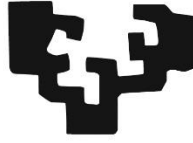


eman ta zabal zazu



Universidad
del País Vasco

Euskal Herriko
Unibertsitatea

**Indigenous Language Revitalization in British Columbia:
Yunešit'in strategies for Nenqayni ch'ih or the Tšilhqot'in language**

Paula Laita Pallarés

PhD dissertation

Supervisors:

Maitena Etxebarria Arostegui

and

Xabier Artiagoitia Beaskoetxea

University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU
Department of Linguistics and Basque Studies

2021

*Nendid Yuneŝit'in deni gha an.
(To the Yuneŝit'in people)*

Contents

Esker ona / Sechanalhyagh	v
Nexwejeni naghulchud yenedzen	vii
Abstract	1
Laburpena	2
Chapter 1. Introduction	5
1.1 Research focus and scope	6
1.2 Justification of research	7
1.3 Research questions and hypotheses	9
1.4 Purpose and objectives of research	11
1.5 Research methodology	11
1.6 Research outcomes	15
1.7 Structure of the dissertation	17
Chapter 2. Indigenous languages in Canada: language revitalization in British Columbia	19
2.1 Federal and provincial language legislation	20
2.2 Status of the Indigenous languages in British Columbia	25
2.3 Why is it important to protect Indigenous languages?	36
2.4 First Nations language revitalization efforts in British Columbia	41
2.4.1 Challenges for First Nations language revitalization B.C.	44
2.4.2 Indigenous language policies and planning in B.C.	46
2.5 Summary	61
Chapter 3. <i>Nenqay Deni</i> ‘the T̓silhqot’ in people’: <i>Nenqayni Ch’ih</i> ‘the T̓silhqot’ in language’ and Yunešit’in	65
3.1 <i>Nenqay deni</i> ‘the T̓silhqot’ in people’	65
3.1.1 <i>Nen</i> ‘the land’: T̓silhqot’ in territory and communities	67
3.1.2 T̓silhqot’ in main economic and traditional activities	74
3.1.3 <i>Dechen-ts’edilhtan</i> : T̓silhqot’ in traditional laws	77
3.1.4 T̓silhqot’ in values, traditions, beliefs and education	80
3.2 <i>Nenqayni Ch’ih</i> : The T̓silhqot’ in language	82
3.2.1 Previous linguistic work	85
3.2.2 Language description	86
3.2.3 Current status of <i>Nenqayni ch’ih</i>	110
3.3 <i>Gex nats’ enaghilht’i</i> : Yunešit’in and language revitalization efforts	114
3.3.1 Language knowledge and usage of <i>Nenqayni Ch’ih</i> in Yunešit’in	116
3.3.2 T̓silhqot’ in language revitalization efforts in Yunešit’in	118
3.4 Summary	127

Chapter 4. Methodology	129
4.1 Ethical Framework	131
4.2 Community-based Research.....	135
4.3 Gathering of the knowledge: approach, methods and procedures.....	138
4.3.1 Participant observation	141
4.3.2 Conversations.....	143
4.3.3 Sharing circle	147
4.3.4 Document Analysis	151
4.4 Sampling	154
4.4.1 Participating community members.....	154
4.4.2 Documents.....	157
4.5 Organizing and sharing of the gathered knowledge: data processing, analysis and dissemination of results.....	158
4.5.1 Units of analysis.....	158
4.5.2 Criteria of analysis	161
4.5.3 Procedure.....	162
4.6 Research Questions and Hypotheses: in constant transformation.....	168
4.7 Summary	176
Chapter 5. Presentation of the learnings: T̂silhqot'in language knowledge and usage in Yunešit'in	179
5.1 Topic 1 – T̂silhqot'in language knowledge in Yunešit'in.....	180
5.1.1 What is the language fluency level in the community?.....	180
5.1.2 Where and how did participating community members learn their language?	186
5.2 Topic 2 – T̂silhqot'in language usage in Yunešit'in	198
5.2.1 Who uses the language in the community?.....	198
5.2.2 What is the language used for?	204
5.2.3 Where is the T̂silhqot'in language used?	211
5.2.4 What challenges do speakers find to use the language?.....	214
5.2.5 What would be the consequences of not using the language?.....	223
5.2.6 What are the reasons for the low number of speakers?.....	226
5.2.7 Does intergenerational language transmission happen in the community?	245
5.2.8. What strategies can be used for promoting the use of the language in the community?.....	249
5.2.9 What is the future of the T̂silhqot'in language in the community?	256
5.3 Summary	265
Chapter 6. Presentation of the learnings: Importance of recovering the T̂silhqot'in language in Yunešit'in and language revitalization strategies and resources	267
6.1 Topic 3: Importance of recovering the use of T̂silhqot'in in Yunešit'in.....	267
6.1.1 Why is it important to speak and learn the language?.....	267

6.1.2 Where should it be spoken?	295
6.2 Topic 4: T̓silhqot̓'in language teaching/learning strategies in Yunešit̓'in.....	300
6.2.1 What community group should have priority on learning the language?	300
6.2.2 What challenges do community members face regarding teaching/learning the language?	302
6.2.3 What strategies can be used for language teaching/learning?.....	327
6.2.4 Where should it be learned?.....	357
6.3 Topic 5: T̓silhqot̓'in language resources in Yunešit̓'in	361
6.3.1 What language materials exist in the community?.....	361
6.3.2 What new language materials should be developed?.....	372
6.3.3 What is the community vision for a repository of language resources?	376
6.4 Summary	382
Chapter 7. Discussion and application of the learnings	385
7.1. Revisiting research questions and hypotheses.....	385
7.1.1 Answering Research Question #1.....	385
7.1.2 Answering Research Question #2.....	390
7.1.3 Answering Research Question #3.....	392
7.1.4 Answering Research Question #4.....	392
7.2 Yunešit̓'in language revitalization from a broader perspective.....	393
7.2.1 Language immersion: a successful language teaching strategy.....	400
7.2.2 Securing intergenerational language transmission	402
7.2.3 Language revitalization as cultural revitalization	403
7.2.4 Language revitalization: a collective effort.....	405
7.3 Application of the learnings: advancing Yunešit̓'in language revitalization	407
7.4 Summary	410
Chapter 8. Conclusions and final remarks.....	413
8.1 Overall research conclusions.....	413
8.2 Significance of the research	422
8.3 Research limitations	424
8.4 Recommendations for further research and final thoughts.....	426
References	429
List of Figures.....	453
List of Tables	453
List of Appendices.....	457

Esker ona / Sechanalhyagh

This work is the result of a long journey full of learning experiences, which would not have been possible without the combined efforts and energy of an amazing group of people that supported me along the way. I want to start saying *eskerrik asko* to my supervisors Maitena Etxebarria and Xabier Artiagoitia for believing in this research and assisting me through all these years, with their ongoing encouragement and great academic support and input, which enhanced the outcome of this work. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to the Yunešit'in community, as without them this work would have not come to be. *Nexwets'en ch'iqi yenedžen. Nexwenen ch'ed nexwelh našiyah. Nenqayni ch'ih jighašeneželhtan.* They kindly welcomed me in their land and shared their beautiful culture and language with me. I want to say *sechanalhyagh* to Yunešit'in Chief and Council for giving me the opportunity to work with the community. I gratefully acknowledge the financial support of Yunešit'in Government to conduct this work, by covering the costs of the research activities. *Sechanal?in gulin* to *Nits'il?in* Russell Myers Ross for believing in me and in this work, by showing strong interest and support from the beginning, taking the time to introduce me to the community and the members, providing ongoing guidance, as well as sharing his passion for the *nen* 'land', culture and *nenqayni ch'ih*. I am also grateful for his valuable feedback on the research and his time reviewing the final version of this dissertation.

I also want to express my deepest appreciation to the Yunešit'in Language Committee. *Sechanalhyagh* for their trust, collaboration in this work and advice over time. Likewise, *sechanalhyagh* to all the participating community members who held a role at the different stages of the work: those ones who shared their stories and knowledge on the language conversations, *?Elagi, Blondie, Braids, Britt, BW, Charlie Brown, Chel?ig, Chickadee, Dani, Datsan, Dothy, Filly, Gex, Jo, Juna, Kalikala, Lily the Pink, LM, Maggie, Matilda, Maureen, MJB, MQ, Nists'i, Nun, Nundi, Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh, Omi, Peter, Rissa, Roper, Saina, Tay, Theresa*, and special mention to Elders (late) *?Etsu ghinli* and (late) *Pauline ghinli*; Yunešit'in *?Esgul* students who shared their valuable thoughts and insights in the sharing circle and activities at the school; Elders, fluent speakers and language teachers that participated in the language meetings over the last years; Tšilhqot'in language experts Bella Alphonse, Maria Myers, and William Myers for their translation and transcribing work in this research, as well Linda Myers, for sharing her language resources; special thanks to Maria Myers for editing the text in *Nenqayni ch'ih* in this work; Olivia Hink for her assistance filming and recording the conversations, sharing circle and other activities; and to all those

other community members who directly and indirectly participated in this work, including community cooks, and especially Yunešit'in ?Esgul Cook Charleen Brigham, who made sure I was well fed during all these years and that I always had my *bannock*. Thanks to Yunešit'in ?Esgul as well for providing the space for doing the activities with the youth.

I owe special thanks to my beloved Tšilhqot'in teachers: *sechanalyagh* Selina Myers for teaching me the language and showing me the 'Tšilhqot'in way' from the beginning; Celestine Brigham 'Filly', for giving me the opportunity to attend her language classes at the school and learn the language with the students; Maria Myers, for sharing her extensive language and cultural knowledge and stories during our nature walks, car rides and language classes; and, finally, to all the Elders and community members who spoke to me in *Nenqayni ch'ih*, so I could continue practicing and learning every day.

I would also like to thank Nirach Suapa, Beth Bedard and Titi Kunkel for their academic support, which helped shape my ideas on the early days of this work; to Frances and Shirley for those inspiring 'research therapy sessions', and especially, to Jean-Paul Laplante for connecting me with the Tšilhqot'in people and Yunešit'in community, by introducing me to Nits'il?in Russell Myers Ross in the spring of 2014. I also want to thank Bhiamie Williamson for collaboratively developing and implementing one of the research activities with me as well as to Scout Island Nature Centre for providing the space for one of the activities.

Finally, this day would not have arrived without the steady support from my Williams Lake 'family' and all those hikes, bike rides, meals, knitting nights, tea-chatting and laughing, that filled me with energy to continue working; my dear Basque friends, who, even from miles away, continued being present in the form of letters, emails, check-in texts or long calls, that helped shorten the physical distance and kept me connected with home; and finally, my family and their unconditional support and encouragement through all my life. I am grateful for my parents, Pilar and Oscar, who have always supported me in all ways through my growth and education, and have passed down to me their love for languages and cultures, as well as my brother David, who has always reminded me to 'keep going'. I do not forget the support of my extended family, cousins, uncles and aunties, and late grandparents, especially my late *Abuela* Pilar, who always encouraged me to pursue this work and will be happy to see I have completed it. Finally, I am immensely thankful to my life partner, Jon, who has shared this special time with me and has brought in his positive energy, by supporting me through thin and thick and giving me that extra 'push' when I needed. *Guztioi, mila esker bihotz-bihotzez.*

Nexwejeni naghulchud yenidžen

Nenqayni ch'ih yaltig nenduw h nen dežilhtsih. Nenqayni deni nidlin. Nenke'd deni lha?alhhah nenqayni ch'ih yajeltig, gan jeni ?eyi t'agultinqi dzanh jeyelh deni lin. ?Esqax in lha guban belh guta jigubedelh?anx. Nexwejeni nalchud ?eguh ?esqax chuh yajetalhtig. Deni lha?alhhah in ?esqax ?ijegwedelh?anx nenjan Yunešit'in tex. Nexwejeni dežilti gwech'ez nalchud gwetazulh. Nexwejeni ?eyi nendan hanint'ih ?egwinentaghendzanx. Nexwenen nent'sin gwelex hink'an nexwedešni hink'an ?esggidam gangu ?elhixitl'un ganit'ih nexwejeni bid. ?Elhelh ?at'in ?egu nexwejeni qa ?inlhtitah nagutšig. Gat'in nexwedeni gwetowh gwech'ijalyilh ?eguh ?atughet'anx qa?at'in. ?Elhelh ?anat'in ?egu nexwejeni nataghelchelh hagunt'i.¹

¹ Text in *Nenqayni ch'ih* written by Maria Myers, *Yunešit'in jeni ?igwedelh?anx* (Yunešit'in language teacher): 'We are grabbing our voice back – Here while we sit on the land, we speak *Nenqayni Ch'ih*. We are *Nenqayni*. A lot of people speak the language, the older people live with the voice. Children are not being taught by their parents. If we grab back our language, then the children can speak. Over here among the Yunešit'in people, a lot of people are working towards teaching the children. It would be better to grab back our language because we value it. You will know by our voice who we are. Our lands, our people and our ancestors are tied together with the language. We work together in this project for grabbing our language back. We are taking directions from our own people's voice. If we work together, we will be able to revive our language'.

Abstract

Nenqayni ch'ih or T̓silhqot'in is a Dene (Athabaskan) language spoken in the interior of British Columbia, Canada. It presents the highest linguistic vitality of the province, due to the largest number of speakers (the 19.9%; 864 of 4,352 total population) and to the younger age of the speakers, comparing to other Indigenous languages in B.C. However, T̓silhqot'in is considered an endangered language, as the intergenerational transmission has been interrupted and, nowadays, children rarely learn it as their mother tongue. This research study is focused on one of the six T̓silhqot'in communities, Yunešit'in, traditionally named *Gexnats'enaghilht'i*, with the main objective of identifying the community needs regarding language teaching/learning strategies and resources towards T̓silhqot'in revitalization in the community. Other secondary objectives are to describe the language knowledge and usage of Yunešit'in community members, to identify the reasons of the language loss in the community and to explore the importance of reviving it. This work follows so-called Indigenous methodologies and a collaborative, participatory and community-based research approach. Methods applied to gather community perspectives are participant observation, semi-structured conversation, sharing circle and document analysis of meeting minutes, language materials and other related documents. Outcomes from the thematic analysis of the gathered knowledge show that community members in their late 40s and up are fluent speakers, those on their 30s are semi-speakers and somewhat understand the language, and community members under 30 years have basic language knowledge. With regard to the intergenerational effects, the main reason for the language loss in Yunešit'in is the trauma caused by colonization in the late 1800s and the assimilation practices, especially the residential School system, which operated from 1891 to 1981 in that area. In spite of the loss, Yunešit'in community members believe it is crucial to reclaim the language, since it represents an important part of their T̓silhqot'in cultural identity in relation to the land. As a response, Yunešit'in members understand it is essential to continue developing language revitalization strategies and implementing language immersion programs that contribute to the intergenerational transmission of the language on the land, supported by the development of culturally oriented language materials. In an attempt to provide comprehensive information, the results from this study may be used to advance the development of the 2021 Yunešit'in Language Revitalization Plan and further the efforts made by the T̓silhqot'in Nation in revitalizing the language.

Laburpena

Nenqayni ch'ih edo T̄silhqot'in hizkuntza Dene (Atabaskera) familiako mintzaira bat da eta Kanadako Columbia Britaniarreko barnealdean hitz egiten da. Probintziako hizkuntza indigenen artean bizitasun mailarik handiena du, hiztun kopuru handia ez ezik (4.352 T̄silhqot'in-en %19,9; 864 pertsona inguru), hiztun gazteak ere badituelako. Hala ere, T̄silhqot'in-a desagertzeko arriskuan dago; izan ere, belaunaldiz belaunaldiko transmisioa eten egin da, eta, gaur egun, ez da jada umeen ama-hizkuntza. Sei T̄silhqot'in komunitate daude, eta ikerketa hau horietako batean oinarrituta dago: Yunešit'in-en (*Gexnats'enaghilht'i* jatorriz). Ikerketak T̄silhqot'in ikasteko eta hizkuntza komunitatean biziberritzeko estrategiak eta baliabideak identifikatzea dauka helburu nagusitzat. Bigarren mailako beste helburuak ondorengo hauek dira: Yunešit'in komunitateko kideen hizkuntza jakite-maila eta erabilera deskribatzea, komunitateko hizkuntza-galeraren arrazoiak ezagutzea, eta hizkuntza biziberritzearen garrantzia azaltzea. Lan honek metodologia indigena delakoari eta elkarlana, parte-hartzea eta komunitatearen jakintza oinarri dituen ikerketa-ereduari jarraitzen die. Komunitatearen iritziak biltzeko metodoak hauek izan dira: behaketa parte-hartzailea, erdi-bideratutako solasaldia, *sharing circle* (partekatutako zirkulua), eta dokumentu-azterketa (batzar-agiriak, hizkuntza-materialak, eta horiekin lotutako bestelako baliabideak). Yunešit'in-en jasotako jakintzaren analisi tematikoaren emaitzak honako hauek izan dira: komunitateko 40 urtetik gorako kideak dira hiztunak; 30 urtetik 40ra bitartekoak 'erdi-hiztunak' edo 'hiztun hartzaileak' (ingelesez *semi-speakers*) dira, eta neurri batean hizkuntza ulertzen dute; eta 30 urtetik beherakoek hizkuntzaren oinarri-oinarrizko jakite-maila dute. Belaunaldien arteko hizkuntza galeraren arrazoi nagusienak, funtsean, hauek dira: XIX. mende bukaerako kolonizazioa eta horrekin lotutako asimilatze-estategiekin eragindako traumak (1891-1981ko *residential school* izeneko barnetegi sistemak sortuak batez ere). Dena dela, Yunešit'in komunitateko kideek argi dute hizkuntzari eustea garrantzitsua dela, haien hizkuntza T̄silhqot'in identitate kulturalarekin eta lurrarekin lotuta baitago. Yunešit'in komunitateko kideentzat ezinbestekoa da naturan eta eguneroko bizimoduan oinarritutako belaunez belauneko transmisioa sustatzen duten murgiltze-programak garatzen eta T̄silhqot'in kulturaren oinarritutako hizkuntza materialak sortzen jarraitzea, hizkuntza biziberritzeko. Ikerketatik ateratako emaitzak lagungarriak izan daitezke 2021eko Yunešit'in Hizkuntza Plana garatzeko eta T̄silhqot'in herriaren hizkuntza berpizteko ahaleginak sustatzeko.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Although there is no agreement as yet on the exact number of languages in the world (Martí et al. 2005: 20; Amorrortu et al. 2004; Manterola Garate and Berasategi Sancho 2011: 11), according to Ethnologue (Fennig et al. 2014), the total is close to 7,105; out of them, 5,530 languages have no more than 10,000 speakers, and just 3,570 have developed a writing system. Unfortunately, for some time now, there has been a clear tendency towards disappearance and, according to recent research (Harrison 2007a: 3), a language dies every 10 days, which means that in less than hundred years half of the languages existing today could vanish.

That phenomenon is also present in North America. In Canada, there are currently more than 70 Indigenous languages (Statistics Canada 2017), which can be classified in 12 families (Cook and Flynn 2008: 319), and all of them are in danger of disappearance due to a combination of historical and current socio-economic reasons that stem from European contact in the early 1800s. Colonization, wars, epidemics, the historical policies of assimilation carried out by the Canadian Government and the residential school System, where children were removed from their homes and forbidden to speak their mother tongue, have all contributed to the decline of the languages, mostly caused by the interruption of the inter-generational mother-tongue transmission (Fishman 1996: 187; First Peoples' Cultural Council 2015: 45).

The province of British Columbia hosts the 60% of all the Indigenous languages in Canada, with 34 Indigenous languages that can be classified in seven language families (First Peoples' Cultural Council 2018a). All of them are considered 'endangered' and, therefore, decades ago communities and allies started working towards their revitalization and protection (Ball and McIvor 2013: 27), as part of their broader efforts to recover their sovereignty, lands, ceremonies and other aspects of their culture that were taken away (FPCC 2018h: 27).

Languages are more than a mere linguistic code. They are neither abstract beings, nor independent systems; languages are the results of history and appear related to each other (Martí et al. 2005: 39). In the early 19th century, Humbolt reflected on "the inner form of language", where language comprises the spirit of a people and expresses their particular way of seeing the world (Moreno Fernández 1998: 191-193). Every language is the tool to communicate and the principal means by which culture gets transmitted; it is the way to experience, express and explain the world around us (Martí et al. 2005: 39). Thus, one

of the most important functions of the language is the sense of ethnic-cultural identification that it provides (Ovide 2008: 99). Our language sets us apart from the others, includes us in a community and embodies our culture.

Moreover, Indigenous languages are the principal instrument by which culture is passed down from one generation to another, “by which members of a culture communicate meaning and make sense of their shared experience”; “language defines the world and experience in cultural terms” (RCAP 1996). UNESCO (2003: 1) acknowledges that “language diversity is essential to the human heritage” and explains that “each and every language embodies the unique cultural wisdom of a people” and “the loss of any language is thus a loss for all humanity”. That is why each and one of the languages of the world has an irreplaceable nature which makes them worthy of conservation.

In addition, the use, revitalization and conservation of Indigenous languages is also recognized as a human right since 2007 under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), endorsed by Canada in 2010. However, as Romaine (2015: 32) explains, that right gets sometimes compromised “when we confront the fact that people do not normally give up their languages or cultures willingly” and that “not coincidentally, the vast majority of today’s threatened languages and cultures are found among socially and politically marginalized and/or subordinated national and ethnic minority groups”. Language and culture disappearance “almost always forms part of a wider process of social, cultural and political displacement where national cultures and languages are in effect those of dominant ethnic groups” (Romaine 2015:3 2). That is also the case of the Indigenous languages and cultures in Canada at present.

1.1 Research focus and scope

Within that context, this research work focuses on the revitalization of one of the Indigenous languages in B.C.: *Nenqayni ch’ih* or the T̓silhqot’in language. The T̓silhqot’in or ‘people of the river’ (Yunešit’in First Nations Government 2014: 1) live in Interior British Columbia. There are six T̓silhqot’in communities represented by the T̓silhqot’in National Government (TNG): ʔEsdilagh (Alexandria), Tl’etinqox (Anaham), Tl’esqox (Toosey), T̓si Del (Redstone), Xení Gwet’in (Nemaiah), Yunešit’in (Stone); all located throughout the Chilcotin Plateau, west of ʔElhdaqox (Fraser River), except for ʔEsdilagh (Alexandria), which sits north of the closest main service centre Williams Lake.

This research study focuses on Yunešit'in or *Gex nats'enaghilht'i*, as per the traditional name of the place. This community is located south of the Tšilhqot'in river approximately 105 km west on Williams Lake, B.C., and 8 km South of Hanceville, B.C. It consists of 450 registered members, and 250 of them live in the community. As for other Indigenous language communities in B.C., language shift also occurs in Yunešit'in: even though *Nenqayni ch'ih* is still used on daily basis by the older generations, English has become the dominant language. However, this community had extensive experience on language revitalization during the 1970s and 1980s, and so has it been in the last five years, since Yunešit'in Government set language revitalization as a priority for the community.

My research aims at contributing to the field of Indigenous language revitalization by providing a deeper understanding on the recovery of the *Nenqayni ch'ih* or Tšilhqot'in language, through the gathering and analysis of community perspectives about the specific needs regarding language teaching/learning strategies and language resources towards reviving the use of the language in Yunešit'in. Other topics covered under this study are the following: language knowledge and usage in the community; main reasons and consequences of the language loss; importance of revitalizing the language; strategies to promote language use; priorities, challenges and strategies to teach/learn the language; and the development of language resources.

1.2 Justification of research

The main motivation and driving force behind this work is the matter of urgency in protecting and revitalizing Indigenous languages. Considering the current B.C. sociolinguistic situation of low numbers of Indigenous speakers in elderly ages, there is an immediate need for reflection, research and work towards language revitalization. This research sets out to provide a good assessment of the Tšilhqot'in language situation and community perspectives on effective proposals for its revitalization.

In addition, according to many authors (Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Graveline 2000; Henry et al. 2004; Creswell 2013; Strand et al. 2003; Brown and Strega 2005; Dickson-Swift et al. 2008; Mayan 2009; Finlay et al. 2013; King 2010; Etmanski et al. 2014; FATSIL 2014), in order to develop successful strategies for language revitalization, communities need to be directly involved in the work and develop their own strategies. As Harrison (2017a: 20) points out, “the real story of endangered languages revolves around speakers,

and what they have to say for themselves”; that is why, we should make sure “not to lose sight of real people, their experiences, attitudes and opinions”. Therefore, for achieving successful outcomes, it is essential to gain an in-depth understanding of the communities’ perspectives. As it is the case for many languages (Martí et al. 2005: 39), even though there has been previous linguistic research work on the T̓silhqot’in language (Krauss 1975; Cook 1978; Latimer 1978; King 1979; Cook 1983, 1987, 1989, 1993, 2005, 2013); none of has focused on community perspectives about language revitalization: how community members understand the issue, what language attitudes they present and what insights they have on how to revive the use of their language. This dissertation is designed to also give voice to the T̓silhqot’in community and present the research’s insights and conclusions in such a way that they may also be of their interest and for their benefit. This work provides an opportunity to include community perspectives in an academic framework, and fill the gap in the current work about the Indigenous peoples’ language revitalization efforts.

According to the *Report on the Status of B.C. First Nation Languages* published in 2018 by the First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC), T̓silhqot’in presents one of the best language vitality of all the Indigenous languages in B.C.: it has “the largest number of speakers” and “a larger number of young people fluent in the language” (FPCC 2018h: 38). However, FPHLCC (2010: 13) still classifies this language as “severely endangered” based on the analysis of the number of speakers, the use of the language and the documentation work. In addition, T̓silhqot’in is also placed on Stage 7 ‘Shifting’ of the Fishman’s *Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale*, since the intergenerational transmission of the language has been interrupted and the language is rarely learned now as the mother tongue by children; nonetheless, language revitalization through re-establishing home transmission may still be possible since grandparents and some of the parents learned T̓silhqot’in as their first language (Fishman 1991). Therefore, furthering the research on the T̓silhqot’in language, while diligently applying what is known, may contribute to its resurgence.

Besides, the T̓silhqot’in people have shown strong will across time for the survival of their land, language and culture against the constant assimilation attempts throughout history. This desire has often been reflected in their attitude of resistance against the sovereignty of the British Crown (i.e. T̓silhqot’in War in 1864, the legal proceedings of *The Xenigwet’in Court Case for Rights and Title* before the Supreme Court of Canada) and its opposition to the development of resource extracting activities that threaten their

land (i.e. New Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine Project in Težtan Biny, Fish Lake) (Smith 2013a, 2013b; Turner 2013). Regarding the language and culture, the Tšilhqot'in people have also devoted their efforts towards its revival. Yunešit'in members, in particular, have been committed to language and culture revitalization for decades; furthermore, it has become a priority for the Yunešit'in Government and recent leadership has given strong support to Yunešit'in Language Committee's efforts towards the development and implementation of the 2016 Tšilhqot'in Language Revitalization Plan. Since then, several language projects have been implemented with the aim of bringing the language back to full use in the community. In this context, the present research may also contribute to making progress in community efforts towards language revitalization in Yunešit'in, as they may be used to advance the 2021 Yunešit'in Language Revitalization Plan.

To finish, I would like to mention my personal interest in the revitalization of minorized languages. Due to my personal background and experience recovering my own language, *Euskara* (Basque), I understand the essential value of maintaining our languages as part of our cultural identity, and, therefore, feel passionate about the language revitalization and cultural resurgence work around the world.

1.3 Research questions and hypotheses

As Indigenous scholars Potts and Brown (2005: 267) explain, the research design is a dynamic plan that evolves and gets altered along the process; likewise, questions stated for this work evolved and continued being shaped throughout the study. As it is common in qualitative research (Tovar and Hidalgo 2009), questions developed at the initial stages provided the research framework and narrowed the scope of the study; however, due to the inductive nature of this work, they were slightly modified upon the needs that came up along the different phases.

Considering that, four research questions were developed: one main question (RQ1) and three secondary questions (RQ2, RQ3 and RQ4) with the exploratory purpose of providing background to the main question and enhancing the overall results of this study. The main question is as follows:

- *what are the community needs regarding Tšilhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies and language resources towards Tšilhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in?* (RQ1);

and the other three secondary questions are the following:

- *what is the Yunešit'in community members' knowledge and usage of the Tšilhqot'in language? (RQ2);*
- *what are the reasons of Tšilhqot'in language loss in Yunešit'in? (RQ3); and*
- *why is it important to recover the use of the Tšilhqot'in language in Yunešit'in? (RQ4).*

In a similar way, I developed relevant hypotheses to provide a guide for generating ideas from the data (Thomas 2006); however, they stayed open and flexible and were constantly reviewed during the research process at the same time that data were being collected. They helped narrow the focus of the study and also design data collection instruments. I generated hypotheses mostly from literature review, observations, insights acquired from my participation in the community life and thoughts shared by community members.

The hypotheses tried to respond only to the main research question (RQ1). As secondary research questions (RQ2, RQ3, and RQ4) were considered of exploratory nature, no hypotheses were assigned to them. Each hypothesis addressed a variable (V) or factor under study, according to the objectives explained below (cf. 1.4). Hypotheses for the main research question (RQ1) state as follows:

- *It is necessary to develop and implement language immersion programs in order to increase the number of speakers and level of language fluency (H1) [Language teaching/learning techniques (V1)].*
- *It is necessary to develop language programs that support intergenerational transmission (H2) [Engagement of different generations and community groups in the language programs (V2)].*
- *It is necessary to develop and implement new strategies to teach/learn/acquire the language on the land (H3) [Strategies that promote language teaching/learning/acquiring on the land (V3)].*
- *It is necessary to develop culturally oriented language programs and materials that support language teaching/learning while simultaneously acquiring traditional knowledge (H4) [Presence of cultural traditions in the language programs and resources (V4)].*

Next, I will present the research objectives identified in relation to the aforementioned research questions and hypotheses.

1.4 Purpose and objectives of research

In order to answer the first and main research question (RQ1), the main goal for this work was to identify Yunešit'in community needs regarding Tšilhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies and resources towards Tšilhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in (O1). Other secondary objectives responding to the secondary research questions (RQ2, RQ3 and RQ4), were the following:

- to describe Tšilhqot'in language knowledge and usage of Yunešit'in community members (O2);
- to identify the reasons of the Tšilhqot'in language loss in the community (O3); and
- to explore the importance of recovering the language (O4).

In order to provide background to this study, the following supplementary objectives included:

- to review the classification of the Indigenous languages in British Columbia and the linguistic relationships established between them as well as their vitality and other sociolinguistic aspects;
- to provide a brief overview on the language laws, policies and recognition at federal and provincial levels;
- to introduce the *Nenqayni* or Tšilhqot'in people and their language, *Nenqayni ch'ih*;
- to present the Yunešit'in, their language knowledge and usage as well as language revitalization efforts conducted in the community; and
- to explore some of the main aspects of other well-known language revitalization experiences, as the Māori and Hawaiian, in order to bring the outcomes of this study into a broader perspective.

Once the objectives were identified, I developed a methodology specific for this research, which I will describe in the next section.

1.5 Research methodology

The methodology of this work represents an essential hallmark of this project; it is the result of a constant process of self-reflection about existing approaches and ways of conducting research projects with Indigenous peoples. This research followed so called

Indigenous methodologies to ensure the work was not only respectful and culturally responsive, but also based on approaches and processes emerging from Indigenous cultures, worldviews and ways of being (Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Graveline 2000; Sinclair 2003; Absolon and Willett 2005; Kovach 2010; King 2010).

A comprehensive ethical framework was designed for this study following recommendations from several Indigenous institutions and authors. According to the Assembly of First Nations (AFN henceforth) (n.d), *partnership* is a key principle, where researchers are expected to work closely with the community not only for the design of the overall project but also for identifying data collection methods and instruments that would be used to gather the knowledge as well as the data analyzing strategies that would be applied (Kovach 2010). In addition, the *Prior, Free and Informed Consent* needs to be suitably addressed, and principles of academic integrity related to Indigenous knowledge ownership and sharing need to be respected (AFN n.d). Other provisions related to Indigenous research ethics that helped design the methodology of this project were as follows: developing a research agreement, designing collaborative research, promoting community engagement, respecting community codes of practice, recognizing the role of Elders and other knowledge keepers, achieving mutual benefits for both the academic and the community parts, building research capacity, and sharing results with the community (CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC 2010:110-132).

Likewise, after reviewing Indigenous research protocols and other academic work (RCAP 1996; Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Graveline 2000; Henry et al. 2004; Creswell 2013; Strand et al. 2003; Brown and Strega 2005; Dickson-Swift et al. 2008; Mayan 2009; Finlay et al. 2013; King 2010; Etmanski et al. 2014; FATSIL 2014), I decided to follow a *collaborative* and *participatory* approach and pursue a *community-based* research study with the main goal of developing a reciprocal, capacity building and collaborative work.

According to Indigenous methodologies' principles of *connectedness* and *collectiveness* (Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Kovach 2005: 28-31; Potts and Brown 2005: 263; King 2010: 281; Walmak 2013: 217), I started by developing an authentic relationship with the community and the land and thus I took time to visit, listen to their stories while also sharing my own as well as my motivation for doing this work. That helped not only create a mutual connection but also provided me with a better understanding of the T̓silhqot̓'in worldview, the Yunešit̓'in community and their relationship to the language and the land; that knowledge would be strongly beneficial when developing and implementing all aspects of this research.

The methodology designed for this work was *exploratory* and *adaptive* (Babbie 2004: 88). There was not much pre-existing peer-reviewed literature about the topic under study, so this research was aimed to develop a better understanding of the issue, as well as to design valid methods that could be used in subsequent studies. The work was also open to follow the research flow, and changes were embraced and managed with flexibility as a key part of the overall research success.

This work was designed as a case study, since it is focused on Yunešit'in and the understanding of the perspectives of this Tšilhqot'in community regarding the resurgence of their language. As for the data generation techniques (Mayan 2009: 66), this research follows a mixed method approach, since both qualitative and quantitative data have been collected and analyzed (Creswell 2013); however, the qualitative analysis prevails in this study in order to gain deep understanding of community perceptions and underlying reasons of the research topic (Mayan 2009). Aspects of the grounded theory methodology are also present, owing to the inductive nature of the research process (Glaser and Strauss 1967); instead of trying to fit the collected data into a previous developed framework, in this case, conclusions emerge directly from the gathering and analyzing of the community perspectives and become a description of a reality (King 2010: 271).

I applied qualitative research criteria (Tovar and Hidalgo 2009: 26), as well as the *triangulation of method* as a validation tool, which allowed me to validate results through cross-verification from several sources (Mason 2002: 190). Using several data collection techniques allowed for the observation of the gathered knowledge from different angles and the presentation of a more complete picture of the study area. Participant observation, conversation, sharing circle and document analysis were the methods applied in this work.

The *participant observation* method was used in the initial stages mostly to create a background for this study. Being personally involved in the research setting, by visiting the community members, participating in events, volunteering at the school and becoming part of the community life, it helped me acquire a better understanding of the reality of the study (Campoy and Gómez Araújo 2015) and, ultimately, start developing the research questions and hypotheses for this work. However, notes collected under this method were used only for background purposes and were not included in the further analysis.

Semi-structured conversation was the main knowledge gathering method. According to Indigenous scholars Thomas (2005) and Bessarab and Ng'andu (2010), story through conversation is the most appropriate technique to approach Indigenous knowledge, since it honors the traditional way of passing on the knowledge (King 2010) and creates a strong

relationship between the conversation participants (Kovach 2010: 43). This method also provides a higher level of comfort for participants as they keep control of what, how and to what extent they share their knowledge. Collaborative storytelling also allows for a construction of meaning from and about the participant's life experiences in order to create a collaborative text or description of the phenomenon (Bishop 1996). A total of 23 conversations were conducted for this study. Participants were encouraged to choose their language of preference (Tsilhqot'in or English) and appoint other participants they would be comfortable conversing with. A conversation protocol was developed as well as a topic guide with the only goal of framing the conversation.

The *sharing circle* method was used to gather perspectives from Yunešit'in youth. It was decided so to maximize the students' comfort level, since they were already acquainted with the procedure. In Indigenous cultures, sharing circles represent ceremony and a collective experience of growth from listening to each other (Lavallée 2009). A total of one session was conducted at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul (school). As part of it, two visual activities guided by the Anishnaabe symbol-based reflection method (Lavallée 2009: 30) also took place. Participants were encouraged to visually express their ideas in relation to the topic by creating a group art piece, and then, use their art work to share their thoughts in the circle. It became a cross-cultural sharing activity, as different languages that were being revitalized throughout the world were represented in the circle (Nenqayni Ch'ih, Secwepemctsin, Euahlayi, Ngyaimpaa and Euskara).

The last method used within this study was the *document analysis*. It is considered a less intrusive way of gathering data (Mayan 2009:82) and an efficient less-time consuming technique. Documents may also cover a long span of time (Bowen 2009: 31) and represent valuable recording (Mayan 2009: 82). They also provide solid results which may help enhance qualitative studies; however, since most of the time those documents are not created for the specific purposes of the research, results might not be as specialized as data gathered from other methods that were designed especially for the study (Bowen 2009). In this case, meeting minutes from language initiatives (8 documents), and other relevant language project-related documentation (5 documents) were part of the analysis. In addition, I also conducted an inventory of language resources at the school to record data about available language resources (186 resources). The outcomes that emerged from the *documentation analysis* supported the results from the main methods described above. Together with the knowledge gathered under the *participant observation* method, the

results from the *documentation analysis* also allowed me to start drafting the research questions and hypotheses (Bowen 2009: 30).

Regarding the sampling, by following qualitative research principles (Potts and Brown 2005: 269), I decided to conduct a *stratified purposeful* (Mayan 2009) or *judgement sampling* (Marshall 1996), in which both participants and documents were selected by their singularity in relation to the topic study (Mejía Navarrete 2000: 166) and their unique and valuable contribution to addressing the research questions and hypotheses. As it is recommended by Potts and Brown (2005: 269), the researcher should not be the only one designing the sampling; therefore, a list with potential participating community members and documents was collaboratively developed by Yunešit'in leadership, Yunešit'in Language Committee, and myself. All families, generations and language speakers from all levels (fluent, semi-speakers, basic and learning) were included in the sample to ensure representativity and validity of the gathered perspectives (Potts and Brown 2005: 269). In addition, language experts and teachers and members of Yunešit'in Government leadership and staff were engaged due to the influence of their work in the community. Regarding selected documents, language meeting minutes and other related documents were included in the sampling as well language resources from the school. Both community members' and document samplings were determined following the principle of *data saturation*; they were completed when no new data emerged from the analysis (Marshall 1996).

For the data analysis, I chose to conduct an inductive *thematic analysis* (Patton and Cochran 2002; Thomas 2006). With the help of NVIVO Qualitative Data Analysis Software, I looked at common patterns emerging from the data and drafted *codes* and *categories*, until I was able to reduce the data to *themes* or key ideas that interpreted several aspects of the study (Boyatzis 1998). Research questions and objectives outlined for this work helped developed upper-level or more general categories; lower-level or specific codes, however, emerged directly from the multiple reading of the raw data (Thomas 2006), not from a priori developed model.

1.6 Research outcomes

The themes coming up from the coding process represented the results of this work by answering the stated research questions and validating the hypotheses. A total of 121 themes were identified and classified in five main topics: Topic 1 Tšilhqot'in language knowledge in Yunešit'in; Topic 2 Tšilhqot'in language usage in Yunešit'in; Topic 3

Value of the T̓silhqot̓in language in Yune̓it̓in; Topic 4 T̓silhqot̓in language teaching/learning/acquiring strategies in Yune̓it̓in; and Topic 5 T̓silhqot̓in language resources in Yune̓it̓in.

The analysis of the community perspectives revealed some of the needs regarding T̓silhqot̓in language teaching/learning strategies and language resources towards T̓silhqot̓in language revitalization in Yune̓it̓in (RQ1): Yune̓it̓in community members believe current language teaching methods are not optimal and they should be focused on language immersion (H1) and support intergenerational transmission (H2), language learning on the land (H3) and traditional knowledge acquisition (H4).

Research outcomes also showed that Yune̓it̓in community members' language knowledge and usage (R2) varies generationally, where most 45 years-old and up are fluent speakers and speak it regularly; community members on their 30s are semi-speakers or understand most of it and speak it mostly to Elders; community members under 30 years old have a basic language level; and younger generations are learning the language and rarely speak the language outside the language programs.

Additionally, the analysis of the community members' perspectives identified the intergenerational trauma caused by colonization (European contact occurred in the late 1800s, in this region of B.C.) and the assimilation practices, especially the residential school system operated from 1891-1981 in this area, together with the contemporary education system, the foster care system, the community life-style change and the ongoing racism as the main reasons for the language loss in Yune̓it̓in (R3).

To finish, this study unfolded Yune̓it̓in community perspectives on the importance of reviving their language (R4): they believe the language represents an important part of their T̓silhqot̓in identity, it empowers them as people, and is closely related to the land and culture as well as to ceremony linking them to creation times; the language is connected to the health and well-being of the community and it is also their responsibility to secure communication as many of the Elders do not speak English.

In addition to the academic contribution, the outcomes emerging from this research may also have a practical application and they may be used to advance community efforts towards language revitalization in Yune̓it̓in. In this work, along with their interpretation, I will present a suggestion for their incorporation into the 2021 T̓silhqot̓in Language Revitalization Plan.

1.7 Structure of the dissertation

In this last section, I would like to present a brief description of the organization of this dissertation and the chapters containing the different aspects of the work. After this introduction, the next two chapters will provide the necessary background to the research. Chapter 2 will cover a brief overview of the Indigenous languages in Canada and the federal and provincial language legislation; it will also review the reasons for the loss of the Indigenous languages in this country and the importance of the language revitalization work. Besides, I will describe the Indigenous languages existing in British Columbia and the revitalization strategies undertaken for reviving these languages. Chapter 3 will introduce the *Nenqayni* or T̓silhqot'in people and their language, *Nenqayni ch'ih*, including a brief linguistic description. I will also locate the six T̓silhqot'in communities and focus on Yunešit'in. A brief characterization of the community and a description of the language knowledge and usage and the language revitalization efforts taken in the last few years will be provided. Chapter 4 will review the aspects of the collaborative research approach, the methodology and ethical framework developed for this study as well as the collection of methods and inductive analysis procedures applied. The research outline including the research questions and hypotheses will also be covered in order to frame the study before looking at the results. In Chapter 5 and 6, I will discuss the outcomes of the thematical analysis. Chapter 5 will provide a description of the T̓silhqot'in language knowledge and usage in Yunešit'in and Chapter 6 will include the community perspectives about the importance of recovering the language in the community and the language revitalization strategies and resources that can be used for that. Chapter 7 will consist of the interpretation and discussion of the results in relation to the stated research questions and hypotheses and other language revitalization experiences as the Māori and the Hawaiian, as well as a suggestion for a practical application of the results to enhance Yunešit'in Language Revitalization Plan. Finally, Chapter 8 will reveal the overall conclusions that emerged from this study, the research limitations and some recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2. Indigenous languages in Canada: language revitalization in British Columbia

Canada presents a huge Indigenous language diversity. Several linguists and anthropologists like Boas, Powell, Sapir and Bloomfield have contributed to the classification of the Canadian Indigenous languages (Cook y Flynn 2008: 318). A first attempt at a comprehensive language classification was presented by Powell in 1891 and years later, in 1929, Sapir, inspired by his mentor Boas, developed a new classification based on Kroeber and Dixon's works, which served as a base for subsequent linguistic work on Canadian Indigenous languages (Cook and Flynn 2008: 319).

Current language studies show that there are more than 70 Indigenous languages in Canada (Statistics Canada 2017) grouped 12 linguistic families: Algonquian, Inuktitut, Na-Dené (Athabaskan), Siouan, Salish, Tsimshianic, Wakashan, Iroquoian, Michif, Lingít (Tlingit), Kutenaxa and Xaad Kil / Xaaydaa Kil (Haida). Each language family includes several languages and many of those present dialects, except for the last three, which are considered isolated languages (Cook and Flynn 2008: 320). The largest language families are the Angloquian with 175,825 speakers, Inuktitut with 42,065 speakers and Na-Dené (Athabaskan) with 23,455 speakers and represent the 93% of the total population with an Indigenous language as their mother tongue (Statistics Canada 2017). The language families are classified into three ethnic groups: First Nation¹ (10 languages families), Inuktitut² (one language family) and Métis³ (one language family).

In 2017, the total Canadian population was 36,708,083. Of those, 208,720 people reported having “an Indigenous mother tongue” and 260,550 reported being able to speak their Indigenous language “well enough to conduct a conversation” (Statistics Canada 2017). That may suggest that intergenerational language transmission has been interrupted and nowadays most of the Indigenous population usually learn their own languages as second languages. Most of the Canadian Indigenous languages are

¹ *First Nation(s)* is a term used for Indigenous peoples in Canada who are not Inuit or Métis people. According to AADNC (n.d.), “this term came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word *Indian*, which is considered offensive. The term *First Nation*, has been adopted to replace the word *band* in the name of communities”. First Nations peoples are registered under the Indian Act (1876).

² *Inuit* is a term used for an Indigenous people from northern Canada, “living mainly in Nunavut, Northwest Territories, northern Quebec and Labrador” (AANDC n.d.). Inuit people are not covered by the Indian Act (1876).

³ *Métis* is a term used for “people of mixed First Nation and European ancestry”: Ojibway, Cree, Scottish, Irish and French (AADNC n.d.).

endangered, except for just a few of them which are considered to be in “good health”, due to their larger populations: Nîhîyaw (Cree), Anishnaabe (Ojibway) and Inuktitut (Inuit) (Norris 2007).

In this chapter, I will provide a brief overview of the Canadian federal and provincial language legislation (cf. 2.1). I will also discuss the status of the Indigenous languages in British Columbia (cf. 2.2) and the reasons for revitalizing the Indigenous languages (cf. 2.3), together with the language efforts that are being made in this province and the challenges communities may face (cf. 2.4).

2.1 Federal and provincial language legislation

Despite the high number of Indigenous languages in this country, since the 1867 Confederation, English and French have been recognized as the only “founding languages” of Canada (Ignace 2015: 16). Indigenous languages are mentioned neither in the *British North America Act* (1867), nor in the *Indian Act* (1876), and a century later only languages of other ethnic groups, meaning the ones of “those who had immigrated to Canada”, were recognized (Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1967). According to the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, the first *Canada’s Official Languages Act*, enacted in 1969, recognized the equal status of English and French throughout the federal administration and stated that it was Canada’s responsibility to do “everything that is possible [...] to help the native populations preserve their cultural heritage, which is an essential part of the patrimony of all Canadians” (Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1967; Ball and McIvor 2013: 24). Nevertheless, it remained silent on Indigenous language rights (Ignace 2015: 17); no support was provided and responsibility for language revitalization was left to communities who had no resources to secure language learning within the young population (Ball and McIvor 2013: 24). Later on, the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* kept providing equal status to English and French as part of the *Constitution Act of 1982* (sections 16 to 23) and, although it dealt with undefined “Aboriginal and treaty rights”, Indigenous language rights were not specified (Ignace 2015: 17). The same happened with the *1985 Canadian Multiculturalism Act* and the subsequent *1991 Canadian Heritage Languages Institute Act*, which considered Indigenous languages as “heritage languages,” placing them in the same category as immigrant languages (Ignace 2015: 17). Only some years later, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples presented

certain recommendations, such as providing interpreting services and making literature available in Indigenous languages (RCAP 1996: 281).

Since then, several acts have been passed provincially to support Indigenous languages and some languages have gained official status in certain provinces. In Nunavut, in addition to English and French, the two Inuit languages Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun have “equality of status and equal rights and privileges as official languages” under the Nunavut *Consolidation of Official Languages Act 2008*. Article 4.1 of this act states that “everyone has the right to use any Official Language in the debates and other proceedings of the Legislative Assembly” and the Nunavut Court of Justice and appeal court proceedings. In addition, according to Article 12.1, “a member of the public in Nunavut has the right to communicate with and receive the services of a territorial institution in an Official Language” (*2008 Consolidation of Official Languages Act*). The Nunavut Government also enacted the *Inuit Language Protection Act 2008*, under which children in grades K-3 have the right to receive instruction in the Inuit language, a new Language Authority is created to establish language standards, Inuit have the right to work for the government in their own language, and municipalities have to offer services in the Inuit language. The Act also states that by 2019 all school grades would have the right to an Inuit language education (*2008 Inuit Language Protection Act*). However, according to the Government of Nunavut, this has not happened yet due to the lack of capacity and resources in the Inuit language.

In the Northwest Territories (NWT), under the *NWT Official Languages Act 1988*, nine Indigenous languages, in addition to English and French, are recognized as official and granted equal rights for their use in government institutions: Dëne Sųłı́né Yatı́é (Chipewyan), Tų́chų Yatı́é (Dogrib), Gwich’in, Sahtúqt’ı́ne Yatı́é (North Slavey) and Dene Zhatı́é (South Slavey), which belong to the Dene family; Inuvialuktun, Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut, which belong to the Inuktitut family; and Nēhiyawēwin, which belongs to the Cree (Angloquian) family. In NWT, there are also three institutions dedicated to the Indigenous languages: the Language Commissioner, the Official Languages Board and the Aboriginal Languages Revitalization Board.

In Yukon, the *Yukon Languages Act 2016* recognizes English and French as official languages and ‘the significance’ of Indigenous languages. It also states that the government “wishes to take appropriate measures to preserve, develop, and enhance those languages in the Yukon”. According to Article 3.1, “everyone has the right to use English,

French, or a Yukon Aboriginal language in any debates and other proceedings of the Legislative Assembly” (*Yukon Languages Act 2016*).

In Manitoba, the “Aboriginal languages of Cree, Dakota, Dene, Inuktitut, Michif, Ojibway and Oji-Cree are recognized as the Aboriginal languages spoken and used” in the province under the *Aboriginal Languages Recognition Act 2010*; however, they do not enjoy official status.

At the federal level, the *S-212 Act, An Act for the advancement of the aboriginal languages of Canada* was enacted in 2015 with the purpose of recognizing and respecting Indigenous language rights. In addition, the *Bill C-91, An Act Respecting Indigenous Languages*, was enacted on June 21, 2019. It sought to provide recognition, although not official status, to Indigenous languages. It was aimed to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action 13, 14 and 15 of the “Language and Culture” section:

“13. We call upon the federal government to acknowledge that Aboriginal rights include Aboriginal language rights.

14. We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:

- i. Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.
- ii. Aboriginal language rights are reinforced by the Treaties.
- iii. The federal government has a responsibility to provide sufficient funds for Aboriginal-language revitalization and preservation.
- iv. The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities.
- v. Funding for Aboriginal language initiatives must reflect the diversity of Aboriginal languages.

15. We call upon the federal government to appoint, in consultation with Aboriginal groups, an Aboriginal Languages Commissioner. The commissioner should help promote Aboriginal languages and report on the adequacy of federal funding of Aboriginal-languages initiatives” (TRC 2015b: 2).

Below is an extract of the summary of *Bill C-91, An Act Respecting Indigenous Languages*:

“This enactment provides, among other things, that

- (a) the Government of Canada recognizes that the rights of Indigenous peoples recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 include rights related to Indigenous languages;
- (b) the Minister of Canadian Heritage may enter into different types of agreements or arrangements in respect of Indigenous languages with Indigenous governments or other Indigenous governing bodies or Indigenous organizations, taking into account the unique circumstances and needs of Indigenous groups, communities and peoples; and
- (c) federal institutions may cause documents to be translated into an Indigenous language or provide interpretation services to facilitate the use of an Indigenous language.

The enactment also establishes the Office of the Commissioner of Indigenous Languages and sets out its composition. The Office’s mandate and powers, duties and functions include:

- (a) supporting the efforts of Indigenous peoples to reclaim, revitalize, maintain and strengthen Indigenous languages;
- (b) promoting public awareness of, among other things, the richness and diversity of Indigenous languages;
- (c) undertaking research or studies in respect of the provision of funding for the purposes of supporting Indigenous languages and in respect of the use of Indigenous languages in Canada;
- (d) providing services, including mediation or other culturally appropriate services, to facilitate the resolution of disputes; and
- (e) submitting to the Minister of Canadian Heritage an annual report on, among other things, the use and vitality of Indigenous languages in Canada and the adequacy of funding provided by the Government of Canada for initiatives related to Indigenous languages” .

During the time the bill was under its second reading in the House of the Commons, the First Nations-led provincial Crown Corporation named First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC), together with Indigenous leadership, institutions and communities, presented feedback to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage in February 2019.

According to FPCC, “this Act is a beginning” since “it provides good direction but it will require key revisions” (FPCC 2019: 2). Amendments suggested by FPCC were the following:

- a) *Indigenous peoples need to have control over Indigenous languages* – The preamble of the act states that “the Government of Canada recognizes that all relations with Indigenous peoples must be based on the recognition and implementation of their right to self-determination, including the inherent right of self-government”. However, in contradiction to that, the Act specifies that powers, duties and functions resulting from the Act will be carried by the Minister of the Commissioner. FPCC recommends “the establishment of a national Indigenous language organization governed by Indigenous experts and at arm’s length from the Department of Canadian Heritage⁴ and the Office of the Commissioner” (FPCC 2019: 2-3).
- b) *Adequate, sustainable and long-term funding needs to be secured* – According to Article 7 of the Act, long-term funding for the reclamation, revitalization, maintenance and strengthening of Indigenous languages is crucial. However, this article describes a non-specific consultation process that denies Indigenous self-determination and prevents effective and efficient distribution of funding. FPCC’s recommendation is that “the Minister must fund a national Indigenous language strategy”. The proposed organization could develop the strategy and funding framework. It is essential to switch from current proposal or project-based funding system to a language investment plan for every language based on long-term funding (FPCC 2019: 3).
- c) *Some omissions need to be clarified* – FPCC has identified three main issues that have been omitted on the Act. Firstly, no reference is made to Indigenous sign languages and those should also be explicitly recognized on the Act. Secondly, it should also be specified that Indigenous peoples have the right to the language even if they live away from their communities. More and more community members move to urban areas, and those children “often are especially deprived of opportunities to learn their ancestral languages” (Ignace 2015: 9). Indigenous peoples should also enjoy the same right whether or not they have *status* under the

⁴The Department of Canadian Heritage is the federal government body responsible for allocating funds for Indigenous language revitalization. See website: <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage.html>

1876 Indian Act or official community membership. Finally, ownership and intellectual property rights must be clearly specified, so Indigenous knowledge is properly protected and no non-Indigenous entity can hold or curate Indigenous knowledge (FPCC 2019: 4).

Unfortunately, no amendments were made before its enactment and FPCC continue working with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in Canada and the Department of Heritage to try to implement the bill in the best way possible.

The *Bill C-91* is an important step for language revitalization in Canada and it will help meet some Indigenous language rights and secure more funding for Indigenous language revitalization initiatives. Nevertheless, both federal and provincial governments will still need to continue developing policies and legislation to guarantee meaningful support to Indigenous communities in their efforts towards language revitalization.

In the next section, we will focus on the province of B.C. and the local First Nations language classification, level of language vitality and main reasons for their state of decline.

2.2 Status of the Indigenous languages in British Columbia

The province of British Columbia is unique for its language diversity (Shaw 2001: 45). Although only 5.3% of the total speakers of Indigenous languages in Canada are located in B.C., they represent the 60% of the total First Nations languages in Canada. This province is the home of 34 Indigenous languages, which can be classified in 7 language families: Salish, Dene or Na-Dené (Athabaskan-Eyak-Tlingit), Wakashan, Tsimshianic, Algonquian, *ᑭaad Kil / ᑭaaydaa Kil* (isolated language) and *Ktunaxa* (isolated language) (FPCC 2018a).

Below is a classification of languages families in B.C. (Shaw 2001: 54).⁵

APPENDIX B	
<i>Linguistic Diversity of First Nations Languages Within British Columbia</i> ¹³	
LANGUAGE FAMILY (8)	LANGUAGES: DIALECTS († INDICATES NO LONGER SPOKEN)
Salish (11)	Pentlatch † Straits: Sooke †, Songish †, Semiahmoo † Saanich, Samish (Lummi) Comox †; Sliammon, Klahoose, Homalco Klallam Squamish Sechelt nsilxcin (Okanagan-Colville) Shuswap NLa'kapmx (Thompson) St'at'imcets (Lillooet) Nuxalk (Bella Coola) Halkomelem, həŋqəmiŋəm, Hulqumiñum
Athabaskan (8)	Tsetsaut † Nicola † Tagish Tahltan Kaska Sekani Beaver Babine/Witsuwit'en Chilcotin Carrier
Wakashan (6)	Ditidaht Oowek'yala Xa'islak'ala, Xenaksialak'ala (Haisla) Heiltsuk Kwak'wala Nuu-chah-nulth (Nootka)
Tsimshian (3)	Southern Tsimshian Coast Tsimshian Nisga'a, Gitxan
Algonquian (1)	Cree
Ktunaxa (Kootenay)	[Language Isolate]
Haida	[Language Isolate]
Tlingit	[Language Isolate]

Figure 2.1 Linguistic diversity of Indigenous languages in B.C.

Next, I provided FPCC's map for the localization of the Indigenous languages in B.C. (FPCC 2018h: 67):⁶

⁵ Please note language names may have been modified. First People's Cultural Council has called on the Department of Canadian Heritage to facilitate a review of Indigenous languages, dialects and their names. For a list of current language names chosen by the communities, please see FPCC's website: http://maps.fphlcc.ca/language_index

⁶ For FPCC's interactive language distribution map, see website: <http://maps.fphlcc.ca/>



Figure 2.2 First Peoples' Language Map of B.C.

Each language in B.C. may differ on population size, oral and written language use, number of dialects, level of language documentation, cultures, histories, political organization, social and health conditions, and geographic location (Ball and McIvor 2015: 21); however, all of them are considered at risk and under a process of language shift⁷ and decline, just like the other Indigenous languages in Canada (Ignace 2015: 9).

The language vitality level is often determined by several variables such as the number of speakers and percentage within the total population, domains of language use, state of intergenerational language transmission, amount of materials available for

⁷ According to Fishman (1991), *language shift* is defined as “the process of one language replacing another in an increasing number of domains of use”; and *reversing language shift (RLS)* refers to “the efforts to reverse this process” (Pérez Baez et al. 2018: 466)

language education and literacy, governmental and institutional language attitudes and policies, and amount and quality of documentation (FPCC 2018h: 11).

Since the definition of *speaker* may vary to a considerable degree, FPCC differentiates the following types of the *speakers*⁸, based on Harrison (1997), Dorian (1977; 1980) and self-assessment by communities:

“*Fluent speakers* can speak and understand their language to the degree that they self-identify or are identified by fellow community members as having the ability to converse and understand the language with no use of English. Usually this means that the language is their *mother tongue*, meaning it was the first language they learned as a child”.

[...]

“*Semi-speakers* can speak and understand their language to the degree that they self-identify or are identified by fellow community members as *semi-speakers*. This definition allows for great variability, but generally a *semi-speaker* has less language ability than a *fluent speaker*. [...] The category of *semi-speaker* may also include those who discontinued using their First Nations language due to residential school experiences, urbanization, employment and other reasons, but still maintain some fluency in the language”.

[...]

“A *silent speaker* is someone who has a good understanding of a language but does not speak it. There are many different kinds of *silent speakers* including residential school survivors, people who grew up hearing but not speaking the language and people with internalized negative beliefs and values about their language that have been promoted by Western society. [...] Other terms for *silent speakers* include *latent speakers*, *passive speakers* and *receptive bilinguals*.

[...]

“A *learner* is anyone in the process of learning her or his First Nations language by participating in any type of language learning method, program or class”. According to FPCC, it is important to include this category because is an indication of the revitalization activity for that language. As they explain, “the percentage of learners is a separate category which may overlap with non-

⁸ I have used FPCC’s terminology and definitions on this dissertation.

speakers, semi-speakers or even fluent speakers who may still consider themselves learners. Therefore, in the data reported, the number of learners should be considered independently and not combined with any other category. A learner is anyone in the process of learning her or his First Nations language by participating in any type of language learning method, program or class (it does not have to be in a formal educational setting). The number of learners is important because it represents hope for the revitalization of the language. The number of learners demonstrates the level of interest, desire to learn and presence of language in the community. In many cases the learners of a language are children, which is the most encouraging sign for language revitalization.”

[...]

“*Non-speakers* are defined as having little to no knowledge of their language” (FPCC 2018h: 9–10).

It is important to notice that *fluent speakers* are usually Elders who were raised in the language. However, nowadays many younger community members, whose mother tongue is English, are learning their Indigenous language and becoming *fluent speakers* (FPCC 2018h: 9). *Semi-speakers* usually belong to middle-aged generations and are considered an important category for securing language revitalization, as well as the *silent speakers* since, even though they are not fully fluent, they may constitute a good language resource. According to FPHLCC (2014), the number of *fluent speakers* had declined to about 4 percent by 2014, but the number of *semi-speakers* had increased to 9.32 percent as result of the increasing language revitalization efforts. The number of *learners* is often the best indicator of the health and longevity of an endangered language (Barreña et al. 2007); “it demonstrates the level of interest, desire to learn and presence of language in the community” (FPCC 2018h: 10).

Below is a table with a list of Indigenous languages in B.C. regarding their language vitality based on the number of *fluent speakers* in 2018 (FPCC 2018a). Numbers from 2014 FPCC Language Needs Assessment (LNA)⁹ and 2016 Census numbers are also

⁹ A *Language Needs Assessment (LNA)* is an assessing system developed by FPCC to gather data on language knowledge and use in the communities. It provides a baseline on community demographics and resources. Communities have to complete an LNA online form as part of their application for FPCC grants and the results are used to develop the FPCC’s *Status of Languages Report*. That document is used to advocate for funding, plan programs and for educational purposes (retrieved from FPCC website on May 18, 2019).

included for comparison purposes. The census count of mother tongue speakers is included since this number may vary from the one of the fluent speakers: some people, whose mother tongue was English, may have become fluent as adults, and some people, whose the Indigenous language was their mother tongue, may not be fluent anymore (FPCC 2018a: 20). As we can see, the T̓silhqot̓in language is on the first place due to its highest number of fluent speakers.

TABLE 3: LANGUAGE-SPECIFIC MEASURES OF SPEAKERS

B.C. First Nations Language	Response Rate ^a	2011: Number of Fluent Speakers	2014: Number of Fluent Speakers	2016 Census: Mother Tongue Speakers
T̓silhqot̓in	7/7	765	864	780
Gitsan̓imx̓	6/6	523	350	1010
W̓ik̓suw̓it̓en / Nedut̓en	4/9	523	434	130
Dakelh	11/13	399	680	1200
Nl̓sq̓a	4/4	331	857	450
Secwepemct̓in	15/17	187	197	625
Dane-Zaa	4/6	160	156	180
Kwakwaka	10/15	139	165	425
N̓e̓ʔkepm̓x̓ct̓in	13/15	133	127	375
Nsyilx̓c̓an	7/7	132	194	330
Nun̓ca̓nt̓ol̓	12/13	108	134	345
S̓t̓at̓im̓c̓ets̓	11/11	98	137	360
Hul̓q̓um̓'num̓' / Hal̓q̓om̓t̓ylem̓ / h̓on̓t̓p̓em̓t̓am̓	33/42	93	263	585
X̓on̓aks̓ial̓ak̓ala / X̓a'is̓ak̓ala	1/1	89	242	145
T̓se'k̓hene	3/3	59	30	95
Dene K̓e	1/1	58	58	100
S̓nal̓gyax	6/6	58	106	230
N̓eh̓t̓yaw̓ew̓in (Cree)	4/4	51	54	190
É̓y̓y̓t̓j̓uuthem	3/4	47	36	85
T̓ah̓an	2/2	43	45	115
H̓á̓h̓baq̓v̓ja	2/2	39	60	120
K̓t̓un̓ax̓a	4/4	31	25	115
X̓aad̓ Kil / X̓a̓y̓daa Kil	2/2	19	9	125
Nux̓alk	1/1	11	17	No data
d̓it̓it̓id̓ʔa̓at̓x̓	3/3	7	7	No data
SEN̓C̓OP̓EN / Mal̓ch̓osen / Lek̓wungen / Sem̓ish̓moo / T̓'Sou̓-ke	7/10	7	7	110
O̓ow̓ek̓y̓ala / 'U̓it̓kala	1/1	6	6	No data
S̓e̓w̓x̓w̓t̓ym̓esh̓ sn̓ich̓im	1/1	6	7	55
D̓ane̓z̓ig̓e'	2/3	4	16	15
She̓ sh̓ash̓ish̓al̓hem	1/1	4	4	No data
L̓ing̓it̓	1/1	1	2	30
S̓g̓it̓it̓igs	1/1	1	0	No data
An̓ish̓naub̓em̓ow̓in	0/1	No data	No data	185
Southern T̓utch̓one	0/1	No data	No data	0

^a Response rate – number of communities reported to us out of the total number of First Nations communities where the language is spoken.

Figure 2.3 Number of speakers of Indigenous languages in B.C. (FPCC 2018h: 21)

Regarding the age range of the speakers, it is common in the B.C. languages that most of the *fluent speakers* are over 65 years and some between 45 and 65 years old together with the *semi-speakers*. Most of the *learners* are mostly under the age of 24 and some between 25 and 45. Below is a table providing percentages and number of fluent speakers and learners, according to the age ranges (FPCC 2018h: 19).

AGE GROUP	FLUENT SPEAKERS	LEARNERS
65+ years	2,146 (51.9%)	222 (1.6%)
45-64	1,591 (38.5%)	1,182 (8.4%)
25-44 years	278 (6.7%)	1,659 (11.9%)
0-24 years	117 (2.8%)	10,934 (78.1%)
TOTAL	4,132	13,997

Figure 2.4 Number of speakers by group age in 2018 in B.C.

Another important variable to determine the vitality of a language is the *language use*. According to FPCC (2018h: 9-11), “generally in B.C., First Nations languages are not used as the primary mode of communication or for natural daily communication”. The usage often refers to the use of the language in language revitalization efforts, like language learning programs in schools and preschools, where fluent speakers and semi-speakers work. The number of *language resources* available in a community is also useful to determine the vitality of the language, “whether they have recordings of their language”, “language curricula” or access to any type of archives for their language, such as FirstVoices¹⁰ (FPCC 2018h: 19).

In the next section, I will review some of the most important reasons for the status of the Indigenous languages in B.C. and the language shift situation they have experienced.

2.2.1 Reasons for the current situation of the Indigenous languages

Wars and power dynamics, the migration of the population and the changes in the technology have strongly affected the evolution of the world’s languages (Martí et al. 2005:19), but one of the most common reason of the death of a language is the imposed assimilation of another language. As Fishman (1996: 189) points out, “many languages are dead as far as certain beholders are concerned”, since they “represent cultures that are

¹⁰ According to FPCC (2018h: 19), FirstVoices is “a suite of web-based tools and services designed to support Indigenous people engaged in language archiving, language teaching and culture revitalization. The FirstVoices Language Archive contains thousands of text entries in many diverse writing systems, enhanced with sounds, pictures and videos. Some language archives at FirstVoices are publicly accessible, while others are password protected at the request of the language community. Of the 34 languages in B.C., 24 have a FirstVoices archive”.

problematic for their opponents”. When one group is colonized by another and forced to adopt its language (Crystal 1997), that is known by some authors as *linguistic genocide* (Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). In Romaine’s words: “languages of colonial conquest and dominant languages of nation-states penetrate into, transform and undermine, a minority community’s ability to maintain its language, culture and identity in various ways” (Romaine 2015: 33). Historically, that practice has been repeatedly used all around the world and it is usually supported by “language-in-education policies [...] motivated by an explicit or hidden curriculum of assimilation” (Ball 2011; Milloy 1999), where “the language of the state is the sole or main medium of instruction” and children are forced to drop their mother tongue in order to adopt the dominant language of communication.

Regarding the situation of the Indigenous languages in B.C., although each group’s experience may be slightly different, some commonalities may be found across the territory (Ball and McIvor 2013: 21). The number of speakers continues to decrease every year and most of those languages are in danger of disappearing due to historical events and current socio-economic factors caused by European contact in the early 1800s. The attempt of military, political, and economic subjugation of Indigenous peoples in Canada has been well documented (Battiste 2000: 193) and the decline of the Indigenous languages and the language shift phenomenon (where English becomes the dominant language and the Indigenous languages stops being passed on to future generations) is directly connected to this country’s history of colonization and oppression towards Indigenous peoples (FPCC 2018a).

According to authors like Duff (1951: 42) and Swansky (2012; 2013), the genocide caused by wars and epidemics, such as smallpox and other infectious diseases introduced deliberately by the settlers during the late 1700s and the 1860, brought traumatic population losses. The devastating decline in the number of people of all generations who communicated and transmitted stories in their languages provoked a dramatic reduction of the “wealth of knowledge about the social, moral and physical world encoded in those languages”, to the point that some of the languages in B.C., such as Nicola, Tsetsaut and Pentlatch, completely disappeared during that time (Ignace 2015: 10).

In addition, historical policies of assimilation carried out by the Canadian Government post-Confederation (1867), especially the residential school system, have definitely contributed to the current language situation. The boarding schools operated from 1870s to the 1990s and were part of a calculated policy of the Canadian state to “kill the Indian in the child” (RCAP 1996); cultural knowledge and traditions are passed on

through the language, so their purpose was to intentionally interrupt the intergenerational transmission of knowledge by blocking off the family channel (FPCC 2015: 45). Children were removed from their homes by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers and separated from their communities, Elders and families, “sometimes as young as six, for 10 months or even years at a stretch”, with a “penalty of incarceration for parents who did not comply” (Milloy 1999). In the schools, students suffered “physical punishment, shame and humiliation for the use of their First Nations languages” (Ignace 2015: 10); “their hair was cut short” (FPCC 2015: 45) and they were “taught to reject their *savage* ways” (RCAP 1996: 16) in order to “re-socialize them according to the norms of non-Aboriginal [non-Indigenous] society” (RCAP 1996: 32). They were constantly “neglected, beaten, sexually abused and many died of disease in these schools” (Forsyth 2010: 229).

Those terrible experiences plus the lack of “intimate contact with adults whom they could trust to make sense of their environment” (RCAP 1996: 16) had awful consequences in the children’s identity and self-esteem; that affected their lives when they came back to their home communities and later on while they were growing up, as the Canadian Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) explains:

“With the absence of this caring and nurturing environment, [children] lost their identity, their feeling of self-worth, their self-esteem, their place within their own society and their whole reason for being. Some children harboured great resentment towards their parents, grandparents and their whole community for subjecting them to the horrors of the residential schools and found they could trust no one, not even themselves, for self-betrayal was common in order to survive. They had to cheat, lie and steal to avoid punishment, get food to eat and obtain special favours, or avoid hard labour. Later when these children returned home, they were aliens. They did not speak their own language, so they could not communicate with anyone other than their own counterparts. Some looked down on their families because of their lack of English, their lifestyle, and some were just plain hostile. They had formed no bonds with their families, and some couldn’t survive without the regimentation they had become so accustomed to” (RCAP 1996: 32).

The level of language that residential school survivors present today depend most of the times on the age they were brought to the residential schools: “those who were sent

to school at a very young age (5-6 years old) had acquired their [...] language to a lesser degree than those who had been sent at age 10-11, by which time a child's language acquisition of grammar and the sound system is nearly complete" (Ignace 2015: 10). Although the use of residential schools started to slow down in the 1950s, the last ones were closed down in the 1990s, and they were followed by the *Indian* day schools, where abuses and mistreatment to students were also recorded. Although today many residential School as well as *Indian* day school survivors have been financially compensated by the Canadian Government, that can hardly repair the comprehensive damage caused in the individuals, families and communities.

B.C.'s public elementary, middle and high schools are the successors of those schools and they have always emphasized monolingual English language education (Ignace 2015: 10), offering First Nations languages only as elective courses. As Battiste (2000: 193) points out, "under the subtle influence of cognitive imperialism, modern educational theory and practice have in large part destroyed or distorted the ways of life, histories, identities, cultures, and languages" of the Indigenous peoples in B.C.; and still today, survivors of those schools live with the trauma from those years, being the main cause for current "overwhelming presence of social pathologies, child abuse, domestic assault, suicide, alcoholism, and general social decay in Indigenous communities" (Forsyth 2010: 229).

In June 2008, under the Canadian restorative justice model (Forsyth 2010: 230), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was founded with the goal of documenting the history and impacts in the students and their families of the residential school system, the *cultural genocide*, and what Ignace (2015: 10) considers *linguicide* or "the calculated silencing and stigmatizing of Aboriginal languages within and across generations". The TRC processes provides light to the "nature, causes and extent of the harms causes by the residential school system, including the context, factors, motives, and perspectives that led to and supported the system and the abuses that occurred within it" (Forsyth 2010: 230).

Another historical event that is considered an important factor on the language shift was the so-called *1960's scoop*, when "thousands of Indigenous children were removed from birth families and placed in non-Indigenous environments" (Sinclair 2007: 65), T̓silhqot'in among them, as we will see later in this work (cf. 5.2.6). In many cases, it was done with no knowledge or consent from their birth families and communities, in the

belief that the foster families would take a better care of their children, as Smillie-Adjarkwa explains:

“Many First Nations charged that in many cases, where consent was not given, government authorities and social workers acted under the racist assumption that Aboriginal [Indigenous] people were culturally inferior and unable to adequately provide for the needs of the children. This situation was due to the wide held belief among those of European descents that their beliefs and values were right and therefore superior to those of Aboriginal [Indigenous] peoples” (Smillie-Adjarkwa 2009: 3).

According to RCAP (1996), 11,132 children were adopted between the years of 1960 and 1990, but communities believe the number could have been even higher. This policy had terrible consequences on the cultural identity of the children who grew up confused without being able to identify with the Euro-Canadian middle-class society that they were placed and forced to fit in. Many of them, as well as parents whose children were taken away, turned into alcohol and substance abuse to ease their pain (Smillie-Adjarkwa 2009: 3). Shame, self-rejection and anger caused by colonial practices was also internalized and reflected in attitudes during their lives, as we can see in this heart-breaking testimony:

“When you are talking about oppression, there is a process that goes on. [First] there is a process that demeans us, that belittles us and makes us believe that we are not worthy, and the oppressed begin to develop what they call cultural self-shame and cultural self-hate, which results in a lot of frustration and a lot of anger. At the same time this is going on, because our ways are put down as Native people, because our cultural values and things are put down, we begin to adopt our oppressors’ values and, in a way, we become oppressors ourselves... Because of the resulting self-hate and self-shame, we begin to start hurting our own people. When you talk about things like addiction and family abuse, Elder abuse, sexual abuse, jealousy, gossip, suicide and all the different forms of abuses we seem to be experiencing, it’s all based on [the original] violence. It’s all a form of [internalized] violence... [Churches and governments] made us” (Royal Commission of Aboriginal Peoples 1996: 55).

Cases of family dysfunction present today in the communities are a legacy or reflection of past disrupted relationships. The neglect that those children experienced, not also affected their language and cultural knowledge, but also hindered the development of emotional relationships with their family members, which afterwards became translated into lack of parenting skills and the inability to emotionally relate to their own children:

“Not being brought up in a loving, caring, sharing, nurturing environment, they did not have these skills as they are not inbred but learned through observation, participation and interaction” (RCAP 1996: 33).

To all that, we could also add other factors like the current social, industrial and cultural pressures from the English-speaking society, the exclusion of the Indigenous languages from the government, commerce, industry, art, education and the media as well as the population movements. Over 60% of Indigenous children are growing up in urban and periurban settings (Ball and McIvor 2013: 21-22), separated from their communities and relatives who still speak the language. In addition, Elders are often scattered in old age homes, hospitals and other centres, geographically dispersed and in many cases without direct contact with their kin (Fishman 1996: 187).

Nevertheless, communities are aware of the reasons for the language situation and they understand the importance of maintaining their languages and cultures. In the next section, we will discuss some of the main reasons for protecting Indigenous languages.

2.3 Why is it important to protect Indigenous languages?

Many authors have studied the language loss and the importance of the revitalization of the endangered languages (Fishman 1999; Reyhner 1999a, 1999b; Nettle and Romaine 2000; Fishman 2001). Languages are not a mere tool for communication. Language provides us with a unique worldview. It shapes the way we think, how we perceive the world around us and how we interact with other people (Ignace 2015: 6). Our language is also shaped by us to make sense of life and it serves as “repository for cultural knowledge, efficiently packed and readily transmittable across generations” (Harrison 2007a: 7). It is intrinsically tied to a people’s history and culture and formed by the “accumulated wisdom and observations of generations of people about the natural world,

plants, animals, weather, soil, and so on” (Harrison 2007a: 17). Language diversity is therefore important since each language provides an insight into the different ways that humans think and understand the world (FPCC 2018a), which makes all of them worth of conservation.

Indigenous languages present unique “ways of organizing the social and natural world, based on the ancient, cumulative human experience of First Peoples” that cannot be replaced (Ignace 2015: 6). As Battiste (2000) explains, Indigenous languages are especially embedded with meanings that are hard to explain without the language:

“[They] convey culturally based ways of interpreting the world and experiences within it, and it is impossible to translate the deep meanings of words and concepts into the languages of other cultures” (Ball and McIvor 2013: 23).

Language also helps a person see their existence as distinct cultural entity (Romaine 2015: 32). Language is who we are and it tell us how to live in this world (FPCC 2018g). It forms an inseparable bond with culture and identity (FPCC 2018a), as explained by this Indigenous speaker:

“You’re really no one... You can’t claim a title to yourself, if you do not have your language, and some practices of your culture, and spiritual goings on” (Shaw 2001: 42).

Knowing one’s Indigenous language is also likely to affect the level of self-determination and the ability to claim ownership of their past and future, as Oster et al. (2014) discusses. “Being a self-sufficient Nation”, stems from cultural and linguistic continuity; therefore, First Nations that have maintained the language are more empowered to take charge on the leadership and management of their communities (Oster et al. 2014: 1).

Indigenous languages help speakers understand their relations to “their families, their communities and to Creation itself” (Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures. 2005: 5) and are also the vehicle to transmit all that cultural baggage across generations. When children learn their language at a young age, they are consolidating their cultural identity and their connection to their land, traditional knowledge, Elders and communities (Battiste 2000).

Language is also connected with the well-being of the Indigenous peoples, to their mental, physical and emotional health (FPCC 2018a: 1). It provides healing and empowers a people's identity, spirituality and beliefs (FPCC 2018g). There is recent research about the relation between language and health: Christian et al. (2018) explored the proportional relation between higher levels of cultural connectedness and higher scores of resilience, or the ability to remain strong, in the face of certain illnesses; Lalonde (2005) studied how language knowledge can play a key role in lowering First Nations youth suicide rates; and Oster et al. (2014) found connections between language and lower rates of diabetes in some communities in Alberta, Canada. As we can read on the work of the latter, "those First Nations that appeared to have more cultural continuity (measured by traditional Indigenous language knowledge) had significantly lower diabetes prevalence after adjustment for socio-economic factors" (Oster et al. 2014: 1).

In addition to the health-related benefits, knowing their own Indigenous language has also proved to lead to academic success. There is recent research done on Indigenous language immersion programs and how language positively affects students' learning: the Nawahi Immersion School in Hawaii has shown "100% high school graduation rate and an 80% college attendance rate since its first senior class graduated in 1999" (Wilson & Kamana 2006; Wilson 2012) and Mi'kmaq language immersion students reached a greater academic success than students from the English program (Tompkins and Orr 2011).

However, it is still a common concern for parents that the "child exposed to more than one language during early, developmental phases might be confused linguistically, cognitively, emotionally, and possibly even morally" (Meisel 2004: 91). According to Ignace (2015: 5), that perception is probably based on results of misguided studies developed in the early twentieth century "combined with the Canadian government's intent to assimilate Aboriginal [Indigenous] children away from their languages and cultures, led to educators telling Aboriginal [Indigenous] parents that their children would be kept back if they were raised in their Aboriginal [Indigenous] language". However, according to Meisel (2004: 95) "although some research has reported that bilinguals tend to begin to speak late, around 2 years old, "the observed delays are well within the range of what counts as normal rate of language development for monolingual children". Another common worry of parents and educators is the fact that "bilinguals might encounter difficulties, at least initially, in separating the lexicons and the grammatical systems of the languages which they are learning is that their language use normally

exhibits a certain amount of mixing”; however, research conducted from mid 1900s on, proved positive impacts of bilingualism; in most of the cases, “bilingual children have more highly developed language skills” and “show an improvement in memory and problem solving”, according to FPCC (2018h); also, as Meisel (2004: 96) explains, research done in the 1970s “agreed that children growing up with more than one language eventually succeed in separating their languages without much effort or specific pedagogical support”; and likewise, more recent research on code switching (Köppe and Meisel 1995) shows that children acquire the necessary knowledge very early, by the age of two, and they are able to choose what language to use according to the addressee. Ignace (2015: 5-6) also points out some benefits of bilingualism (including Indigenous languages) in the cognitive development and abilities found by Bialystok et al. (1991; 2004): bilingual children develop “metalinguistic awareness earlier and to a higher degree”; they present a better reading ability and “develop advantages in executive functions of the brain, such as problem, solving, mental flexibility, attention control, inhibitory control, task switching” (Ignace 2015:6).

To finish, knowing and being able to speak our language and passing onto to the future generations is a human right, as retaining their own names for their communities and languages (Martí et al. 2005: 32), as it can be read on the United Nations’ Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Article 13.1 states the following:

“Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons” (UN 2008: 7).

Having culturally appropriate education in their own language inside and outside the communities is also a right to Indigenous peoples, according to the Article 14:

“1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

[...]

3. States shall, in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for Indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside

their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language” (UN 2008: 7).

And the same way, Indigenous peoples have the right to create their own media in their language, according to Article 16.1:

“Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages and to have access to all forms of non-Indigenous media without discrimination” (UN 2008: 7).

The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Linguistic Rights also supports the linguistic rights of communities, especially of endangered and Indigenous languages, and establishes the following (FPCC 2013: 85):

Article 7.2: “All languages are collectively constituted and are made available within a community for individual use as tools of cohesion, identification, communication and creative expression”.

[...]

Article 8.1: “All language communities have the right to organize and manage their own resources so as to ensure the use of their language in all functions within society”

[...]

Article 9: “All language communities have the right to codify, standardize, preserve, develop and pro-mote their linguistic system, without induced or forced interference” (UNESCO 1998: 6).

To finish, conserving the world’ languages shouldn’t be considered beneficial just for the individuals but for the global population. According to UNESCO (2003: 6), the links and parallels between linguistic diversity and biodiversity are being explored as well as the consequence of the loss of biodiversity at all levels (Haugen 1972; Maffi 2001; Harrison 2007a;). That connection suggests “diversity of life is made up of diversity in nature, culture and language” (UNESCO 2003: 6); that is called *biocultural diversity* by Maffi (2001), and Krauss also introduces the term *logosphaera* for describing the web linking the world’s languages, making an analogy to *biosphere* or the web linking the world’s ecosystems (Miyaoka 2007: 16). Therefore, “conservation biology needs to be supplemented by conservation linguistics”. Indigenous peoples have “accumulated rich

ecological knowledge in their long history of living in their environment” (UNESCO 2003: 6), and their languages are connected to the land, its traditional uses and sustainable lifestyles. Protecting the languages will also help protect the land, since the traditional and sustainable lifestyle would be encouraged when speaking the language (FPCC 2018g), as Ignace (2015: 12) points out:

“Preserving Indigenous languages means preserving the valuable local ecological knowledge encoded in them, which in combination with traditional resource stewardship practices can contribute greatly to the sustainable management of lands and resources” (Ignace 2015: 12).

Indigenous communities in B.C. are aware of the above mentioned and see the need of protecting and using the own languages; therefore, they are currently focusing their efforts on maintaining their languages alive to be able to pass them onto the future generations, as we will see in the next section.

2.4 First Nations language revitalization efforts in British Columbia

Preserving and reviving languages is “one more piece of the larger struggle for social justice by Indigenous peoples in Canada as they seek to reclaim their ways of life that were taken away” (FPCC 2018h: 27). Although language revitalization is considered a priority in many of indigenous communities, efforts often need to focus on other aspects. Communities in B.C. are still fighting for their right to live on and manage their traditional lands (Romaine 2002); human basic needs such as dignified housing, potable water availability and even access to food sources are not met in many cases; and communities are still going through processes of healing for trauma and consequences from past experiences.

Cultural resilience is embedded in the languages, so language maintenance is essential to the survival of the peoples (Ignace 2015: 14). According to Romaine (2015: 32), the language is not an easier cultural identity marker to recover, so strong efforts are needed to revive the languages. By reclaiming them, Indigenous peoples would retrieve not only their culture but the connection to themselves and to the land. Their ancestors’ knowledge is kept in the language, so, when that language is brought back, their traditional healthy lifestyles and ways of understanding the land are likely to come back too (FPCC 2018g). There is also a strong connection between language revitalization and

Indigenous peoples' spirituality, health and well-being (Romaine 2015: 38). Reviving the language brings healing to the feelings of grief, despair and resentment that communities still live in today “from a history of cultural and linguistic repression and loss” (Flores Farfán 2014: 9; FPCC 2018g); as Indigenous Elder late Eileen MacLean stated at a gathering of bilingual educators: “[communities] do not need more linguists – rather what [they] need is good psychiatrists” (McIvor 2009: 6-7).

Indigenous peoples in B.C. are aware of the importance of preserving their languages and since the last decades, Indigenous leadership, language experts, Elders, youth, community members and advocates have joined efforts to fight for this common goal and seek for government and institutional support to change and create language policies at both provincial and federal levels. First Nation leaders, like Perry Bellegard, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, and scholars, like Onowa McIvor, have publicly claimed the official status of the Indigenous languages in B.C. for many years, but no change has been made yet. As it was mentioned before (cf. 2.1), at this time only English and French are declared official languages of this province and First Nation languages are relegated to a status beneath the two colonial languages.

As we can read in Ball and McIvor (2013: 27), “in the 1970s, Indigenous organizations became increasingly vocal about their rights to raise and educate their own children and to practice their own cultures, languages, and forms of government, which included a growing sovereignty movement”. They believed the education system had to be involved in any language revitalization strategy and in 1972 the National Indian Brotherhood reclaimed self-determined education to First Nations by publishing their document *Indian Control of Indian Education* (NIB/AFN 1972). Today, First Nation languages still lack proper representation in the B.C.'s education system, and English is still the main language in the public schools, except for the French immersion programs. Although some efforts have been done towards recognizing Indigenous languages and cultures in the school system, better educational policies and institutional support as well as financial investment towards Indigenous language immersion programs are still needed (FPCC 2014b: 12).

All B.C. languages, including Indigenous languages as well as English and French, are “regulated through the B.C. *School Act* through the Ministry's Language Education Policy, developed in 1997” (Ignace 2015: 54). As that act states, “all students, especially those of Aboriginal [Indigenous] ancestry, should have opportunities to learn an Aboriginal [Indigenous] language” and all students “must take a second language as part

of the curriculum in Grades 5 to 8” (Ignace 2015: 54). Many school districts provide language education right to grade 12, which means that students can take those courses “for academic credit towards graduation and meet second language requirements established by universities” (Ignace 2015: 54). However, most of the programs treat the First Nations languages “similar to the way second or foreign languages are taught as a subject” (FPCC 2014b: 12) for a short period of time, with an average of 45 minutes a day, four days a week. The main goal of the programs is often to create awareness but few are focused on producing fluent speakers. Indigenous languages are not considered part of “core” subjects (i.e. math, language arts, science and social studies) for which enough allotted time is secured and relevant curriculum materials are available (Ignace 2015: 16). Independent Schools (meaning the ones that are outside the public-school system) have more flexibility regarding curriculum and time dedicated to language learning but still follow provincial curriculum guidelines as set out in the B.C. *School Act* and Ministry of Education policies. First Nations schools not accredited as Independent Schools have greater flexibility in offering programs outside of the norms of policy and legislation, like language immersion or partial immersion programs (Ignace 2015: 21)

According to Dunlop et al. (2018: 16), since 2014 there are three B.C. band schools that provide language immersion programs recognized by the B.C. Ministry of Education: the Xit’olacw Community School¹¹ in St’at’imc territory (Mount Currie, B.C.), which offers immersion in the Ucwalmicwts language from pre-school to Grade 2; T’selcéwtqen Clleq’mel’ten (Chief Atahm School), in Secwepemc territory (Chase, B.C), which currently offers Secwepemctśín language immersion programs from 6 months old and K–4 and a 5–7 bilingual program¹²; and the WŚÁNEĆ School Board, in WŚÁNEĆ territory (Brentwood Bay, B.C.), which currently offers SENĆOŦEN language immersion preschool and K–4 immersion programs at the LE,NOŦET SCUL,ÁUTW Survival School near Victoria¹³.

However, as Fishman (1996: 194) explains, “institutions, although important, should be on tap and not on top of a language”. According to this author, two paths can be taken for language revitalization: *institutionalization*, where efforts are focused on the institutions and primarily on the schooling system; or *vernacularization*, where efforts

¹¹ For further information, see Xit’olacw Community School website:

<http://www.lilwat.ca/community/education/xitolacw-community-school.cfm>

¹² For further information, see T’selcéwtqen Clleq’mel’ten or Chief Atahm School website:

<http://www.chiefatahm.com/>

¹³ For further information, see WŚÁNEĆ School Board website: <https://wsanecschoolboard.ca/>

are made towards recovering intergenerational transmission in the families (Fishman 1996: 193). Nevertheless, as he explains, if we want to secure language survival, the *vernacularization* strategy needs to be promoted:

“Vernaculars are inter-generational on informal, spontaneous bases, outside any formal institutionalized bases. Vernaculars are acquired in infancy. They are handed on that way in intimacy and in infancy. Schools teach and students learn, but schools are programmed and not generally intergenerational institutions, [...] and mother tongues are intergenerational and not programmed” (Fishman 1996: 192-193).

In any case, *vernacularization* also requires societal change. Informal relationships already established in the dominant language need to switch to the Indigenous language again. Efforts need to come from the parents to change the family language dynamics and for that, they need support from the society (Fishman 1996:193). Children also need places to use the language acquired at home until they become parents: “re-vernacularization requires changes in established informal conventions and their reinforcement from various directions, from status-gain, from friendship-gain, from affection-gain” (Fishman 1996: 193).

Securing the language in the family is the only way to guarantee language survival (Aguilera and LeCompe 2007: 13; FPCC 2018f), but there are challenges communities may face during this process.

2.4.1 Challenges for First Nations language revitalization B.C.

B.C. First Nations communities understand the key role of the family transmission of the language and culture, and that “the health of a language depends on it being passed on naturally to children in the home” (FPCC 2018h: 1). Due to the residential school system, this natural process was interrupted and now it represents one of the biggest challenges for the B.C. communities; therefore, many of the current language programs are often focused on promoting the language use at home. Hinton (2013) published the resource *Bringing Our Languages Home*, where she provides testimonies of families working on language revitalization in the homes and teaching the language to their children despite not being fully fluent themselves. It also includes a *How-to Guide* on language teaching for parents (FPCC 2018h).

Other challenges that communities may find for language revitalization are the low number of speakers for some languages, the scarcity of settings and situations where the language can be spoken, the reduced offer of intensive language training opportunities for advanced levels, the shortage on funding, the lack of time due to work and personal obligations, the high level of difficulty of the languages and insufficiency of learning resources specifically developed for First Nations languages (Ignace 2015: 22; FPCC 2018a).

The presence of dialects and the discussions emerging around them is often a major pedagogical challenge too (FPCC 2018b). Speakers are protective of their dialects because they link them to their families and the land (FPCC 2018a). Communities often do not have resources to produce their own materials so teachers use materials created by other communities, who speak a different dialect, although they share the same language. However, dialects are intimately tied to a person's identity and teaching in a dialect that is not theirs creates a conflict with their own identity (Shaw 2001: 51).

Writing systems may also trigger disagreements. Sometimes languages present more than one writing system, which can difficult some of the revitalization tasks, such as the teaching of the language and the development and sharing of language materials between communities. The creation of new words or expressions to adequate the language to the twenty-first century life may also be a cause of disagreement. Some community members might be more conservative in terms of how language should evolve and different opinions may arise. Even if they come to an agreement, communities still need to reach a consensus on who will create the new words and how they will be developed, either, for example, by using word parts that already exist in the language, reviving old words from Elders' memories or early records, creating description words or using borrowings from other languages (FPCC 2018d).

Developing language teaching strategies and curriculum may also constitute a challenge. First Nations languages in B.C. have an extensive oral tradition and often current teaching strategies do not work well with the way language and culture have been passed on for hundreds of years. Methods are Western-based and often focused on developing writing and reading skills, and speakers do not feel comfortable teaching the language that way. However, younger learners, who have received Western schooling, may prefer to be able to read and write the language to understand it, as Talhtan UNBC Master's student and language revitalization community champion *Hotseta* Oscar Dennis commented on one of the workshops at the KEE Conference (Prince George, B.C.,

October 14-16, 2016)¹⁴. Besides, learners' personal abilities and aptitudes or motivation towards language learning may also challenge the level of success.

Developing policies and planning for language revitalization purposes may help address some of those arising challenges. In the next section, I will provide an overview of current language policy and planning strategies for B.C. First Nation languages.

2.4.2 Indigenous language policies and planning in B.C.

As I have discussed earlier (cf. 2.2), there is no legislation at the moment that recognizes Indigenous languages as official in B.C.; however, the Government of this province has developed some policies and programs to support local First Nation language revitalization. In 1990, the B.C. First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC)¹⁵ was created to administer the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Program. As specified on Section 6 of *First Peoples Heritage, Language and Culture Act* (Chapter 147), passed in 1996 as part of its First Peoples' Heritage Initiative, the main purposes of this First Nations-led provincial Crown corporation are:

- “(a) to provide support to any of the following that are associated with First Nations heritage, language, culture or arts: (i) organizations; (ii) programs; (iii) cultural centres;
- (b) to receive, manage and distribute funds and property of every nature and kind from any source for the establishment, operation and maintenance of the corporation and to further the purposes of the corporation;
- (c) to support and advise ministries of government on initiatives, programs and services related to First Nations heritage, language, culture and arts;
- (d) to advise the government on the preservation and fostering of First Nations languages, arts and other aspects of cultural development of First Nations peoples throughout British Columbia;
- (e) to consider all matters brought to its attention by the government and, if requested by the government, to report its findings to the government”.

¹⁴ The *KEE Conference – Knowledge Exchange and Exploration: A Gathering for Aboriginal and Academic Communities* was held on October 14-16, 2014 at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC).

¹⁵ For further information, see FPCC's website: <http://www.fpcc.ca/about-us/>

Since its creation, FPCC has allocated over \$45 million for British Columbia's Indigenous language revitalization programs and resources. In 2018, they experienced a significant increase of funding for communities, since the provincial government allocated \$50 million from their budget to language revitalization. That allowed FPCC to provide more grants, multiyear and of a higher value, create two new positions and organize more workshops that could reach four times more people than in 2017.

Under its advisory role, FPCC has also called on the Department of Canadian Heritage to facilitate an Indigenous peoples-led process to review the languages, dialects and their names. That would finally give the opportunity to the peoples to name themselves, instead of using labels assigned by outsiders, as it still happens today on most of the lists, maps, road signs and official documents (FPCC 2018a: 1). Also, the 'one-size-fits-all' approach to language maintenance and revitalization should change and diversity in Indigenous languages and cultures should be acknowledged in the processes. In addition, Indigenous peoples should be supported to become leaders on the revitalization efforts and identifying the status of their languages by having control of the emerging data (FPCC 2018a: 1). As of today, there are no language policies or planning strategies common to all B.C. First Nation Languages. Every language community, and sometimes even communities that share the same language, are developing their own plans and strategies based on their needs and priorities towards language revitalization.

FPCC provides funding and advice to community language immersion programs and documentation initiatives. This corporation also supports Language Revitalization Planning Programs, which allow communities to develop comprehensive and strategic language plans and language policies. This is the definition and some of the benefits of developing a plan as provided by FPCC (2018h: 27):

“A language revitalization plan is a long-range document that outlines a community's vision for its language and the actions needed to achieve that vision. It considers all domains of language use and all demographics within a community or nation and lays out the strategic actions necessary to reach its language goals. Language plans guide the efforts of the community or nation to ensure that the available funding achieves the desired outcomes. A plan allows for language projects to be sequenced appropriately so that they each build on previous successes. It unites the community around a shared vision and can be useful for generating buy-in and support from both leadership and the community at large. Moreover, a strategic language plan is useful for generating an accurate cost for language revitalization, which is essential

information both for the community and for funders. It provides clear information to government and funders about the needs for resources and support, and it positions the community as the expert and leader of its own language revitalization work” (FPCC 2018h: 27).

FPCC’s main resource for that program is the document titled *A Guide to Language Policy and Planning for B.C. First Nations Communities*, which is “intended to support First Nations communities, governments, schools and language authorities across British Columbia in the implementation of language policies and programs that lead to effective and successful long-term language revitalization” (FPCC 2013: 11). It was developed based on needs, goals and capacity of the communities and the topics discussed in this guide are the following: concepts of language planning and policy, community language planning by using eight steps to language revitalization, policies for education and documentation, and policies for First Nations governments.

FPCC (2013) understands *language planning* as an essential step on language revitalization. This process becomes effective when the language community is included throughout it and when it is focused on the speakers and the intergenerational transmission of the language. Language revitalization is a shared responsibility and governments, educational institutions, as well as individuals need to take their own responsibility and fill their role in the process to make it successful collaboratively (FPCC 2018a). Ball and McIvor (2013) present an *Ecologically Comprehensive Strategy* where the families are situated “as the core – or heart – of language-mediated relationships between caregivers and young children”. The figure below represents “interdependent ecological systems in which Indigenous young children and their families are nested” and how supportive interventions could be applied to the different contexts to enhance language acquisition (Ball and McIvor 2013: 30).

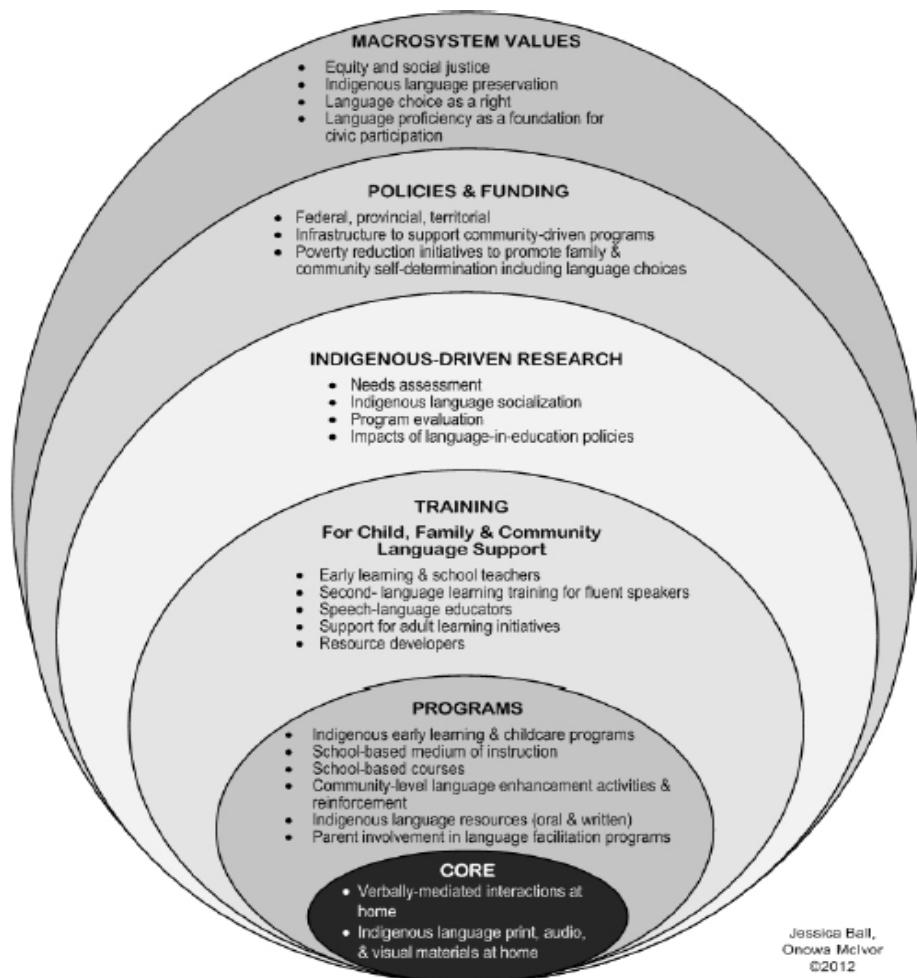


Figure 2.5 Systems of support for Indigenous language acquisition and maintenance

As FPCC (2013) explains, community language policy is usually a part of the language plan, supports the language revitalization activities and creates a framework for the use of the language in the community. Schools, health centres, households and business can also create their own language policies complementing the community language policy (FPCC 2013: 12). Communities often have a Language Authority or also called Language Committee, Society or Council. This group is “responsible for the overall language policy and language revitalization plan for one or more communities [that speak the same language]” (FPCC 2013: 12) and is usually formed by Elders, leadership, language experts, languages teachers, and community members. A Terms of Reference is often developed to outline responsibilities and expectations for members of the group.

To support the planning process, FPCC (2013: 23) provides a framework called *8 Steps to Community Language Revitalization: Keeping it Alive* as a road map to achieve language revitalization in the communities. Speakers are placed at the centre of the

process and the process is understood as a cycle where the steps need to be repeated many times. It is also flexible to community needs and some of the steps may vary in order. The main steps recommended by FPCC for achieving language revitalization in the community are the following.

Step 1: Determine the status of the language. The first step is to assess where the community is at, how many speakers and learners exist and how many resources are available inside and outside the community (i.e. university, museums, archives). Creating a starting point will help to set the priorities, goals and potential strategies for language revitalization in the community.

Step 2: Community mobilization and support. Grassroots community support is important for language revitalization; both leadership and as many community members as possible should be involved in the process.

Step 3: Research. It is helpful to find out what kind of language revitalization efforts have been made for that specific language, so that actions are not repeated and lessons can be learned from past experiences. It can be interesting as well to become familiar with other revitalization experiences of languages in B.C. or other parts of the world, so they can be used as reference or for gathering ideas. Also, consulting literature on best practices for language revitalization and communicating with other communities will provide useful knowledge for the process.

Step 4: Set language goals. Overall or short-term goals need to be established. Either big or small, they should reflect the ideal situation for the language in the community and respond to community priorities and needs.

Step 5: Planning. The next step is developing a language plan that is unique for the language community and based on the identified priorities. It should reflect community goals, strategies to meet those goals, plan actions (specific projects) to support those strategies and main participants and roles. Examples of what projects may cover are the following: language immersion program, training, documentation, curriculum and resource development or language promotion.

Step 6: Implement language projects. Once the plan is designed, it is time to implement the projects by involving the whole community with the aim of reviving the language. For that, ongoing funding needs to be secured; grant applications need to be submitted in order to support initiatives and keep the momentum going in the community.

Step 7: Use the language more. At this stage, language needs to be incorporated in the community life and members need to be encouraged to use it at school, health centre, administration office, social gatherings and events, ceremonies, in the media, street and road signs, etc. Language policies may be developed to support the use of the language.

Step 8: Keep the language alive. Bringing the language back to the community is an ongoing process. The language plan needs to be reviewed regularly, and the status of the language reassessed. Community needs and priorities may shift over time; therefore, goals, strategies and specific actions may need to be adapted too.

FPCC (2013) also provides guidelines for developing language policies for First Nations language education in B.C. According to FPCC (2013: 57; FPCC 2018e), the best practice for First Nations language teaching is language immersion: under this approach, the time of exposure of the student to language use is maximized; context and communication become essential; and language gets to be the means of education rather than the object of the teaching (De Korne 2010: 118). It is a simulation of how we learn our mother tongue as children. Our parents do not sit with us and teach us words about different topics; we learn language through context, connecting the action and what is happening around us with the language that is being said. Grammar is learned intuitively and sentences are created as they are ‘correct’ or acceptable to other speakers (Ignace 2015: 27). Certain languages, as Rice argues for the polysynthetic languages such as Tsilhqot’in and other Dene (Athabaskan) languages (Fortescue et al. 2017: 8), are not learned “as complex systems of rules, but rather by exemplars experienced in specific contexts”; although “speakers can expand the language by analogy later”. According to this author these languages should be studied at the phraseology level. That approach could also be helpful for the production of pedagogical materials aimed at maintaining these languages (Fortescue et al. 2017).

According to Reyhner (2003: 4), in language immersion, “comprehension precedes production”; the student goes over the ‘silent period’ first, and with the help of the teachers’ gestures, visuals and real objects the students starts to understand the language; then, they start producing single words, a few words, phrases and, finally, full sentences. This author believes activities should be based on topics of interest to the students; and developing conversation skills must be the main goal, with the help of activity-centered lessons, instead of grammar-centered.

Ignace (2015: 27-30) agrees on the idea that the language should not be taught as a subject, but she also believes that some degree of conscious awareness of grammar may be useful for ensuring grammatically accurate speech. She thinks that “it should not involve learning rules, but [...] interactive games and varied activities in oral and written form [instead]”. Regarding the teaching of language phonology, children that begin to learn the language at a young age acquire good pronunciation, accent and sentence melody, if exposed to the language for an adequate amount of time; however, adult learners might benefit from specific work on the sound system or difficult or different sounds.

One of the most successful language immersion initiatives supported by FPCC for Indigenous languages in B.C. is the Language Nest Program (McIvor 2006; Parker et al. 2014). There are currently 20 language nests in this province. These programs are modeled by the Māori *Te Kōhanga Reo*¹⁶ and Hawaiian *Aha Pūnana Leo*¹⁷ (cf. 7.2), and provide a language and cultural immersion environment for early-aged and their families. “Early learning sets children on a path of strong cultural connection” (FPCC 2018g) and a faster language learning process. According to Archibald et al. (2006), learning patterns are different when acquiring a language at the age of 5 or the age of 15 or later. Language learning experiences can still be successful later on in older ages but brain processes are different and although good fluency can certainly be gained, it can be difficult to acquire “a near-native pronunciation or accent” (Ignace 2015: 31)

FPCC also encourages communities to develop full (100% of the time in the language) or partial (50% of the time in the language) language immersion programs at the schools, while being aware of the challenges that may arise: lack of fluent speakers and teaching capacity, shortage of financial resources, strict school administration requirements, and cautious attitudes of community members towards language immersion. As I explained before (cf. 2.4), today there are only three schools in B.C. that offer immersion programs in Indigenous languages; however, there is growing interest in that language teaching approach, as communities realize it is the best practice for language learning in order to be successful at creating fluent speakers. Regarding adult language immersion programs, FPCC has supported the Master-Apprentice approach since 2007 for building up language fluency in adult community members (FPCC 2006;

¹⁶ For further information on the Māori *Te Kōhanga Reo* program, see the website: <https://www.kohanga.ac.nz/>

¹⁷ For more information on the Hawaiian *Aha Pūnana Leo*, see the website: <http://www.ahapunanaleo.org/>

2012). It is based on one-on-one language immersion sessions where a mentor and an apprentice work together. Culture is also an essential part of the program and apprentice learns the language while “doing” activities in the home and on the land. The program aims to train apprentices in the hopes that they become leaders on language revitalization in their communities. The Silent Speaker Program is another initiative aimed to semi-speakers who understand the language but do not speak it due to different reasons. The program provides them with the confidence to develop their language skills and start using the language (FPCC 2018g). Some communities also offer language immersion classes for adults where students develop their conversational and writing skills.

In addition to language immersion programs, there are also other programs where the language is taught as a subject, together with math, science, arts, etc. This is the most common approach for public school language programs. Curriculum is based on “thematic units to traditional seasonal rounds and subsistence activities” (Ignace 2015: 35) and programs offered in elementary grades often focus on oral skills development and in higher grades students also work on their writing and reading skills. Sometimes programs have “cross-curricular connections” to other subjects like social studies or science and students learn the language related to the topics that are being covered in other courses (Ignace 2015: 35).

Language teaching methods used in B.C. for Indigenous languages may vary depending on the teacher. These are the most common ones used in the classrooms:

- The *Accelerated Second Language Acquisition Method* by Dr. Stephen Neyooxet Greymorning. It was developed for teaching Arapaho, a language spoken in Wyoming, Colorado, and Oklahoma (Greymorning 1997). This method focuses on developing learner’s ability to produce simple sentences of two or three words.
- The *Where Are Your Keys*¹⁸ method developed by Evan Gardner. It is an interactive game-based technique that uses gestures and sign language for allowing communication in the language that is being learned.
- The *Berlitz Method*¹⁹. This approach focuses on a question/answer technique where students learn the language while interacting with the teacher and other students by asking and answering questions (Ignace 2015: 44).

¹⁸ For further information on the *Where are your keys?* method, see the website: <https://whereareyourkeys.org/>

¹⁹ For further information on the *Berlitz Method*, see the website: <https://www.berlitz.ca/websites/main/berlitz-method>

- *Total Physical Response (TPR)* by Dr. James Asher. This method “uses commands combined with physical actions to instill listening skills in students” (Ignace 2015: 44).
- *Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS)*. It combines the question/answer with physical action commands and “provides fast-paced, comprehensible input through a series of steps that lead to learners being able to tell a story with the help of visuals, after having learned and practiced the needed vocabulary” (Ignace 2015: 44).
- *Accelerative Integrated Method (AIM)*²⁰. In this method, among others, students learn simplified and high-frequency vocabulary, gestures are used for all parts of the sentence, language is interpreted through songs, plays and drama activities and grammar is taught in an inductive way, where students discover regularities and exceptions while playing games and being exposed to examples (Ignace 2015: 44).
- Other approaches or “best practices” used in the classroom may be the *Imaginative Education* approach developed by Kieran Egan²¹; the *discovery learning* method, “which support experiential or hands-on learning on the land – in this case involving Elder and knowledge keeper teachings”; and other *Indigenous approaches* to learning – learning by doing, experiential learning, and culturally embedded learning” (Ignace 2015: 44).

Regarding the B.C. Indigenous language teaching curriculum, in the mid-1990s the B.C Ministry of Education started to develop *Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs)* for all core subjects with the aim of setting standards for second language education in the schools (Ignace 2015: 54). Those packages included “an overview of the approach and principles used in teaching the subject and, broken down into curriculum organizers, lay out prescribed learning outcomes for specific grade levels”, as well as a “list of provincially approved curricular resources” and “student assessment formats and samples” (Ignace 2015: 54). The Ministry has also developed a Language Template document (updated in 2003) with an organizational framework and wording for second languages IRPs, including Indigenous languages (only half of the languages are part of

²⁰ For further information on the *Accelerative Integrated Method*, see the website: <https://www.aimlanguagelearning.com/>

²¹ For further information on the *Imaginative Education*, see the website: <https://www.sfu.ca/~egan/>.

it; the T̓silhqot'in language is not). The template is the only option for Indigenous languages to meet the provincial second languages requirements and acts more as an authorizing document for provincial accreditation than guidance for developing curriculum and specific teaching units. Although Indigenous Elders and teachers tend to support the IRPs due to the recognition it provides to the languages, the incentive for the secondary students to get academic credits, and somehow the curriculum support they provide, Indigenous representatives are not fully satisfied with the template (Ignace 2015: 54). According to them, the Language Template meets primarily heritage and immigrant languages contexts, which may differ from the ones of Indigenous languages; IRPs are not based on language immersion teaching methods; they only cover Grade 5-12, and although some school districts and most of the First Nation schools offer Indigenous language courses for the elementary levels, there are no Ministry approved IRPs for the lower levels; and Indigenous programs are not always covered by core school district funds, unlike French and foreign language programs (Ignace 2015: 54).

There exist several language frameworks that may be used to assess students' First Nations language proficiency: the *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)*²², the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines 2012*²³, the *Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB)*²⁴ and *CLB Can Do Statements*²⁵. Some have been adapted to meet First Nation languages requirements (FPCC 2018g): for example, Dr. Jack Miller's *First Nations Language Benchmarks (FNLB)*²⁶ with the *Language Teacher's Guide to Assessing First Nations Language Proficiency*; the *First Nations Language Benchmarks (FNLB)* adapted by Dr. Michele Johnson²⁷; the *NETOLNEW: One mind; one people* project for the SENĆOTEN language²⁸; and the *First Nations Language Essentials (FNLE)* developed by Michel (2009) (Ignace 2015: 65).

As for training programs and certification options for First Nations language teachers, we can read in Ball and McIvor (2013: 27) that "in 1999, the First Nations

²² See ACTFL website: <http://www.actfl.org>

²³ See ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines: <http://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012>

²⁴ See CLB website: <http://www.language.ca>

²⁵ See document on CLB website: http://www.language.ca/wp-content/uploads/2000/01/CLB_Can_Do_Statements_S_02.pdf

²⁶ See Interior Salish website: <http://www.interiorsalish.com/languageassessment.html>

²⁷ See document on FPCC website:

http://www.fpcc.ca/files/PDF/Language/MAP/FNLB_Johnson_2013.pdf

²⁸ See UVic website: <http://www.uvic.ca/research/partner/home/currentprojects/language-assessment-tool/index.php>

Education Steering Committee (FNESC) forged a partnership with the British Columbia College of Teachers to create an accredited Developmental Standard Teaching Certificate”, and today more and more communities partner with secondary education institutions to develop community-based teaching training on Indigenous language revitalization. Additionally, several universities in B.C. (University of British Columbia UBC, University of Victoria UVIC, Thompson Rivers University TRU and University of Northern British Columbia UNBC) offer diplomas, certificates, undergraduate and graduate programs on Indigenous language revitalization and language teaching accreditation. Speakers can also get language proficiency recognition and a First Nations language certificate from a First Nations Language Authority recognized by the Teacher Regulation Branch of the B.C. Ministry of Education (FPCC 2013: 63). All those First Nations language accreditation efforts respond to one of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada:

“16. We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages” (TRC 2015b: 2).

Annual conferences and workshops are also held annually in B.C. or surroundings to provide the opportunity to community members, academics, students and other interested parts to share and discuss about language revitalization as well as training opportunities in language teaching and documentation (FPCC 2013: 71-72). British Columbian universities and other institutions like First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC), First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and Chief Atahm School, Alberta universities and also USA universities organize annual events like the International Conference on Language Documentation and Conservation (ICLDC) held in Hawai’i, Stabilizing Indigenous Languages (SILS) Conference held in Lethbridge Alberta or the CoLang: Collaborative Language Research Institute (formerly called InField).

Universities and research institutions also partner up with communities to conduct research projects and studies. Some communities may still feel reluctant to collaborate due to past experiences of neglect where communities felt used and not benefited from the studies done in their communities and about their community members and knowledge (FPCC 2013: 81-84); however, today research policies and agreements based on community-based and collaborative approaches are being developed to protect

community members' intellectual property and cultural heritage. Communities are also leading and designing the projects based on their own needs and interests.

Language documentation and archiving are also important activities for Indigenous language revitalization in B.C., since languages started to be recorded quite recently, mid-1900s in most of the cases. There is also a need of developing language resources since still today only few language materials are available. Nonetheless, communities need to assess first their priorities towards language recovering. As FPCC (2013: 64) states, “fluent speakers are the most valuable resource for language revitalization”; sometimes there is not even a handful of speakers in a community and time is limited, so if they are busy recording the language, they might not have the time to pass it onto others or spend time actively supporting the language programs. Therefore, FPCC recommends to keep a balance between language teaching strategies and documentation activities.

Creating archives or safe places to store language materials and resources is another important language revitalization activity recommended by FPCC (2013: 65). Communities that share the same language, even if they speak different dialects, may develop a collaborative archive where resources are centralized. Maynor et al. (n.d.) provide a guide to help set up an archive, that covers topics such as location, type of resources that should be kept, approximate expenses or how and where to gather language resources already created.

Language data bases or online dictionaries are also being developed by Indigenous peoples in B.C. There currently exists the *First Voices*²⁹ archive, a web-based tool that supports language revitalization efforts and provides an on-line archive to store language knowledge and other resources (FPCC 2013: 65). Some B.C. communities are focusing their efforts on language recording and digitalizing, since only couple of speakers may be left. According to Fishman (1996), recording speakers is especially important for those languages that are extremely weakened:

“A serious archive collection is an answer to what works for languages about to disappear [...] Such archival material can be used to learn the language as a second language, so that even such weakened languages do not have to die entirely” [...] But the question is whether ‘it is really living’ [...]. It can support certain languages. However, if the alternative for a particular language is not just the mausoleum,

²⁹ For further information on the FirstVoices archive, see the website: <http://www.firstvoices.com/>

perhaps it can aspire to societal re-attachment or even more to inter-generational mother-tongue transmission of that re-attachment, so that it becomes the mother tongue of a vibrant speech community” (Fishman 1996: 188-190).

Policies about orthographies, writing systems, new words and standardization of the language are also being discussed and developed in the B.C Indigenous communities. As I commented before (cf. 2.4.1), those can be sensitive topics due to the differences on dialects and discussions need to be held with caution and respect (FPCC 2013: 66). There needs to be a collaborative agreement between communities speaking the same language. First Nations languages in B.C. are mostly oral; however, orthographies may be useful for more public areas like government, higher education and academia and immersion education, business and workplaces (Reyhner 1999b). Most of the Indigenous languages orthographies in B.C. were developed after colonization by priests, anthropologists or linguists who visited the communities (FPCC 2018c), except for some, like the SENĆOTEN alphabet, for example, which was developed by SENĆOTEN speaker Dave Elliot and is still in use today (FPCC 2018c). Some languages may even have several writing systems; nevertheless, “the best policy is to agree on one writing system for the language so that any revitalization materials can be easily shared” (FPCC 2013: 66).

According to FPCC, Indigenous languages in B.C. use both linguistic and practical orthographies. Linguistic orthographies are writing systems based on the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and contain symbols such as: ʔ, x^w, λ, and ý. For languages like Nl̓eʔkepmxcín and Hən̓q̓əmin̓əm, that is their standard orthography. Practical orthographies are usually developed for writing and teaching and they use symbols found in an English typewriter together with some extra letters or diacritics (such as accents, underlines, or bars).³⁰

Practical orthographies in B.C can be divided into alphabets or syllabaries. Alphabets of the Indigenous languages in B.C. are formed by a group of symbols that represent the distinctive phonemes of a language; however, they may vary and the same sound might be represented differently in two different languages, like we can see in the example below:³¹

³⁰ Retrieved from FPCC website: <http://www.fpcc.ca/language/toolkit/Glossary.aspx> (accessed on May 12th, 2019)

³¹ Ibid.

Linguistic orthography	x ^w	χ
Hul'q'umi'num'	hw	x
Nuučaanuł	x ^w	χ
̄Xa'islakala	x ^o	̄x
Secwepemc	cw	x

Some Indigenous languages in B.C. rely on combination of symbols to represent different sounds, like in T̄silhqot'in, where *t* and *l* can create several sounds depending on how they are combined: *t*, *l*, *tl*, *tl'*. B.C. Alphabets are quite phonemic: different letters can represent one sound and different sounds can be represented by the same letter. Some languages have chosen to develop a syllabary, where each symbol represents a syllable (often combination of a consonant and a vowel) rather than a single sound. Syllabaries have been used for Dene languages in British Columbia, such as C̄B^l (Dakelh), Ūɔ̄ ɔ̄ (Dene Tha), and C̄ɔ̄ ɔ̄ (Dane-zaa)³².

According to some, B.C Indigenous languages may also be in the need of coining words. It is usually relatively easy for fluent speakers to create new words for technology or modern activities (FPCC 2013: 66); nevertheless, sometimes conflict may arise since some language speakers may prefer to keep the language static, as it was before European contact in the 1800s, and others may believe that languages inevitably evolve and adapt to the life of a community, so new words may need to be created in order to secure continuity of the language (FPCC 2013: 66) but always keeping the essence of the original culture (Romaine 2015: 38).

Media, such as radio and television, can certainly support language revitalization efforts. Canadian First Nations are involved in many broadcasting networks including Aboriginal Peoples' Television Network (APTN), Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), National Film Board (NFB), Radio-Canada, Aboriginal Voices Radio and other local radio-broadcasting initiatives under the Western Association of Aboriginal Broadcasters (WAAB)" (FPCC 2013: 70). Additionally, Facebook, Twitter and other

³² Ibid.

social media platforms, as well as other internet tools, such as YouTube or Vimeo, are often used to promote the Indigenous languages. Media activities often bring up discussions on the need of developing policies for knowledge sharing. Communities need to come to an agreement on what knowledge should be open to the general public and what should stay confidential, since certain types of knowledge might be considered sacred or only to be shared within the family or the community.

The role of B.C. First Nations governments is essential to language revitalization in the communities. Governments can develop language policies to promote the use of the language in the government and community activities and enhance the prestige of the language inside and outside the communities. FPCC (2013: 77-78) provides some examples of policies that can be developed in the community to achieve language revitalization goals: encourage leadership to speak the language or learn it, if not fluent yet; promote the use of the language in government documents, legislation, resolutions, correspondence, newsletter, notices, etc.; develop workplace policies (e.g. use of the language at work, make language knowledge an asset in hiring processes, develop glossaries with work vocabulary); provide translation and interpreting services so speakers can use the language at meetings and events; promote the language at community events; secure resources for language revitalization (e.g. funding, language coordinator position, office space); create signage in the language to make language visible to community members and external visitors; and promote sharing of language resources and materials. Policies may also be developed for outside the community and the relation with other communities and external institutions as follows: promote sharing of resources and experiences with other communities that speak the same language; discuss signage in the language with organizations on the territory (e.g. Parks Canada, companies working in the area); use the language in government's correspondence with external organizations (e.g. letter head in the language, greetings, email signatures); act as language advocates in education and other municipal, provincial and federal governments for language present and increasing funding towards language revitalization; ensure protection of intellectual property and traditional knowledge when developing agreements with external institutions (e.g. universities); and protect the language as a community asset and assess language impact when making decisions (FPCC 2013: 78-79).

B.C. First Nations governments may also want to develop policies for copyright and intellectual property, as FPCC (2013: 81-84) suggests. Every community may have different

opinions and comfort levels of sharing their traditional knowledge, mostly due to issues of cultural appropriation experienced in the past in the communities. However, sometimes language and knowledge sharing may become essential for language revitalization purposes and, therefore, policies based on each community's laws and sharing protocols are needed to ensure the protection of the knowledge. The Government of Canada publication *Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Property Rights* (2014) as well as the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) recognize that Indigenous communities held property rights of all their knowledge and are the only ones that should be allowed to manage it (Simeone and Library of Parliament 2004). Developing common licensing and collaborative research agreements with outsider institutions are also strategies that support intellectual property rights (FPCC 2013: 81-84).

As we have seen in this chapter, it is undeniable that extraordinary efforts for Indigenous language revitalization are being taken in B.C.; however, some future directions may still be mentioned. As for government institutions, official status needs to be granted to First Nations languages in B.C. and ongoing support for community-led processes needs to be provided so results are visible in the next decade (McIvor 2009: 7). Some of the suggested actions are the following: creating policies and securing sufficient resources and funding for developing cultural and linguistically appropriate programs; developing language-in-education policies that address specific needs for ensuring that children have access to education in their First Nation language, while promoting immersion programs; involving families to bridge the intergenerational gap and support language learning at an early age in the home; and facilitating language teaching and reviewing the accreditation system by creating secondary education opportunities for speakers to become teachers of the language (Ball and McIvor 2013: 33). As for the communities, the momentum created in the last few decades needs to be kept, by continuing to set language reviving as a community priority. The languages need to be alive in the communities and spaces for language speaking and learning needs to be facilitated. Now it is the time to take action and ensure the survival of Indigenous languages in B.C., since unfortunately time and speakers become more limited every day that goes by.

2.5 Summary

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the Indigenous languages in Canada and a brief description of the historical and current federal language legislation. At the moment, only English and French are considered official languages of the country. The

new *Bill C-91, An Act Respecting Indigenous Languages* enacted in June 2019 introduces some improvements and provides more support for Indigenous language revitalization; however, it does not guarantee the official status of the languages, and according to FPCC (2019) would still need some amendments. At the provincial level, only in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories local Indigenous languages are fully recognized as official, together with English and French. Besides, I have also presented a description of the First Nations language diversity in B.C., with 34 languages and 7 language families. Although they show different levels of vitality, they are all considered endangered, due to the reduced number of speakers and the interruption of the intergenerational language transmission due to several reasons from colonization times and culture and language assimilation practices, such as the residential schools. Nevertheless, the communities are aware of the importance of maintaining the languages as it is the connection to their cultural identity, spirituality and physical and mental wellness. Therefore, they have invested on language revitalization practices on the last decades in the hope that languages will get revived and brought back to the communities, the homes and the families.

I have also explained the provincial government role as essential in the language revitalization process by developing policies and supporting the initiatives; an example is the creation of the First Nations-run Crown Corporation First Peoples' Cultural Council in 1990 in order to provide overall support for language revitalization and distribute government funds for community-led language revitalization projects. The chapter has also included a brief overview of the B.C. language education policies, as well as a description of the immersion programs available in the province and other common language teaching methods used in the classroom, language curriculum, language skills assessment tools and language teaching training and accreditation opportunities. I have also commented on challenges that communities and learners might face as well as the idea of successful language revitalization as a shared responsibility where, not only the school, but every community group needs to get involved. Likewise, I have also discussed the possibility of developing archives or 'safe places' to store language resources, as well as the creation of orthographies and different writing systems and the discussions that may emerge around standardization of the language and coining new words. To finish, I have included future steps or directions towards intergenerational language transmission as the key to a successful language revitalization.

In the next chapter, I will introduce the Tsilhqot'in language community and provide a description of Yunešit'in and the language revitalization efforts that have been taken in that community.

Chapter 3. *Nenqay Deni* ‘the T̄silhqot’in people’: *Nenqayni Ch’ih* ‘the T̄silhqot’in language’ and Yunēsit’in

In this chapter, we will meet the T̄silhqot’in people, their land and culture (cf. 3.1). We will learn about their territory and main economic and traditional activities as well as their traditional laws, cultural values and traditions. I will also provide a brief description of their language *Nenqayni Ch’ih* and the previous linguistic work as well as an overview of the current language status (cf. 3.2). Finally, I will introduce the Yunēsit’in and the T̄silhqot’in language revitalization efforts undertaken to date (cf. 3.3).

3.1 *Nenqay deni* ‘the T̄silhqot’in people’

The *T̄silhqot’in* get their name from the land (T̄silhqot’in Language Group and Kunkel 2012). Translation into English may slightly vary (Yunēsit’in First Nations Government 2014:1); see variations in (3.1):

- (3.1) “*T̄silh* - *-qu* *-t’in*
T̄si (rock) (river) (people of)
Tsish (red ochre)
Jenijilhtsih (s/he is whispering)”

Possible meanings may be: *People of the river*; *People of the whispering river*; *People of T̄silhqox (Chilcotin River)*; *People of the red-ochre* (Yunēsit’in First Nations Government 2014:1).

Although currently the name most used by community members is *T̄silhqot’in*, there exist variations on the pronunciation and also several written versions (T̄silhqot’in Language Group and Kunkel 2012). It was originally spelled as *T̄silhqut’in*, considered the “proper spelling according to the orthography that was adopted for the language” in the 1970s (Smith n.d: 80). However, some speakers also use *Tsilhqut’in*, or even the nasalized forms of those, *Tsinlhqut’in* or *T̄sinlhqut’in* (Cook 2013: 11). Other versions, such as *Tzilcotin*, have been used in the past as well as *Chilcotin*, which is the version adapted to the English phonetics and orthography. The term *T̄silhqot’in* has been chosen for this work in order to respect the name this people currently use to refer to themselves (Payne 1997: 13).

T̕silhqot'in people also call themselves *Nenqayni*, meaning 'people of the Earth/world/surface of the land' (Smith n.d: 1) in the T̕silhqot'in language, as in (3.2):

(3.2) “*Nen-* *-qay* *-ni (deni)*
 (Earth, land) (surface) (person, people)
 Nenqay (World)”

Sometimes the word *nenqayni* is also used with the meaning of 'Indigenous person' to refer to all First Nations or Indigenous peoples in the world (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:40:18,8 – 00:44:59,7; Yunešit'in First Nations Government 2014: 1).

T̕silhqot'in people are surrounded by other peoples that speak very distinct languages (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:01:11,4 – 00:40:03,6): as the T̕silhqot'in would call them, *Ninchat'in (Dakelhne, Carrier)* to the north, *Ena (Secwepemc, Shuswap)* to the east, *Ešch'ed-Deni (St'atl'imx, Lilloet)* to the south, and *Enay (Nuxalk, Bella Coola)*, *Oowekyala, Qaju (Kwakwaka, Kwakiult)* and *Éy7á7juuthem* to the west (Smith n.d: 80). Historically, there have been territorial disputes between the T̕silhqot'in and the neighbouring communities (*Chelʔig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:13:14,3 – 00:15:10,4 and 00:20:50,6 – 00:25:13,7; *Maggie*, 76, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:11:41,4 – 00:12:19,9). As community members themselves often express, T̕silhqot'in are protective of their territory (*Chelʔig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:20:50,6 – 00:25:55,8), but also inclusive and welcoming, as long as visitors respect their people, their land and their way (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:24:53,4 – 00:31:07,7). The T̕silhqot'in have also maintained a trading relationship with neighbouring peoples (*Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:07:49,5 – 00:08:26,3; *MJB*, 68, and *ʔEtsu*, 92, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:01:05,4 – 00:01:27,6; T̕silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2008:20). Therefore, some T̕silhqot'in, especially the Elder generation, have learned to speak and/or understand the neighbouring languages. Intermarriages have also been common across time (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:24:53,4 – 00:31:07,7), so it is quite frequent today for T̕silhqot'in to be related to members from other language communities (*MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:03:02,2 – 00:04:27,2 and 00:51:31,1 – 00:54:58,0). Nowadays, the T̕silhqot'in also share songs and traditions with neighbouring communities (*Charlie Brown*, 47, and *MJB*, 68 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:29:31,6 – 00:35:47,2).

3.1.1 *Nen* ‘the land’: T̓silhqot̓’in territory and communities

The total T̓silhqot̓’in population is 3,513 people (T̓silhqot̓’in Language Group and Kunkel 2012: 17), registered in six communities or *bands*.¹ Most of them are located at considerable distances from the main service centre, Williams Lake, and only have dirt road access (T̓silhqot̓’in Stewardship Department 2007). The six communities are: ʔEsdilagh (Alexandria), T̓si Del (Red Stone), Tl’etinqox (Anaham), Tl’esqox (Toosey), Xeni Gwet’in (Nemiah) and Yunešit’in (Stone) (Smith n.d). They are located throughout the Chilcotin Plateau, west of ʔElhdaqox (Fraser River), except for ʔEsdilagh that sits north of Williams Lake, straddled on both the east and west side of the river. Below is a map created by the T̓silhqot̓’in National Government (TNG) in 2017, showing the six communities:

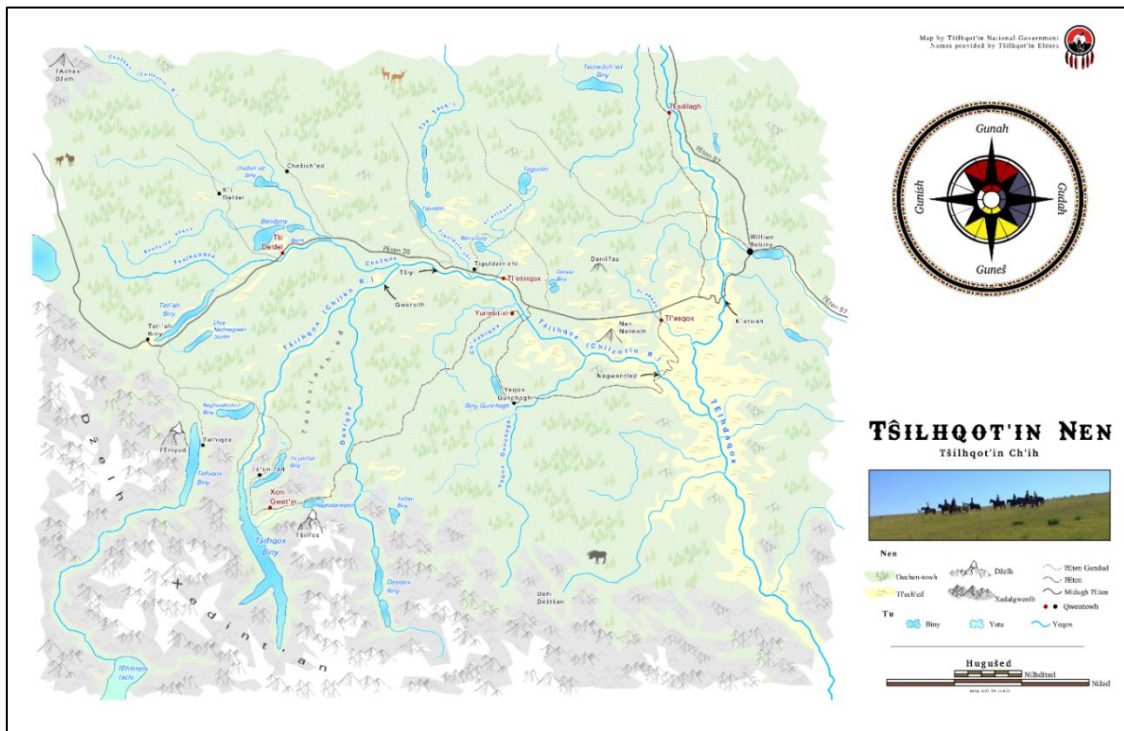


Figure 3.1 T̓silhqot̓’in *Nen* (land)²

¹ According to the *Glossary of Terms of Indigenous and Northern Affairs (INAC) Canada* a band is: “a body of *Indians* [First Nations] or whose collective use and benefit lands have been set apart or money is held by the Crown, or declared to be a band for the purposes of the Indian Act. Each band has its own governing band council, usually consisting of one Chief and several councillors. Community members choose the Chief and Councillors by election, or sometimes through custom” (Retrieved from: <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033576/1100100033577>, accessed on October 10th, 2019),

² This map was created by TNG Land & Resources department and T̓silhqot̓’in Elders who provided the map names. According to TNG, it is a draft and it is not considered finished.

Traditionally, the T̓silhqot'in people move around their territory seasonally depending on the time of the year and what they would hunt, fish or gather for (*Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6 00:02:08,8 – 00:03:02,4; *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:15:54,4 – 00:20:44,9; *Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:45:39 – 00:46:05). Most of the communities (*reserves*) were created around 1876 and 1898 under the *Indian Act*; however, as we can read in their *Declaration of Sovereignty*, the T̓silhqot'in people has have never accepted that organization of the territory, since they were never consulted in this decision (TNG 1998: 3).

Each community has their own government and is represented by a Band Council, formed by a *Nits'il?in* (Chief) and several *Nits'il?in-yaz* (Councillors). The size of the Band Council depends on the size of the community and the ratio is one council member to 100 community members. Leadership may be female or male and nowadays representatives are elected under a voting process. The term length may vary among communities from two to four years. Elders also have an important role in the community and they often form committees to advice leadership in decision making on the different fields (e.g. housing, education, language, etc.). Each of the six T̓silhqot'in communities have its own government office and health centre, and in some of them there are also a school (public or managed by the community), library, church, youth centre and Elders' centre, among other facilities.

The six T̓silhqot'in communities are represented by the T̓silhqot'in National Government (TNG), a governmental organization established in 1989 and run by the six T̓silhqot'in *Nits'il?in* (Chiefs)³. TNG's mission is "to govern programs that reflect the T̓silhqot'in culture, customs and needs" (T̓silhqot'in Stewardship Department 2007: 10) and some of the services for the communities are the following: employment, fisheries, wildlife, natural resources, forestry, economic development, mining and youth justice and youth⁴. TNG operates outside the British Columbia Treaty Commission, since the T̓silhqot'in Nation is not part of the B.C. Treaty process.

TNG was created with the underlying goal of re-establishing "a strong political government structure with memorial to the war Chiefs of 1864" (T̓silhqot'in Stewardship Department 2007:10). The T̓silhqot'in War and small pox history is essential to the

³ At the time this research was done, TNG *Nits'il?in* were: *Nits'il?in* Joe Alphonse, Tribal Chairman (Tl'etinqox), *Nits'il?in* Russell Myers Ross, Vice Chairman (Yunešit'in), *Nits'il?in* Francis Laceese (Tl'esqox), *Nits'il?in* Roy Stump (?Esdilagh), *Nits'il?in* Otis Guichon (T̓si Del Del) and *Nits'il?in* Jimmy Lulua (Xeni Gwet'in).

⁴ More information on T̓silhqot'in National Government website: <http://www.tsilhqot.in.ca/>

T̓silhqot'in identity. In 1864, six T̓silhqot'in Warriors, named Lhats'as̓in, Biyil, Telad, Taqed, Chayses and Ahan, were tried under the colonial law and accused of murdering a road crew. As a result, five of them were hung in Quesnel, B.C. and one, later, in Abbotsford, B.C. They fought to protect their land, people and way of life, when they saw their people threatened by the intentional spreading of the small pox diseases in their communities. As Lhats'as̓in said then: they "meant war, not murder."

On October 23, 2014, B.C. Premier Christy Clark apologized for "the wrongful hanging of the six T̓silhqot'in Warriors, and confirmed the full exoneration [...] to the extent of the Province's ability" (The Province of British Columbia and the T̓silhqot'in Nation 2016). On March 28th, 2018, after more than 150 years, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau exonerated the T̓silhqot'in Warriors of any wrongdoing in the House of the Commons in the presence of the six current T̓silhqot'in *Nits'il̓in*. The action implied the intention of the federal government to work on a nation-to-nation relationship with the T̓silhqot'in. In order to present Canadian Government's apologies directly to community members, the Prime Minister visited Xení Gwet'in territory on T̓silhqot'in land on November 2nd, 2018 and a ceremony for the exoneration of the T̓silhqot'in Warriors was held and witnessed by community members.

Just as their ancestors, the T̓silhqot'in nation keeps being united and standing up for Aboriginal Rights and Title to the lands of the T̓silhqot'in. In 1989, Xení Gwet'in First Nation made the *Nenduwh jid guzitin Declaration* (Nemiah Declaration), and 30 years later, it still is considered T̓silhqot'in law, in order to state the terms of the Nemiah Aboriginal Wilderness Preserve, and initiate legal action in the court system. In 1992, Xení Gwet'in First Nations held a blockade at Henry's Crossing in order to prevent the logging at Brittany Triangle (Yunešit'in First Nation, Xení Gwet'in First Nation and Dasiqox Tribal Park Planning Team 2017: 15). Twenty-five years later, on June 26th, 2014, "the Supreme Court of Canada declared Aboriginal title in the caretaker area of the Xení Gwet'in, one of six T̓silhqot'in communities" and rights to an additional portion (*T̓silhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia* 2016). This court decision was the first of its kind in Canadian history and, although only 1,750 square km² of territory was recognized out of the 4,380 km² that were claimed, it is still considered a great success by the T̓silhqot'in Nation.

Aboriginal title is recognized in British Columbia under *The Delgamuukw Decision 1997* (Supreme Court of Canada 1997). The Crown always has a legal obligation to consult the Indigenous communities and that obligation "cannot be delegated to another

party such as industry”. *Aboriginal title* is an Indigenous right that is also recognized in Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act 1982* and “encompasses the right to exclusive use and occupation of land, and the right to choose to what uses land can be put, and lands held pursuant to Aboriginal title have an inescapable economic component” (T̓silhqot̓’in Stewardship Department 2007: 7). With the Title case, the T̓silhqot̓’in have increased “their knowledge and capacity of what *Aboriginal title* entails, and are more likely to negotiate more favorable accommodation agreements with better control over their territory” (Kunkel 2008: 125). It also represents a reference for other Indigenous communities that are working towards reclamation of their territory. Below is a map of the Declared T̓silhqot̓’in Title Lands (*T̓silhqot̓’in Nation v. British Columbia 2016*).⁵

⁵ Map retrieved from: http://www.tsilhqotin.ca/PDFs/TitleOverview_Public_Aug2015.pdf (accessed on February 2, 2017)

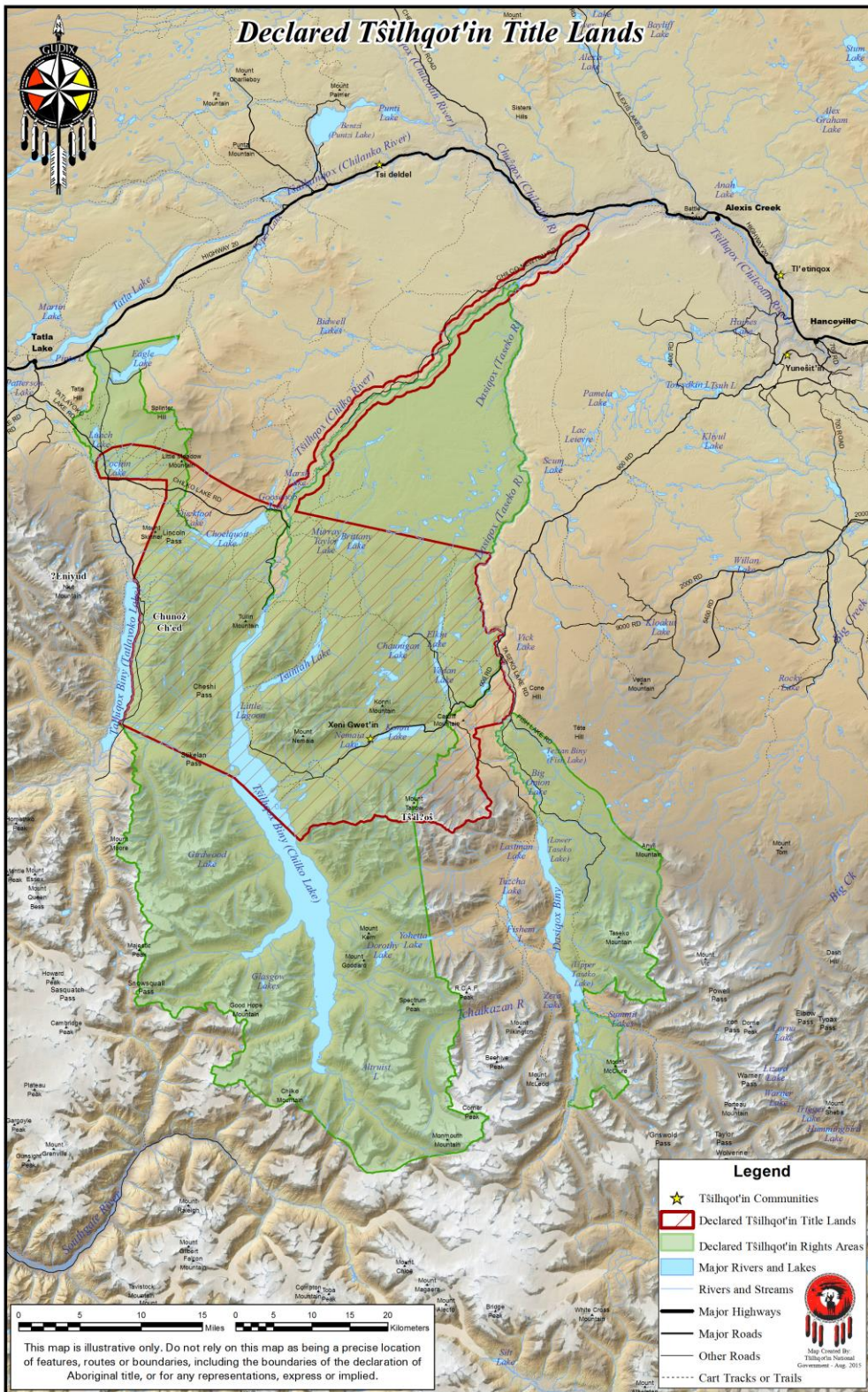


Figure 3.2 Declared Tsilhqot'in Lands

After the federal decision, ongoing negotiations with both federal and provincial have been developed and, although the path towards reconciliation is long, several milestones

have been reached. On September 10, 2014 the Province of British Columbia and the T̓silhqot̓in Nation signed a *Letter of Understanding* “to strengthening their government-to-government relationship by undertaking negotiations in good faith towards lasting reconciliation” between the parties. On February 11th, 2016, that intention got confirmed under the first-of-its-kind *Nenqay Deni Accord (The People’s Accord)* signed by the Province and the T̓silhqot̓in Nation. This document is different from a treaty; the *Accord* is developed based on community priorities and the funding for negotiations is not a ‘loan’, as under a treaty. Under this agreement, both the Province of B.C. and the T̓silhqot̓in Nation are committed to negotiations always based on the recognition of Aboriginal rights and Title stated on the *Accord*, as the T̓silhqot̓in Nation has never surrendered them.

The Federal Government and the T̓silhqot̓in Nation also signed a *Letter of Understanding* on January 27th, 2017 as a framework for the previous negotiations towards reconciliation and collaborative work between the T̓silhqot̓in Nation and the Crown. That document was ratified on August 28th, 2019, when both the federal and provincial governments signed the five-year *Gwets’en Nilt’i Pathway Agreement* (meaning ‘Towards it, We are Striving’), a historic reconciliation agreement to support T̓silhqot̓in self-determination. Since the *Declaration of T̓silhqot̓in Nation Decision on Aboriginal rights and Title*, both governments had been working separately with the T̓silhqot̓in Nation to implement it and that agreement has brought the three parties to the table to continue working together towards reconciliation. It was the first tripartite reconciliation agreement signed in British Columbia and the main goal was to bring significant changes to the lives of the T̓silhqot̓in and the relationship of B.C., Canada and the T̓silhqot̓in Nation in order to sustain T̓silhqot̓in self-determination priorities. Internationally, in 2016 Canada also signed the United Nations declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), “which affirms Indigenous rights and free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) where development is set to impact Indigenous peoples and [...] lands” (Yunešit̓in First Nation, Xeni Gwet̓in First Nation and Dasiqox Tribal Park Planning Team 2017: 15). The *Gwets’en Nilt’i Pathway Agreement* is a tangible expression of the recognition of those rights and the different paths towards self-determination that nations may have.

However, despite of all those efforts, today the T̓silhqot̓in people continue claiming their Indigenous rights to their land. Over the last 30 years, Taseko Mines Ltd. (TML) has tried to advance a massive open pit mine in Težtan Biny (Fish Lake), a sacred

place to the T̓silhqot'in, which holds an immense cultural, spiritual and environmental value to the nation. This project, originally called Prosperity Mine and later New Prosperity mine, failed twice, in 2010 and 2014, to obtain federal environment approval by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA). Surprisingly, even without the federal approval, on July 14th, 2017, on the last day of B.C. Liberals in power, former Premier Christy Clark, issued exploratory permits for extensive drilling operations in Te̓ztan Biny and surrounding area of Naba̓s to Taseko Mines Ltd., while the T̓silhqot'in Nation was under evacuation due to 2017 summer wildfires. After years of appeals and provincial court actions, on May 14, 2020 the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed Taseko Mines Ltd.'s appeal and affirmed the Federal Government's rejection of New Prosperity Mine.

It needs to be stated that the T̓silhqot'in National Government and its member communities are not fully opposed to mining, oil, forestry or other resource extraction activities on principle, "provided that it is carried out in an environmentally sensitive and sustainable manner" (T̓silhqot'in Stewardship Department 2007). However, the T̓silhqot'in Nation understands they hold rights to their lands and strongly believe they should be the ones who manage the area under their own protocols, terms and priorities. One of the efforts to conserve Te̓ztan Biny and Naba̓s, was the declaration of an Indigenous-led protected area: *Nexwagwez̓ʔan* (there for us) Dasiqox Tribal Park. This initiative was an expression of Indigenous governance, initiated in 2014 by Yune̓sit'in and Xeni Gwet'in Governments and supported by TNG. The tribal park includes 3,000 km² and is located in Yune̓sit'in and Xeni Gwet'in shared caretaker areas (Yune̓sit'in First Nation, Xeni Gwet'in First Nation and Dasiqox Tribal Park Planning Team 2017:14). Below is a map of the Dasiqox Tribal Park developed by T̓silhqot'in National Government in 2016:

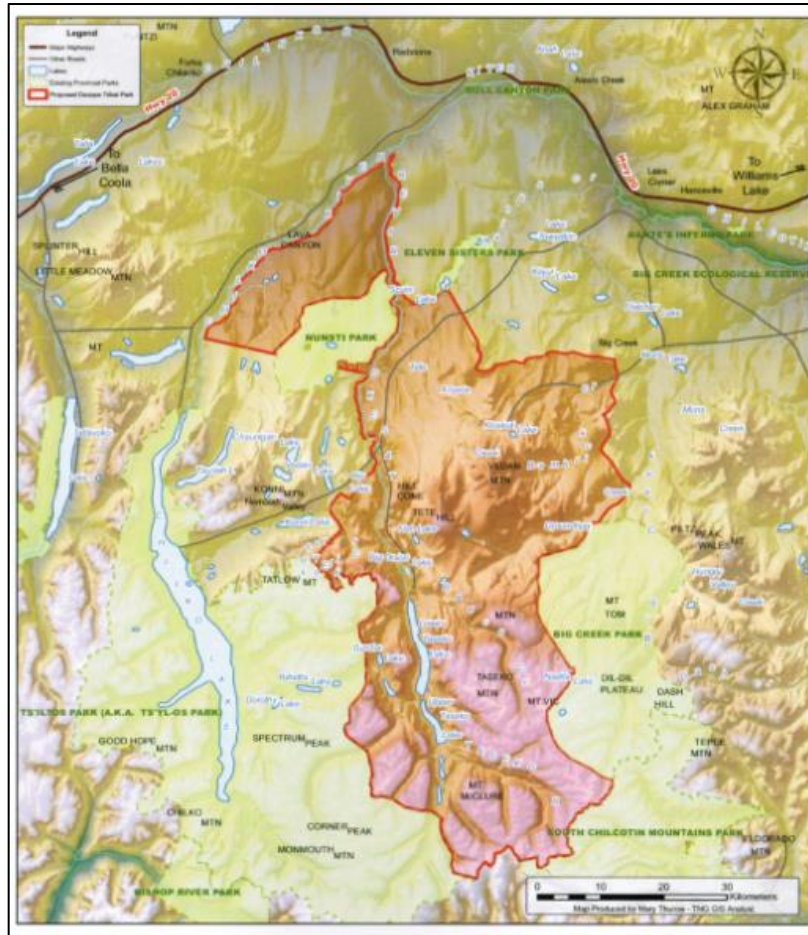


Figure 3.3 Dasiqox Tribal Park Map (Yunešit'in First Nation, Xeni Gwet'in First Nation and Dasiqox Tribal Park Planning Team 2017: 16)

As we can read on the *Nexwagwežan* Vision Statement, it is their responsibility and right to take care of that place and their whole territory: Tšilhqot'in are part of *nen* (the land), and *nen* is part of them; it is where they “hunt, fish, learn, teach and share while spending time out on the land respectfully”; the land is there for them, and for future generations (Yunešit'in First Nation, Xeni Gwet'in First Nation and Dasiqox Tribal Park Planning Team 2017: 10).

3.1.2 Tšilhqot'in main economic and traditional activities

The Tšilhqot'in people are strong in their traditional culture and way of life, and that shapes their economy. The land is still their main source of resources. According to the Tšilhqot'in Stewardship Department (2007), “the Tšilhqot'in communities are interested in environmentally-sustainable and culturally-acceptable economic development opportunities that generate revenue, and provide for business opportunities, jobs, training and income for its members”. The six Tšilhqot'in communities are located in areas with

limited commercial activity and most of the community members work for the community governments, neighbouring communities, forestry, fishing and agriculture, depending many of them on seasonal work (T̓silhqot̓in Stewardship Department 2007).

Traditionally, cattle, horse ranching and producing hay for winter feed have been the main sources of employment for community members (T̓silhqot̓in Stewardship Department 2007: 43); however, interest in those fields has been decreasing among the younger generations. Community gardens exist in all communities, including a greenhouse project in Yunešit̓in.

Cultural tourism has started to be considered a potential way of income that allows for the protection of the ecosystems and the T̓silhqot̓in traditional way of life providing at the same time opportunities of involvement to a wide range of community members from Elders to youth with different skills (T̓silhqot̓in Stewardship Department 2007: 43).

Nevertheless, T̓silhqot̓in communities still face challenges that hinder their economic development: a lack of investment capital, as the communities mostly depend on Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada for their core funding (Kunkel 2008:97); limited capacity; and the “remote location” of the communities (T̓silhqot̓in Stewardship Department 2007: 43). In addition, fundamental basic needs, such as shelter and water, are not met by many on-reserve community members: “houses are overcrowded” and the “housing stock is condemned, moldy [...] or in a state of major disrepair” (T̓silhqot̓in Stewardship Department. 2007: 43). Most homes rely on B.C. Hydro for energy, except for some located in the more remote areas. Communities have water treatment systems but boil-water advisories are common (T̓silhqot̓in Stewardship Department 2007).

As many other Indigenous communities (Turner et al. 2011), the T̓silhqot̓in keep practicing their traditional activities such as hunting, fishing (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:44:25,5 – 00:46:31,5), trapping and gathering berries and other wild foods and medicine plants. Some community members also make crafts and sell them at local gas bars and markets in neighbouring communities. Trading is still used sometimes for exchanging goods. T̓silhqot̓in people mostly hunt for *nists̓i* (Mule Deer, *odocoileus hemionus*) and *mus* (Moose, *alces alces*). That is one of the main sources of food for most of the community households. Meat is often smoked and dried (*tsenghen*) or stored frozen for the winter. The *ežez̓* (hide) is often tanned and used for traditional clothing, gloves, moccasins and crafts. In the past, sinew was used for sewing (T̓silhqot̓in Language Group and Kunkel 2012). Both men and women may hunt (*Theresa*, 60, 02/20/2017, CO#20,

00:03:18). Generally, *elhtin* (rifle) is the weapon used for hunting, replacing the traditional *datsan-k'a* (bow and arrow) and other tools made out of *bis* (obsidian rock) used before European contact in the late 1800s. Trapping is another traditional method still used today for smaller animals (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:40:38,0 – 00:40:53,8)⁶

Fishing is another common traditional activity and also main source of food for most of the T̂silhqot'in families. Community members rely mostly on the different species of salmon, depending on the season: *ts'eman* (Sockeye Salmon, *oncorhynchus nerka*), *jaš* (Spring salmon, *oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) and *dandzex* (Humpback or Pink Salmon, *oncorhynchus gorbusha*). *ʔEteqash* (dip net) is usually used for fishing (*LM*, 78, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:13:56), and also, *sex* (fish gaff). Salmon is smoked and dried on the *tish* (drying rack) or kept frozen for the winter. Other lake fish like *dek'any* (Rainbow trout, *oncorhynchus mykiss*) and *sabay* (Dolly Varden, *salvelinus malma*) are traditionally fished with *laghembinlh* (gillnet) (*Saina*, 65, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:13:12 – 00:13:24) or a *jenš-chen* (rod).

Community members also gather wild food as *sunt'iny* (wild potatoes) (Mellot 2010) and *tl'etsen* (wild onions), berries, like *nuw̄ish* (Soopolallie, *shepherdia canadensis*) for *Indian ice-cream*⁷, *melguns* (Choke Cherry, *prunus virginiana*), *texalhtsel* (raspberry, *rubus idaeus*), *yanlhtsel* (Blueberry, *baccinium spp.*) and *unchuynsh* (Rose hips from *Rosa Spp.*). Berries are usually dried or stored frozen. They also gather medicine plants like *datsan k'achilh* (Common Juniper, *juniperus communis*), *tsiguns* (rock liquens), *xilh dilh* (False Indian Hellebore, *Veratrum viride*), *bedzish ts'ediyān ledi* (Labrador tea, *ledum groenlandicum oeder*) and *dzax* (pitch) from *chendi* (Lodgepole pine, *pinus contorta*) or *tsintsen* (Douglas Fir, *pseudotsuga menziesii*) for making healing creams (T̂silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012:26). *Deyen* (traditional healers) can be female or male and are highly respected by the community (*Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2 00:46:51 – 00:47:04). Traditional medicine events are often held in the communities and knowledge on medicine plants is shared. *Smudging* ceremonies and *sweats* are also

⁶Some of the wildlife for which trapping methods are used are the following: *dlig* (American Red Squirrel, *tamiasciurus hudsonicus*), *nembay* (Least Weasel, *mustela nivalis*), *nabi* (Muskrat, *ondatra zibethicus*), *tša* (American Beaver, *castor canadensis*), *tilhjus* (American Mink, *mustela vison*), *chinaž* (River Otter, *lontra canadensis*), *sesjiz* (Pine Marten, *martes americana*), *sesugh* (Fisher, *martes pennanti*), *nanjez* (Red Fox, *vulpes vulpes*), *chelīg* (Coyote, *canis latrans*), *nun* (Wolf, *canis lupus*), *nundi* (American Lynx, *lynx canadensis*) or *nundi-chugh* (Cougar, *puma concolor cougar*).

⁷ *Indian ice cream* is a whipped cream-like sweet made out of the juice of the *nuw̄ish* and sugar.

common (T̄silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012: 51-55). Gathering protocols and ceremonies are still followed, honored and passed down from generation to generation.

3.1.3 *Dechen-ts'edilhtan*: T̄silhqot'in traditional laws

Nenqayni people are deeply connected to the land (Smith 2013a, 2013b; Turner 2013); they have a spiritual relationship as well as “sacred responsibilities to the natural world” (Smith n.d: 5), as Yunešit'in community members Ross and Haig-Brown (2010) explain:

“I am T̄silhqot'in, a member of a nation with land. The name of the nation derives from a place where the people are ultimately connected; there is no separation between the people and the land. This is home. The T̄silhqox is the river that runs through the territory; it is an artery that links people with a common language, ancestry, history and culture” (Ross and Haig-Brown 2010).

T̄silhqot'in creation stories tell about *sadanx*, “sacred historical period during which animals and birds were able to transform themselves into human beings and communicate with people”: “all creatures were human long ago” and “spoke *Nenqayni ch'ih*” (Smith n.d: 4). Same happened with other elements in nature, like *aldzi* (moon), *dželh* (the mountains), *dechen* (the trees) and *qwen* (fire), *sen* (stars) and *untseniluy-nenaghinluy* (rainbow) (Smith n.d: 22); *tši* (the rocks) have the power to heal people; *tu* (the water) and *yeqox* (the river) are ancestors; “all these parts of nature are living and intelligent spiritual beings that can observe, speak and help *deni* (people)” (Smith n.d: 4). Therefore, “respect and honor is shown to all beings in the natural worlds”, principle that is shared in most of the traditional stories (Smith n.d: 2)

As Smith (n.d: 1) explains, T̄silhqot'in people still follow their *dechen-ts'edilhtan* or traditional laws and the way of their *esghaydam* (ancestors) above everything (*Chel?ig*, 48, 2/07/2016, CO#17, 00:20:50,6 – 00:25:13,7). Traditional law is based on respect to Mother Earth (Smith n.d: 79) and it is reflected in their creation stories:

“Our people are not that removed from the people in our creation story *Lhin Nits'en Nanayidaysh* (The Dog Who Courted Someone), or more commonly referred to as *Lhindesch'oysh* (The Woman and the Dog). For the most part, we still use politeness as a form of communicating, we have held on to our work ethic, and we practice our

spirituality and our traditional laws. Our vision is to maintain and continue the traditions of our *esghaydam* (ancestors)” (Smith n.d: 1).

Those laws are transmitted “during childhood through oral stories [...] about *Datsan* (Raven), *Nisdžun* (Owl) and *Ts’elh* (Frog) and other animals” and according to (late) Helena Myers *ghinli*, those stories are to be told “only after the nightfall” or the person can become blind (Smith n.d: 2). In the T̓silhqot’in culture, storytelling becomes essential to the education of the younger generations.

Principles of harvesting only what is necessary and sharing the abundance provided by Mother Earth with the Elders and other community members are also reflected in those stories and serve as a guide for hunting, fishing or gathering activities (Smith n.d: 3-4). Keeping the balance in nature (Smith n.d: 74), listening to and understanding the animals, leaving no trace or footprint, not disturbing the animal habitats or sacred places, giving back to the land, making honoring and praying when gathering are also embedded in T̓silhqot’in law; and if somebody intentionally harms “the Earth or its inhabitants, that energy will come back full circle, magnifying its intensity” (Smith n.d: 4–14).

Special protocols are followed for those who are considered *nimih* or *niminh* (Smith 2008), since they carry powerful energy: infants, twins, mothers of twins, boys and girls during puberty, women during moon time (Smith n.d: 59-60), widows, widowers, pallbearers and those who have touched dead bodies (Smith n.d: 56; Smith 2008; *Saina*, 65, 03/11/2016, FNLTPD#3).

T̓silhqot’in *esqax* (children) are also taught to respect “those who have more wisdom” (Smith n.d: 54), like *deyen* (healers) and Elders. They are the history of the people and the knowledge keepers. Elders sacred within the community. They take roles of primary decision-makers, teachers, disciplinarians, healers, midwives, name givers and protectors for the communities (Smith n.d: 62).

T̓silhqot’in consider themselves caretakers of their land. They hold the responsibility to protect it (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:15:54,4 – 00:20:44,9) and make sure it is there for future generations, as former Xení Gwet’in *Nits’il?in* Marilyn Baptiste explains:

“We are T̓silhqot’in, we are Indigenous Peoples of this land, we have the honor and duty of being stewards of our way of life that is intricately connected to the land, water, wild life (including Wild Salmon), wild plants that all provide for our future

generations here on Mother Earth” (T̄silhqot’in Language Group and Kunkel 2012: 21).

That deep connection to nature and animals is often reflected in the language; for example, the months of the year originate from the changes in nature and how animals behave in the different times of the year:

T̄silhqot’in months	English translation	Month
<i>Benen-Eghuteliḡ</i>	‘the month of melting snow’	March
<i>Benen-Neḡedilh</i>	‘the month the birds come back’	April
<i>Benen-Gwets’enedzish</i>	‘the planting month’	May
<i>Daltsi-za</i>	‘the month of the red-mouthed sucker’	June
<i>Jaṣ-Sa</i>	‘the month of the Spring Salmon’	July
<i>Ts’eman-Za</i>	‘the month of the Sockeye Salmon’	August
<i>Dandzex-Iza</i>	‘the month of the humpback salmon’	September
<i>Benen-Nats’ih</i>	‘the windy month’	October
<i>Benen Lhizqwenyex-Ts’enish</i>	‘the month when they move into underground houses’	November
<i>Gwelu-Za</i>	‘the month of the ice’	December
<i>Tiṣel-Iza</i>	‘the month of the Golden Eagle’ (when the life cycle of the Golden Eagle starts and eagles are doing display flights)	January
<i>Benen-Ses-Elhtsish</i>	“the month the bears have their cubs”	February

Figure 3.4 T̄silhqot’in months of the year (Smith 2011)⁸.

Naṣlhiny (horse) and *keyus* (wild horse) are important animals to the T̄silhqot’in (Bhattacharyya 2012, 2013; Bhattacharyya and Larson 2014; Bhattacharyya and Murphy 2015). They share a strong connection and are part of their identity as people. They were used for transport and wagons until late 1900s and today the T̄silhqot’in still train, ride and use them for ranching and rodeo activities (*Pauline ghinli*, 82, and Theresa, 60, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:13:30 – 00:15:00).

⁸ Note that there exist variations on the name of the months. For more versions, please refer to Smith (2011).

3.1.4 T̄silhqot'in values, traditions, beliefs and education

T̄silhqot'in people have a strong culture and firmly respect their traditions. Family is an essential part of the culture. Linage and family trees are important to their identity, since it holds the history of each family (*Chel̄pig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:51:49,6 – 00:53:27,8). When introducing oneself, it is protocol to share about one's parents and grandparents and community they belong to (*Chel̄pig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:17:34,1 – 00:18:17,0; *Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:02:36,9 – 00:03:07,2). Some community members often mentioned they can identify which family somebody belongs to only by looking at their facial features and observing their behavior (*Chel̄pig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:15:38,1 – 00:17:18,2 and *Blondie*, 57, and *Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:33:06 – 00:33:18). The use of last names, as in the Western last name system, started upon European contact. According to the community members, T̄silhqot'in names were changed by the Canadian Government and adapted to the English language and last name system (*Nun*, 57, *MQ*, 66 and *Maggie*, 76, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:09:48,2 – 00:10:30,1; *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:38:34,7 – 00:40:03,6). Regarding marriage traditions, today some women choose to adopt the husband's last name and some keep their own family name. When it comes to mixed marriages of people from different communities or language groups, community members often distinguish the community their family is originally from and the community or family his/her partner is from.

Traditionally, T̄silhqot'in had extensive families formed by four generations or more as well as many cousins and uncles and aunties. Children are usually given a T̄silhqot'in and/or an English name. Sometimes T̄silhqot'in naming ceremonies are held, where Elders give names to the children, even if they are not new-borns. T̄silhqot'in names are usually related to animals or other nature elements. New moms usually receive a *ch'i* (baby basket), after the baby is born. No gift is given during the pregnancy, since it is considered bad luck (T̄silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012). Children are usually raised by the whole family and often by other families (*Chel̄pig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:18:23,3 – 00:19:08,2).

Gatherings are an important part of the culture. Marriages, funerals and other celebrations become community events. Annual gatherings are held by TNG or a community and T̄silhqot'in members camp and visit for several days. Traditional meals are provided daily and events include speeches and traditional activities like *Lehal* or stick

game, talent show, horseshoe tournament, moccasin mile run, horseback quarter-mile race, bow and arrow contest, ax throwing contest, bannock-making contest, tea-making contest, *Indian Bingo* game and children's activities (T̓silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012: 66). Praying, drumming and singing are also very present in the gatherings. Traditional places where T̓silhqot'in people gather are *Težtan Biny* (Fish Lake), *Nagwentled* (Farwell Canyon), *ʔElhixidlin* (Fraser and T̓silhqot'in rivers' junction), *Gwetsilh* (Siwash) and the Brittany Triangle (T̓silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012: 66).

T̓silhqot'in are "strong-willed and spiritual people" (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement). Drumming and singing are an essential part of the culture. They pray to *Gudi Nits'ilʔin* (the Creator) and their *esghaydam* (ancestors) (T̓silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012). Catholicism is also common among the older generations due to the church presence upon European contact in the late 1800s (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:15:54,4 – 00:20:44,9), and in the ceremonies and other events, like funerals or marriages, both T̓silhqot'in protocols and catholic traditions are often present; it is common to listen to Catholic prayers in T̓silhqot'in (T̓silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012).

Catholic missionaries arrived to the Cariboo in 1866, and couple decades later the residential school system was established. Many T̓silhqot'in children, together with neighbouring peoples like Dakelh and Secwepemc (*Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:29:40,4 – 00:30:02,8), were forced to attend the St. Joseph Mission near Williams Lake (Kunkel 2008: 88; Kunkel 2014: 44). This residential school was open from 1891-1981 (T̓silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012: 47-48). Later on, most of those children also attended *Indian* day schools when they opened in the communities in 1962. In both institutions, children were forbidden to practice their culture and speak their language and were forced to learn how to read, write and speak in English; furthermore they were forced to practice a new religion to them, Catholicism (Kunkel 2014: 44). They were neglected and suffered sexual and physical abuse and as a result, trauma and fatal consequences of losing their language, culture and identity are still present today, like in many other Indigenous communities in B.C. and all over Canada (Kunkel 2014: 43-44), as we have mentioned in the previous chapter (cf. 2.2.1).

3.2 *Nenqayni Ch'ih*: The T̄silhqot'in language

According to Ethnologue (Eberhard et al. 2021), different names have been used for the T̄silhqot'in language: Tzilkotin, T̄sinhqot'in, T̄silhqut'in. However, speakers would refer to their own language as *Nenqayni Ch'ih* (meaning 'T̄silhqot'in way').

This language belongs to the Na-Dené (Athabaskan)-Eyak-Tlingit⁹ family, and the Na-Dené (Athabaskan) language sub-family, which is distantly related to the languages Lingít (Tlingit) and Eyak. There are about 13,440 speakers of Na-Dené, located mostly in Canada, including 27 languages with less than 1,000 speakers (Martí et al. 2005: 110) and with only 300 speakers of Tlingit left today (Krauss 1997; Krauss 2007; Tsumagari et al. 2007; Fortescue et al. 2017: 22); Eyak has recently become extinct (Fortescue 2017: 3), as the last remaining speaker of Eyak passed away in 2008 (Cook and Flynn 2008: 322).

The Na-Dené language family is formed by sixteen distinct languages covering northern British Columbia (cf. 2.2; Figure 2.2)¹⁰, Yukon, Northwest Territories, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, with languages like Dakelh (Carrier), Dane-Za (Beaver), Danezāgé' (Kaska), Dene K'e (Slavey), Tāltān, Tse'khene, T̄silhqot'in, Southern Tutchone, Witsuwit'en/Nedut'en; the southwest United States with Diné bizaad (Navajo) and Apache, as well as the Pacific Coast in northern California and Oregon (FPCC 2018h: 32). It has been recently stated that the Na-Dené (Athabaskan)-Eyak-Tlingit family is ultimately related to a small language family called Yeniseian located in central Siberia (Fortescue et al. 2017: 10; FPCC 2018h: 32).

See a table below with the languages that form this family and the estimated number of speakers in Canada and the United States (Cook and Flynn 2008:322):

⁹ Tlingit and Athabaskan-Eyak probably diverged more than 4,000 years ago, but “virtually all prefix classes from object to classifier are shared in recognizably cognate form” (Vajda 2017:386).

¹⁰ See the following links for language maps: https://www.ethnologue.com/map/CA_sw and <https://maps.fpcc.ca/> (accessed on September 2, 2019)

Language	Estimated number of speakers in Canada	Estimated number of speakers in the United States
Tlingit	< 100	< 400
<i>Athabaskan:</i>		
Dëne Sułíné/Chipewyan	15 000	-
Slave(y), including Hare	3 850	-
Dogrib	1 900	-
T̄silhqot̄'in/Chilcotin	1 200	-
Dakelh/Carrier	1 250	-
Tutchone (Northern, Southern)	450	-
Kaska	400	-
Gwich'in/Kutchin	350	300
Beaver	200	-
Witsuwit'en-Babine/Nedut'en	185	-
Sekani	50	-
Tsúut'ina/Sarcee	< 40	-
Tahltan	< 40	-
Upper Tanana	10	105
Hän	< 5	12
Tagish	2	-

Figure 3.5 Speakers of Tlingit and Na-Dené languages in Canada (Cook and Flynn 2008:322)

As neighbouring languages, T̄silhqot̄'in has Dakelh (Carrier) to the north, Secwepemcstin (Shuswap) to the east, St'át'imcets to the south, Éy7á7juuthem, Kwakwala, Ooweykyala/'Uikala and Nuxalk to the west (cf. 2.2; Figure 2.2). The only one of them that belongs to the Dene language family is Dakelh (Carrier). They share similar words and grammar features and speakers from both languages can often understand each other. However, phonology is quite different; as we will see below, T̄silhqot̄'in has a complex vowel pronunciation in combination with certain consonants as well as a special tone system, where vowels carry the high tone (Krauss 2005; Hargus and Rice 2005: 112). According to Sturtevant and Goddard (1983: 84), this may have been influenced by contact with neighbouring language communities, as the St'át'imcets or other Interior Salish languages.

Another language that was spoken in T̄silhqot̄'in territory was the Chinook jargon. This pidgin language, formed by a mix of English, French and Indigenous languages arrived in T̄silhqot̄'in territory along with European contact in the late 1800s (Lutz 2008:142), and it was used mostly for trading activities between settler and Indigenous communities. According to Lutz (2008: 142), the T̄silhqot̄'in were one of the last Indigenous peoples to acquire this “language of the in-between”, due to their isolation from the settler population. This author also states that they also were one of the last communities in learning English, and one that kept using their own language on a regular basis until today.

Traditionally, variations within the language existed; as Shaw (2001: 50) explains, dialects were “an integral component of everyday life, actively nurtured through the social interactions of intermarriage, trade, pot latching, war, etc. People from one band [community] or region readily recognized dialectal features from other locals”.

Although no thorough study of *Nenqayni ch'ih* dialects has been conducted to this date (Cook 2013: 1), we can observe pronunciation variations in different areas within T̓silhqot̓'in territory (Yunešit̓'in First Nations Government 2014: 1). As I will comment more in detail below (cf. 3.2.2.1), speakers from different communities show phonological variations (Cook 2013: 1). Those differences are not a problem for speakers to understand each other (Pye 1992: 80), but sometimes they may represent a challenge or cause disagreements about the right way to pronounce words. Therefore, to address any potential language issues, the T̓silhqot̓'in Language Committee, together with T̓silhqot̓'in National Government Executive Lead & Legal Counsel Jay Nelson, developed the following dialect declaration¹¹.

“T̓silhqot̓'in Language – Respecting Our Diversity:

The T̓silhqot̓'in language is valuable to our future generations, we need to respect and acknowledge the diversity of the T̓silhqot̓'in language dialects of each community; Tl'esqox, T̓si Del, Yunešit̓'in, ʔEsdilagh, Xenigwet̓'in and Tl'etinqox. When we use the term 'dialect', we are not referring to any 'correctness' nor 'inaccuracies' in how T̓silhqot̓'in is spoken, but simply acknowledging that the pronunciation may differ slightly in each community. When our Elders speak T̓silhqot̓'in we listen and learn and appreciate the richness of the different dialects.”

Today there is a general attitude of respect towards all T̓silhqot̓'in speakers, since it is widely understood that not just communities but even families may have different ways of speaking or referring to things and all of them are legitimate and unquestionably enrich the language.

In the next section, I will review some of the linguistic work conducted on this language and provide a brief linguistic description of the special features of this language.

¹¹ Dialect declaration and T̓silhqot̓'in translation provided by TNG Language Expert Bella Alphonse with assistance from TNG Language Technology Manager Aaron Plahn are available at the T̓silhqot̓'in Nation Government Language website: <http://www.tsilhqotinlanguage.ca/>

3.2.1 Previous linguistic work

Nenqayni Ch'ih has an important oral tradition, as the other Indigenous languages in B.C. According to Smith (2011: 2), “the T̄silhqot'in language has not been thoroughly documented nor has it gone through a standardization process and language acquisition is still based on oral communication”. However, some documentation efforts have been taken in the last decades. According to Cook (2013: 1), the first attempt to describe the T̄silhqot'in phonemic system was done by evangelical missionary Quindel King. In 1968, he produced a manuscript titled *Chilcotin Phonology and Vocabulary*, that, later on, was included in a compilation on the Athabaskan consonantal system by Hamp et al. (1979). King's work “revealed some typical characteristics of the Athabaskan consonantal system, including, among others, three series of stops and affricates (plain, aspirated and glottalized) and two series of continuants” (Cook 2013: 1). King, together with other missionaries and T̄silhqot'in language expert William Myers from Yunešit'in, also participated in the translation of some parts of the Bible, and later on, the *Gospel of Mark*, the *Book of Genesis* and the *Jesus* movie.

American linguist Ed Cook also got fascinated with the T̄silhqot'in phonology during his visits to the territory in the 1970s, as we can read in his words:

“Within a few days I began to hear consonants that were not reported in earlier studies, and I realized the vowel system was much more opaque and more complex than I had encountered in any other languages that I was familiar with” (T̄silhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012: 29).

In 1975, Michael Krauss visited him and documented the “most remarkable and quintessential characteristic” of the T̄silhqot'in phonology (Kraus 2005): “the contrast between two sets of consonants, sharp and flat, and their effect on vowel allophony” (Cook 2013: 2). Results were included in Krauss (1975).

Cook continued the work interested in defining the “complete synchronic phonemic system, especially the velars, uvulars, vowel phonemes, and tone”, and, in 1976, with the help of community language experts Bella Alphonse, Maria Myers and Stanley Stump developed an overall phonemic inventory (Cook 1978; 1983; 1987; 1989; 1993). That work represents now the basis of the orthography currently used by the T̄silhqot'in Nation (Cook 2013: 2). Other research studies were also conducted (Latimer 1978) and several

pedagogical materials were developed by community language experts, some of them unpublished, but still used for teaching the language at the schools (Cook 2013: 2): Maria Myers's *Nenqayni ch'ih ?ech'eyaltig* booklets and handbooks (1979); vocabulary lists and transcriptions of traditional stories titled *Chilcotin texts* by Bella Alphonse (1983); the unpublished *Chilcotin lexical database* by William Myers (n.d.) and booklets *Deni Ghanidats'egughilex Bigwedetaghanl?anx* 'Learning about the law' (1994) and *Traditional Values Gathering* booklet (1998); and a visual dictionary titled *Beghad Jigwedetaghel?anx* published by Linda Smith (2011).

In 2013, Cook published his work *A Tsilhqút'in Grammar* with a description of the "phonology, morphology, and syntax of the language, written in the spirit of Generative Grammar" (Cook 2013: 3). That book is an extension of his manuscript titled *A Linguistic Introduction to Tsilhqút'in (Chilcotin)* (2005) based on field data collected between the 1970s and 1980s. That study was adapted by Maria Myers and Suzanne Russell to be used at the schools for teaching the language.

In the next section, I will provide a brief description of *Nenqayni ch'ih* and some of the special characteristics this language presents, mostly based on Cook (2013). Please note that my intention is not to fully describe the language but to provide the reader with some linguistic background for the purposes of this study, as well as with relevant literature on this topic.

3.2.2 Language description

Some authors like Fortescue (2017: 19) would classify Tsilhqot'in as a *polysynthetic* language, morphologically, as all the other languages of the Na-Dené (Athabaskan) family and many other language families in North America such as Inuktitut, Algonquian, Wakashan, Kiowa-Tanoan, Iroquoian and Caddoan, and in other parts of the world, as "Northern Central Australia, the Sepik River area of New Guinea, the Northwest Caucasus, and parts of India and Nepal" (Zúñiga 2019: 8).

As Zúñiga (2019: 15) argues, further research is needed, since there is no consensus yet as to how polysynthesis "is best defined" and where the "boundaries between polysynthesis and its look-alikes" are; however, some common traits can be found in these languages. According to Rice (2017), the so-called polysynthetic languages tend to be strongly oral and are typically associated with small speaker groups, local and inward-oriented, a sociolinguistic context that may have had relevant structural effects on the language. These languages are considered "synthetic to an extreme degree" (Baker 2001:

66), as words may consist of multiple meaningful parts or morphemes (Mithun 1999: 38) and can “express nearly all grammatical relationships by elaborations on the verb” (Baker 2001: 66). Morphemes can be roots, which are obligatory foundation of the word and carry its main meaning; affixes, which are never isolated, usually have subordinate meaning and may occur before (prefixes), after (suffixes) or inside of the root (infixes); or clitics, which are always attached to a phrase, clause or sentence (Mithun 1999: 39). Noun incorporation is another one of the so-called polysynthetic traits (Baker 2001: 69). Roots or stems may be combined and two nouns may create a new noun stem, or two or more verb stems may create a new verb, or a noun and a verb may create a new verb stem (Mithun 1999: 44) with a new meaning that combines both parts (Baker 2001: 69). As in other Na-Dené languages (Mithun 1999: 44), this phenomenon also occurs in T̚silhqot̚’in (cf. 3.2.2.2).

Syntactically, T̚silhqot̚’in is characterized as an SOV language (Eberhard et al. 2021) and it has some of the syntactic features associated with these languages: i.e. postpositions are used over prepositions; genitive noun phrases occur before the possessed noun; and auxiliary verbs are placed after the action verb (cf. 3.2.2.2 and 3.2.2.3 for examples illustrating these features). According to Cook (2013: 1-12), this language presents some special phonological features related to tone and nasal vowels, as well as verbal prefixes. Other characteristics related to negation, questions, demonstratives, causative ditransitive verbs, disjunct pronominal prefixes and the challenging morphophonemics in the third person are also noteworthy. I will explain more in detail some of those features in the sections below, covering some aspects of the phonology, morphology and syntax of the language.

3.2.2.1 Phonology

In regard to the phonology of the language, King (1979) and Cook (2013) agree on the complexity of its phonemic system and that “the T̚silhqot̚’in language has probably the largest consonantal inventory among the existing Athabaskan languages” (Cook 2013: 4). It is formed by 47 consonants, six vowels and two tones. Characters from the Latin alphabet have been adopted for the written language, in addition to few special characters:

ʔ, ɛ, ʂ, ʐ and ʋ. Below is a table with a phonemic inventory of the T̂silhqot̂'in consonants developed by Cook (T̂silhqot̂'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012: 31):¹²

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
I	b	d	dl	dz	dʒ	j	g	gw	gg	ggw	
II	p	t	tl	ts	tʂ	ch	k	kw	q	qw	
III		t'	tl'	Ts'	tʂ	ch'	k'	kw'	q'	qw'	ʔ
IV			lh	s	ʂ	sh		wh	x	xw	h
V	m	n	l	z	ʐ	y		w	gh	ʋ	
VI	N	N	N	S	ʂ	N	K	K	Q	Q	N

Figure 3.6 T̂silhqot̂'in consonants

And here is the vowel system:

Long vowels			Short vowels		
i		u	i		o
	a			e	

Figure 3.7 T̂silhqot̂'in vowels (Cook in T̂silhqot̂'in Language Group and Kunkel 2012:32)

T̂silhqot̂'in is a tonal language, where sometimes two different words are pronounced the same, but the slightly different tone gives them different meanings. An example of that would be *set̂si* (my daughter, when the father is speaking) and *set̂sí* (my head) (Yuneʂit̂'in First Nations Government 2014: 25). Initially, it seems that T̂silhqot̂'in can be described “in terms of marked high tones versus unmarked low tones (as in many other Athabaskan languages)”; however, there is variability and it is much more dynamic than in other languages from the same family (Cook 2013 :4); in T̂silhqot̂'in, “sometimes high tone on one syllable causes high tone on the next syllable” (Yuneʂit̂'in First Nations Government 2014: 1).

Nasal vowels are another special phonological feature that is worth commenting (Hargus and Rice 2005). As mentioned above, according to Cook (2013: 1), a thorough

¹² According to Cook (2013:15): “Column headings: 1, (bi)labial; 2, dental; 3, lateral; 4, alveolar; 5, post-alveolar; 6, alveo-palatal; 7, velar; 8, labio-velar; 9, uvular; 10, labio-uvular; 11, glottal. Row headings: I, plain stops; II, aspirated stops; III, glottalized stops; IV, voiceless continuants (aspirates); V, voiced continuants (spirants); VI, nasals (sonorants). The uppercase letter at the bottom of each column is used to represent II segments in that column as a subclass: N (neutral consonants), S (Sharp sibilants), ʂ (flat sibilants), J (velars), and Q (uvulars)”.

dialect survey would still be needed; however, two ‘dialects’ can be distinguished based on the appearance of nasalization: one in Yunešit’in, where the nasals are prominent, but don’t seem always predictable, since they can also occur in an open syllable and in a syllable closed by a stop (Cook 2013: 4-5); and another one in Tl’etinqox (Anaham), in which nasal vowels seem predictable, as they occur before a continuant (Cook 2013: 4-5). However, a process of denasalization can be observed nowadays (Cook 2013: 1) mostly among Tl’etinqox young generations (Cook 2013: 33). Even so, we cannot determine the two dialects as in traditional dialectology, since we can find speakers of both dialects in the same community (Cook 2013: 25).

3.2.2.2 Morphology

With respect to the morphology of the language, Cook (2013) organizes Tšilhqot’in words into major and minor lexical categories, according to their internal structure (morphology) and their grammatical function (syntax). He includes nouns and verbs and postpositions as the three major lexical categories for two main reasons: morphologically, “these categories undergo inflection (although not all nouns are inflected), encoding grammatical categories such as person and number”; and syntactically, they all can represent a phrase, either noun phrase (NP), verb phrase (VP), and postpositional phrase (PP) (Cook 2013: 80).

Nouns have the syntactic function of being the head of a noun phrase, and they can be classified into five subcategories (Cook 2013: 81):

1. Simple nouns. According to Cook (2013: 81), they are mostly monosyllabic nouns and human nouns (e.g. *tsa* ‘beaver’, *deyenž* ‘boy’). As in other Na-Dené languages, only nouns for people are marked for plural (Fortescue et al. 2017: 15-19), usually by the suffix *-qi* (eg. *deyenž-qi*¹³ ‘boys’) (Cook 2013: 81). This phenomenon also vary among speakers and the plural forms of some nouns like *deni-qi* or *tšiq’i-qi* may not be acceptable for some (Cook 2013: 81). Nouns can get inflected with a possessive prefix like in *se-lin* (*se-lhin*) ‘my dog’, *nen-gex* ‘your rabbit’ (Cook 2013: 81); however, Tšilhqot’in lacks articles, as many other Na-Dené languages (Mithun 1999: 56).

2. Kinship terms. Except for the affectionate terms (*ʔinkwel* ‘mom’, *ʔaba* ‘dad’ *ʔEtsu*, ‘grandma’) that are words by themselves, kinship words need to have a possessive prefix as in *beban* ‘his/her mother’ (*ban* is not a word), *betá* ‘his/her dad’ (*ta* is not a

¹³ Author uses hyphens to separate the prefixes or suffixes.

word) (Cook 2013: 82). Cook (2013: 84) makes a special comment on the prefix *ye-* for 3rd person singular. According to speakers consulted, it would not be used for affectionate or kinship terms. Instead of using *ye-ʔad* ‘his wife’, it would be used *deni beʔad* ‘the man’s wife’. There are also three special stems in kinship terms, where one refers to a male’s relation and another to a female’s relation (Cook 2013: 84) (eg. ‘grandchild’ of female is *-cháy*, and *-tšuy*, of male; ‘son’ of female is *-yaz*, and *-yi*, of male; ‘daughter’ is *-yats’i* of female and *-yats’i*, of male).

3. Body part terms. This category is similar to the previous one and inflect with the same set of pronominal prefixes; however, they don’t present plural forms. As Cook (2013: 84) explains, “a more remarkable feature is the 0 form, which is inflected with the prefix *ʔe-*” (eg. *ʔe-ghu* ‘tooth’ and *se-ghu* ‘my tooth’).

4. Compounds. This type of terms may be formed by two nouns (eg. *nists’i-tšén* ‘deer meat’; *tsá-zéz* ‘beaver skin’) or a noun and a noun stem (eg. *Xení dení* ‘Nemiah Valley people’; *yeqóx ʔúy* ‘river eddy’) (Cook 2013: 86).

5. Deverbal and other nominals. Some nouns are derived from verbs or verb phrases but act purely as nouns (Cook 2013: 87). An example would be *delghi* (literally ‘it is white’) meaning ‘swan’ where the verb is identical to a noun. In other examples, the process is more complex, like in *shen* ‘song’ and *ts’ejen* ‘somebody is drumming’, where *shen* constitutes a radical that turns into a verb that turns into a deverbal noun *ts’ejen*. Another example is *deldón* ‘drum’ and *ʔets’edelhdón* ‘drumming’; however, unlike *shen*, *deldón* is not a radical, but “shows the morphological structure of a passive (intransitive) verb” (Cook 2013: 88). Deverbal nouns can also derive from a third person singular like *ts’eyan* ‘groceries’ (*ts’eyan* ‘someone eats it’), *gwenig* ‘story’ (*gwelig* ‘s/he is narrating the story’) or *bíyatig* ‘telephone’ (*bíd yalhtig* ‘s/he is talking with/into it’). Here, *ts’eyan* could be compared to *ts’ejen* and *bíyatig* can be comparable to *deldón*, although they don’t show the classifier *-l*. There are also nouns that are exactly like verbs, morphologically, like *t’águltin* ‘old person’ that derives from *t’águltin* ‘s/he is old’. Some noun phrases that are formally identical to full sentences, like *nulh nádílh* ‘flying bird’ (=an animal that is flying) or *nundi damalh* ‘bobcat’ (literally, ‘lynx that is striped’). Other nominal particles are *chuw* (or spelled *chugh* as preferred by some community language experts) as augmentative and *yaz* as diminutive in examples like *ses-chuw* (or *ses-chugh*) ‘big bear’ or *sek’i-yaz* ‘calf’ (little cow). Those particles are not words and cannot be used without being attached to a noun (Cook 2013: 90).

Regarding postpositions, these words use the same pronominal prefixes as nouns (Cook 2013: 91), for example, *-ts'én* 'to' (eg. *se-ts'én* 'to me'; *ne-ts'én* 'to you'; *be-ts'én* 'to him/her'; *ye-ts'én* 'to the other'). Cook (2013: 91) mentions two prefixes that may require special comment: *ʔe* that occurs with nouns and postpositions and *gwe-* that only occurs with postpositions. The cognates of the pronominal prefix *ʔe* are called “unspecified” (no person or number) in Na-Dené languages, or “impersonal” as Cook (2013: 91) suggest for a better term since “they don’t refer to a person”, and its use is restricted to body parts when they are not referred to a certain body (e.g. *ʔe-lá* ‘a hand’ *ʔe-žež* ‘a skin’). This prefix is treated as an inflectional prefix of the postpositions as in *ʔe-tsen* ‘a different way/direction (*ʔelh-ts'en* ‘to each other’). Words related to the prefix *-gwe* are called “areal” prefixes and make reference to an area or place, time situation or condition (Cook 2013: 91). As the author explains, postpositions and names are similar morphologically but different syntactically; a postposition cannot represent a phrase without a pronominal prefix or a noun as a complement. They can be incorporated by a noun *beqá biz* ‘in his/her car’ and inflected by a prefix *se-gha* → *sa* ‘for me’, for example. Some of the postpositions are: *ts'én* ‘to (wards)’, *bánx* ‘around’, *bíd* ‘with (it as a tool)’, *bélh* ‘with (him together)’, *towh* ‘amongst’, *ghén* ‘near, beside’, *ch'ed* ‘on’ and *gha* ‘about’ (Cook 2013: 92-93). Postpositional incorporation can also occur when postpositions become a prefix. This can happen with the postposition *qá/qa* ‘for’ when attached to a verb, like in (3.3):

- (3.3) *Dechen ʔeyuy qalhgáy*
 Stick / other / for-he-went
 ‘He went for other sticks (and got them)’

With respect to the verbs, Cook (2013: 94) consider them morphologically complex and the most functionally lexical category in T̂silhqot'in; they can stand by themselves for a sentence since a verb typically has all elements to constitute a full sentence. According to Fortescue (Fortescue et al. 2017: 15-19), “all Athabaskan languages are characterized by pronounced head-marking plus a complex templatic organization of the verb, mainly prefixing, with just a handful of suffixes or (clausal) enclitics”. Cook (2013: 5) highlights three things to take into account regarding T̂silhqot'in verbal prefixes are: first, “they are organized into more or less dozen positional categories relative to each other and to the stem”; second, “the prefixes are divided into two sets – conjunct prefixes versus disjunct

prefixes, based on their different morphophonemic behaviour and syllable structure, as well as morphosyntactic differences”, where ‘disjunct’ are placed to leftmost zone of prefixes and the more inflection-like ‘conjunct’ prefixes are placed closer to the stem (Fortescue 2017: 15-19); and third, “the prefixes belong to two functionally different categories: lexical (thematic) versus grammatical (inflectional)” (Cook 2013: 5). This author also remarks that “[...] both positional and analysis and the dichotomy between conjunct and disjunct prefixes are much less straightforward than is assumed for Athabaskan languages” (Cook 2013: 5).

Verbs are marked for person categories and aspect/mode categories¹⁴ (Cook 2013: 98). T̄silhqot’in presents only one modal prefix *w̄e-* (optative) that can correspond with the English ‘will, would, may’ (Cook 2013: 137). According to him, there is no tense in T̄silhqot’in, and probably in other Na-Dené languages (Cook 2013: 137), and time markers are used to express the time when the action took place. There also are some particles that suggest past tense meaning (eg. *najaš* ‘it is snowing’ versus *naghejaž* ‘it snowed’). The *-ghe-* prefix is a “perfective aspect marker”, “the action is bound, that is, it has an specific end”, “in this case it means that the action is completed, it’s already happened, it’s in the past”, and *-jaž-* “is the perfective stem of the verb”. Not every perfective verb has both markers “but most will have at least one of those” (Yunešit’in First Nations Government 2014: 101). The tense called ‘future’ is an aspect in T̄silhqot’in, named ‘inceptive-progressive’ and represented by prefixes *te-* *ghe-* (Cook 2013: 137). This language does present several lexical or derivational aspects, as for example, iterative, usitative, continuative and inceptive, as well inflectional aspects, as for example, imperfective, perfective, progressive. Elements of the verb are the stem, classifier and subject prefix, and those occur in that order from the right edge of the verb, as we can see in (3.4) from Cook (2013: 95); however, sometimes prefix order may vary (Cook 2013: 135):

- (3.4) ná-s-gásh ‘I walk’ (s- ‘I’ = 1sg)
 ná-n-gásh ‘you walk’ (ne- → n ‘you’ = 2sg)
 ná-je-l-gásh ‘they walk’ (je- ‘they’ = 3dp)
 ná-ts’e-l-gásh ‘one walks’ (ts’e- ‘one’ = ‘default’)
 ná-l-gásh ‘s/he/it walks’ (∅ = unmarked = 3sg)

¹⁴ This author follows Jakobson’s definition of tense, aspect and mode.

ná-l-gásh ‘we (two) walks’ (*íd* ‘we’ = 1dp, deleted)

ná-lh-gásh ‘you (two) walk’ (*eh-* ‘you’ = 2dl, merged with *-l*)

As the author explains (Cook 2013: 95), the stem is the most important constituent of the verb but cannot represent a lexical unit, or “theme” (as it is called in Athabaskan literature) by itself. Themes are comparable to the English infinitives, as the “atomical lexical component of a verb” (Cook 2013: 137); they are not lexemes since they do not constitute a lexical entry (Cook 2013: 138) but they are morphologically more complex than English infinitives, since they have a lexical meaning; a set of stems also alternate for different aspects and mode. As Cook (2013: 95) explains, a theme needs a stem and at least one of the four preceding classifiers *-l*, *-lh*, *-d* or zero (\emptyset), which mark voice and valency, among others, as in the last example (3.2) of the verb *l-gásh* ‘to walk’. Sometimes themes also need a thematical prefix, for example, the prefix *ya-* in *ya-lh-tig* ‘to be talking’, which is not even a morpheme since it has no function or meaning. This prefix is called ‘thematic’ and only occur in this verb (Cook 2013: 137). Classifiers are not considered morphemes either, since they don’t have a meaning but they have some derivational function (Cook 2013: 137).

Primary themes may yield to secondary themes through lexical derivation, as for example, *gwe-l-nig* ‘to narrate (a story)’. Secondary themes include an active usitative-iterative theme like *na-we-l-nish* ‘she narrates stories habitually again and again (*na-*)’ and a passive iterative theme *na-gwe-d-nig* (or *na-gwe-d-nin*g in Yunešit’in community, where the nasal is usually present) ‘it (story) is narrated’ (Cook 2013: 137).

Then, subject prefixes mark the verbs for person: *s-* ‘I’, *n-* ‘you’, *-je* ‘they’, *-t’sé* ‘someone’, \emptyset or unmarked for ‘s/he’ (there is no contrast between the masculine and feminine genders in this language as in other Na-Dené languages), *-íd* ‘we’ (that gets deleted after *ná-* and *l-*) and *eh-* ‘they’ (where the ‘e’ gets lost after the long vowel of *ná-* (Cook 2013: 137):

- (3.5) **se-nin-lh-ʔin** (*se-ne-i-ne-lh-ʔin*) ‘you see me’ (se- ‘me’)
ne-nu-ghe-lh- ʔin (*ne-ŵe-lh- ʔin*) ‘he will see you’ (ne- ‘you’)
ye-n-i-lh- ʔin ‘he sees her’ (ye- ‘him/her/it’)
nexwe-n-i-lh- ʔin ‘he sees us’ (nexwe- ‘we/you plural’)
gube-n-í-l- ʔin (*gube-ne-íd-lh- ʔin*) ‘we see them’ (gube- ‘them’)

In transitive verbs, objects are marked by prefixes too, as we can see in example (3.5) taken from Cook (2013: 96) for the verb *lh-ʔin* ‘to see something’. Objects are marked in bold. Both subjects and objects are represented in the verb by those inflections, which means speakers can choose whether to include a subject or object noun phrase, since those are not needed to make a semantically complete clause, as it happens in other Na-Dené languages; for example, in Navajo (Baker 2001: 78). The examples shown above also have the prefix *ne-*, which marks the ‘momentaneous’ lexical aspect (Cook 2013: 96).

Cook (2013: 549-584) also dedicates a full chapter to explain what he calls the ‘third person anomaly’, since it does not seem as straightforward as those for the first and second persons. One of the ‘problems’ is the prefix *ye-*. As Fortescue et al. (2017) explain, Northern Athabaskan languages do have cognate pronominal prefixes, but the prefixes related to third person object are in complementary distribution with lexical nominals. In T̄silhqot’in, however, the third person object *ye-* does not show up in the verb when there is a lexical object as in this example from Cook (2013: 342-3): *yeyan* ‘(s/he) is eating it’ versus *lhuy heyān* ‘(s/he) is eating fish’

Another set of verbs are the so-called descriptive verbs, like *∅-náž* ‘to be tall’ in (3.6). They include a subject prefix and the prefix *-ne*, that may seem phonetically similar to the one in the example above but its morphemic identity cannot be like determined yet (Cook 2013: 96):

(3.6)	<i>ne-s-náž</i> ‘I am tall’	(s- = 1sg)
	<i>ni-náž</i> (ne-ne náž) ‘you are tall’	(ne- = 2sg)
	<i>ne-náž</i> ‘s/he/it is tall’	(3sg = zero = unmarked)
	<i>n-í-dánž</i> (ne-íd -náž) ‘we two are tall’	(íd = 1dp)
	<i>n-eh-náž</i> ‘you (two) are tall’	(eh = 2dl)
	<i>jináž</i> (je-ne -náž) ‘they (two) are tall’	(je = 3dp)
	ts’i -náž (ts’e-ne -náž) ‘one is tall’	(ts’e- = ‘default subject’)

Other inflectional categories, like aspect and mode, are also marked in descriptive verb stems as *-zun* (imperfective) and *-zú* (perfective) and by prefixes, like *-n* (imperfective paradigm) and *gh* (perfective paradigm) as shown on (3.7). The *N* in *ghen-* represents a nasal feature:

(3.7) nes-zun ‘I am good’	ghi-zú (gheN-i-zú) ‘I was good’
nin-zun ‘you are good’	ghin-zú (gheN-ne-zú) ‘you were good’
ne-zun ‘it is good’	ghin-zú (gheN-zú) ‘s/he/it was good’
níd-zún ‘we are good’	ghíd-zú (gheN-íd-zú) ‘we were good’
neh-zún ‘you are good’ (pl)	gheh-zú (gheN-eh-zú) ‘you were good’ (pl)
jin-zun ‘they are good’	jeghin-zú (je-gheN-zú) ‘they were good’

Classificatory verb/stems are common to Na-Dené languages. They indicate the shape, texture of the subject entity doing the action or the object entity being manipulated: if it is a compact, flat, or right entity, a shallow container, a bag or other enclosed object, or flexible, wet, etc. (Fortescue 2017: 15-19). This also occur in *Nenqayni ch’ih* and the verb varies depending on the object it is referring to (Yunešit’in First Nations Government 2014: 1).

As minor categories, Cook (2013: 98) includes pronouns, demonstratives, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs, numerals and locative and temporary nouns, and particles of various functions. None of them constitute an extended syntactic phrase; they have no complex internal structure as they do not get inflected and their derivational processes are simple (Cook 2013: 80). Cook (2013: 99) provides an example (3.8) from the story *Se?intsu* ‘my grandmother’ narrated by (late) Henry Solomon *ghinli* to see how frequently elements of minor categories are used:

(3.8) ?egúh	gúyi	deníchuw	gádant’i	?eyi	dzánh	nénduwh	yáx	nén	ch’ed
then	that	elk	like-that	that	only	around-here	that-way	land	on
gunlin	hágughint’í,	yáx	néndúwh	nén	ch’ed	gágunlhchúw			
there-were	it-was	that-way	around-here	land	on	all-over			
									‘There were only those elks around here’

According to Cook (2013: 134), demonstratives constitute an interesting feature, also from a pan-Athabaskan perspective, and from both morphologically and syntactic points of view. They are organized into a 3x3 deictic and gender system as in (3.9) (Cook 2013:102) and they are used as topic markers (Cook 2013: 8):

(3.9)	I	II	III
(human)	néndén 'this person	(nen) gúyen (gún) 'that person'	?eyen (-in) 'him/her'
(locative/temporal)	néndid/nénján 'this place/time'	(nen) gúyen (gú) 'that place/time'	?eyed (-id) 'there/then'
(other)	néndíd 'this thing'	(nen) gúyi (gúy) 'that thing'	?eyi (-i) 'that'

Next, we will learn how those major and minor categories behave and are organized in different types of sentences.

3.2.2.3 Syntax

In this section, I will make a short presentation of the structure of the simple sentences and complex sentences, as well as the main characteristics of negation and interrogative sentences.

A simple sentence is a structural unit consisting of only one predicate verb but that may include other non-verbal elements (Cook 2013: 331). These sentences are constituted by a subject nominal phrase (NP) and a predicative verb phrase: NP + V1. However, “the subject nominal phrase can be absent where the verb is inflected for a subject” (Cook 2013: 336).

Cook (2013:331) distinguishes three types of speech acts in T̂silhqot’in: commands, questions and statements. The order of the elements in the sentences may not vary, so meaning can become ambiguous in T̂silhqot’in when there is only one verb and no enclitic auxiliary verb. For questions, however, the particle *-ánh* is added¹⁵. In (3.10), *nin* is the subject to all the sentences and may or may not appear in the sentence since the information about the subject is included in the verb with the prefix *n-*. The subject pronoun may be added if the speaker wants to emphasize it. There is also a polite way of asking someone to do something and *-ghu-* and *-wê-* prefixes are usually used for optative or polite commands (eg. *ghunjen* ‘sing’, in a polite way, versus *henjen* ‘sing’ in 3.10a Command column) (Yunešit’in First Nations Government 2014:60):

¹⁵ I provide further explanation about interrogative sentences on p.107-110.

(3.10)	Statements	Commands	Questions
a.	(nin) <i>henjen</i> 'you sing.'	(nin) <i>henjen</i> '(you) sing!	(nin) <i>henjen-ánh</i> 'are you singing?'
b.	(nin) <i>şindah</i> 'you are seated'	(nin) <i>şindah</i> '(you) be seated!'	(nin) <i>şindah-ánh</i> 'are you seated?'
c.	(nin) <i>ʔinyan</i> 'you eat'	(nin) <i>ʔinyan</i> '(you) eat!'	(nin) <i>ʔeghínyán-ánh</i> 'were you eating?'

In Tşilhqot'in, just a single verb can constitute a sentence, since verbs include prefixes that mark person categories (subjects and/or objects) and aspect/modes. However, simple sentences can also include other elements that modify the verb, like adverbs¹⁶ (3.11a), postpositional phrases (3.11b), locative/temporal nouns (3.11c):

(3.11)	a.	<i>tşíqí</i>	<i>sú</i>	<i>hejen</i>
		woman	well	she-sing
		'the woman is singing well'		
	b.	<i>tşíqí</i>	<i>sa</i>	<i>hejen</i>
		woman	for-me	she-sing
		'the woman is singing for me'		
	c.	<i>ʔesgúl</i>	<i>tayalh</i>	
		school	she-go-prog	
		'she is going to school'		

All the examples cited above constituted intransitive verbs, sometimes called “intransitive complete”, as Cook (2013: 336) explains, since they do not require any complement. The constituent structure of these sentence is: NP + [[V₁]]_{VP}

There is another type of intransitive verbs that require a nominal phrase as complement/predicative to represent a sentence. That is the case of the verb *Ø-t'ih* ‘to be’, as we can see in (3.12) (Cook 2013: 337):¹⁷

¹⁶ According to Cook (2013), Tşilhqot'in has an exceptionally large number of locative and temporal particles. See Cook (2013: 121) for examples.

¹⁷ This may not happen in all cases, as Cook (2013: 340) explains. The same theme *-t'ih* but with the classifier *lh-*, as in *húnilh-t'ih* ‘how are you’, is an intransitive verb (V₁) and, therefore, does not need a complement to become a sentence.

- (3.12) a. há(ne)st'ih 'I am'
 b. sid há(ne)st'ih 'It's me' (I am me)
 c. sid beʔikwel hánest'ih 'I am her mother'

The sentence in (3.12a) is incomplete and requires a complement. Sentence in (3.12b) and (3.12c) are well formed with complements. However, those elements have different syntactic functions: in (3.12b), *sid* is a complement and the prefix *s-* is the subject (*hánest'ih*); whereas in (3.12c) both *sid* and the prefix *s-* represent the subject, and that is why including *sid* in this case is optional since the subject is marked obligatory by the *s-* (*hánest'ih*), however, the complement *beʔikwel* 'her mother' is necessary to maintain the meaning of the sentence (Cook 2013: 338). The structure of these sentences is represented as follows: NP₁ + [NP₂ + [V₂]]_{VP}

Regarding transitive verbs, these verbs have a subject and also a direct object (nominal phrase or NP) as an obligatory element of the verb phrase as in (3.13) (Cook 2013: 341):

- (3.13) Sid lhin naghilhʔín
 I dog saw
 'I saw a dog'

In (3.13), first NP *sid* is the subject, *lhin* is the object and both are marked by prefixes in the verb, which means those elements could be absent and *naghilhʔín* would be well formed and could constitute a sentence by itself. This third sentence pattern can be represented as: NP₁ + [NP₂+ [V₃]]_{VP} (Cook 2013: 343). That could look similar to the last sentence structure pattern presented above (NP₁ + [NP₂ + [V₂]]_{VP}) but in this case the NP₂ is a direct object of V₃, not a complement of V₂ as in (3.12c).

Regarding simple sentences with ditransitive verbs, we will see now in (3.14) what happens when an indirect object is added to the sentence (Cook 2013: 345-346):

- (3.14) a. ʔinkwél ʔetʂen [selin gha] niʔan
 NP₁ NP₂ NP₃ P Verb
 Mom meat my-dog it-to-she-gave
 'mom gave meat to my dog'

- b. ʔinkwél ʔetʂen [selin] gha-niʔan
 NP₁ NP₂ NP₃ P Verb
 mom my-dog meat it-to-she-gave
 ‘mom gave meat to my dog’
- c. ʔinkwél selin ʔetʂen [ya]-niʔan
 NP₁ NP₃ NP₂ ye-P-Verb
 mom my-dog meat it-to-she-gave
 ‘mom gave meat to my dog’

As we have seen above, the postposition *gha* may get incorporated in the verb, as in (3.14b) and (3.14c), since *ya* derives from *ye-gha*; or may stay separate, as in (3.14a).¹⁸ According to Cook (2013: 347), all options are acceptable for a speaker from Tl’etinqox and only the last one (3.14c) is acceptable for a speaker from Yunešit’in; however, the author cannot determine if it is due to a dialect difference, a personal preference or another reason.

That type of verbs represents, therefore, the following sentence structure patterns (Cook 2013: 347):

- a. NP₁ + [NP₂ + [NP₃ + P-V₄]]
 (NP₁ = subject, NP₂ = direct object, NP₃ = complement of P, V₄ = ditransitive)
- b. NP₁ + [NP₃ + NP₂ + p-V₄]
 (NP₁ = subject, N₂ = direct object, NP₃ = indirect object, p = indirect object prefix, V₄ = ditransitive)

Other frequently incorporated postpositions are *bíd* ‘with’, *qa* ‘for’ and *gha* ‘to/for’. This phenomenon can be “simply a morphological fusion or entail lexico-semantic and grammatical changes” (Cook 2013: 372), as, for example, syllable structure adjustments. Some may or may not get incorporated like *bid* in the different examples in (3.15):

- (3.15) a. Séneya-t’áʂ [seʔanlhchénʂ **bíd**] ʂeʔan.
 Money-purse my-bag inside it-is-placed
 ‘The wallet is [in my bag]’

¹⁸ Cook (2013: 345-352) explains postposition incorporation in ditransitive verbs in detail. The author also points out the importance of the causative ditransitive verbs from a morphologically point of view, as this language presents some prefix features with no cognate in other Na-Dené languages.

- b. Nentšínágu y qá bíghiʔan (PI = bíd)
 You-hat car in-I-put
 ‘I put your hat in the car’
- c. Bídáqásh ‘cup’ cf. -qásh ‘to dip’

Cook (2013: 376-390) explains other topics related to postposition incorporation as the prefix position of incorporated postpositions, lexical status of incorporated *qa-*, incorporation of *gha-* in transitive verbs and postpositions and idiom formation.

In addition, the descriptive verbs (or stative verbs) also need to be mentioned; they describe semantically the attributes of an entity, as the shape, size, colour, texture, etc. (Cook 2013:390). These verbs are preceded by a subject NP, and followed by a modal auxiliary verb (*hánt’ih* ‘assertive’). Descriptive verbs are considered ‘verbs’ and not adjectives, since morphologically, “they inflect for person (subject) with the same set of prefixes as in the active verbs”, and for five aspect categories and one mode. In (3.16), we can see the verb ‘to be big’ with the stem *-chágh* (Cook 2013: 392):¹⁹

(3.16)	Imperfective	Perfective	Optative
1.	neschágh ‘I am big’	ghinchágh ‘I was big’	weschágh ‘I will be big’
2.	ninchágh ‘you are big’	ghinchágh ‘you were big’	ghunchágh ‘you will be big’
3.	nenchágh ‘he is big’	ghinchágh ‘he was big’	wechágh ‘he will be big’

To finish, Cook (2013: 366-367) also comments on the existence of verbless sentences, where the predicate consists of an NP and zero copula, as in (3.17):

- (3.17) [Shen belhdán [ʔeyi gúyen ʔajey’inlágh]] ʔeyen guyen
 Song some Top those they-made them their-song
 ‘Some songs belonged to individuals who had their own songs’ (literally
 ‘some of the songs they made [were] theirs’)

¹⁹ For other persons, see Cook (2013: 392)

Regarding T̄silhqot' in complex sentences, Cook (2013: 453) divides them in three types. The first group is formed by “conjoined sentences in which clauses are joined in a linear fashion”. They can be joined by a coordinate conjunction placed before the clause or phrase conjoined by the conjunction, as in (3.18a); they can also be linked by a subordinate conjunction placed after the subordinate clause (Cook 2013: 113-112), as in (3.18b); or otherwise, they cannot be not marked at all, as in (3.18c), where we have a *complement* subordinate clause without any subordinator or complementizer. If that is the case, they have independent status, usually present the same subject and actions are concurrent (3.18c and 3.18d) or consequential (3.18e) (Cook 2013: 411-412):

(3.18) a. *hínk'an/?ínk'an* ‘and’

Nuṣay-chuŵ bíd yelhbíz, *hínk'an* sugah yetah nindzáy *hínk'an* yaghinhqen
 Pail-big inside it-she-boil and sugar it-in she-added and it-she-tasted
 ‘She boiled it in a big pail, and added sugar to it, and tasted’

b. *gwech'an* ‘before’ (subordinate conjunction)

Miduŵ xájeghindil *gwech'an*...?Elhk'achuŵ gwet'ín xi Bella Coola jedeltš'ish
 White man they-came before Ulkatcho people winter Bella Coola they stayed
 ‘Before the white men came, the people from Ulkatcho used to winter in Bella Coola’

c. Yánáh nádilh, wáygen jíz dežiltših jínasnih
 Way-back we-move-about wagon in we-sit I remember
 ‘I remember that we moved around way back sitting in a wagon’

d. ?Abá ?esqi náne?áx, yetelhts'ilh
 dad child e-shoot he-swing-him
 ‘Dad is soothing the child, he swings him’

e. Niyelh?éx qúnŵ nayeniláh.
 They-skin-it house they-bring-it
 ‘They skinned it (and brought it home).’

Sometimes the relationship between two clauses may not seem straightforward, as when they are linked by adverbial words like *ʔegúh*, *ʔegún* or *ʔeyed*. These words belong to the second sentence (Cook 2013: 412-413), as we can see in (3.19) below:

- (3.19) ʔUyán yenizen ʔegúh ghet'ex
 It-opt-eat it-think there it-prog-fly
 'it (bird) is flying there thinking it would eat?'

The second group of complex sentences is represented by those in which a complement clause or clauses are embedded into the left of the matrix verb in a nested vertical structure (Cook 2013: 413), and the rightmost clause is the highest clause and the leftmost clause is the lowest clause, as in (3.20). A clause embedded into a VP is usually an obligatory constituent of the VP (Cook 2013: 414) and its function is to 'complete' the action described by the verb as in (3.20a and 3.20b):

- (3.20) a. Ši [nezun]S jínilʔin
 Belt it's-good like-it-look
 'the belt looks good (*ši jínilʔin 'the belt looks')
 b. [ʔeyi yuyán]S yenizen
 that she will eat she-think
 'she thinks she will eat that'

The third group of complex sentences is formed by sentences in which a relative clause is embedded. (Cook 2013: 453). A relative clause is placed to the right of the head, but no (overt) relative pronoun is used. As we can observe in (3.21), there is no relative pronoun in *Tšilhqot'in* (Cook 2013: 441):

- (3.21) [qúnw [guntse]s]NP gwežaʔan
 house it-is-small it-is-placed
 'there is a small house' (literally, 'a house that is small is sitting there')

The periphrastic causative formation is noteworthy in *Tšilhqot'in*. As in other Na-Dené languages, this language presents "a productive morphological process of causative formation (morphological causatives) as well as periphrastic (syntactic) causative" (Cook

2013: 425-432). The verbs *lh-tsih* ‘to make (object)’ (3.22a) and *Ø-lax* ‘to make (object)’ (3.22b), among others, occur as main verbs in periphrastic causative constructions (Cook 2013: 425-432):

- (3.22) a. [Béd [nezun]S]NP [jelhtsin]
 food it is good they-made
 ‘They cooked a good meal’ (literally, ‘they made food that is good’)
- b. [qi [nezun]S]NP ?asdlágh
 shoe it’s-good I-made
 ‘I made a good shoe’

The postpositions *jíd* or *qa-* can also act as complementizers and link a matrix clause and a complement clause in the periphrastic causative formation (Cook 2013: 419-425). See examples in (3.23) and (3.24), respectively:

- (3.23) a. [[betšíghá]NP [nentsen]VP]S
 her hair it-s bad
 ‘her hair is bad’
- b. [[betšíghá nentsen]S2 jínil?in]S1
 her-hair it’s-bad *jíd*-it look
 ‘her hair looked bad’
- c. [[[betšíghá nentsen]S3 jínil?in]S2 ts’elhtsin]S1
 her-hair it’s-bad *jíd*-it look one make
 ‘somebody made her hair look bad’
- d. [[[betšíghá nentsen]S4 jínil?in]S3 ts’elhtsin]S2 nih]S1
 her-hair it’s-bad *jíd*-it look one make he said
 ‘he said somebody made her hair look bad’
- e. [[[betšíghá nentsen]S5 jínil?in]S4 ts’elhtsin]S3 nih]S2
 ts’edinh]S1
 her-hair it’s-bad *jíd*-it look one make he said
 ‘someone said that he said somebody made her hair look bad’

- (3.24) a. [w̃ejen qé]-ʔasdlágh
 He-opt-sing for-I-him-made
 ‘I made him sing’
- b. [w̃esjen qé]-ʔasínlágh
 I-opt-sing for-me-she-made
 ‘she made me sing’
- c. [w̃ejen qé]-ʔayínlágh
 She-opt-sing for-her-he made
 ‘he made her sing’

Other verbs can also take a clausal complement. The verb \emptyset -*t'ih* ‘to be’ can work as an auxiliary verb (3.25a) or as a main verb with clausal complements (3.25b) (Cook 2013: 432-434). The verb (*de-*) \emptyset -*nih* ‘to say’ also takes a complement clause, which may be a direct quote, and the subject of the subject of the matrix clause moves more often than not to the right end of the sentence (3.25c) (Cook 2013: 454), or an indirect quote or reported speech as in (3.25d) (Cook 2013: 435-436). As well as the verb \emptyset -*t'in* ‘to want/like’ which also takes a clausal complement (3.25b) (Cook 2013: 438-441). Pronominal prefixes between the matrix verb \emptyset -*t'in* ‘to do’ and its casual complement are co-referential: “the object prefix of the matrix clause and the personal prefix of the complement cause make reference to the same person, and the impersonal prefix *gwe-* of the matrix clause refers to the situation described by the complement clause” (Cook 2013: 454):

- (3.25) a. lhuy hánt'ih
 ‘it is a fish’
- b. [lhuy nilhʔin] hánt'ih
 fish he-see it-is
 ‘he is looking at a fish’ = ‘it is the case that he is looking at a fish’
- c. “Ses hánt'ih” nih deni.
 Bear it-is he-said man
 “It is a bear” said the man
- d. [[[Qwén [nenchágh tsính]S]NP dilhk'en]S2 ts'edenish]S1
 Fire it's- big indeed he burn one-said

‘It is said that he was burning a really big fire’

- e. Yuwētén yúst’in
Him-she-opt-hold him-she-want
‘she wants to hold him’

In regard to negation, according to Fortescue et al. (2017: 15-19), Na-Dené languages use a prefix plus a suffix (e.g. Koyukon) or just an independent word (e.g. Slave). In T̄silhqot’in, Cook (2013: 497) explains that negation is morphologically complex involving stems and prefixes different from the ones used on affirmative sentences. The two most prominent features of negation are the negative proclitic *lha* ‘not’ and the prefix *še*, as in (3.26). We can find cognates in other Na-Dené languages like Carrier, Witsuwit’en, Navajo, Ahtna, Slave and Chipewyan; those languages present either a proclitic/prefix or enclitic/suffix that contains a lateral consonant (*lágo* in Navajo, *le* in Slave, *le* in Carrier, but *we#* in Witsuwit’en)”, and some like Ahtna, Witsuwit’en and Carrier also have cognates of *še-* (Cook 2013: 7):

- (3.26) a. nendáʔátasnilh
(nen-dá-ʔá#te-ghe-s-Ø-nilh)
‘I am going to do what you bid (nen-dá ‘your lip’)
lha nendáʔátezasnilh
(lha nen-dá-ʔá#te-še-ghe-s-Ø-nilh ‘I am not going to do what you bid’
- b. nendáʔájunax
(nen-dá-ʔá-je-ŵe- Ø-nax)
‘they will do what you bid’
lha nendáʔájušnax
(lha nen-dá-ʔá#je-ŵe-še-Ø-nax) ‘they won’t do what you bid’
- c. nendáʔawēsnaX
(nendá-ʔá#ŵe-a-Ø-nax)
‘I will do what you bid’
lha nendáʔásusnaX
(lha nendá-ʔá# še-ŵe-s-Ø-nax) ‘I won’t do what you bid’

As we can see in (3.26), *lha* occurs at the beginning of every negative sentence as well as the prefix *še-* in the verb if this is an active verb; however, the position of the prefix may vary (3.26b and 3.26c), which constitutes a notable feature of Tšilhqot'in (Cook 2013: 7).

In simple sentences, *lha* also follows a subject NP (pronoun, demonstrative pronoun, or demonstrative plus a common noun) as in (3.27a); however, although in more complex sentences with a complementary clause *lha* may vary its position, it always stays as the first constituent of the matrix clause, as in (3.27b). If *lha* is a constituent of the complement clause, its position is at the left edge of that clause, as in (3.27c):

- (3.27) a. Sid *lha* deni ghuzi ʔegwébéyenešen
 I not man name about-it-I-know
 'I don't know the man's name'
- b. Miduw̄ nén deni baxagwetalyilh *lha* ts'egut'in
 white man land person 3-from-inc-prog-take-away not one-want
 'They did not want white men to take away the land from them.'
- c. ʔEgun tšiqi k'aníghelih [*lha* deyenž chuh ʔanáyešdlí] ts'eyenižen.
 there woman she-was-young [not boy yet he-touched-her] one-thought
 'They thought there lived a young woman who had not been with a young man.'

There is also a negative adverb *lhajíd* (not-like) 'in no way' that functions similarly to *lha*, as we can see in (3.28a). In addition, *lha* can also become a prefix, as in (3.28b):

- (3.28) a. *Lhajíd* beghén náts'uyá gúyah.
 No-way it-near one-opt-go aux.
 'In no way could anyone go near it.'
- b. ʔEts'én ʔusán yenížen, *lhagúl* xedeltsín.
 Elsewhere I-opt-eat he-think not-he-be refl-he make
 'Thinking "I will eat at a different place," he made himself not to be there.'

Other prefixes and even stems can also mark negation (Cook 2013: 503). Verbs can be divided in descriptive verbs, neuter verbs and active verbs in order to explain the morphological differences in their affirmative and negative forms in prefix structure for certain aspect/modes (Cook 2013: 515). Some noteworthy findings from Cook (2013: 515) are the following: the negative stem-suffix *l-* can only be found in perfective forms, and that the prefix *še-*, as negation marker, cannot be found in perfective forms that include *še-* or *gheN-* or imperfective forms with \emptyset -imp.

To finish and regarding interrogative sentences, Cook (2013: 523) explains that, as in other languages, questions in Tšilhqot'in can be classified as yes/no questions and content questions. This author points out that, as for the first type, Tšilhqot'in doesn't have a morpheme that exclusively marks a yes/no question; however, the verbal enclitic *-áh/-ánh* and rising intonation is used instead (Cook 2013: 523). Those particles can be attached to the question words or at the end of the sentence. All enclitics, except for *-áh*, appear both in questions and statements, and they derive from a verb (eg. *hanh* → *an*). Orthographically, a question marker is used at the end of the interrogative sentences. The order of the elements of yes/no questions is the same as in statements. See (3.29) (Cook 2013: 523):

- (3.29) a. *sesqi* *ʔeyan* *hanh?*
 my- child he-eat Q
 ‘Is my child eating?’
 b. *gúyen* *deyenž* *nenchágh-an?*
 that boy he’s-big-Q
 ‘is that boy big?’

As for content questions, they present the same order as statement sentences (Cook 2013: 524), and question words stay in-situ and are not moved to the beginning of the sentence as in English. See (3.30) below:

- (3.30) a. *néndan* ‘who’
 gúyen deni néndan hánt’ih
 that man who he-is
 ‘who is that man?’

cf. gúyen seʔaba hánt'ih 'that man is my dad'

b. nendid 'what'

ʔesqi *nendid* heyán-án

child what he-eat-it-is

'what is the child eating?'

cf. ʔesqi lhuy heyán hánt'ih 'the child is eating fish'

Cook calls question words 'NEN-words' since they all start with the syllable *nen-* (Cook 2013: 525-540). These words may be syntactically and semantically comparable to demonstratives (Cook 2013: 547). They can also occur in statements with the meaning or interpretation of indefinite pronouns: *néndán* 'who' ('anyone' or 'someone' in a statement); *nendid* 'what (non-human)' ('anything, something' in a statement), *nents'in* 'where' ('anytime, sometime' in a statement), *nendin* 'when' ('anytime, sometime' in a statement), *nendád* 'which (non-human)'. See example (3.31) for *nents'in* (Cook 2013:525-26) below:

- (3.31) a. nents'in (áh) yeghiyá hánt'ih?
where (Q) it-he-perf-eat it-is
'where did he eat it?'
- b. gán nents'in yetay'nlh hánt'ih-áh?
Just anywhere it-inc-prog-eat-eat-it it-is
'is he going to eat it anywhere?'
- c. lha nents'in nisʔin hágunt'ih
not anywhere him-I-see it-is
'I don't see him anywhere'

As we can see, questions and statements maintain the same order (subject + object + verb) with some special features as the use of the auxiliary *hanh* (→-*an*) (Cook 2013: 523).

According to Cook (2013: 525), there is a second type of content questions in Tšilhqot'in: *hú*-questions. The prefix *hú-* is attached to the left edge of a verb and it covers different meanings like 'how', 'what' or 'where'; therefore, cannot be understood without context, as in (3.32) (Cook 2013: 540):

- (3.32) a. *húninlht'ih* 'how are you?'
 húnest'ih 'how am I?'
 neʔaba húnlht'ih 'how is your dad?'
 b. *húlt'in* 'what is he doing?'
 húnelt'in-á 'what are you doing'
 ʔesqi húlt'in-án 'what is the child doing?'
 c. *húlhyad* 'where is he?'
 húnlhyad 'where are you?'
 húgulhyad 'when is it (happening?)'

In (3.33), we can see that other elements can also be questioned by the prefix *hú-*:

- (3.33) a. Q *neghuzi húts'edihn*
 your-name what-one-say
 'what is you name'
 A *seghuzí Maria hán*
 my-name Maria it-is
 b. Q *seyats'í húlhyad*
 my daughter where-she-is
 'where is my daughter'
 A *neyats'í qúnwê sedah*
 your daughter home she stay
 'your daughter is at home'

The *hú-* question prefix can also precede quantifiers like *lhan* 'many/much' → *húllhan*, as in (3.34a) and *jíd-* complement or dependent clauses for 'how' (3.34b and 3.34c) and *qa-* clauses for 'why' in (3.34d):

- (3.34) a. *ʔeyed deni húllhan gulin*
 there man how-may there-be
 'how many people are there?'
 b. *ʔesqi húgusún jíd yalhtig*

- child how-good-it is he-talk
 ‘how well does the child talk?’
- c. *húgult’í jíd k’a ʔanlhʔínsh*
 how-it-is like arrow you-make
 ‘how do you make an arrow?’
- d. *húllht’í-qa ninyah*
 why you-came
 ‘why (what for) did you come?’

As we have seen, *Nenqayni ch’ih* presents interesting phonological, morphological and syntactic characteristics and special features in relation to other Na-Dené languages that make it worth of further study and documentation. In the next section, we will explore the current status of the language in comparison to other Indigenous languages in B.C., reasons for its current situation as well as the scope of language use in the communities.

3.2.3 Current status of *Nenqayni ch’ih*

Compared to other Indigenous languages in B.C., the T̄silhqot’in language has “the largest number of speakers” and “the larger number of young people fluent in the language” (FPCC 2018h: 39), probably due to reasons like the remoteness of the communities, the late European contact compared to other language communities, and the fighting nature of the T̄silhqot’in nation, among others (Pye 1992). According to FPCC (2014b), there are 4,352 T̄silhqot’in people in total and only the 19.9% is fluent (around 864 fluent speakers, 100 of which are monolingual), 17% are semi-speakers (around 763 people) and 13% are active learners (573 people) (FPCC 2014b). In the table below, we can see numbers of speakers and fluency levels in each of the six T̄silhqot’in communities:

Community	Population	Fluent speakers	Semi-speakers	Active Learners
Tl’etinqox	1528	300	115	88
Tl’esqox	312	39	22	89
T̄si DelDel	639	103	79	115
Xeni Gwet’in	419	154	63	38
Yunēsit’in	424	105	123	155
ʔEsdilagh	180	18	21	0
TOTAL	4352	864	763	573

Figure 3.8 Number of T̄silhqot’in speakers and levels of fluency by community (TNG 2015)

Despite having a high number of speakers compared to other Indigenous languages in B.C., T̓silhqot̓in is currently experimenting a critical language shift, where English has become the dominant language for communication, and it is classified as “severely endangered” by FPHLCC (2010: 13), based on the analysis of the number of speakers, the use of the language and the documentation work. According to Ethnologue (Eberhard et al. 2021), the language is preferred by adults to elderly, but most children use English for daily communication. Some grandparents pass the language onto their grandchildren and the language is also taught in schools. There are some materials and wordlists or a dictionary-like resource and some portions of the Bible have also been translated. The T̓silhqot̓in Language Committee oversees the teaching of T̓silhqot̓in in schools and encourages language and cultural awareness activities (Eberhard et al. 2021). Language is used daily by older community members in private and public spaces. Regarding media, since its launch in 2018, the T̓silhqot̓in Community Radio has established language and culture as one of their priorities and has engaged T̓silhqot̓in fluent speakers in their shows so they can share stories in the language.

The T̓silhqot̓in language is also placed on Stage 7 ‘Shifting’ of the *Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale* (Fishman 1991), since the intergenerational transmission of the language have been interrupted. According to Cook (2013: 1), that is a recent phenomenon from the last couple decades, since in the 1980s children were still learning *Nenqayni ch’ih* as their mother tongue. However, in later records (Pye 1992), children would speak English, even if they could still listen to the language at home from their parents and grandparents for daily communication. Parents would still teach them basic language like colors, numbers, animals, etc. but communication would be mainly in English (Pye 1992: 77). Among the reasons for that language shift, Pye (1992: 77) mentioned the concerns that some parents may have had at that time about the complexity of the language and the challenges their kid could face to learn it. Also, the idea supported by some that learning English would help their children reach academic success. In addition, the advance of the technology could also change the lifestyle of the community members and affect the use of the language. Another factor could be the subordinate status of the T̓silhqot̓in language under English, since, according to that author, it was considered polite to speak English in case some of the people who were present did not understand T̓silhqot̓in; however, if somebody did not know English, the conversation would not switch into T̓silhqot̓in (Pye 1992: 79), as unfortunately, it is quite common in similar situations involving minorized languages.

Nowadays, almost three decades later, these attitudes have changed and there is a positive attitude towards language. Children learn the language from their grandparents or at school, as a subject (Martí et al. 2005: 289) Several initiatives to preserve and learn the language have been taken in the six communities, as we can see on the 2015/2016 Language Needs Assessment conducted by the TNG (2015):

“There is the desire to preserve the language and culture. Certain Bands have their own language initiatives such as publishing material, archiving and video-taping cultural events. There are 3 Band Schools on-reserve (Yunešit’in, Tl’etinqox, Tši Del Del) that offer Tšilhqot’in Language class at the Elementary level, and at School District No. 27, there are 5 language teachers teaching Tšilhqot’in language at the elementary level and at the two high schools”.

At the elementary public schools, Tšilhqot’in language is taught for an average of 2.5 h/week. Middle and High School Tšilhqot’in is an optative course. There are also three early childhood education programs where the language is taught 8.75 h/week, a Language Nest program (Yunešit’in), where the language is taught 16 hours/week, plus one language course for adults, where the language is taught 6 hours/week (FPCC 2018h: 39).

The Tšilhqot’in National Government (TNG) also participated in the Development Standard Term Certificate (DSTC) program for the Tšilhqot’in language. The framework for this program was developed by the communities together with the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) and the B.C. College of Teachers (BCCT) to provide accreditation to language teachers and also allow teachers to bridge into regular teacher education programs and complete a teaching degree. The DSTC program requires 3 years (90 credits) of course work on B.C. Indigenous languages, Indigenous studies and teaching degree prerequisites plus professional development. TNG and the Tšilhqot’in Language Group partnered up with the University of British Columbia and developed Tšilhqot’in Culture Level I y Level II to provide Tšilhqot’in community members with the opportunity to become language teachers.

However, despite the efforts, communities often face challenges. Some of the ones identified by the TNG on the Language Needs Assessment 2015/2016 are the following: the remoteness of the communities; the lack of funding for continuation of language projects long term; and the limited support and training for teachers in areas like learning

the teaching styles, curriculum development, lesson plan development, and resource development. According to TNG, there is no progression of learning with the curriculum from k-12 from *band* schools [schools managed by the communities] to Public Schools” and “there needs to be more communication and working relationships amongst language teachers and experts for information sharing” (Language Needs Assessment 2015/2016).

At national and provincial levels, as already mentioned above (cf. 3.1.1), attitudes of recognition and support towards language revitalization have also been established by the federal and provincial governments under the *Gwets'en Nilt'i Pathway Agreement* (2019), and by the provincial government, under the *Nenqay Deni Accord* (2018). We can see this on the following extract from the latter:

“7.0 Strong T̓silhqot'in culture and language:

7.1 The Parties commit to work together to achieve the following shared vision for this Pillar:

- a. T̓silhqot'in Citizens fluent in, and proud of, their language and culture;
- b. public awareness, appreciation and understanding of T̓silhqot'in culture, history and heritage; and
- c. recording and preservation of T̓silhqot'in language, beliefs, oral histories including legends, and cultural knowledge for the benefit of future generations” (Nenqay Deni Accord 2016:8).

Recognition of place names within the T̓silhqot'in territory to “reflect the history and culture of the area” was also identified as a priority within the *Accord*, and now the names of the T̓silhqot'in communities appear in the T̓silhqot'in language on Provincial government resources, maps and databases. Since 2015, we can also read the names of the communities both in T̓silhqot'in and English on the mileage posts along the B.C. Highway 20 and within T̓silhqot'in territory.

As the other Indigenous languages in B.C., T̓silhqot'in language also lacks of official status, and only some language services, like interpreting, are provided in public institutions. Interpreting is also provided at some of the community and official events, such as the trial for Težtan Biny (Fish Lake) in 2013 or the Prime Minister's visit to Xeni Gwet'in territory in Nemiah Valley in November 2018 (cf. 3.1.1).

In the next section, I will introduce the Yunešit'in community, where this research work has been conducted. I will present a brief description of the community, the current level of language usage and the language revitalization work that has been done to date.

3.3 *Gex nats'enaghilht'i*: Yunešit'in and language revitalization efforts

Yunešit'in is one of the six Tšilhqot'in communities. It is known in English as 'Stone', and some people also call it 'Stoney'. The traditional name of the place is *Gex nats'enaghilht'i*. According to Smith (n.d: 87), the name can be literally translated as 'rabbit, one clubbed once' ('once' as in number of times) and it makes reference to an event that occurred in that area:

“The place of Yunešit'in was a site with many rabbits like many other places and this place was named after an incident of an elderly woman who clubbed a rabbit. The actual clubbing of a rabbit may have been remembered because it is not the Nenqayni way – to club any mammal is offensive to an animal” (Smith n.d: 87).

Yunešit'in community is located south of the Tšilhqot'in river approximately 105 km west on Williams Lake, B.C. and 8 km South of Hanceville, B.C. within the Chilcotin Forest District and the Southern Interior Forest Region.²⁰ The main access is from Hanceville and Highway 20 (Tšilhqot'in Stewardship Department 2007:24). The Yunešit'in Caretaker Area stretches as far as *Elhdaqox* (Fraser River) to the East, Dasiqox (Taseko Lakes) to the West, Tšilhqox (Chilcotin River) to the North, and Graveyard Valley to the South.

According to Yunešit'in Government,²¹ the community consists of 450 people, and approximately 250 people live in the community within 59 homes. Regarding community infrastructures, at the moment, there are a Health & Administration building, school (K-grade 7) and gym, *Gex-yaz qungh* daycare building, library, youth centre, community hall, ice rink, rodeo grounds, three greenhouses and a small-sized mill and bed & breakfast-like facilities. There was also a church built in 1904 and restored in 1983, but was recently burned in April 2020.

²⁰ Cf. 3.1.1 for map (TNG 2017).

²¹ Yunešit'in Government website: www.yunesitin.ca (accessed on September 29th, 2019).

Yunešit'in Government operates as a community with responsibilities equivalent to a municipal, provincial and federal level. The jurisdictions cover governance and administrative responsibilities, lands, education, health and housing. Yunešit'in Council is formed by five members (roughly one per 100 community members): one *Nits'il?in* (Chief) and four *Nits'il'in-yaz* (Councillors) elected every four years, being the *Nits'il?in* and two *Nits'il'in-yaz* and the other two *Nits'il'in-yaz* elected in alternative years in order to seek governance stability.²² Quorum is constituted by three Council members out of the five.

According to Yunešit'in Vision Statement (2012) Yunešit'in people “are strong, independent, spiritual, and in control”.²³ “They are moving forward” guided by the wisdom of their “Ancestors and Elders”. They see themselves as “part of the land” and the land is part of them. They “move freely across the land” and consider their home special. They have the responsibility to “protect the natural integrity” and the health of the land, water and air “with respect for all and with power by acting together”, through their “collective commitment to the land, to each other and throughout stories and songs”. As they are “the only Tšilhqot'in community on the side of the River (Tšilhqox)”, they have “special responsibilities for the forests, water, air, medicines, foods, plants, and animals” and to preserve the portions of the land that are “protected for spiritual and cultural reasons”. They “teach Nenqayni ways of living with the land to youth and all who are interested” to provide a better future to our children, future generations and the land.

Yunešit'in people rely heavily on the land for food. They fish for sockeye, humpback and spring salmon and hunt for deer and moose. Some community members also trap during the winter months. They use traditional gathering places throughout the seasons for hunting, fishing and drying meet and fish, gathering plants and traditional medicines, picking berries and food preserving, ranching and ceremonial activities (Tšilhqot'in Stewardship Department 2007: 24).

Main economic activities are forestry, agriculture and community projects, which currently include: greenhouses, tourism, mill, fire management and bed & breakfast. The community is also developing a Waste Management Plan (Garbage and Recycling) as

²² At the time this research was done, leadership were *Nits'il?in* Russell Myers Ross (2nd mandate), *Nits'il?in -yaz* Rosalie Montgomery (2nd mandate), *Nits'il?in -yaz* Earl Quilt (2nd mandate), *Nits'il'in-yaz* Gabe Pukacz and *Nits'il?in -yaz* Jessica Setah-Alphonse (for the first part of the research; later on, *Nits'il?in -yaz* Ralph Myers took over the seat during the later stages of this research)

²³ The Vision Statement was developed as an outcome from 2012 Yunešit'in Land Use Plan.

part of the Comprehensive Community Plan. Education and Health are also significant departments with several ongoing projects.

In the next section, I will present a description of the language knowledge and usage in the community.

3.3.1 Language knowledge and usage of *Nenqayni Ch'ih* in Yunešit'in

As in the other Tšilhqot'in communities, language shift also occurs in Yunešit'in. English is the main language for communication, however, *Nenqayni Ch'ih* is also spoken daily by fluent speakers, mostly older community members on the late 40s and up. Younger community members may be semi-speakers that understand the language and may speak it especially to Elders; however, they communicate mainly in English. Younger generations may have basic language knowledge and are learning. In the last Language Needs Assessment 2018 (See Appendix 1)²⁴, conducted by Yunešit'in Government, we can see the ages and fluency level of the speakers. According to the data, there are 96 fluent speakers between 45 and 84 years old and 147 semi-speakers between 25 and 45 years old, whereas most active learners are between 0 and 25 years old. Data also shows the numbers of speakers living in the community (*on-reserve*) and outside the community (*off-reserve*). Below is an extract with the results of the assessment:

²⁴ The first Language Needs Assessment (LNA) developed by Yunešit'in Government was part of the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization efforts to assess where the community was at in terms of language speakers. A committee, formed by a Yunešit'in Elder Agnes Haller, Language Teacher Celestine Brigham and Education Coordinator Rosalie Montgomery identified fluent speakers, semi-speakers and learners in the community as well as living outside the community. Since then, the LNA has been updated every year as part of the FPCC funding application requirements.

Fluency											
Combined Fluent Speakers: 96											
Combined Semi-Fluent Speakers: 147											
Fluent and Semi Speakers											
Age range	0-4	5-14	15-19	20-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Total
Fluent on-reserve:	0	0	0	1	5	24	21	13	5	1	70
Semi on-reserve:	0	0	28	12	55	6	1	0	0	0	102
Total On-Reserve Speakers:											172
Fluent off-reserve:	0	0	0	0	2	15	7	0	2	0	26
Semi off-reserve:	0	0	3	3	30	9	0	0	0	0	45
Total Off-Reserve Speakers:											71
Combined Fluent Speakers:											96
Combined Semi-Fluent Speakers:											147
Language Learners											
Age range	0-4	5-14	15-19	20-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Total
Learning on-reserve:	21	42	49	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	134
Learning off-reserve:	23	24	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	49
Total Language Learners:											183
Non-Speakers											
Non-speakers On-Reserve			Non-speakers Off-Reserve								
102			124								

Figure 3.9 2018 Yunešit'in Language Needs Assessment

Other relevant language information, like the existence of curriculum and other language resources is also reflected in the document. According to the LNA, Yunešit'in has “language recordings/oral history archived (multi-media), “a finalized writing system”, “curriculum materials developed” and other “language resources in the community (books, CDs. Videos, etc.)”. Community members also have access to the *First Voices* archive done by Xeni Gwet'in First Nations.

The Tšilhqot'in language is partly used in government communication, meetings, documents, and signs and posters in the community buildings; however, English is still dominant for official communication. Tšilhqot'in translation of documents and interpreting are often provided in meetings. Language can also be heard in community events, gatherings and funerals, mainly for openings, prayers and songs. As in the other communities, new road signs with the community name in Tšilhqot'in were installed in 2015.

Yunešit'in ?Esgul is managed directly by Yunešit'in Government. Current staff is mainly local or from other neighbouring Indigenous communities. There are 30-35 children registered from preschool to grade 7. For middle grades, students may go to Alexis Creek public school, and for high school grades they need to move to Williams Lake. Yunešit'in school runs full day from 8.30am to 3.30pm four days a week and

follows the public-school calendar with some variations based on the cultural calendar (eg. *Lhatassin Memorial Day*, October 26).²⁵

Regarding the language, English is used for daily communication at the school. However, T̓silhqot̓'in can also be heard at certain events, like Monday morning sharing circle where children introduce themselves in the language and share about their weekends; there is signage in Nenqayni Ch'ih in some of the spaces like the classrooms, washrooms, kitchen, etc.; and teachers who are fluent speakers use the language for communicating with each other well as with the students' families.

Regarding the use of the language in the classroom, there is a language immersion preschool program called *Nenqayni T'ox/Language Nest*, where 2-4-year-old children are exposed to the language on a daily basis for 4 hours in the morning. Older grades also receive a 45-minute language class every day.

In the next section, I will describe the language revitalization work that has been developed in Yunešit'in in the last few years.

3.3.2 T̓silhqot̓'in language revitalization efforts in Yunešit'in

Yunešit'in community has a long experience on T̓silhqot̓'in language education and documentation. As mentioned above (cf. 3.2.1), in the 1970s and 1980s Yunešit'in language experts William Myers, Maria Myers and Linda Smith produced a number of language resources and teaching materials. Yunešit'in Immersion Committee also created several language materials in the 1980s and 1990s. Recordings of Elders' stories and songs have been collected, and two community members also participated on the FPCC's Master-Apprentice program in 2012.

More recently, language revitalization has become a priority for Yunešit'in Government and since 2015, the community has been following the FPCC's 8-step framework mentioned in the previous chapter (cf. 2.4.2) towards T̓silhqot̓'in language revitalization in the community; language and cultural projects have been financially supported by FPCC and other provincial and federal organizations.

In the next sections, I will present some of the programs that have taken place in the community from 2015 to the present.

²⁵ *Lhatassin Memorial Day* is Statutory Holiday for the T̓silhqot̓'in in memory of the Warriors that were hung in 1864 during the T̓silhqot̓'in War (cf. 3.11).

3.3.2.1 T̄silhqot'in Language Revitalization Planning Program

In 2015, Yunešit'in Government participated in the FPCC's Language Revitalization Planning Program. This initiative was collaboratively run by three T̄silhqot'in communities: Xeni Gwet'in, Tl'esqox and Yunešit'in with the main goal of bringing back the conversation about language revitalization in the communities and getting community members together to share perspectives on main priorities and strategies in order to bring the language back to full use in the communities. It also helped build capacity and infrastructure for language revitalization projects.

A T̄silhqot'in Language Committee was built within this project. It was formed by at least 6 representatives from each participating community including Elders and knowledge keepers, language teachers, parents, educators and youth, in order to promote diversity in experience and opinions. Representatives were elected by each community's Chief and Council under their own criteria. Other T̄silhqot'in communities were also invited to participate under their own accord.

A Language Planning Specialist position was created and I had the opportunity to do this work.²⁶ My job was to coordinate this initiative and facilitate the planning meetings, work closely with Yunešit'in, Xeni Gwet'in and Tl'esqox representatives to strengthen collaborative relationships and establish practices for communication and sharing. I also organized the knowledge gathered during the meetings and drafted the project deliverables.

On December 1st, 2015, a first Community Mobilization Meeting was organized in Yunešit'in. Around 30 people attended, including representatives of the three participating communities and the TNG. The main objectives of this meeting were to drum up excitement for language revitalization, to engage community members and to start down the path to bringing back the language to full use in the communities. Upon a brief introduction of the program by *Nits'il?in* Russell Myers Ross and presentation and brief description of the Basque experience on language revitalization by myself, the round table started. Participants had the opportunity to share ideas and identified big picture goals based on the following questions: *What is the language for us? How do we want to see our language in the next ten years? What can we do to achieve that? What challenges*

²⁶ Since then, I have been working as Yunešit'in Language Coordinator. Under the directions of Yunešit'in Language Committee, I have helped prepare applications for federal and provincial funding for language projects, coordinated the programs and organized the project activities, carried out budgeting and reporting tasks, and held communication with the funding agencies.

might we face? What solutions may we find? Yunešit'in ʔEsgul students also had discussed those questions at the language class and Selina Myers, Yunešit'in ʔEsgul language teacher, brought their ideas to the roundtable. As part of the *Vision* for this project, participants also contributed to a community *collage* made out of pictures of nature, animals, cultural activities, drawings and words in the language. By combining all those perspectives, a Vision Statement on language revitalization was drafted to provide guidance and inspiration and to be used as a tool for reference and to come back to the original vision in case of dissent (Appendix 2).

On the subsequent months, four more planning meetings were held in Tl'esqox (December 5th, 2015 and February 4th, 2016), Xení Gwet'in (March 4th, 2016) and Yunešit'in (March 23rd, 2016). The focus of those meetings was to provide the opportunity to share more about previous Tšilhqot'in Language Revitalization work (TNG Language Department presented their three-year language revitalization work under the FPCC's program in 2014) and to continue gathering knowledge that guide the design of other deliverables for this project.²⁷ Among them, a draft document of Terms of Reference was developed in order to establish the working relationship between the three participating communities and the roles and responsibilities of the Language Committee. The possibility of creating a Repository of Language Resources was also discussed. Language Committee members identified existing language resources and a safe place to store them at each community. Discussions on use policies and other strategies for sharing language materials were also held. To finish, a Strategic Language Revitalization Plan was developed including main goals, strategies to reach those goals, specific actions to address those strategies and stakeholders and target groups for each them (Appendix 3). The Language Committee identified the priorities in each community and, since then, this document has served as guideline for the language revitalization efforts in Yunešit'in, when applying for funding for language projects in the past few years (Appendix 4).

Under the Language Revitalization Planning Program, Yunešit'in Government covered the first five steps of the FPCC's 8-step framework (cf. 2.4.2): *Step 1 Assess the status of the language* with the development of the Language Needs Assessment; *Step 2 Community mobilization and support* by holding community meeting and engaging members in the language revitalization efforts; *Step 3 Research* on previous Tšilhqot'in

²⁷ Meeting minutes and deliverables from the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Planning Program have been included in the research analysis.

language revitalization work so efforts are not duplicated, as well as other language revitalization experiences for reference; *Step 4 Set language goals* based on the community needs and priorities; and *Step 5 Planning* projects that helped reach those goals. Finally, the development of the Language Revitalization Plan allowed the community to move onto FPCC's *Step 6 Implement language projects*, and since then, Yunešit'in Government has set to secure funding for addressing the priorities identified by the Yunešit'in Language Committee. The Committee continues meeting quarterly in order to develop, monitor and evaluate the ongoing language programs.

3.3.2.2 Tšilhqot'in Language Teachers' Professional Development

One of the strategies identified on the Language Plan mentioned above was to provide professional development opportunities to Tšilhqot'in Language Teachers. In 2016, the First Nation Education Steering Committee (FNESC) granted Yunešit'in ʔEsgul with funding to organize a series of Pro-D gatherings for Tšilhqot'in language teachers and a total of three meetings were facilitated by Yunešit'in Language Teacher Selina Myers (January 22, 2016, February 19, 2016 and March 11, 2016). They were well attended by 8-10 Language Teachers from four Tšilhqot'in communities (Yunešit'in, Tši DelDel, Tl'etincox, Alexis Creek and Xenigwet'in). The main goal of this initiative was to provide a space for teachers for sharing about their language teaching strategies and resources. They also worked on lesson plans for classroom and on-the-land activities, year calendar and language materials. They discussed about challenges they face while teaching the language and intervention strategies as well as about other activities that could be used to enhance their language teaching programs.²⁸

3.3.2.3 Tšilhqot'in Language Immersion and Culture Camps

Another priority identified by Yunešit'in Language Committee on the Language Plan was to organize language learning initiatives on the land. In 2016, Yunešit'in Government was granted with FPCC's funding under the B.C. Language Initiative (provincial funding from the First Citizens' Fund and the New Relationship Trust), and that summer, Yunešit'in Language Committee organized a four-day Tšilhqot'in Language Immersion and Culture Camp at Nagwentled (Farwell Canyon), about 60 km south-west from the community. The main goals of the camp were to provide a safe place to speak the

²⁸ Perspectives provided by the language teachers within this project were included in the analysis for this study.

language, support intergenerational transmission of the language and cultural knowledge, and promote pride and motivation for learning the T̄silhqot'in way among the young generations. This initiative created an opportunity for children and youth to be immersed in *Nenqayni ch'ih* and increase their language fluency through natural communication with their Elders, fluent speakers and language teachers, while doing cultural activities on the land. The camp facilitated the transmission of the traditional knowledge and values, while also nurturing the relationship between the youth, the Elders and the land (Daniels and Amrheim 2010). Cultural and hands-on activities allowed youth to acquire cultural knowledge while learning the related language. Some of the activities were fishing, cutting and drying salmon, cooking it around the fire, picking *bedzish ts'ediyān* (Labrador tea), medicine hikes, make dip nets, making traditional crafts (e.g. dreamcatchers, keychains, painting rocks). Ceremony-related activities like prayers, smudges, sweats, storytelling, songs, drumming, *lehal* game, also allowed youth to learn the cultural protocols while improving their language skills. Language games like *Charades*, *Pictionary*, *Broken Phone* and camp labelling activities helped youth become familiar with *survival* words and vocabulary for the objects at the camp.

Likewise, in 2019, Yunešit'in Language Committee identified the need of offering culture camps in the community and designed a series of cultural activities for the summer/fall/winter 2019: deer hunting and drying meat, hide tanning and making hide clothing. Two five-day camps were organized in a traditional camping area close to the community and were well attended. Elders shared their knowledge with the youth and other community members. The hide sewing sessions were held as part of the winter Language Course. Language curriculum for these activities was developed by Yunešit'in language experts and shared with participants and other community members.

3.3.2.4 *Nenqayni T'ox*: T̄silhqot'in Language Nest

Providing language teaching programs for young children was identified as another priority by Yunešit'in Language Committee in 2016, and since then, the *Nenqayni T'ox* Language Nest Program has run in Yunešit'in for several school years (2016-2017 / 2017-2018 / 2018-2019 / 2019-2020). This program is based on the *te kōhanga reo* (language nest) initiative, which was originated in New Zealand in the 1980s, as a part of the Māori language revitalization strategies and *Aha Pūnana Leo* program for the 'Ōlelo Hawai'i language (cf. 7.2), and has been used in some B.C. communities and other parts of the world for reviving Indigenous languages.

According to FPCC Language Nest Guide, this early childhood language immersion program can be shaped “as a day care or pre-school program, or it may also be a simple childcare program run out of your own home” (FPCC 2014a). In the case of Yunešit’in, the *Nenqayni T’ox* Language Nest program is a language immersion preschool program run in the community, where children are “nurtured and cared for in the cultural way by fluent speakers, and the goal is not to *teach* children the language, but to create an environment where they can acquire their language naturally”.

The Nest runs for 4 days a week, 5 hours in the morning, and it is aimed for fully language immersion while playing, singing, storytelling, going for nature walks and doing cultural crafts and other learning activities. Staff consists of one Language Teacher and a Teaching Assistant. A Language Apprentice also supports the program under the Language Mentorship program, and learns the language while acquiring teaching skills. Elders and fluent speakers visit the Nest regularly and do activities in the language with the children.

As part of the daily routine, the group have a morning circle where the children sing songs learn the colors, numbers, shapes, animals and other basic language. Breakfast, snacks and lunch are provided as part of the program. Only parents/guardians of children under 3 years old are expected to accompany their kids; however, families are highly encouraged to participate in daily activities and learn the language with their children. The program is well attended and supported by the community.

3.3.2.5 *Nenqayni Deldon* ‘Tšilhqot’in drum’

The intergenerational transmission of the language and culture was another strategy identified as a priority by Yunešit’in Language Committee. In 2017, Yunešit’in Government run the *Nenqayni Deldon* (Tšilhqot’in Drum) project as a language and cultural recovery initiative with a primary focus on healing from the impact of residential schools. Funding was granted by the Healing Fund of the United Church of Canada and the main project goals were to facilitate language and cultural restoration, support intergenerational and traditional learning and bridge the language and cultural gap between generations. The specific project objectives included: providing a space for language and cultural transmission; encouraging community members to share their knowledge with other community members; providing children and youth with an opportunity to learn their language and their culture; and engaging Elders in community activities. The target group was intergenerational, from children to Elder generations.

traditional knowledge and values were transmitted through cultural activities while nurturing the relationship between generations. Cultural workshops were delivered by two or three facilitators one or two nights a week in the community library. Activities included crafts (e.g. dream catchers, bead work, beaded *lehal* sets, small drums, medicine pouches), singing and drumming (i.e. *Nenqayni* songs, powwow drumming,), storytelling (i.e. traditional life in the meadows, animal spirits) and other cultural teachings (e.g. medicine wheel, dip nets, trapping, *lehal* game, survival skills).

As expressed by community members, this project created a positive effect in the community. By sharing and practicing their traditional knowledge, both community teachers and learners of all ages benefited emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually. It provided an opportunity for the members to reconnect with their roots and gain pride and motivation to learn their T̄silhqot'in language and traditions among the Yunēsit'in younger generations.

3.3.2.6 T̄silhqot'in Language Mentorship Program

Another initiative run by Yunēsit'in Government that promoted intergenerational transmission of the language and culture was the Language Mentorship project: a language immersion initiative for adults, where apprentices are partnered up with mentors/fluent speakers. The main objectives of this program are to increase youth's language fluency and provide them with language teaching training, support intergenerational transmission and develop new language resources.

The first year 2017-2018, the program was funded by the Aboriginal Language Initiative (ALI)²⁹ administered by FPCC with federal funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH). Two pairs of one mentor and one apprentice were formed. One pair worked together learning about *survival words* and daily language used for cooking, raising children, clothing, etc. The mentor was supported by two fluent speakers to facilitate the use of the language during the sessions and maintain the immersion approach. Activities were conducted at the mentors' or apprentices' residence and sometimes at public places (e.g. grocery store). The second pair worked together at the school and, in addition to having the language immersion sessions, the apprentice also supported the language class and the Language Nest program. Both pairs developed language materials based on their activities and learnings. Some of the activities and

²⁹ This FPCC initiative has recently been replaced by the Indigenous Languages & Cultures Program (ILC).

curriculum covered were: prayers, commands, calendar, alphabet, body parts, animals, food and cooking, and traditional stories. They also held group sessions and mentors, apprentices and language teachers had the opportunity to share their learnings and talk about their experiences, while doing crafts (e.g. beaded earrings, barrettes) or translating resources.

The second and third year 2018-2019 and 2019-2020, the Language Mentorship program was funded by a multi-year provincial grant under the B.C. Language Initiative through FPCC, with funding from the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR) and the New Relationship Trust. The objectives were similar: increasing youth's language fluency and providing them with language teaching training, supporting intergenerational transmission and developing new language resources. However, this time four apprentices and four mentors were involved in the program in order to increase the level of language exposure. They conducted language immersion sessions at the participants' residence and at the school focusing mainly on developing conversational skills. All participants attended the language course for adults organized concurrently in the community and used the course materials on the sessions with their mentors. One of the apprentices also kept supporting the Language Nest program and improving her language teaching skills. Group sessions were also held to create language materials (i.e. language flashcards), so participants could also share about their experiences and improvements on their language learning process. The group also went on fieldtrips and gather plants and prepare medicine. There is still one year left of this program 2020-2021 and Yunešit'in Language Committee plans to start the program again in the winter 2020/2021.

3.3.2.7 *Nenqayni ch'ih yawêltig* 'we speak Tšilhqot'in': Language courses for adult learners

Providing language classes for adult learners was also a community need identified by Yunešit'in Language Committee, and two language courses were offered in 2018-2019 and 2019-2020. The program was supported by a two-year grant under the Aboriginal Languages Initiative Program (ALI) administered by FPCC with funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH), Aboriginal Peoples' Program. Yunešit'in language teacher Maria Myers and Yunešit'in Curriculum Developer Linda Smith developed and delivered the language program titled *Nenqayni ch'ih yawêltig* 'we speak Tšilhqot'in' based on oral language transmission. The main goals were to increase the

fluency of the participants and to produce more language speakers, who may be involved in passing on the language and supporting future programs.

Language immersion classes were offered at the school two evenings a week during the winter months. The program was well attended with 15-20 participants registered in both years. Dinner was also provided as part of the course and participants had the opportunity to share a meal together and learn the language around it. Recordings of the language sessions and pictures of activities were collected and may be used for developing future curriculum and language materials. On the first year, course curriculum covered grammar, greetings and goodbyes, food, beverages, clothing, storytelling, and songs, among others; cultural activities were also organized, such as making *bannock*, preparing *bedzish ts'ediyān ledi* (Labrador tea) and *nuwish* (Indian ice cream). The second-year curriculum was based on a traditional story and a set of story props was created by the students. Curriculum and materials developed under this program may be used in other language initiatives in the community. Yunešit'in Language Committee plans to offer another series of the language course, this time online, under the Indigenous Language Grant 2020-2021.

3.3.2.8 Language material and curriculum development

Yunešit'in Language Committee also identified a need to gather and relocate existing materials and develop new ones. In 2019, as part of the 2018-2019 ALI program, the Committee revisited the inventory of language resources developed under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Planning Program. Some of the existing language materials were collected and updated by Yunešit'in language experts (e.g. *Nenqayni Ch'i Yaltig* phrase book and *Shen* song book). Those materials supported language immersion activities, such as Language Immersion program for adults and the Mentorship Program. Curriculum and materials created under the 2019-2020 ALI program may be used in other language initiatives in the community.

Under the 2018-2019 BCLI program, new language materials were also created. Language students with the help of language teachers and experts developed booklets in the language. They had about 10-20 pages of pictures and phrases, and covered different topics depending on students' interests (e.g. family stories, children stories, cultural activities, vocabulary about weather, colors, numbers, animals). Materials were professionally printed and distributed to support language programs in the community.

After these years of work towards T̓silhqot̓in language revitalization, we could say Yunešit̓in community is on FPCC's *Step 7 Use the language more* (cf. 2.4.2), since, after the planning and project work, now the language needs to be incorporated in the community daily life and members need to be encouraged to use it at home as well as at work and in public buildings and settings, like the school, the Health and Administration building, gatherings and events. Language policies also may need to be developed to support the use of the language. At the same time, moving into the *Step 8 Keep the language alive* may be appropriate too: language revitalization is an ongoing process and needs and priorities may have changed over the last few years; the status of the language may need to be reassessed and the Language Revitalization Plan, reviewed as well.

3.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced the T̓silhqot̓in community and their language, *Nenqayni ch'ih*. I have presented the geographic and political organization of the T̓silhqot̓in Nation as well as the agreements signed towards reconciliation and collaborative work between the T̓silhqot̓in Nation, and the Province of B.C. and the Canadian Government. I have briefly mentioned current environmental conflicts and the ongoing fight of the T̓silhqot̓in nation for securing their Aboriginal rights in their territory. As explained, some positive work has been done but more extensive recognition is needed from both provincial and federal governments.

In addition, I have also included a brief overview of the main economic activities and challenges that the T̓silhqot̓in communities currently face. Community members continue doing cultural activities and living from the land while relying on it as main food source. The T̓silhqot̓in maintain an ancestral relationship with the land and with nature. Protocols, traditions and cultural values are still very present and continue being taught to the younger generations. Regarding the language, I have presented the previous linguistic work, a brief description of *Nenqayni ch'ih*, the status of the language and usage in the communities as well as the language revitalization efforts conducted in the recent years.

To finish, I have provided a brief characterization of Yunešit̓in, the language knowledge and usage and the language revitalization efforts recently taken in the community. This description was based on a literature review and observations with the intention of providing some background to the research work.

In the next chapter, I will present the methodology including the ethical framework applied in this study together with a description of the implemented data collecting and analysis methods, as well as the research outline with the research questions and stated hypotheses for this study.

Chapter 4. Methodology

The methodology of this work is the result of a constant process of self-reflection about existing approaches and ways of conducting research projects with Indigenous peoples. As I was becoming more familiar with Indigenous methodologies and ethical and culturally appropriate research methods, questions like *who is studying whom? who will benefit from this work? and how will this work be approached?* emerged with the aim of developing a non-intrusive and respectful methodology for this study. Indigenous methodologies arise from Indigenous perspectives where *relation, connectedness* and *collectiveness* are key foundational concepts (Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Kovach 2005: 30-31). Under certain research paradigms, the close researcher-researchee relationship is seen as a potential risk for biasing research; however, in relationship-based methodologies the lines between researcher and communities are often unavoidably blurred (King 2010: 281) and “subjectivity [is] acknowledged and honoured” (Kovach 2005: 28). This is essential and almost a necessity in community-based research under Indigenous perspectives. As Potts and Brown (2005: 263) visually explain in their description of what they called anti-oppressive research, “[they, as researchers] do not begin to collect data in a community until all the dogs know [them]”, and that cannot be reached in a short visit to the community (Walmak 2013: 217). According to them, researchers need to create a sincere and authentic relationship with the community by taking time to visit both participating and non-participating members and getting to know each other; they need to collaboratively develop all aspects of the project as well, from the main goals to the ownership of the results.

That approach was the quintessence of this work. In order to pursue an ethical and respectful work, I needed a profound understanding of the culture and the people, which required a significant amount of time with the community. Guided by Yunešit'in leadership, represented by *Nits'il?in* Russell Myers Ross, I started building my relationship with the land, the community as a whole, as well as with the individual members and the families. That would help build depth to my understanding of the Tšilhqot'in worldview and the community dynamics in Yunešit'in. An important part of this learning and relationship building was to listen to their story while also sharing my own as well as my motivation for doing this work. The time that I had previously spent on the land learning about the local wildlife and ecosystems also provided me with a better understanding of the surroundings and their territory. The same way Kovach (2010:

42) explains, “the relational dynamic between myself, others, and nature was central to the essence of this work”.

Criteria of collective responsibility and accountability are also key concepts in Indigenous political and culture systems and, therefore, also expected to be met when conducting research. Both ‘researcher’ and (who was traditionally considered) ‘researchee’ become equal participants and engage themselves in a collaborative process. Māori researcher Russell Bishop (1996) introduces the concept of “collaborative storytelling”, where the relationship between participants “builds and deepens as stories are shared” (Kovach 2010: 43). In Western approaches, community values and beliefs and practices might be seen as *barriers* for carrying on research projects or even as exotic customs which researchers need to know for doing an appropriate work without causing offence in the hosting communities. However, Indigenous methodologies approach cultural protocols and behaviors as an integral part of the methodology (Tuhiwai Smith 1999). They also provide guidance when designing culturally appropriate methods and, therefore, procedures based in oral history and storytelling are considered a legitimate way of conducting research under Indigenous research paradigms.

This critical and collective way of conducting research with Indigenous communities has become more common in the last decades. Many Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars are actively working to ensure that research is not only respectful, or culturally sensitive, but also collaborative and based on approaches and processes that are part of the Indigenous cultures, worldviews and ways of being (Tuhiwai Smith 1999; Graveline 2000; Sinclair 2003; Absolon and Willett 2005; Kovach 2005, 2013). As Kovach (2010: 28) states, “an Indigenous epistemology within Indigenous research projects is important because Indigenous peoples will likely understand and share their experience from this perspective”. The term *research* has also come under scrutiny by certain approaches (Tuck and Yang 2014). For many Indigenous communities, that word contains implicit negative meaning, related to concepts like *colonialism* and *racism*, due to the type of research conducted in many communities in the past centuries, where Indigenous people became the ‘object’ of research (Tuhiwai Smith 1999). With the aim of respecting that, authors like Absolon and Willett (2005: 114), have suggested other ways of approaching the *research* concept, for example, by using other terminology such as “gathering and sharing of knowledge”, which I adopted in this work. Likewise, the concept of *knowledge* is taken under consideration. Potts and Brown (2005: 267) reflect on it in their work and explain why it should be considered as such other knowledge beyond what is published

in academic books and articles. As they explain, “lived experience of self and others can also provide a valid point of departure for a research topic”, which opens the gate to considering peoples’ knowledges, Elders’ stories and traditions as a legitimate knowledge source for conducting research.

The approaches mentioned above helped develop the methodology for this work and answer arising questions associated with the researcher-participant relationship, the interests this work would serve, the participants and their involvement in the project, and the data collection methods and interpretation, among others. In this chapter, I will provide a description of the ethical framework applied in this study (cf. 4.1.) and the community-based research principles that guided the work (cf. 4.2). I will also describe the data collection methods for gathering the knowledge (cf. 4.3), the sampling criteria (cf. 4.4) and the procedures for the analysis and interpretation of the results (cf. 4.5). Finally, I will also state the research questions and hypotheses for this research (cf. 4.6).

4.1 Ethical Framework

Research on Indigenous languages is deeply grounded in ethical principles and cannot probably be developed without establishing respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and relationship as prerequisites (Rice 2010). Partnership is one of the main principles in all research projects involving Indigenous knowledge, as the Assembly of First Nations states in the *First Nations Ethics Guide on Research and Aboriginal Traditional knowledge*. Researchers do not conduct research *on* Indigenous communities anymore but they do collaborative research work *with* the communities. Researchers are expected to work closely with community leadership and develop together a research project that also meets the community needs and may be highly beneficial for the purposes of community development and capacity building. In this case, this research was developed in collaboration with Yunešit’in and main research goals were locally identified based on the needs of the community, so that results may positively contribute to Yunešit’in language revitalization efforts. Development of research capacity was also sought by engaging community members in the different stages of the process. Some of the specific tasks where community members became involved were the following: leading language conversations, recording and gathering audio and video data, developing inventory of language resources and interpreting results. Community-based research projects are also expected to empower community members and encourage them to become stakeholders

of the research work; the object-subject relation turns into a self-reflexive exercise where participants become both subjects and actors of the research (Flores Farfán 2014: 9). In the case of language revitalization, the language experience that Indigenous peoples have gained through life should be as valued and acknowledged as the technical knowledge that researchers and other consultants bring into the communities (FATSIL 2014: 9). Also, researchers need to be aware of the community protocols and which members are considered custodians of certain knowledge to work accordingly to the community criteria.

That approach also applies to data collection methods. Researchers need to reflect on which techniques may be more appropriate and convenient from an Indigenous perspective, how those methods will be employed for gathering knowledge, and how that data will be analyzed and interpreted (Kovach 2010). Besides, the *Prior, Free and Informed Consent* principle needs to be suitably addressed. In this case, community members were fully informed about the project goals and objectives, data collection methods and usage of results (cf. 4.3.2). Participating community members were asked to sign an *Informed Consent Form* (Appendix 11), which included the description of the project and how their knowledge was going to be interpreted, shared and accessed so as to facilitate their decision regarding their participation and involvement in the project. Participants' rights of voluntary participation and withdrawal of consent and confidentiality were also covered.

Academic Integrity is another main ethical principal, so Indigenous knowledge *Ownership* and *Sharing* are also topics that need to be discussed between the parts before starting a research. For Western approaches, knowledge is often private to one individual/entity and it supposed to be shared and tested, while under Indigenous perspectives, knowledge is considered collective and created by a combination of observations and understandings of Indigenous peoples since time immemorial (AFN n.d). In many cases, it is considered sacred and not always meant to be shared or eligible for copyright and patents or other forms of legal protection, as the AFN (n.d) states. It also expected that communities retain ownership and control over their knowledge; findings based on it must be shared with them and publications should reflect that (FATSIL 2014:20). As Bruce Muir, from the West Moberly First Nation in B.C., stated: "what comes from the land stays on the land" (KEE conference, Prince George, B.C., October 16-18, 2014). Thus, in this work, I acknowledge the value of the knowledge

provided by Yunešit' in community members and understand that it remains fully in their property.

According to other ethical guidelines provided by Thompson Rivers University in their *Research Ethics Statement*, “researchers contribute to human welfare by acquiring knowledge and applying it to human problems” (TRU 2001: 2). However, they have two obligations when designing the research: one is “to conduct research as capably as their knowledge permits, and another one is to protect the dignity and preserve the well-being of human research participants”. Unfortunately, this has not been a top priority for many academics conducting research on Indigenous peoples on the last decades (Kovach 2005; Brown and Strega 2005: 32). As Walmak (2013: 217) explains, and I have heard myself from community members many times, the traditional way of conducting research was to put the individuals under the microscope to collect data and extract their knowledge from the communities for projects designed by academic institutions for their own purposes, far from being addressed to the everyday reality in the communities and serving their priorities and needs of the individuals. Researchers would design their research, travel to the communities to collect the data and return to their office to produce and publish their work. Quite often, not even the community leadership were aware of their intentions. However, research was and continues to be important for the communities, since it can help shape policies and building capacity at community level; for that reason, and to address potential risks related to human research, in 1998 the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the National Science and Engineering Research Council in Canada (NSERC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) developed a report titled *Tri-Council Policy Statement: the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC 2010). That document served as ethical framework to develop this work. Following the chapter 9 of that document (*Research involving the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Peoples of Canada*), this research project was designed to respect to Indigenous peoples' knowledge systems by “ensuring that the various and distinct worlds views [...] are represented in planning and decision making, from the earliest stages of conception and design of projects through to the analysis and dissemination of results. It affirms respect for community customs and codes of research practice to better ensure balance in the relationship between researchers and participants, and a mutual benefit in researcher-community relations” (CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC 2010: 106). Principles that express the core of ethical value of respect for human dignity, respect for persons and concern for welfare and justice and inclusiveness, were also

applied, as well as other provisions specific to research with Indigenous peoples (CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC 2010: 110-132) as follows:

- nature and extent of community engagement
- engagement with community authorities and leaders, organizations and other groups
- respect for community customs and codes of practice
- previous research ethics review
- research agreements designed jointly by the researcher and the community
- collaborative research
- mutual benefits in research
- minimizing harms and respect for vulnerable persons
- building research capacity in the community
- recognition of the role of Elders and other knowledge holders
- maintaining privacy and confidentiality
- shared interpretation and dissemination of the results
- intellectual property and use of the gathered knowledge by the community

To ensure all the aforementioned provisions, an Ethics Review for all aspects of this study was also conducted by the Human Ethics Review Board of the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU and the Final Report was provided to Yuneșit'in Government. Community and School Authorizations (Appendix 6) and a Memorandum of understanding providing a clear description of the research protocol were also signed between Yuneșit'in Government and myself, as a PhD student of the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU (Appendix 7). Besides, a protected personal data file was created under the Spanish Royal Decree 1720/2007 and was registered in the Basque Agency of Protected Data (*Datuak Babesteko Euskal Bulegoa*), through the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU. Personal data collected for this project remained confidential and protected under the law and could only be accessed by Yuneșit'in Government and the research team. It was stored both at Yuneșit'in Government for long-term preservation and at the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU for five years and only for the purposes of this study or related research work.

4.2 Community-based Research

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples of Canada developed one of the earliest documented protocols on research with Indigenous communities. This protocol, published in 1996, emphasized collaborative research and the community's participation in the development and design of the research model. In 2003, the Indigenous Governance program at the University of Victoria, B.C., presented an updated protocol where the need for participation in all levels of research by the Indigenous participants was also highlighted as well as the idea that all research projects needed to benefit the community in some manner (Kovach 2005; Brown and Strega 2005: 23)

Bearing in mind the aforementioned protocol and after having considered methodologies proposed by several authors (Creswell 2013; Mayan 2009; Strand et al. 2003; Brown and Strega 2005; Graveline 2000; Henry et al. 2004; Dickson-Swift et al. 2008; Tuhiwai Smith 1999; FATSIL 2014; Finlay et al. 2013; Etmanski et al. 2014; King 2010), I decided to follow a collaborative and participatory approach and pursue a community-based research project whose main goal was to develop a reciprocal, capacity building, cooperative research process between equal partners.

In order to achieve that, the following principles of Community-Based Research (CBR) provided by Strand et al. (2003: 6) were also incorporated:

- “CBR is a collaborative enterprise between researchers (professors and/or students) and community members. It engages university faculty, students and staff with diverse partners and community members.
- CBR validates multiple sources of knowledge and promotes the use of multiple methods of discovery and of dissemination or the knowledge produced.
- CBR has as its goal: social action and social change for the purpose of achieving social justice.
- CBR is qualitative and participative (among other reasons, change is usually easier to achieve when those affected by the change are involved).”

Besides, as Flores Farfán (2014: 9) explains, language revitalization work intrinsically demands an action-oriented research methodology with the main goal of working with and for the Indigenous peoples. I strongly agree with Freire (1997) that

“people have a universal right to participate in the production of knowledge which is a disciplined process of personal and social transformation” (Mayan 2009: 43) and that the best results on research are obtained when the research is done by the people who are the focus of study. Therefore, Participatory Action Research principles were also incorporated to all aspects of this work in order to develop an action-based project, with a tangible goal to meet community needs and engage the community members in what was happening (needs, resources, challenges) and what could happen in the future (community’s envision).

When developing the project methodology, guidelines for conducting language revitalization and research projects provided by the FPCC were used for reference.¹ Their Research Evaluation Checklist became essential to frame this work:

1. “Will it be useful (for the community)? Will the research product or process be of any practical benefit or use to the community?
2. Could it be harmful in any way? From the community’s perspective, is there potential for the project or any aspect of it to be harmful in any way to individuals or the community? Is potential for harm acknowledged in the research proposal? How is this potential addressed?
3. Does the proposal provide clear and acceptable guidelines for informed consent of participants? Are vocabulary and technical terms understandable to persons who are being asked to consent? Are there clear provisions for confidentiality and the ability to ask questions and withdraw at any time?
4. Are the right questions being asked? Is the proposal asking the right questions from the community’s perspective? Are there any other questions that should be asked?
5. Is there an opportunity for capacity development in the design and conduct of research at the local level? Is an opportunity provided for community participation in any aspect of the project other than being interviewed? (For example, community advisory committee, training in research skills, etc.)”.

Also, essential features provided by FATSIL (2014) for successful language projects were used as reference. According to them, language projects:

¹ Sample documents for language revitalization and research projects available at: <http://www.fpcc.ca/language/toolkit/LanguageResearchProjects.aspx>

- “are suggested by the community rather than being determined by a consultant;
- recognize, employ and build on the existing skills and knowledge in the community;
- involve younger as well older community members;
- incorporate formal or informal training opportunities (e.g. linguistics, education, ICT) for local people;
- involve community members in an active way, in all aspects of the project, including developing, language research skills, collecting language data, documenting language, using equipment/ technologies, analyzing language data, making decisions about publication format, design and layout;
- result in a publication which is useful for the community;
- explicitly recognize community contributions and ownership of language” (FATSIL 2014: 16).

In addition, perspectives gathered at the KEE Conference became very useful for designing this work. This event brought together representatives of First Nations communities, local organizations, and academics from B. C. and elsewhere to discuss and develop best practices for education and research involving Indigenous communities and organizations.² Participants, from both communities and the academia, shared their experiences with the aim of enhancing mutual understanding, learning from each other and developing capacity and future research partnerships. Some of the ideas learned at this event and applied to this work are the following: reflecting on questions like where do we want to go to and how we can go together (Bruce Muir, West Moberly First Nation); developing protocol agreement and a clear way of communication (Jasmine Thomas, Saik’uz Nation); hands-on learning and researchers becoming part of the community by visiting and feasting together, learning the language for a better understanding of the community’s worldview, knowing the territory, and recognizing the value of traditional knowledge in Elders and community members (Indigenous Scholar Dr. Henry Harder).

² Source: <http://www.unbc.ca/knowledge-exchange-and-exploration-gathering> (accessed on May 25, 2017).

For this work, I developed a research proposal by following the advice provided by Yuneŝit'in leadership represented by *Nits'il?in* Russell Myers Ross, and subsequently presented to Yuneŝit'in Council for their review (Appendix 5). In that document, I described all the aspects of a potential research project: project synopsis, objectives, methodology, methods, procedures, risks and benefits for the community, participation requirements, potential participants, ethical framework that would be applied, expected time and main steps, requirements from the community and contact details. Once the research proposal was approved by Yuneŝit'in Council, a Memorandum of Understanding with the research protocol (Appendix 7) was collaboratively developed and signed by both parts, Yuneŝit'in Government and myself, as a PhD Student of the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU in order to clearly define the aspects mentioned above as well as the intellectual property and copyright requirements. All the documents mentioned above were presented as part of the Ethics Review, which subsequently approved by the Ethics Department of the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU.

4.3 Gathering of the knowledge: approach, methods and procedures

The methodology of this work was designed through a combination of different perspectives. An *exploratory* and *adaptive* approach (Bhattacharyya 2012) was followed with the aim of developing a better understanding of the topic and to design methods that could be employed in subsequent studies (Babbie 2004:88). This approach works well for projects undertaken in varied cultural environments, where it is necessary to understand the values and perspectives of a people different from us (Lutz and Neis 2008; Watson and Huntington 2008), or when we are open to follow the flow of the research process by looking at the emerging data and embracing new directions the work may take. This research was framed within an adaptive approach (Bhattacharyya 2012), since it includes different participants, reflexively reconsiders the role of the researcher, and constantly re-defines success for the project (Reed and Peters 2004). This approach fits this work because at the time it was started there was not much pre-existing peer-reviewed literature about the topic under study, and the few references that could be found were in most of the cases the result of research work considered not reliable by the community members due to the non-respectful attitude presented by the researcher or the methods employed. Finally, following an adaptive approach also allowed flexibility for

changes on schedule, participants, places of the activities, timeline, etc. without becoming an obstacle for the fulfillment of the work.

Besides, this work is also derived from a case study approach, since it focuses on Yunešit'in and the understanding of the complexities of the reality of this Tšilhqot'in community regarding the resurgence of their language. That also gave the work a practical approach: an empirical study of the topic requiring hands-on methods was conducted with the aim of portraying a phenomenon from different points of view.

Due to the inductive nature of the research process, aspects of the *grounded theory* approach are inevitably present in this work. Conclusions are deeply founded in the data collected: from the gathering and analyzing of the community perspectives to a description of the reality, instead of trying to fit the collected data into previous developed hypotheses (King 2010: 271). Glaser and Strauss (1967), founders of this method, believed that “the only way in which everyday social life and theory can be closely related is if theories are inducted from the data”. According to Charmaz (2006), through categorizing and theoretical sampling, “grounded theory can reveal the processes of human action or experience through their various stages and phases over a period of time” (Mayan 2009: 47). As Heath and Cowley (2004) point out, when applying this method, the goal is not to create the theory, but a theory that aids understanding the area of study. Thomas (2006: 240) suggests wondering about the core meanings evident in the text, relevant to evaluation or research objectives. In this method, the outcomes of analysis are the categories most relevant to research objectives and the description of the most important themes.

Concepts of the *phenomenology* approach are also part of this work, since we aimed to study the lifeworld and lived experience on the purpose of “gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences”, as explained by Van Manen (2001b: 9), and building a thick description of the meaning or essence of the research topic. Besides, and due to the nature of this work, aspects of the narrative approach are also present. Oral tradition is key to Indigenous history and culture and storytelling is essential to creating and sharing knowledge. In this case, through the gathering of the experiences of each participant a story was told and a collective vision on Yunešit'in language revitalization experience was created.

Some aspects of *ethnography* approaches were also valuable for the methodology of this work. The goal of this project was “not to critique, judge, or design action plans to bring about change within the culture” but to explore a reality and make it “intelligible

and comprehensive to others” (Mayan 2009: 38). The focused ethnography approach “is led by a specific research question, conducted within a particular context or organization among a small group of people to inform decision-making regarding a distinct problem” (Mayan 2009: 39). In this case, the research questions came up from the needs identified by the community; therefore, the results of this study may help guide future decision making towards T̄silhqot’in language revitalization in Yunešit’in.

Regarding the data collection, which Mayan (2009: 66) would rather call *data creation* or *data generation* (as this “is not a direct representation of the participant’s life but a representation filtered through the participants’ relationship” with the researcher), this work followed a mixed method approach, since both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered. This is a fairly new methodology approach that originated around the late 1980s and early 1990s from research work in diverse fields such as education, management, sociology, and health sciences (Creswell 2013: 266). It provides a stronger understanding of the problem or question than either method by itself and help overcome some of the limitations of each method (Creswell 2013: 264). In this case, the qualitative approach prevails, since the research is to be introduced in scenarios constructed by the participants based on their own feelings, perceptions, intuitions and interpretations. The aim was to become acquainted with the reality of the language revitalization experience in Yunešit’in and to understand the community needs and priorities on that regard and how that could be achieved in relation to the complex articulations of the social factors affecting this community and the underlying historical and political and socio-economic reasons of the current language situation (Barriga 2001; Silva-Corvalán 2001). Nevertheless, quantitative data were also collected and interpreted (i.e. inventory of language materials) in order to create a supporting background for the qualitative results.

Since qualitative research is not supported statistically, other criteria need to be applied to validate the work. Bowling (2002: 354) provides some questions to assess rigor in qualitative research:

- Was the theoretical framework of the study and the methods used always explicit?
- Was the context of the research clearly described?
- Was the sampling strategy clearly described and justified?
- Was the fieldwork clearly described in detail?
- Were the procedures for analysis clearly described and justified?
- Were triangulated methods used?

Criteria provided by Tovar and Hidalgo (2009: 26) were used as reference when applying the methods in order to ensure scientific accuracy:

- depth of information; we would rather go deeper in the information than aim for a higher amount of observations (i.e. more or longer visits with participating community members);
- critical outlook to the data;
- credibility and confirmation in order to get reliable results;
- compilation of a significant sample covering the different perspectives and interests; existing in the community (different generations, families, areas of influence);
- use of the combination of methods to validate gathered data;
- comparison of results to assess data reliability and minimize errors; and
- supporting analysis by reviewing related literature.

The *triangulation of method* was used a validation tool. Combining different methods provides a better understanding of the reality under study and allowed to explore the research questions from different angles (Mason 2002: 190). It also allows to triangulate and validate results through cross-verification from several sources. Different methods may create different data, so by using several data collection techniques I was able to look at the gathered knowledge from different perspectives and draw a bigger picture of the study issue. Participant observation, conversation, sharing circle and document analysis were the methods used in this work and they are explained in the next section below.

4.3.1 Participant observation

This method is the action of personally participating in the research setting and learning from it by observing and getting involved (Campoy and Gómez Araújo 2015). It has traditionally been used in ethnography studies (Schensul et al. 1999), but it can also be well applied to other social studies. It allows the researcher to gain a better understanding of the phenomena by participating in everyday activities without developing an intrusive behavior. According to Bernard (1994), this method is appropriate when conducting cultural studies and requires the researcher to be characterized by “having an open, nonjudgmental attitude, being interested in learning more about others, being aware of the propensity for feeling culture shock and for making mistakes, the majority of which can be overcome, being a careful observer and a good listener” (De Walt and De Walt 1998), as explained in Kawulich (2005: 3).

For this work, this method was mostly used in the initial stages by visiting the community, participating in the activities and events, volunteering at the school and having casual conversations with community members. Being present, helped me not only develop a relationship with the community but also to gain a better understanding of the community dynamics, leadership, politics, cultural protocol and taboos, in order to become culturally aware and respectful to the community. It allowed me to create the background for this work and build the awareness of the reality that was being studied. The comprehensive knowledge gained during that time helped me start developing the hypotheses at the beginning stages of the work and, later on, understand the data gathered from the other methods.

According to Mayan (2009: 79-80), there are different observation and involvement degrees, which might produce different results: the researcher may be a *complete observer*, when observing the situation without taking part in the activity; an *observer as a participant*, when watching the situation and participating in the activity on a secondary level; a *participant as observer*, when fully involved in the situation but taking time to record observations; or a *complete participant*, by being fully immersed in the setting. For this study, I acted from the beginning as a *complete participant* getting fully involved in the events and activities and learning from them without having a specific purpose of gathering data but gaining a comprehensive understanding of the community.

Besides, it is also important to reflect on the *insider-outsider* role. Traditionally, researchers have taken the *outsider's* role by merely observing the research setting without implicating themselves in it. Nowadays, some approaches, such as the feminist methodologies, have made *the insider's* concept more acceptable in qualitative research (Kunkel 2008: 82). In my case, I am an *outsider* per se because I belong to another people, culture and language community; however, a combination of several factors brought me closer to the focus of this study and the *insider's* role (Costley et al. 2010). Due to my personal experience on Euskara (Basque) language revitalization, since the beginning, I could easily identify with some of the community experiences regarding the loss and the resurgence of their language and culture. Besides, my work as Yunešit'in Language Planning Specialist and Project Coordinator also made me feel strongly connected to the community. It also helped build trust with community members who, by knowing my background, could understand my personal interest in this work. My job also gave me the opportunity to attend several workshops organized by FPCC and receive first-hand training on language revitalization projects in British Columbia. I gained knowledge on

the current situation of the Indigenous languages in this province, which provided me with a better understanding of the reality of the community and led me to an appropriate approach for addressing this study.

The data collecting instrument used for the participant observation method were notes of my reflections, feelings, ideas, insights and interpretations from community life or casual conversations (Appendix 8). I used the Five Ws (*who, what, where, when, why*) to describe the situation, what was happening and the relations between the participants in the event (LeCompte and Preissle 2003). This procedure helped me record and organize my initial perceptions and learnings when participating in the community life. However, as Mayan (2009: 77) explains, when taking field notes, we might miss some key information, because we do not have the complete knowledge or we cannot or do not want take notes in certain settings since it may be considered inappropriate; that is why, for this work, collected notes were not as consistent as a proper data collection method and, therefore, the data was not included in the further analysis. Nevertheless, it became beneficial for building the necessary background of this work as well as for my personal learning and understanding of the reality of study.

The participant observation method was used in combination with other methods explained in the following sections. For this work, this method by its own would not have been valid due to the lack of involvement of community members that it implies.

4.3.2 Conversations

The main method used to gather community knowledge was conducting semi-structured conversations with community members. It was essential to this work that community members' voices and perspectives were heard, so this method became the primary source of data (Bowen 2009). The *conversational method* can be found within narrative inquiry methodologies and has recently been accepted as a method of inquiry (Kovach 2010: 43). Indigenous scholars (Thomas 2005; Bessarab and Ng'andu 2010) believe that the use of story through conversation is the most appropriate way to approach Indigenous knowledge, since it creates a collaborative storytelling process where stories are "shared, selected, recollected, and reflected on by research participants (including the researcher), and then merged to create a collaborative text –a mutually constructed story created out of the lived experiences of all participants" (Bishop 1996).

Storytelling reflects the traditional Indigenous way of passing the knowledge. First Nations peoples come traditionally from oral culture and storytelling methodology honors

that tradition and their ancestors (King 2010); according to Kovach (2010: 43), it is even linked to a particular tribal epistemology or knowledge. It is relational, since it creates a strong relationship between the participants involved in the conversation, and also purposeful, in the way that it is used most often with a decolonizing aim. It is collaborative, dialogic and reflexive and also involves informality, flexibility and a particular protocol as determined by the epistemology and/or place.

This technique may be compared to the use of semi-structured interviews; however, there are some differences between the two methods. Interviewing can become intrusive sometimes and questions can be narrow and made under the researcher's perspective, which may differ from community members' interests. Also, in an interview, the interviewer usually has a more prominent and leading role, while in the conversations both community members and researcher are actively participating in the conversation and the data are generated by the interactions between them.

In this study, conversations also provided a more natural communication flow and flexibility in the answers, since they let the door open to different ways of sharing knowledge. They allowed participating community members to share their stories in the way they felt most comfortable, keeping control at all times and choosing what they felt like sharing in that particular moment.

Regarding the recruiting of community members, the project was advertised by placing a poster at Yunešit'in Administration and Health building (Appendix 9) as well as word-of-mouth spread in the community. I also personally contacted community members myself to seek participation. I explained the research goals and methodology and provided my contact information so they could connect with me if they were interested or had further questions; if they agreed to participate, a date and place for the conversation was scheduled. The research project had a good response since the beginning and community members showed a high level of interest.

To optimize participants' level of comfort, they were given the option to choose the main language of the conversation (Tšilhqot'in or English) and with whom they would like to have it, up to a maximum of three people, in order to allow each participant enough time to share their insights. Some chose family members or other community members from the same generation or community group (e.g. Elders, youth, teachers, etc.) and others preferred to do it individually. They could also choose to lead the activity themselves by using the conversation guide or having me involved in the conversation.

To minimize identified risks, such as the use of their personal time and invasion of their privacy, conversations were held at a time and place of the participants' convenience. Prior participation, a form covering participants' personal details was filled out in order to record a general background of the participant (Appendix 10) and also, an *Informed Consent Form* together with a brief description of the project (including synopsis, objective, term, methodology, location, participants, ethics and contact) needed to be signed by the participant and myself (Appendix 11). This was designed as a clear and easy-to-read document in order to ensure participants' full understanding of the procedure. The form stated how the gathered knowledge would be interpreted, shared, accessed and stored so as to facilitate community members' decision regarding their participation and involvement in the project. It also included an explanation of the participants' rights of privacy and confidentiality, voluntary participation and the right to consulting the results and modifying or withdrawing their consent for the use of their knowledge at any time.

To secure anonymity, participants were encouraged to choose a pseudonym and references to other people were deleted in the conversations. That respected the anonymity principle but also allowed to maintain speakers' context, family history and personal narrative at the same time. Graveline (2000) reflects on that idea:

“No identification of the speaker

leads to Objectification

descontextualizes Speakers

de-collectivizes Individuals.

[...]

When naming is required

to reconstruct meaningful exchange,

soliciting self-selected pseudonyms can Empower participants”

(Graveline 2000:366).³

A conversation protocol was collaboratively developed by Yunešit'in Language Committee and myself (Appendix 12)⁴. The instrument used for this method was a

³ The quote respects the author's original writing style.

⁴ Interview protocol of *Memoria Bizia* (Living Memory) Project was used as reference. I had the opportunity to participate in this project, in the role of Project Coordinator, by recording Basque Elders of the *Diaspora*

conversation guide with a set of open questions that could be covered during the conversation (see Appendix 13). The objective of the guide was to frame the conversation, but not to limit participants' input. Questions were not aimed to be personal or go deep into detail. However, I was aware that the topic itself (the loss and recovery of the language) could trigger personal experiences that could make feel the participant uncomfortable –in fact, some participants mentioned how the conversations brought up memories from the past (*Lily the Pink*, 8/11/2107, CO #6, §116). Therefore, community members were given the guide ahead of time so they could review it and assess their participation or avoid any question they were not fully comfortable with. The conversation guide was translated/adapted into T̄silhqot'in by Yunešit'in language teacher Maria Myers in order to support community members that had chosen the T̄silhqot'in language for their conversation and to minimize the probability of the conversation to switch into English. Other questions related to specific roles of some participating community members were added and discussed before the activity (i.e. questions about language policy and planning for Yunešit'in leadership members).

There was no time limit for conversations. All of them lasted between 25 minutes and 1 hour and 30 min. Participants were free to interrupt the conversation at any time and resume whenever they wanted. They could choose to discuss any aspect of their interest and refuse to answer any questions. The conversations were recorded by using an audio recorder. Photos and videos were also taken during the conversations by Yunešit'in member Olivia Hink. However, they may only be used by Yunešit'in Government for future language projects. Community members received honorarium from Yunešit'in Government for their participation and some of the community members were contacted several times for further inquiries. After the conversations were transcribed, participants were given a CD with a copy for their review in case they wanted to add or remove any section until they were satisfied with their contribution. Together with the CDs, I was also advised to offer tobacco ties in order to show gratitude to participating community members for their participation. *Nits'il?in* Russell Myers Ross kindly guided me on this and helped me prepare them for their distribution among the participants.

in Vancouver, in collaboration with the Vancouver Euskal Etxea B.C. Basque: "*Memoria Bizia* is a community-based project directed by Dr. Pedro J. Oiarzabal and funded by the North American Basque Organizations, the Basque Government, the Etxepare Basque Institute, and the University of Deusto [...] with the goals of collecting, preserving and disseminating the Basque history of migration and exile through the personal oral testimonies of Basques who left their country of birth as well as their descendants born in the United States and Canada" (retrieved from <http://www.nabasque.org/oralhistory.html>; accessed on January 28, 2017).

The equipment used for conversations was the following: 1 Cannon Powershot SX20IS Camera, 1 Compact Cannon S120 camera, 1 Manfrotto tripod, 1 Prisma tripod, 1 Sony IC Recorder SonyICD-PX333 and the Conversation Guide (English and T̄silhqot'in), 1 blanket for background, 2 blankets in case it was cold, 3 comfy chairs and refreshments.

A total of 23 conversations were conducted; 8 of them were fully or partly done in T̄silhqot'in and 15, in English. I actively participated in 17 of the conversations, and acted as support (i.e. recording, logistics) in the other 6. All of the conversations were audio recorded with a total of 15 hours, 8 minutes and 13 seconds of conversation. A 25% (approximately 4 hours) were done in T̄silhqot'in language. Regarding the location, 15 conversations were conducted in the Yunešit'in community (12 conversations were done at the Yunešit'in Library, 3 at the Yunešit'in Government Admin Office and 1 at a private house) and 8 conversations were conducted in Williams Lake, B.C. (7 at private houses and 1 at Scout Island Nature Centre) (Appendix 14).

4.3.3 Sharing circle

The sharing circle was another key method used for gathering community perspectives, in this case, from Yunešit'in youth. This activity was carried out at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul; students were already used to this procedure for other activities at the school, which allowed a higher level of comfort for participating children.

As we can read at Lavallée's work (2009: 28-29), sharing circles are used to gather people's experiences. They may be compared to focus groups in qualitative research, since the aim is to collect information on a particular topic through group discussion; however, sharing circles carry a sacred meaning. In Indigenous cultures, they represent ceremony and create a collective experience of growing for participants while sharing their experiences and listening to others. Lavallée (2009) renders some important considerations about the spiritual aspect of sharing circles provided by Nabigon et al. (1999) that were also present in the sharing circle organized within this work:

“There is recognition that the spirits of our ancestors and the Creator are present in the circle and guide the process. Energy is created in the circle by the spirit of the people involved. The circle is nonjudgmental, helpful, and supportive. Respect is important, and this includes listening to others. Sometimes people speak as they are seated in the circle, either going in a clockwise or counter clockwise direction and hold

an object such as a talking stick or eagle feather. Circles begin with a smudging ceremony to rid the circle and people of negativity. Items may be placed in the centre of the circle, depending on the purpose” (Lavallée 2009:29).

The sharing session was a collaborative activity organized by Yunešit’in ?Esgul, Indigenous Euahlayi Master’s student of the University of Victoria Bhiamie Williamson⁵, and myself. Yunešit’in members Duane Hink, Edward Dick ‘Poncho’ and Joann Setah also participated as co-facilitators. As it was explained in the initial proposal, which we collaboratively developed and presented to Yunešit’in ?Esgul (Appendix 15), Bhiamie Williamson was required to complete a ‘Capstone Project’ as part of his Community Governance Project and this activity was aimed at engaging the community in a non-academic and creative capacity, facilitating a two-way learning experience between him and Yunešit’in community about the importance of our relationship to the land and waters. As for myself, this sharing session was organized as part of the research to provide an opportunity for the younger generations to share their motivation and insights in learning their language and culture.

The main objectives of this activity were to create a cross-cultural conversation between peoples that were going through a revitalization process of their language and culture and to discuss our motivations and the importance of being attached to our traditional lands and waters. The total number of participants in the sharing circle was 42 representing a total of 6 languages: *Nenqayni ch’ih* (Tšilhqot’in) by 22 students (K-Gr.8 / 5-13 years old), 9 school staff/teachers, 2 parents, 2 community members/co-facilitators; *Secwepemctšín* (Shuswap, Interior Salish, B. C.) by 1 community member/co-facilitator; *Nlaka’pamuctsin* (Thompson language, Interior Salish, B. C.) by 1 teacher; *Euahlayi* (Yuwaalaraay, Australia) by MA Student Bhiamie Williamson; *Ngiyaampaa* (Pama–Nyungan language of the Wiradhuric subgroup, Australia) by his wife sub-teacher Madeleine Bye; and *Euskara* (Basque) by myself. Since some participating community

⁵ As he shared about himself, Bhiamie Williamson is “a Euahlayi man from north-west New South Wales, Australia”. He came to be in Yunešit’in through his Master’s program at the University of Victoria, B.C. According to him, the sharing circle activity provided an opportunity for a “cultural exchange [...] via a cultural platform which is rarely achieved” and “presented a valuable learning opportunity between us (the researchers) and students”, who got to engage with us visiting researchers and teachers from elsewhere in the world, including our experiences, histories and cultures”. The activity “challenged the students to think deeply about how they see themselves and why they engage with their cultural practices, such as learning their language”. Recordings will allow to “reflect on students’ voices and experiences and assist in strengthening strategies to engage students and promote learning outcomes” (MA Student Bhiamie Williamson, January 24th, 2017).

members were under the age of 18, permission slips stating the objectives and the procedure of the activity needed to be signed by the parents/guardians ahead of time (Appendix 16).

The sharing session included four main activities: an opening sharing circle, followed by two visual activities and a closing sharing circle to finish. Before starting, a smudging ceremony took place in order to ‘clean’ the space and ourselves before starting the circle. As Susie Lulua shared, “smudging with Juniper was [and still is] used for taking bad medicine off people, clothings and belongings” (T̄silhqot’in Language Group and Kunkel 2012). Also, musical instruments and other cultural items were brought to the circle to use them when singing or have them present during the session. The equipment used for the activities was the following: 1 Cannon Powershot SX20IS Camera, 1 Compact Cannon S120 camera, 1 Manfrotto tripod, 1 Prisma tripod, 1 Sony IC Recorder SonyICD-PX333, art supplies for the activities, wood carved feather as ‘talking stick’ for the circle and drums and rattles for the songs.

Once in the opening sharing circle, participants were encouraged to locate themselves on their relation to their culture, language and land. We all introduced ourselves and shared songs in our language, showed pictures of our land, and told stories about our experiences in recovering our language and culture, challenges that we had found and motivations that make us willing to continue learning. The sharing circle provided “an egalitarian structure”, where each voice was “acknowledged and heard in turn” (Graveline 2000: 364). The talking stick, a wood carved feather brought by Yunešit’in member Duane Hink, was passed around giving the opportunity to the person holding it to speak. There was no time limitation for sharing and minimal interruptions occurred. As Graveline explains in her article:

“In Circle talk

when a speaker has the Stone

She or he talks as long as they want” (Graveline 2000: 367)⁶

After the initial sharing circle, the group was divided in two groups (primary and intermediate students) and two visual activities took place simultaneously. When students completed one, they moved to the other one. Implementing those activities after circle,

⁶ The quote respects the author’s original writing style.

allowed participants to get inspiration from the collective knowledge created in the group, as listening to others provides another lens to view our own reality (Graveline 2000: 364). Knowing more about each other also provided a high level of comfort for participating youth, which enhanced the outcomes of the activities.

Both visual activities were guided by the Anishinaabe symbol-based reflection method (Lavallée 2009), where participants are encouraged to visually express themselves in relation to a certain topic; in this case, our relation to our language, culture and land. We can find a good description of this method in the following fragment extracted from Lavallée's work (2009):

“Anishnaabe symbol-based reflection is an arts-based research approach. Arts-based research is defined as a method of inquiry that uses the elements of the creative arts experience, including the making of art by the participants and/or researcher, as ways of understanding the significance of what we do within our practice and teaching (McNiff 1998). It is classified as participatory action research (PAR). PAR is a socially conscious research method that directly involves the participants of the research in a practical and real way and aims to empower people and contribute to immediate problematic situations while simultaneously furthering the goals of social science (Park 1993)” (Lavallée 2009: 30).

One of the visual activities was led by Euahlayi MA student Bhiemie Williamson at the kitchen. A 2m x 3m canvas was placed on a table and participants were encouraged to create a visual description of how they felt about their land by drawing, coloring, collaging and/or writing in their language. From the group's input, a collective mural that represented a cross-cultural conversation about our relation to our lands and waters was created and given to Yunešit'in ʔEsgul as an outcome of the sharing session. The other activity was led by myself with Tšilhqot'in teachers Selina Myers and Celestine Brigham and Yunešit'in member Joann Setah at one of the language classrooms. The objective was to hold a cross-cultural conversation about our relation to our language and culture and our motivations and insights of learning it. We used the image of a tree to represent our cultures. A person of every language represented in the circle wrote the name of the language on the 'roots' of the tree together with a symbol that for that person would represent their people and culture. These were the symbols chosen for each language: *dagish* 'Bald Eagle' for *Nenqayni ch'ih*; *pumín* 'drum' for *Secwepemctsin*; *scécpel'st*

‘feather’ for *Nlaka'pamuctsin*; *bigibiila* ‘Echidna, porcupine’ for *Euahlayi*; the Australian Aboriginal flag⁷ for *Ngyaimpaa*; and *lauburu* (Basque symbol) for *Euskara*. On the trunk of the tree, we placed the questions covering the topics we wanted to reflect on: *Is it important to learn our language? why?; how and where do we want to learn our language?; what materials could we use for that?.* Finally, the ‘tree crown’ was formed by our insights and perceptions about learning our languages and cultures in form of ‘leaves’ (leaf-shaped sticky notes). Perspectives gathered during the activities were used as part of the analysis for this work. To finish, all participants came together again to the circle for the closing the session. There was time for more sharing about our learnings and show the collective creations the group had made as well as to sing few wrapping-up songs. Bhiamie Williamson shared the *Cangaroo* song and dance and Yunešit’in members Duane Hink and Edward Dick ‘Poncho’ shared some Tšilhqot’in songs.

The sharing session activities were conducted mostly in English, except for the songs and introductions when participants decided to use their own languages and after translate/adapt them into English. The group was formed by 12 adults (4 facilitators, 5 teachers, 3 parents) and 28 students (Kindergarten-Grade 8). The duration of the full activity was around 2 hours, allowing 30 min for the opening sharing circle, 1 hour for the two visual activities and 30 min closing sharing circle. The session was audio and video recorded by Yunešit’in member Olivia Hink. Knowledge gathered during this activity was included in the analysis and further interpretation for this work. Footage and recordings remained at Yunešit’in Government for future consultation and community projects.

4.3.4 Document Analysis

The document analysis method was used at several stages of this work as a complementary method to the main ones mentioned above (cf. 4.3.2 and 4.3.3). This data collection technique can be considered a less intrusive way of gathering data (Mayan 2009: 82). It can also become efficient and less-time consuming than other techniques, since it requires *data selection*, instead of *data collection*, which is usually faster. Documents also bring up broad coverage, as they can include a long span of time, events

⁷ According to the Australian Museum, the Indigenous Flag is “divided horizontally into equal halves of black (top) and red (bottom), with a yellow circle in the centre. The black symbolizes Aboriginal [Indigenous] people. The yellow represents the sun, the constant re-newer of life. Red depicts the earth and peoples' relationship to the land. It also represents ochre, which is used by Aboriginal [Indigenous] people in ceremonies”. Retrieved from <https://australianmuseum.net.au/image/aboriginal-flag> (accessed on January 16th, 2017).

and settings (Bowen 2009: 31) and provide an interesting record of a particular perspective of a phenomenon (Mayan 2009: 82). In addition, documents can provide the study with a solid frame for the results, especially in qualitative studies, when data can be seen as less tangible than the one retrieved within quantitative approaches. On the other hand, as Bowen (2009) states, data gathered from the document analysis might not be as detailed and in-depth as the one retrieved from other methods, as those documents were produced for other purposes than research; that is why it is recommended to use this method preferably in support of other techniques specifically designed under the frame of the research questions.

In this case, document analysis provided the context for starting outlining the hypotheses at early stages of this work. Information contained in documents can suggest some questions that need to be answered and situations that need to be observed as part of the work (Bowen 2009: 30). This method was also pursued to create background information for a comprehensive understanding of the emerging results from other data gathering methods, as well as to become a tool for reviewing and improving the instruments used to gather the knowledge (i.e. topics and questions of the conversation guide, approach and procedures for sharing circle activities). Finally, I also used the document analysis as triangulation method to verify findings and corroborate evidence and results retrieved from other methods in more advanced stages of the data analysis.

For this work, the document sampling was determined by the research focus; criteria of authenticity, credibility, accuracy, and representativeness were also applied when choosing the materials (Bowen 2009: 33). Documents retrieved for this study can be grouped into three categories:

a) Meeting minutes. This category includes minutes from meetings held within two language projects implemented in the last two years: FPCC's Language Revitalization Planning Project 2015-2016 (cf. 3.3.2.1) and FNEESC's First Nations Language Teachers' Professional Development 2015-2016 (cf. 3.3.2.2). Minute recordings and written records were analyzed and fragments of perspectives provided by participating community members (only those who were part of the sampling for the conversations and sharing circle) were extracted to be used as part of the analysis. For informed consent purposes, participants signed a separate document agreeing to the use of their knowledge for this study (Appendix 17). A total of 8 documents were analyzed: 5 from Language Revitalization Planning Project 2015-2016 and 3 from First Nations Language Teachers' Professional Development 2015-2016.

b) Other project documents. This category includes documents and deliverables (5 in total) produced under the FPCC's Language Revitalization Planning Project 2015-2016 (cf. 3.3.2.1): *Language Revitalization Vision Statement, Language Committee's Terms of Reference, Language Revitalization Plan, Language Revitalization Community Priorities and Repository of Language Resources*.

c) Language resources. This category comprises language materials found at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul. An inventory of the language resources was developed as part of this work during the 2016 winter months. Yunešit'in ʔEsgul Language Teacher Celestine Brigham identified the materials and Yunešit'in member Joan Setah helped during the process of the inventory by taking pictures of the materials. Although more language materials may be found in private homes (i.e. recordings of stories, songs), only materials that are open to the use of community members and students were included in the inventory. This helped support and provide background to the perspectives provided by the teachers and other community members about the language teaching activities and resources available. I developed a template at the same time I was analyzing materials and modified it according to the emerging needs and recommendations done by Mayan (2009: 147-149) and by Bowen (2009: 33) were also used for reference (Appendix 18). Features covered in the inventory of language materials were the following: title, author, published/produced by (not all materials have been published), date, number of pages, format, language/s in what is written, type of resource, number of copies and location, description and purpose of document, additional comments and picture of the cover. A total of 186 language materials were identified in the inventory.

To include the materials in the analysis, intellectual property and copyright requirements needed to be met. Whenever possible, I contacted the publishing institutions (i.e. Denisiqi Services Society)⁸ and authors in writing / by written notification, in order to clarify my purpose and explain how their materials would be used within the study. Two documents were developed for this: a letter of explanation for the publishing institutions (Appendix 19) and an Informed Consent form to be signed by the authors (Appendix 20).

⁸ Denisiqi Services Society is located in Williams Lake, B.C. It delivers community-based, culturally appropriate child and family programs to the Tšilhqot'in communities and Ulkatchot'en (Carrier). Retrieved from <http://denisiqi.org/> (accessed on October 24, 2016).

4.4 Sampling

In qualitative research, sampling is seldom random (Potts and Brown 2005: 269) and bias is considered a strength (Mayan 2009). According to Morse (1991), data sources and contexts are selected purposefully to get a better understanding of the phenomenon (Mayan 2009: 62). For this work, I used a *stratified purposeful sample* (Mayan 2009) or *judgement sampling technique* (Marshall 1996). This method is often applied to illustrate characteristics of particular subgroups of interest and facilitate comparisons among participants' perspectives. In this case, not only for community members but also when choosing documents for the analysis, the sample was determined by their singularity in relation to the topic under study (Mejía Navarrete 2000: 166) and their contribution towards addressing the research questions.

4.4.1 Participating community members

Community members that participated in this study were considered equals and stakeholders or partners of this research (King 2010: 276). The role of non-participating community members is also acknowledged, since they have ultimately contributed to this work to happen by keeping the knowledge in the community and passing it down throughout generations.

Regarding the selection of participants, Potts and Brown (2005: 269) highly recommend that the researcher never be the sole source of invitations for community members to participate and that ideally it should be the community itself who identifies the participants. For this work, direction was sought from Yunešit'in leadership and a list of potential participating community members was developed by Yunešit'in leadership, Yunešit'in Language Committee and myself. Following community criteria, all families and generations were to be represented in the sample. This decision was made not only with the aim of covering a wide range of perspectives and for goals of representativeness and validity, but also for community building and empowerment, as for a better understanding of the study (Potts and Brown 2005: 269). In addition, language experts and teachers, Yunešit'in Government leadership and staff were meant to be included due to the influence of their work in the community. As Mason (2002: 196) explains, we want to include 'sampling units', in this case, perspectives, that are interesting for the purposes of the study and that can be compared in order to advance the explanatory thinking.

Sociolinguistic factors taken into account when developing the sampling were the following:

1. Family – There are 6 main families in the community.
2. Generation – Elders (first and second generation), parents, youth and children.
3. Gender⁹ – Women and men have traditionally held different roles in the community and may hold different perspectives.
4. Language Fluency – Fluent speakers, semi-speakers, non-speakers and learners.
5. Language experience – Language Committee members and Language Experts, Teachers and Educators who were working during the time this study was being carried out or who had done language work in the past.
6. Yunešit'in Government Staff – Administration/Health building staff.
7. Yunešit'in Leadership – Chief and Council members.

Community members were given the opportunity to choose who they wanted to have the conversation with. Some of them chose family or community members who were in the same group as them (i.e. young parents, Elders, youth...). This procedure was guided by the so-called *snowball* or *chain sampling technique* (Mayan 2009), where key participants are identified and asked to name other participants. In the case of the younger generations, we identified all Yunešit'in ʔEsgul students as participants due to setting that the school provided. All students that attended the school the day we carried out the sharing circle activity and that brought the permission slip signed by their parents participated in the research activities. I determined the sampling size along the study process by the concept of data *saturation*: the sampling was completed when new knowledge stopped emerging from the analysis (Marshall 1996). That means the sample is specific and unique for this study since it was identified by the singularity of the knowledge in relation to the focus of this work (Mejía Navarrete 2000: 166).

A total of 59 community members directly participated in the research activities (Appendix 14; Appendix 21). See table below for community groups and subgroups:

⁹ In the participants form, the *gender* box remained open, not to limit participants' gender identity options.

GROUP				SUBGROUP							
Group	Gender		Total	Community Members		Language Experts		Admin Staff		Chief & Council	
	F	M	F/M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Elders + (<80)	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Elders (61-80)	7	4	11	5	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Grandparents (50-60)	5	1	6	3	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Parents (25-49)	11	1	12	7	1	1	0	2	0	2	1
Youth (18-24)	5	1	6	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Children (5-18)	12	10	22	12	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	42	17	59	33	16	3	1	3	0	2	1

F = female M = male

Table 4.1 Participating community members' groups and subgroups

A description of the groups is provided below:

- Elders + (<80). Community members aged 80 years old or older.
- Elders ('2nd generation') (55-80). Community members aged between 55 and 80 years old that have grandchildren.
- Grandparents (50-60). Community members aged between 50 and 60 years that have grandchildren.
- Parents (25-49). Community members aged between 25 and 55 that have children. 1 person with no children has been included in this group because perspectives may be closer to this group due to generational similarities.
- Youth (15-25). community members aged between 15 and 25 years old and that have no children.
- Children (5-15). Community members aged between 5 and 15 years old that attended Yunešit'in ʔEsgul.

The subgroups are described as follows:

- Community members: people that are registered in Yunešit'in community. They may live on or off the community.
- Language Experts: community members that have worked or are still working on the language (i.e. translation, interpreting, linguistics, documentation, language teaching activities).
- Yunešit'in Government Staff: Community members that are employed by the Yunešit'in Government and that work at the Administration and Health Office.

- Yuneşit'in Leadership: Yuneşit'in political representatives that form Yuneşit'in Council and have been democratically elected by community members.

The participants' language fluency was another factor that was taken into account, since different perspectives may be generated depending on the language level. Language fluency representation is summarized in the table below:

LANGUAGE FLUENCY									
Group	Fluent speakers		Semi-speakers		Non-speakers		TOTAL	Learning	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F/M	F	M
Elders + (<80)	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Elders (61-80)	7	4	0	0	0	0	11	0	0
Parents/Grandparents (50-60)	5	1	0	0	0	0	6	0	0
Parents (25-49)	0	0	6	1	5	0	12	3	1
Youth (18-24)	0	0	0	0	5	1	6	2	0
Children (5-13)	0	0	0	0	12	10	22	12	10
Total	14	5	6	1	22	11	59	15	11

F = female M = male

Table 4.2 Participating community members' language fluency

For the definitions of each language group (*fluent speakers*, *semi-speakers*, *non-speakers* and *learners*), I have followed FPCC's terms and definitions based on Harrison (1997), Dorian (1977; 1980) and the self-assessment by communities, mentioned earlier in this work (cf. 2.2).

4.4.2 Documents

A total of 13 documents were selected for the analysis as well as the 186 language materials that were included in the inventory at Yuneşit'in ?Esgul. When sampling the documents, their relevance was determined with respect to the research questions and objectives of this work. Determining authenticity, credibility, accuracy, and representativeness of the selected documents was also a decisive factor. As I have explained before (cf. 4.3.4), knowledge generated from other methods prevailed in this work (Mason 2002: 189-190); however, documents were used for verifying and supporting the research (Bowen 2009: 7). As for the sampling of the participating community members, the sampling size of the documents was also determined during the study process by the concept of *data saturation*. Therefore, the data gathering process

finished when new knowledge stopped emerging from the analysis (Marshall 1996). Once the sampling was completed, the analysis process began, as I explain in the next section.

4.5 Organizing and sharing of the gathered knowledge: data processing, analysis and dissemination of results

Data processing and analysis processes may seem to conflict with the Indigenous methodologies, since those processes pull apart stories that cannot often be fully understood in pieces. As Lavallée (2009) explains, Indigenous knowledge is seen as interconnected, and the main objective of content analysis is to classify the data into categories and themes which may likely break that interconnection. Graveline (2000) also reflects on this idea, as we can see in the following fragment of her work:

“How can I possible produce analysis?
How can I Reduce
25 delightfully diverse
self reflective monologues
into One Document” (Graveline 2000:363).¹⁰

Likewise, questions about what should be included in the analysis and what should be left out came up several times during this stage of the work. In order to respect the knowledge provided by the community members and to minimize the risk of breaking the thoughts into unrelated pieces, I analyzed text fragments (weather from conversations, meeting minutes or other documents) in full form within the context, by taking full ideas/paragraphs into consideration.

4.5.1 Units of analysis

For the analysis, I prepared and organized outcomes of the knowledge gathering activities and grouped the units of analysis as follows (Appendix 21):

a) Transcriptions of conversations: A total of 23 transcriptions were analyzed (total time recorded was 15 hours, 8 minutes and 13 seconds). Language experts, Maria Myers (Yunešit'in), William Myers (Yunešit'in) and Bella Alphonse (Tl'etinqox) assisted with the transcription in Tšilhqot'in and English translation of the Tšilhqot'in conversations.

¹⁰ The quote respects the author's original writing style.

Some participants (i.e. Juna) also translated their own conversations into English. The transcriptions of the conversations in English were carried out by myself. My basic knowledge of the T̄silhqot'in language helped me understand and follow the conversation when the participants mixed some T̄silhqot'in words or phrases in the conversation; however, those fragments were still transcribed and translated by the T̄silhqot'in language experts to guarantee accuracy.

Transcribing can be a tedious and time-consuming task, but also very useful for documentation purposes. I used the transcription tool of NVIVO Qualitative Data Analysis Software, which made it a faster and systematic process. It also enabled me to prepare the data for the analysis, which was going to be conducted in the same software. Transcribing also have significant analytical benefits: while doing the transcription I became closer to the material, which facilitated the analysis stage. Finally, it also served to create another opportunity to document the T̄silhqot'in language; the transcription of the conversations will be an addition to the written T̄silhqot'in records; it will remain in the community and may be used for future language projects (i.e. documentation of the language, developing wordlists, grammar).

Transcription guidelines were developed following recommendations provided by DuBois et al. (1993) and were used by all transcribers so as to keep the transcriptions cohesive (Mayan 2009:140). Aspects that were taken into account are the following:

- Number of participants and their names/initials and pseudonyms, location and date were included in the header.
- Emotions, interruptions or comments were shown between angular brackets (i.e. <emotion>)
- A pause was indicated by this symbol: (...)
- If words were emphasized by the speaker, they were written in upper case (i.e. WORD); and if they were softer than normal, in lower case and smaller font (i.e. word).
- Each paragraph was numbered and time and sequence (hours, minutes and seconds) were included to facilitate reference to quotes when developing the analysis and interpretation.

b) Notes from sharing circle: extracting notes from the sharing circle activity was a challenging task since, as Graveline (2000) explains, when editing or picking fragments out of it, context gets lost. This author also reflects on the idea of how this procedure can even be considered disrespectful:

“Editing: a polite code word
For actions viewed Disrespectful
Unacceptable
In Traditional Circles” (Graveline 2000: 368).

And she even recommends to leave the knowledge as it is and keep it within its context, when possible:

“I would heartfully recommend:
“data” collected by Talking Circle as Methodology
Is best left Un-edited
Un-analyzed.
Preserve the content Intact
Circular
Flowing
Interconnected” (Graveline 2000: 369).¹¹

She finally concludes that her *circle as methodology* can be adapted and used as a data collection method if it is done respectfully and cautiously. Following her suggestions, perspectives gathered throughout this method were almost kept intact and, when needed, they were carefully handled and analyzed in their full context, as for other knowledge collected for this work.

c) Transcriptions of meeting minutes: following the same procedure as for the conversations, 8 meeting minutes were included in the analysis. In some cases, they were already in text format, and in others, they were audios that needed to be transcribed before including them in the analysis. For that, I also used the transcription tool of NVIVO Qualitative Data Analysis Software.

d) Other documents: 5 documents in total were selected from recent language projects implemented in the community. They were included in the analysis as they were, without applying any editing.

¹¹ The quotes respect the author’s original writing style.

e) Language resources: 186 language materials were included in the inventory and used for the analysis.

4.5.2 Criteria of analysis

Primarily qualitative researchers must be concerned with overall questions of accuracy in their research practices and analysis procedures. It needs to be demonstrated that the data generation and analysis are rigorous, thorough and honest, so that the data are not misrepresented nor invented (Mason 2002: 188). “Qualitative researchers have a special responsibility because of the high degree of trust generated” and “their power to make an interpretation of the lives of others” (Mason 2002: 202). I was aware that findings were likely to be shaped and analyzed by my own assumptions and interpretations (Thomas 2006: 240); that is why, as well as in other stages of research, I stated clear principles on how to handle the gathered knowledge.

Following criteria provided by Green and Thorogood (2004: 191), several aspects of the research practice were assessed:

- a) *Transparency* – I designed clear methods and provided account of the procedure so others could repeat the work (i.e. collected data available for inspection, and data analysis procedures clearly described)
- b) *Validity* – Conclusions were drawn from supporting evidence and enough context for the reader to judge interpretation was provided as well as the ‘route’ of how the conclusions had been made (Mason 2002: 191). Also, taking into account the *standpoint theory* from the feminist approach (Anderson 2017), which grant the participants with the epistemological privilege provided by their social location and experience, I presented an extract of the results and interpretation to Yunešit’in Language Committee and community members (both participants and non-participants) for their review. This provided validity since it is understood that participants are in a privilege position to judge and confirm interpretations (Mason 2002: 192). Community members’ comments and insights on the preliminary results were taken into account and included in the analysis.
- c) *Reliability* – It is recommended that the whole set of data is analyzed, to achieve reliability and, if possible, two analysts/coders should work together. In this case, due to funding and time restrictions, that was not possible and I did the analysis myself but still presented results to the community for validation purposes.

- d) *Comparability* – Preliminary results obtained from the analysis were compared to other cases within the data. Perspectives that represented a minority and not in concordance with the majority were still included and served to make comparisons with the others. Similarities and differences with other cases and studies were also reflected in the analysis.
- e) *My role as participant* – I was aware of my role in the community in relation to the language projects and the potential influence that could have in the outcome of this study. I knew most of the participants and felt attached to the community, so I had to be careful not to pull out only those findings I found interesting or on my line of thinking. As Mason (2002: 191) remarks, it is quite common that researchers even encounter crises of confidence about the validity and value of their own interpretation and wonder whether they have invented their interpretations or they have actually been drawn from the data. However, this author also explains the aim in qualitative research is not to seek a true and objective reality by using rigorous research instruments; qualitative researchers need to understand that they cannot assert results as universal truths but share their findings in a more modest way; and therefore, that is how I approach my interpretation of the results.
- f) *Respect* – I undertook some strategies suggested by Lincoln and González (2008) when the study is being conducted in a cross-language or/and cross-cultural environment. In order to develop a more respectful analysis procedure, cultural protocols were respected at all times following the guidance provided by community leadership and members. Likewise, the original language was always respected; although literal translations and free translations/adaptations were included in this work, so content could be understood by everybody, when it was the case, T̂silhqot̂in was always used as the main source in the analysis. Due to my translation background, I realized how difficult is to transfer the full content when providing translations and how much meaning gets often lost. By respecting the original language, I wanted to maintain the essence of the T̂silhqot̂in knowledge in its fullness.

4.5.3 Procedure

In order to summarize and integrate the gathered knowledge, a thematic analysis was carried out under an inductive approach (Thomas 2006): looking at what is an example

and making those as abstract as possible (Patton and Cochran 2002). Through multiple readings of the data, common patterns were identified and *codes* and *categories* were drafted in order to enable the data to be reduced to *themes* or key ideas, which interpreted several aspects of the phenomenon (Boyatzis 1998). Upper-level or more general *categories* were certainly influenced by the research questions and objectives outlined for this work; lower-level or specific *codes* emerged directly from the multiple reading of the raw data (Thomas 2006), not from a priori developed model. The procedure was applied to the knowledge gathered from all the sources so *themes* would emerge across all sets of data (Bowen 2009: 35). Those *themes* created during the analysis were woven together later to create the interpretation of the results and the conclusions (Saldaña 2013: 175).

This emergent and intuitive strategy required a flexible research design and a cyclical analysis. It was the result of an iterative and reflective work where the idea of cycle was definitively present, being the community members the starting and ending point of the analysis. I came back to them during every stage of this work for reviewing, adding or removing ideas based on their insights to ensure their perspectives were well interpreted. Thomas (2006: 244) recommends coding consistency checks by applying independent parallel coding by several analysts; however, in this case, due to time and funding limitations, the analysis was mainly done by myself with constant feedback from the community.

Although I was working with a relatively small amount of data, it certainly became a large mass of information at the end. For a faster and more efficient analysis, after researching on several Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis (CAQDAS) that could be compatible with my approach to epistemology, I decided to use the NVIVO Qualitative Data Analysis Software. It became very useful for the indexing and retrieving activities when knowledge did not appear in an orderly or sequential manner in the data. It certainly speeded up the coding process and allowed me to work with data from different sources by analyzing it under the same variables (Mason 2002: 165). I could look across the whole set of data and apply the same coding system while creating interesting connections between the sources. It also became an easier and more accurate process when retrieving analyzed data for developing the results and further discussion.

The analysis process went through several stages (Bowen 2009; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006; Marshall and Rossman 1999; Mason 2002; Mayan 2009, Cassell and Symon 2004; Fox 2004; Thomas 2006), as we can see below:

1. *Preparing and organizing collected data.* Simultaneously to the knowledge gathering activities, the data were ‘cleaned’, organized and prepared for the subsequent analysis. In the case of conversation recordings, raw data files were transformed into a common format and edited following the guidelines provided by the participants (i.e. removing extracts that participants considered personal or were not comfortable sharing with the public). Once the final recording file was ready and accepted by the participant, it was transcribed and the audio, the transcription and other documents produced for each conversation (i.e. *Informed Consent; Participant’s Details Form*) were finally filed for the analysis. A copy of the materials was saved in a CD and given to each participant, so they could review it and contacted me if they thought any modification needed to be done. Materials were indexed and filed by using a consistent system across the whole data set, so extracts were easy to find and connections could be made. The same procedure was followed for the data gathered from other sources; recordings and notes from the sharing circle were also edited and filed, as well as documents selected for the analysis and information from language resources included in the inventory. Data were kept confidential and stored carefully, securely and responsibly, in accordance with data protection, freedom of information and privacy legislation, as stated above (cf. 4.1). To finish, it should be acknowledged that the process of data cataloguing and indexing was not analytically neutral, since preliminary assumptions were being done by me inevitably; likewise, by designing a particular filing and retrieving system, data may be open to some analytical possibilities and closed to others (Mason 2002: 147).
2. *Familiarization with the data and preliminary analysis.* As Thomas (2006: 241) explains, “inductive coding begins with close readings of text and consideration of the multiple meanings that are inherent in the text”. Following this recommendation, I conducted an initial interpretive reading of the data, before starting a deeper analysis. Recordings, transcriptions and documents were reviewed several times and preliminary observations were recorded as *memos* or quick notes inside the NVIVO software. This task often happened simultaneously with the knowledge gathering activities, and it helped reshape procedures in order to enhance the subsequent results. My experience working with the community in language revitalization projects provided me with a valuable background and helped me start developing a draft list of *codes* and *categories*, when reading

through the collected data. I was mostly concerned about participants' insights and understandings for constructing the analysis; however, I was also aware of my own involvement when reading through or beyond the data and how my own interpretation by what I inferred from the gathered knowledge could certainly influence the results (Mason 2002: 149), even if not intentionally (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006 :90). Thus, checking back to the main source, in this case, the participants, was key to reach one of the objectives of this work, in order to construct a reliable analysis based on their own perspectives.

3. *Categorizing and Coding*. Following the *selective coding* method developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), higher-order *categories* were identified, with subsidiary questions and probes as potential lower-order *codes* (Cassell and Symon 2004: 280). This list was flexible and constantly amended while going through the data. *Categories* were internally consistent and externally divergent (Marshall and Rossman 1999: 154), meaning that a category linked together ideas that were somehow related but distinct from each other (Fox 2004). *Codes* were created from text segments that contained meaningful units and were grouped into the *categories*, and then, into main *topics*. Code segments were compared by asking questions such as “how are they similar or different between each other? What relationship is there between the two ideas?” (Bowen 2009). When an idea was repeated in the text, that fragment was assigned to the *code* with the corresponding idea (Thomas 2006: 241); if it was different, a new *code* was created. If one segment of text included different ideas it was coded into more than one category. That systematic overview of the data allowed to build a clear idea of the coverage and scope of this work and helped me distance myself from the initial perceptions and opinions that may have been created during the data collection stage, allowing unexpected ideas to come up (Mason 2002: 152). Coding also made examples of the data available, so they could be used in the write-up of the qualitative data analysis when presenting the results. While coding, knowledge was treated carefully and with respect. Sentences were not simply extracted from their source, since they could be connected to a broader idea and that connection could be lost. Fragments of text were coded with the full context in order to allow a full understanding of the idea provided by the participating community member.

The *saturation* principle was also applied in this stage and, when new *codes* and *categories* stopped emerging from the data, the analysis was considered completed. After coding the full set of data, a total of 5 Topics, 22 Categories and 293 Codes were identified (Appendix 22).

4. *Back to participants for reviewing preliminary results and modifying categories and codes if necessary.* As I was the primary instrument of data analysis, which implies an unavoidable work of own interpretation, during different stages of the analysis, I went back to the community members for feedback and input about the organization of the knowledge. I had conversations with Yunešit'in leadership and participating community members and also personally presented the preliminary results to the community at a General Band Meeting (Yunešit'in Health and Administration building, April 26, 2017). I gathered feedback on the preliminary results and included it in the analysis by making additions or modifications as suggested. This action of going back to participants to assess and confirm results emerging from the data is called *member checking* in qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba 2000) and it is a way of ensuring trustworthiness of the results (Lavallée 2009: 34).
5. *Theming.* *Themes* represent high-level related categories that provide an overall structure to the data and the write-up analysis (Thomas 2006). In this stage, I conducted a continuing revision of the category system. I modified *categories* and *codes* as needed and looked for alternative explanations of the data including contradictory points of view and new insights. As a result, one *code* or a combination of several, created a *theme*. Appropriate quotations that conveyed the core themes were also selected at this stage (Thomas 2006). After the analysis, 121 themes were identified.
6. *Interpreting the data.* Data generation and interpretation were developed simultaneously in a dialectical process (Mason 2002: 180). A systematic mechanism for reaching interpretations was created and I moved back and forth between data analysis, the process of explanation and broader concepts: this is called the *constant comparative method* by Glaser and Strauss (1967) or *abductive reasoning* by Coffey and Atkinson (1996), according to Mason (2002). By making comparisons between those contexts, cross-contextual generalities can be derived from the understanding of processes or phenomena (Mason 2002: 196-197). Following a qualitative approach, all perspectives were interpreted and

treated at the same level of importance. Representation (how many participants said what, how many times) was considered a factor but not a variable determining results. When interpreting the data, I applied the following validation strategies: triangulation, by comparing results from different sources; member checking, by getting back to the participants; and consideration of deviant cases, by analyzing those that differ from the majority, asking questions to the data set and trying out alternative explanations (Mason 2002: 197).

7. *Drawing draft explanations and writing final conclusions.* The writing stage of inductive approaches is a critical element. Since theory comes last and is developed from or through data generation and analysis (Mason 2002: 180), overarching themes are supported by large excerpts from the raw data to ensure that data interpretation remains directly linked to the words of the participants (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006). In this case, participants' reflections were included by maintaining their own words in order to strengthen the validity and credibility of the research (Patton 2002). Also, the original language of the conversation, whether T̄silhqot̄'in or English, was respected to ensure full understanding of the idea provided by the participating community member. For the T̄silhqot̄'in extracts, a free translation done by T̄silhqot̄'in language experts was included to allow understanding. I presented the community with a draft explanation of the results for their feedback and made suggested changes. Then, I developed the discussion and final conclusions.
8. *Dissemination.* During the course of the work, community members were kept up to date about the state of the research in form of casual conversations, brief updates in several General Band Meetings (e.g. April 26, 2017) and as part of community newsletters (March 2017; December 2017; May 2019). Before the completion of the final version of this dissertation, a *stakeholder review* was conducted, as the draft document with the results was provided to Yunešit̄'in Language Committee for their review (December 2019). An Executive Summary report with the suggestion for the application of the research outcomes as well as a final copy of this dissertation will also be presented and made available to the community, upon the filing of this dissertation.

I have presented the stages of the data analysis in a linear and step-by-step order (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006: 83); however, tasks often overlapped during the

analyzing process, and I often found myself moving back and forth from phase to phase and across the data.

4.6 Research Questions and Hypotheses: in constant transformation

Once we have learned about the methodology applied in this study and before heading into the data analysis, in this section, I will review the research outline with the questions and hypotheses that framed this work. As Mason (2002: 174) states, qualitative research work rarely happens as originally planned; due to research limitations or even to the flow of the study, researchers often need to slightly move from the ideal of what was to be achieved onto a different but perhaps more appropriate and interesting approach. In the same way, this work has been in continuing evolution. In every stage of the research, questions arose in form of constant validation and helped reshape the research outline (Appendix 23) by meeting the needs emerging at every moment (Tovar and Hidalgo 2009).

As we can read in Potts and Brown (2005), it is not always easy to find the perfect and final research question. In fact, in qualitative research, initial questions often evolve and continue changing through the research process:

“As important as it is to have a clear starting place, the initial clarity of the research question is tenuously held. When it comes down to it, finding “the question” is seldom that simple. Sometimes the question finds us. Sometimes questions are more like hunches, experienced tensions, or disjunctures sensed in our own lives. Going from clarity to fuzziness can be okay. Questions usually change as the inquiry proceeds. And sometimes the question that was answered is not clearly revealed until the end of the process. We have found that throughout the process, we learn more about what it was we really wanted to know. The art of the question is in the re-researching, the willingness to look again” (Potts and Brown 2005: 266).

Following that idea, research questions developed at the initial stage of this work provided the research framework and narrowed the scope of the study; however, due to the inductive nature of this study, they became open and never remained static. They were slightly modified upon the needs coming up along the different stages of the work. The election of the research focus and the design of the main research question were the result of several conversations with Yuneşit’in leadership and Language Committee, in order to

guarantee the results of this work would be useful for the community. Another key factor was to give voice to Yunešit'in community members by exploring the topic of study directly from their perspectives.

With the aforementioned in mind, four research questions were developed for this study: one main question (RQ1), and three secondary questions (RQ2, RQ3 and RQ4) with an exploratory purpose and to provide background to the main question and enhance the results of this study. Together with the research questions, the rationale and expected output are included in the description below:

Research Question #1	<i>What are the community needs regarding Tšilhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies and language resources towards Tšilhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in? (RQ1)</i>
Rationale	Being traditionally an oral language, the first Tšilhqot'in documentation efforts started in the early 60s when the first alphabet and several wordlists were created. A decade later, an orthography and grammar were developed (Cook 2013). In the 80s, recordings, transcriptions and translations of traditional knowledge and stories were produced, together with teaching materials and other resources for supporting the language learning programs at the schools. Nowadays, the linguistic vitality of Tšilhqot'in is one of the highest in the province. This Indigenous language presents a large number of speakers: 19.9% of the total population are fluent; around 864 out of 4,352 people (FPCC 2014b). However, Tšilhqot'in can still be classified as Stage 7 'Shifting' on the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale as the language is rarely learned now as the mother tongue by children (Fishman 1991). Revitalization through re-establishing home transmission may still be possible since grandparents and some parents learned it as their first language.
Output	By exploring this research question, current needs towards Tšilhqot'in language revitalization strategies in Yunešit'in are sought to be identified. Possible language teaching/learning strategies, challenges that the community may face while learning or using the language, and potential strategies related to the development and preservation of the language and language resources will also be analyzed (e.g. archive for language resources, development of new materials).

Secondary questions stated as follows:

Research Question #2	<i>What is Yunešit'in community members' knowledge and usage of the Tšilhqot'in language? (RQ2)</i>
Rationale	The Tšilhqot'in language can be heard in the daily life and events in Yunešit'in. Community members in their late 40s and older still speak the language regularly. However, a language gap appears between those generations and the younger ones. Language transmission seems to be interrupted and youth barely know the language nowadays.
Output	By answering this question, we will be able to create a picture of Yunešit'in community members' Tšilhqot'in language knowledge, to identify how and where speakers learned the language as well as to evaluate the state of the intergenerational language transmission. Other aspects of the Tšilhqot'in language usage such as where and for what the language is used, current challenges for speaking in the language and strategies to promote it will be also analyzed. Perspectives on how Yunešit'in members perceive the future of the language in the community will be also discussed under this research question.

Research Question #3	<i>What are the reasons for the Tšilhqot'in language loss in Yunešit'in? (RQ3)</i>
Rationale	According to the FPCC (2014b: 2), the dramatic decline in the number First Nations languages speakers in B.C. since the late 1800s is largely due to the following reasons: “the Canadian government’s mandated assimilation policies which outlawed First Nations cultural practices and separated First Nations communities from their land; the residential school system followed by <i>Indian</i> day schools that removed First Nations children from their homes and forbade them to speak their languages; social, industrial and cultural pressures from the dominant English-speaking society; and exclusion of First Nations languages from government, commerce, industry, arts, education and media”. McIvor (2009: 1) adds other devastating events such as “genocide, colonialism, linguistic imperialism, new disease and [...]”

	forced relocation” as crucial factors of the disappearance of the Indigenous languages in B.C.
Output	The aim of this research question is to analyze Yunešit’in members’ perspectives on why speakers stopped using the language. Community perspectives on the reasons causing the current low number of Tšilhqot’in language speakers will be also explored under this question.

Research Question #4	<i>Why is it important to recover the usage of the Tšilhqot’in language in Yunešit’in? (RQ4)</i>
Rationale	As we can read in UNESCO’s study on <i>Language Vitality and Endangerment</i> , “the extinction of each language results in the irrecoverable loss of unique cultural, historical, and ecological knowledge. Each language is a unique expression of the human experience of the world. Thus, [...] every time a language dies, we have less evidence for understanding patterns in the structure and function of human language, human prehistory, and the maintenance of the world’s diverse ecosystems. Above all, speakers of these languages may experience the loss of their language as a loss of their original ethnic and cultural identity” (UNESCO 2003: 2). McIvor et al. (2009) also reflect on the connection between language, land and health as well as traditional medicine, food, activities and spirituality as protective factors of the Indigenous communities.
Output	Under this last research question, I will present Yunešit’in members’ attitudes towards the language and their perceptions on the importance of maintaining the language alive and in use. Their reflections on the consequences of losing their language will also be discussed.

Regarding the hypotheses developed for this work, as explained earlier in the chapter (cf. 4.3), the main objective of the inductive approach is not to prove previously designed statements, but to “allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data” (Thomas 2006). In qualitative research, working hypotheses can be developed to create a guide for generating ideas and propositions from

the data (Mason 2002); they rarely occur before starting the study and usually become one of the results of the work (Barriga 2015).

In concordance with that, hypotheses identified were open, flexible, emergent and constantly reviewed during the research process at the same time data were being collected. They were originally developed from insights and observations acquired from my participation in the community life and literature review. My job as Yunešit'in Language Planning Specialist (and later on, as Yunešit'in Language Coordinator) provided me with valuable perceptions, thoughts and concerns expressed by community members (*participant observation* method), as well as access to documents and materials related to the focus of this study (*document review* method).

Ultimately, hypotheses helped narrow the focus of the study and also design data collection instruments (i.e. question guide for the conversations). As explained before, hypotheses were developed to respond only to the main research question (RQ1) and each of them addressed a different variable or factor under study identified within this research (Appendix 23).

Hypotheses for the main research question (RQ1) were developed as follows; the corresponding variables of study, rationale and observations are also presented.

Hypothesis #1	<i>It is necessary to develop and implement language immersion programs in order to increase the number of speakers and level of language fluency (H1).</i>
Variable #1	Language teaching/learning techniques (V1)
Rationale	Language immersion is considered the best method for learning any language (Francis and Reyhner 2002b, Nettle and Romaine 2000, Aguilera and LeCompte 2007) and has been proved effective when learning Indigenous languages (FPCC 2014a; May et al. 2006: 2; Rewi and Rewi 2015: 145). All communication ought to be done in the language and if the child finds difficulty understanding, the speaker may use “non-verbal communication such as gestures, facial expressions, actions or pictures to convey meaning” (FPCC 2014a:9) trying to avoid the use of the dominant language, in this case, English. Nevertheless, 100% immersion may not always be possible initially and communities often need to go through a graduated or partial-immersion approach (Aguilera and LeCompte 2007).

Observations	Few language immersion programs have been organized in the community, most of them targeting early ages (3-4 years old) and combined with daycare, preschool or Kindergarten programs. Language is also taught to older students (Grade 1-6) at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul for 45 minutes a day, four days a week, in a 'second-language' learning environment (Gass 1994).
--------------	--

Hypothesis #2	<i>It is necessary to develop language programs that support intergenerational transmission (H2).</i>
Variable #2	Engagement of different generations and community groups in the language programs (V2)
Rationale	<p>According to Fishman (1996: 187), one of the main reasons for the endangerment of languages is “the lack of sufficient inter-generational mother-tongue transmission”. The elderly population may naturally converse, argue, sing, pray and live in the language, so it may be difficult to identify the level of endangerment that the language is at. However, when the young generations do not speak it, that language may not have more that couple of decades of life (Fishman 1996: 190).</p> <p>Languages are naturally acquired “in infancy and in the family”, which means “intimacy and informality” (Fishman 1996: 192). Institutionalized language learning (i.e. school) is often programmed and formal, and although it is a useful and needed support, it does not fully promote intergenerational learning (except for schools where parents attend with their children). A successful <i>vernacularization</i> process also required a ‘societal change’ (Fishman 1996:193); the work of the parents and grandparents transmitting the language need to be supported by a society ready to changes and create spaces for speaking the language and encouraging members to use it.</p>
Observations	The Tšilhqot'in language is rarely transmitted as mother tongue from parents to children. Basic vocabulary and greetings may be used in the household, but in most of the cases communication between older

	and younger generations usually happens in English. The language is usually learned at school and other language programs may encourage but do not necessarily require family members' involvement.
--	---

Hypothesis #3	<i>It is necessary to develop and implement new strategies to teach/learn/acquire the language on the land (H3).</i>
Variable #3	Strategies that promote language teaching/learning/acquiring on the land (V3)
Rationale	<p>Shaw (2001: 40) reflects on “the First Nations’ peoples’ inalienable identification of language with the land”. FPCC (2015: 52) also explains how the “knowledge comes from the land and that’s where our ancestral knowledge comes from”. According to them, “the land holds a central importance, and in part it identifies who we are. Knowing one’s connection to the land is an essential part of learning, understanding and teaching others with kindness about cultural protocols” (FPCC 2015: 25).</p> <p>As all Indigenous peoples (FPCC 2015: 32), the T̓silhqot̓’in hold a strong connection to the land and consider themselves caretakers of their territory. Implementing language learning initiatives on the land will not only support the necessary societal change but also enhance the ancestral relationship between the people and the land.</p>
Observations	In the past few years, Yunešit̓’in Language Committee has organized cultural programs where community members of all-ages have had the opportunity to participate in cultural activities and learn about fishing, hunting, cleaning and smoking salmon, cutting and drying meat, drumming, playing cultural games (e.g. <i>lehal</i>), crafts, medicine walks, etc. In addition, in August 2016 a language immersion and culture camp was organized; for four days, children learned the language and simultaneously acquired traditional knowledge by carrying out cultural activities with the Elders on the land (cf. 3.3.2.3).

Hypothesis #4	<i>It is necessary to develop culturally oriented language programs and materials that support language teaching/learning while simultaneously acquiring traditional knowledge (H4).</i>
Variable #4	Presence of cultural traditions in the language programs and resources (V4)
Rationale	<p>Initially, many Indigenous language revitalization processes were based on models developed for teaching other non-Indigenous languages. This is the case of both the Hawaiian and Māori languages (cf. 7.2): language revitalization leaders first studied the French immersion model in Canada before starting their own language revitalization process (McIvor 2009: 5).</p> <p>Today there is a need to include Indigenous worldviews, traditions and protocol in the revitalization processes. “The genesis, cosmology, history and secrets of the people” need to be taught, together with the sociocultural and intellectual heritage embodied in the language, such as “medicine, religion, cultural practices and traditions, music, art, human relationships, child-rearing practices, as well as Indigenous ways of knowing about sciences, history, astronomy, psychology, philosophy and anthropology” (Aguilera and LeCompte 2007: 12). There still exists a lack of curriculum materials, books and other resources created within the cultural environment (Aguilera and LeCompte 2007: 25).</p> <p>The Canadian Ministry of Education has given recommendations to include the Indigenous worldviews and languages as part of any educational experiences with an Indigenous aspect that involves outdoor trips or field studies in the local Indigenous community. It is also recommended to incorporate “simple words and phrases for greetings, interactions, place references, etc., and visibly acknowledge the local First Nation’s culture through the use of images, artifacts such as a talking stick, or circle sharing sessions” (Ministry of Education 2015: 34). Other recommendations have been included in the language teaching Curriculum Guide developed by the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC).</p>

	According to that institution, units may also include cultural lessons about Indigenous concepts, such Indigenous laws or principles (Ignace 2015: 34).
Observations	Existing T̓silhqot̓in curriculum was developed based on how to teach other non-Indigenous languages (i.e. French immersion, English) and current language teaching strategies are still based on Western methodologies. Few resources with cultural content can be found at Yune̓it̓in school, but the majority of the materials are translated stories from Western cultures, mostly English-speaking.

The presented research questions were answered and the hypotheses validated throughout a thematic analysis of the data, as explained before (cf. 4.5.3). Results will be presented in the next two chapters 5 and 6 of this work.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the aspects of the methodology and ethics that framed this work and the data collection methods and analysis procedures designed under principles from Indigenous methodologies and community-based and participatory research. It has also been stated that my intent was not to pursue a study *on* the language revitalization experience of the Yune̓it̓in community but to conduct collaborative research work designed and implemented *with* the community that may contribute to enhance their language revitalization strategies. Thus, the research work was developed in the hope to also meet community needs and address their concerns on the topic of study.

I followed a qualitative and inductive approach, where the community members' perspectives, insights and opinions constituted the start of the analysis, by letting the results emerge directly from them. Community knowledge was gathered through a combination of methods (participant observation, conversation, sharing circle and document analysis), which allowed to look at the data and address the research questions from different angles. This chapter has also thoroughly presented and described the units of analysis and the procedure and criteria applied for analyzing the information: by implementing a thematic analysis, topics, categories and codes derived from the data allowed to organize the knowledge in themes for their subsequent interpretation.

To finish, I have presented the research questions designed for this study together with their corresponding rationale and output, as well as the hypotheses stated for the main research question (RQ1) and the variable of study that each of them addresses, their rationale and some related observations. In the next two chapters 5 and 6, I will go over the results of the thematical analysis of the data, which, ultimately, helped answer the questions and validate the hypotheses.

Chapter 5. Presentation of the learnings: T̄silhqot'in language knowledge and usage in Yunešit'in

A thematic analysis is “a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon” (Daly et al. 1997). In this work, a total of 121 themes emerged from the coding of the gathered knowledge and were classified in five main topics: Topic 1 – T̄silhqot'in language knowledge in Yunešit'in (7 themes); Topic 2 – T̄silhqot'in language usage in Yunešit'in (42 themes); Topic 3 – Value of the T̄silhqot'in language in Yunešit'in (22 themes); Topic 4 – T̄silhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies in Yunešit'in (43 themes); Topic 5 – T̄silhqot'in language resources in Yunešit'in (9 themes). The first two topics will be discussed in this chapter, leaving the last three for the next one.

As explained in the previous chapter (cf. 4.4.3), each topic consisted of several categories and each category was formed by several codes (Appendix 22). Identified codes, categories and topics helped create the themes presented in the subsequent analysis. Some of the themes became interrelated and covered similar content, although they answered different questions.

As we will see through the discussion below, I included community perspectives in form of quotes for developing the analysis and added references to the source and/or participating community member that provided the knowledge (i.e. participant's pseudonym, date, source, time, document, etc.) after each quote (Appendix 21). Together with the participant's pseudonym, I also included their age to provide the reader with the participants' generational background, which is key to understand the language knowledge and use in the community (c.f. 4.1).

By “arguing multivocally”, I was able to make an argument in this study and “make you [the reader] aware of a meaningful range of perspectives, experiences and standpoints” on the topic under study (Mason 2002: 176). In this analysis, the slice of data is constitutive of the explanation; in fact, the discussion could not have happened without it as the explanation was retrieved directly from the data. Quotes were not chosen randomly; they were strategically selected in connection with the sampling method. When selecting quotes for the analysis, the fact that certain perspectives represented a majority or minority of the total data was not definitive; all perspectives were considered valid and essential to the description of the phenomenon, hence, the discussion of the different

topics may vary in length. Relationships between those perspectives were mostly explained in qualitative terms, except for the results emerging from the inventory of language resources, which were quantitatively analyzed.

I am aware that, by selecting and interpreting the data, my own influence is inevitably inferred to the analysis; thus, I tried to minimize my authorial presence and let the community members speak for themselves, by presenting the analysis with minimal commentary from myself as possible (Mason 2002: 185).

In the next sections, we will know more about the language knowledge in the community, how members learned their language and their proficiency level (cf. 5.1). Other perspectives covering topics such as the language usage in the community, who speaks it and in which situations, the challenges speakers face, the reasons for the current language situation and the consequences of the language loss, strategies for promoting its use, intergenerational transmission and the future of the language will be also discussed here (cf. 5.2).

5.1 Topic 1 – T̓silhqot̓'in language knowledge in Yunešit̓'in

Results included in this topic will provide a description of community members' language fluency, how they learned the language and where and when they use it today.

5.1.1 What is the language fluency level in the community?

Community members who participated in this study identified themselves under four different categories regarding their language proficiency: 'fluent', 'semi-speaker', 'basic', and 'learning'. The following themes are be discussed below:

- Theme 1.1. Community members older than 45 years old are T̓silhqot̓'in fluent speakers
- Theme 1.2. Community members in their 30s are semi-fluent T̓silhqot̓'in speakers
- Theme 1.3. Community members under 30 years old have basic level of T̓silhqot̓'in
- Theme 1.4. Community members keep learning the language today

Theme 1.1. Community members older than 45 years old are T̂silhqot'in fluent speakers

Elders and younger generations (until mid-40s) stated that they can speak the language fluently. *ʔEtsu ghinli* (late grandma), who is 92 years old, was the oldest participating community member and did not speak any English during the conversation.

As her daughter *MJB*, 68, commented, her *inkwel* (mom) “spoke [T̂silhqot'in] all her life time” and she still speaks it (*MJB* 11/16/2016 CO#13, 00:00:07,3 – 00:00:32,5).

Yunešit'in Elder *Maggie*, 76, also said she speaks T̂silhqot'in with her husband and her kids, who are in their late 40s and 50s (*Maggie*, 11/09/2016, CO#4, 00:04:41,2 – 00:06:10,9). *MQ*, 66, admitted speaking it regularly with her kids, everywhere she goes (*MQ* 11/09/2016 CO#4, 00:02:16,7 – 00:02:21,6) as well as *Matilda*, 66, who tries to use her language any time she can (*Matilda* 11/09/2016 CO#5 00:01:16,2 – 00:01:16,4). However, other community members from the same generation, like *Nun* (wolf), 57 don't feel they are totally fluent:

“I understand it but can't speak it very good. [...] Still get lost between the English version and the T̂silhqot'in thing...” (*Nun*, 11/09/2016, CO #4, 00:02:21,5 – 00:02:57,8).

Theresa, 60, who is a language expert, felt her language proficiency has grown over the years as a result of her ongoing language teaching and linguistic work:

“When I came out of school and I was about 18 or 19, it was hard to switch [between English and T̂silhqot'in] at the same time. I would start making mistakes in English [laughs], if I was speaking T̂silhqot'in then switching and I would do the same in the other language [...] but then I had, I don't know, [...] 30+ years of working with the language, so I think I got more fluent than when I was that age, 18 or 19” (*Theresa* 11/09/2016, CO#19, 00:10:26,2 – 00:10:24,5).

Nevertheless, she explained how she still feels she doesn't know “everything”, or as much as Elders used to know, and that is why she considers herself “60% [fluent]” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:43:53,8 – 00:44:02,2). However, her daughter *ʔElagi*, 39, who is a semi-speaker disagreed on that:

“I also feel like those that have a lot of knowledge within the language feel that way. Because my mom says that about herself all the time. My mom talked about, you know, when we lived at *ʔEtsu ghinli*’s [late grandma], she’d say ‘I hear ten words a day that I don’t know’. Every day ten words that her mom would say!” (*ʔElagi*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:43:27,0 – 00:43:53,9).

Filly, 49, who is also a language teacher and has been working in the language field for couple of decades now, has that feeling too, as she explained in T̄silhqot’in:

“*Sid ʔeguh, seʔinkwel, seʔintsi belh seʔintsu belh deghilt̄s̄i gwech’ez nenqayni ch’ah yastig ūlin. Nenqayni dist̄iny. Xen... belhdan hin, sunk’ah lha, lha gweched guneŋen.* [I stayed with my mom and my grandfather. I learned to talk T̄silhqot’in and understood it. Some of the language I really don’t know yet] (*Filly*, 07/11/2017, CO#1, 00:04:45:00 – 00:05:10).

48 year-old *Chelʔig* (coyote) was the youngest participating community member who identified herself as fluent speaker. When talking about her language fluency, she assertively answered: “yes, my first language [is T̄silhqot’in], from my parents and grandparents” (*Chelʔig*, 12/08/2016 CO#17, 00:11:24,9 – 00:12:11,2). However, she also mentioned that her husband, who belongs to the same generation, “does get upset because he is T̄silhqot’in himself but he doesn’t speak it” as “he was raised *off-reserve* [out of the community]” (*Chelʔig*, CO #17, 12/08/2016, 00:09:05,1 – 00:10:33,3). Likewise, *Roper*, 44, who is also from the same generation, didn’t considered herself a fluent speaker either: “I do, speak it, but very little. [...] I understand a lot more” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:01:42,2 – 00:01:51,6).

Theme 1.2. Community members in their 30s are semi-speakers

All participating community members in their 30s identified themselves as semi-speakers since they can understand the language, and some of them can speak and even read and write. However, they feel they don’t have an extensive language knowledge to be included in the “fluent” category, as they cannot speak fluently. *Chickadee*, 39, for example, said:

“I would say not fluently, but I can read and I can write it and I would say I know, I know fairly a fair amount” (*Chickadee*, 12/07/2016 CO#22, 00:01:08,4 – 00:01:19,1).

“There is a lot of us [from her generation] that still have that strong grasp of the language” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:08:06,7 – 00:08:51,8).

34-year-old *Gex* (snowshoe hare) also had a similar opinion about her language fluency level: “I don’t speak very much so... I wouldn’t say that I’ve learned my language...” (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15 00:02:02,1 – 00:02:18,9), as well as her sister *ʔElagi* (flower), 39, who explained that might have some conversational skills but not a comprehensive knowledge of the language:

“I wouldn’t say like, I am fluent, right? Like I can understand a lot more than I can speak. I can speak some things, some like basic things, just conversational sort of stuff... just you know, ‘oh it’s windy, look at the wind, it is really blowing right now!” (*ʔElagi*, 12/07/2016, CO#22, 00:04:07,5 – 00:04:55,6).

However, she believes that she might still have some ‘dormant’ language, that she learned as a child:

“A lot of the language is there for us. I think I do have a lot, a language that is kind of, whether you call it ‘dormant’ or whatever. Because I remember coming home from being in the school down in the city, and coming home with *ʔEtsu* [grandma] up there [Yunešit’ in community] and say to *ʔEtsu* [grandma] how, you know, *setsul nenchagh* [my tongue, it is thick]. I remember I felt how my brain was resting, and I felt that my tongue was fat and thick. Whenever I came over, it would take about a month... not a month, maybe couple of weeks or something for that [recover her fluency], after being away for school” (*ʔElagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:06:38,5 – 00:07:09,6).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh (I am holding the grizzly bear spirit), 35, also felt that he cannot speak fluently but he can understand “conversations, and usually when they point [at] [...] what they are talking about [...] and they describe it”:

“I hear *dechen* and they talk about something in the way, when you are walking to the house, maybe to get it out of the way; like I recognize *dechen* [stick] and they are talking about tripping on it, and then I need to go and taking it out of the way” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:01:11,4 – 00:02:53,2).

Kalikala, 39, however, doesn't describe herself even as a semi-speaker. As she explained, she was raised out of the community by foster families, which in her opinion is the main reason for her low language proficiency:

"I was taught in white families, which is different traditions and things and since being taken away so young I never got to learn T̂silhqot'in, [...] at a young age, and what I learned I forgot, because we never used it" (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:01:11,7 – 00:03:19,4).

Theme 1.3. Community members under 30 years old have basic level of T̂silhqot'in

Younger participants, under 30 years old, acknowledged knowing the 'basics', but being unable to understand a whole conversation or produce sentences.

Dani, 28, admitted she understands "some of it", "the basic words", but not "how to make the sentences" (*Dani*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:01:06,8 – 00:01:25,0); same happens to her sister, *Britt*, 25, who knows "just the basic stuff, not the 100% of it" (*Britt*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:01:25,0 – 00:01:35,3) and their cousin *Datsan*, 27, who only knows "a little bit of it, the basics" but "can't speak it" (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:01:35,2 – 00:01:36,6).

Participants in their early 20s, like *Jo*, 23, also stated that they have basic knowledge, such as "animals, numbers, colors, months, days, water... [...] and some commands like "come", "sit down" (*Jo*, 11/10/2016, CO#16, 00:01:51,2 – 00:02:23,9). She also knows some of the expressions, but cannot remember them sometimes because she doesn't use them too often. She thinks her comprehension level is better than her speaking:

"I can remember *seʔast'ih* [I am doing well]; how to say 'my name is'. I can say all that, or used to, but I don't remember how to use it again... because I barely try to do it" (*Jo*, 11/10/2016, CO#16, 00:35:56,5 – 00:36:08,1). [...] "I can get it when people are introducing me like say it, [her name], and they ask my parents *ʔabba* [dad], *ʔinkwel* [mom], and they look at me and they go 'oh, [her mom's name]!'. Like I know what they say; I can understand certain things..." (*Jo*, 11/10/2016, CO#16, 00:36:17,3 – 00:36:52,6).

Her cousin *Rissa*, 24, does not consider herself fluent either, but she can understand when her *ʔEtsu* [grandma] and *ʔetsi* [grandpa] speak to each other (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016,

CO #3, 00:02:40,0 – 00:02:44,9). Neither her sister *Tay*, 23, would call herself semi-speaker, as she only knows “the basics, like the [...] colors” (*Tay*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:02:11,2 – 00:02:13,9) nor their cousin *Omi*, 22, who also responded she only knows “some of it and can understand the basics” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:00:54,8 – 00:01:04,0).

Theme 1.4. Community members keep learning the language today

Independently of their level of fluency, some community members are learning the language nowadays, for example, parents, like *Nists'i*, (deer) 32, who has two children under the age of five and continues learning the language so that he can pass it on to them (*Nists'i*, CO#23, 04/03/2017, 00:04:38,0 – 00:05:44,3). *Kalikala*, 39, is also willing to learn her language for that purpose. She didn't have the chance to spend her childhood in the community and now that she is back, she is looking forward to getting back to her roots and learning her language and culture with her child:

“After being out of the reserve for, I think, since I was about five... –so I've quite a few years [laughs]– you really learn... Well, when you are changing coming from a young girl to a mom, everything changes, and then coming back to your people, you really... it's an eye-opener and it's really interesting to learn... [...] And having my own child makes me really look at my own childhood, you know, and I really want the best for my daughter... So coming back here and being with my mom allows her to be able to be a grandma, you know. She is sober now for... 15 years or more, so she gets to kind of being a mom again in a way, right? In a good way... and [I am] learning T̂silhqot'in because she is teaching my daughter so that's the way I'm learning too” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:01:11,7 – 00:03:19,4).

Youth learns the language by listening to their families, as *Chel?ig*, 48, explained:

“My kids are picking up on it. My 17-year-old, when she gets upset, she will say this phrase *stee* and that is just like 'jeez' but she always says that now. I think it's cool she speaks that up” (*Chel?ig*, CO #17, 12/08/2016, 00:09:05,1 – 00:10:33,3).

Younger generations, i.e. children from 5 to 13 years, are also learning it at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul and other language programs that are organized in the community (SC#1, 11/24/2016).

5.1.2 Where and how did participating community members learn their language?

Community members made reference to several sources for language learning: with family, at home, on the land, at school and at work. Below I present the discussion on the following themes:

- Theme 1.5. Fluent speakers learned their language from their family at home and on the land while carrying out daily and cultural activities
- Theme 1.6. Semi-fluent speakers learned the language at home from their family and at school from their language teachers
- Theme 1.7. Participants with basic language knowledge learned the language at school but also at home and on the land with their family

Theme 1.5. Fluent speakers learned their language from their family at home and on the land while carrying out daily and cultural activities

All fluent community members stated that they learned their language at home, from their Elders and other family members. When I asked *Chelʔig*, 48, how she got her language, she assertively answered, she was “born with it” (FR#1 28/04/2017) referring to the connection of the language, her family and her home.

Many of them mentioned especially their *ʔetsu* (grandma) and *ʔetsi* (grandpa), as well as their *ʔinkwell* (mom) and *ʔabba* (dad), as the main family members transmitting the language. Great grandparents and uncles and aunties were also acknowledged by some, as their ‘language teachers’. Elder *Pauline ghinli*, 82, and *LM*, 78 commented on that in Tšilhqot'in:

“*Guh gan, nengegu lah jid yats'elhtig haghini, seʔaba, seʔinkwel, seʔintsu*” [my dad, my mother and my grandmother used to speak it] (*Pauline ghinli*, 20/04/2017, CO#20, 00:01:36).

“*Sid ʔeguh yaniz dzanh, ʔesqi nesdlin danh, seʔinkwel, seʔaba belh, nenduw h gagulhnaž gunadast'in*” [I was taught by my mother and father since the time I was a kid] (*LM*, 07/11/2017, CO#1, 00:00:03,07 – 00:00:03,29).

Braids, 72, said that her mom was the main person speaking T̄silhqot'in at home (*Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:45:03) and *Peter*, 72, also answered quickly *se?inkwell* (my mom) when asking him about how he learned his language (*Peter*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:01:18), as well as *Lily the Pink*, 62, who stated: "from my parents, my older siblings and grandparents" (*Lily the Pink*, 09/11/2016, CO#6, 00:01:24,0 – 00:01:32,3). *Blondie*, 57, also mentioned her grandparents and great-grandfather taught him:

"*Xunlht'i jid yastig jigwedas?in? ?Aba, ?Inkel, nenqayni ch'ah yajelhtig. Ju?d ghili chuh. Gwelawh gwa yajelhtig*" [How did I learn my language? My grandparents, great grandfather, they talk about everything] (*Blondie*, 16/11/2017, CO#11, 00:01:29)

Filly, 49, felt that the reason why she is fluent is that she lived with her parents; she could learn from them and other Elders (*Filly*, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting). *Nun*, 57, mentioned that, in addition to her parents and grandparents, she also spoke the language with her uncles (*Nun*, 11/09/2016, CO#4, 00:01:17,9 – 00:01:33,5).

Many fluent community members expressed that T̄silhqot'in was the main language in the family during their childhood. *MJB*, 68, said that nobody spoke English those days. Her mom, dad and grandparents, only spoke T̄silhqot'in and they, as kids, "had to learn; that was the only language they had" (*MJB*, 11/16/2016 CO#13, 00:01:15,1 – 00:01:33,8). *Pauline ghinli*, 82, also talked about this:

"In those days, we, even the kids all talked the same language, and anybody who lived in the same house talked in the same language. My grandfather, my grandma [...] and my mother, my dad, my brothers, sisters. And, even any uncles who come by [...]. My aunts and uncles" (*Pauline ghinli*, 04/20/2017, CO#21, 00:00:01:36 – 00:00:02:09)

Dothy, 64, also learned the language from her parents. It was her only language in her first years of life and only learned English when she went to residential school:

"*Chunchuh je?anadeteghat'ax. ?An, sid xunlht'i jid nenqayni ch'ih yastig jigwedas?in. Guyen t'agultin sejenilhyan ?eyen, ?eyen guch'ez gagulhchuh jigwedas?in. Nenqayni ch'ih*

yastig, guh, yagh, guh, nenqayni dzanh ch'ih yastig ghangh. Lha, lha midugh ch'ih yastig gwinešen. Yax, yagh, residential school nendasets'eninlhtin, ?egun, gun, midugh dzanh ch'ah yajelhtig sanh” [I was raised by elder parents (foster Tšilhqot'in family) and that is how I learned how to speak Tšilhqot'in all my life. I didn't know English when I went to residential school and I had to learn there] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:24:23,0 – 00:00:25,03).

Theresa, 60, who has worked as a teacher since the late 70s, also made reference to that by saying that when she started teaching the language “around 40 years ago”, “it was easy because all [the children] spoke Tšilhqot'in” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2017, CO#15, 00:33:11,7 – 00:33:28,8). *Lily the Pink*, 62, also remembered to speak it on daily basis when she was a kid (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:01:37,3 – 00:01:39,8).

Many of the elder participants commented on how their parents didn't even know English, since they never went to school. During one of the conversations with *MJB*, 68, and her mom *?Etsu*, 92, *MJB* said that she only went to school “for a little while but not too much”, and that is why “she knows certain English words but not a lot”. She also said her mom taught them the language and that that is all they heard all day (*MJB*, 16/11/2016, CO#13, 00:06:13,4 – 00:06:25,9). *Maggie*, 76, commented on the same:

“I learned it from my grand peoples, my mom and dad, they never went to school so I learned my language. They hardly talked to us in English” (*Maggie*, 11/09/2016, CO#4, 00:01:33,4 – 00:01:54,4).

Nundi, 69, explained something similar:

“Se?inkwel belh se?aba, yagh, lha ?esgul jidal, hink'an, yagh, gagulhnaž nenqayni ch'ih yajelhtig” [My mother and father never went to school, they always spoke their own language] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:02,13 – 00:00:02,38).

Many community members emphasized that they learned the language just by listening to their parents, “nothing else”; “that's how you learn Tšilhqot'in” (*BW*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:01:45,9 – 00:01:56,6). *Nundi*, 69, also commented that he and his siblings learned fast the same way:

“?Eyi dzanh xužiltš’an gwech’ez ?eghal, ?eghal yaltig jigwedeghil’in” [Listening to them we learned to speak it quite fast] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10 00:00:02,13 – 00:00:02,38).

MJB emphasized that the main person who taught them “the main things” was mostly her dad: “he just taught, we listen, you do it” (*MJB*, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:00:07:16,7 – 00:08:38,0). *BW*, 61, also made reference to how you just “got to listen to your parents. That’s how we learn our language”.

Chel?ig, 48, remembers her grandmother teaching her, not only the language but also body language, which has allowed her to understand people better and be aware of the situations she in:

“I was very fortunate, like I said, with my grandmother. I was like 3 years old and I asked really old, like wise questions... like I saw this girl, beautiful 14-year-old, and 6 months later she had aged and I was like ‘what happened?’, ‘why?’ ‘why does she look different?’ and my grandmother took the opportunity to answer my observation so it was very fortunate that she was giving me, answering my questions as best as she could. And also, like just going into a room and just looking at people and trying to pick up what’s happening as I am walking in. So I am reading body language. [...] That was something that was taught to me: be aware and don’t catch yourself not being aware in situations, because these were times when children were getting hurt [at the residential school]” (*Chel?ig*, CO #17, 12/08/2016, 00:07:00,9 – 00:08:57,6).

When talking about how they learned their language, many fluent community members, also mentioned storytelling as one of the main sources. *Braids*, 72, said that her mom would tell stories at night and that she misses that nowadays (*Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:45:03). *Theresa*, 60, also recalled that her mom would look at a picture and “talk about it”, say what it was or tell “her own little stories from her own childhood” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:28:46,4 – 00:29:21,1).

Community members also mentioned other daily activities that help them to learn their language. *Maureen*, 51, for example, remembered being around her grandparents when she was a child and travelling with them:

“I always asked them questions, how do you say this and that? And, I learned a lot from them. And every time I jumped in the wagon with them, they’ll all tell me, ‘Oh, we’re going to have a young lady that asks nothing but questions, that likes to talk a lot!’ [laughs] (*Maureen*, 16/31/2016, CO#12, 00:04:22,0).

LM, 78, was taught by his parents while working on the land. They would name medicine plants or other things they found:

“*Gu, tsez ?anajeli tah. Tl’ugh tah ?anats’eli gagunlhchugh. Nenqayni dzanh ch’ih yajelhtig. Lha ?esgul jediltš’ul hanh. Ha?anh. Guguh, dadaben gats’i juzih. Did hanh, ni gats’in, ?egu gagunlhchugh jigwedas?in ghangh, gagunlhnaž. Se?inkwel, se?aba, se-brother [name], ?eyen. ?Eyen gweched nenqayni ch’ih yalhtig xaghinih*” [I always work with them when they are making wood and putting up hay, they always speak in the language, like they have me in the school. They named things like medicine and whatever, I learned everything from them. My mother and father and also my brother [name], they always spoke in the language] (*LM*, 07/11/2017, CO#1, 00:00:03,07 – 00:00:03,29).

Other community members also mentioned cultural activities as the way for learning the language. As we can see in this fragment by *Nundi*, 69, he remembered living in the bush, going trapping and helping with the cattle:

“*Yagh, gan gwanajegwelni, yagh, nad xi ghida hinlin, yedanx guzun jid Tšilhqot’in ch’ah yastig. Yanuw h dežiltš’ish, tl’ugh ?ana... tl’ugh ?ajelh?insh, yanuw h. Sek’i ghajaghižtan, ?eqe?ajet’in. Yanuw h hinlin su jedilhtš’ish. ?Eyed hanh su nenqayni ch’ih, nenqayni dzanh ch’ih yajelhtig, gu ?eyed dzanh gužilhtš’an. ?Eyed hanh gagulhghen, yagh, nenqayni ch’ih yastig*” [Just from hearing their stories. I spoke in Tšilhqot’in when I was two years of age. We were living way back in the bush when they were looking after the cows and trapping, they mainly lived way back in the bush. They spoke only their language. I listened to them is the reason why I spoke it early] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:00:02,13 – 00:00:02,38).

Or in this one by *MJB*, 68, who recalled skinning animals and preparing meat with her family:

“She taught us everything we know (*MJB*, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:03:12,9 – 00:03:14,0) [...] to skin deer and moose... [...] I know everything, you take it apart, you gut it” (*MJB*, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:03:14,6 – 00:04:14,2).

BW, 61, also commented that he was raised on the land. They were “out there most of the time” hunting with his late dad (*BW*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:01:45,9 – 00:01:56,6). *Saina*, 65, also said she got the language by fishing and working with her family and the Elders. Even if her dad knew some English and that she went to residential school, T̄silhqot’in would still be the main language at the house:

“Sid ʔegu, seʔinkwel, seʔaba gagunlhnaʔ nenqayni ch’ah selh yajelhtig ghangh. Hink’an, guguh tejelex teʔagunt’ih, gagunlhchugh, gagunlhnaʔ nenqayni ch’ah nexwelh yajelhtig. Lha gwechugh midugh. Seʔaba dzanh midugh dzanh belh yalhtig hast’insh. Xun ʔeguh, lha midugh deʔits’iny xaghit’i. Midugh nadaʔit’in. Gu, gan gagunlhnaʔ nenqayni ch’ah selh yajelhtig. Mission ghida ʔeguh chuh, xanaghesjah ʔeguh chuh gagunlhnaʔ nenqayni dzanh ch’ah selh yajelhtig. Gwech’ez shunk’ah nenqayni ch’ah yastig guneʂen [For me, my mom and dad always talked to me in the language, where they set gillnet they always speak in T̄silhqot’in. My dad was the only one who spoke with the white man but for us we didn’t understand English. We worked for the white man we always speak to each other in the language. I stayed at the Mission (residential school) and came back home. I spoke in T̄silhqot’in. I still know how to speak the language because of that] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:00:04,25 – 00:00:04,42). *Galitsish gujenilhdzay, gagulhchugh jighajeyenelhten hayt’insh. Gu, gulh ʔat’in hanh. Gu, tsa nits’elhʔex chuh nilhʔat’in. Gagulhchugh jighajeyenelhten* [The Elders taught me everything on how to plant a garden. I helped out when someone is skinning a beaver, they taught me everything] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:00:06,29).

MJB, 68, also explained about her mom spending her life on the land:

“She was always working on the land, and summer time they were haying. They had haying contracts and the in-fall time they were [...] guide for hunting...? They worked up there. She made dry meat” (*MJB* 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:06:29,9 – 00:06:34,9).

Pauline ghinli, 82, talked about how she “even learned to count, when they brought in some dead squirrel” that her family had hunted and she had to count them (*Pauline ghinli*, 04/20/2017, CO#20, 00:02:31 – 00:03:01). Younger members, like *Chelʔig*, 48, also stated that, in addition to learning at home with their families, some of them have been taught T̓silhqot’in language in middle school:

“I was taught T̓silhqot’in in grade 7. That was when they were teaching how to write it out. I learned everything I needed it to learn in that time so I can write T̓silhqot’in after speaking. So I’m pretty fortunate that way” (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:45:03,9 – 00:45:47,6).

Theme 1.6. Semi-speakers learned the language at home from their family and at school from their language teachers

All semi-speakers recalled learning the language by “doing stuff” with their families (*ʔElagi*, 12/07/2016, CO#22, 00:04:07,5 – 00:04:55,6). As *ʔElagi*, 39, said in a conversation with her mom, she felt that what she knows she learned it at home with her mom and other family members:

“The language that I do have [...] I learned it with my mom. My mom was [...] pretty focus to speaking T̓silhqot’in to us when we were young. But I also... until I was probably two years old, lived with my *ʔEtsu* [grandma] and my mom and my aunties and my *ʔetsi* [grandpa], so I think the [T̓silhqot’in] language was probably the main language that was spoken in the household until I was two years old, and then beyond that it was the only language you spoke with us, eh? until probably five years old or something (*ʔElagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:03:14,8 – 00:04:03,8).

A similar response was given by her sister *Gex*, 34:

“Well, we grew up in the city, so it was only my mom that we learned from, and then when I moved back with my *ʔEtsu* [grandma]” (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:02:20,2).

Gex also explained that because they lived in the city, she didn't have the opportunity to learn T̄silhqot'in at school. Her dad tried to find a teacher for her "but the language workers up here didn't want to be outside of Williams Lake" (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:02:44,2 – 00:03:09,6).

Nists'i, 32, also referred to his grandmother as one of the sources of his language and culture knowledge when he was young. Although he didn't grow up in the community, he often visited at his grandma's place:

"My mom would bring me out and when we were at our *ʔEtsu* or grandmother's house, that's all I heard [...]. We would be there for meals or soup or..., even, you know, waking up in the bed and that's all I heard, it was the language" (*Nists'i*, 04/03/2017, CO#23, 00:10:24,5 – 00:12:23,0).

However, he said that it was mostly his mother who taught him the language. They even created a language a booklet together, with drawings and sentences in the language, but when he actually had to sit down and learn like in a 'classroom', he would lose his interest:

"Mostly my mother [...]. She actually started me off when I was quite young. She would have stopped when I was 4 years old, 5 years old. [...] She would sit me down and I have a book here and it's like... it shows a lot of the little things we did. We did cartoons together and she would go over them with me. It lasted a while, but when I had to like sit down like in... like in in a classroom, that kind of setting when I was that young, I don't think I liked it so... My mom kinda she...in some ways, she still spoke around the house, but she kinda gave up on trying like really push us to learn so... But you can see like the pictures or... they have little children... sort of things I would be doing at that age... But it's mostly where I got it from. Because we lived in town...in Williams Lake. It's a lot harder. We didn't see as much family... Family wasn't coming in the house, you know, every day so...my mom didn't have that chance to speak. My father was *midugh*, or white person, so, you know most of her interaction, because he wasn't really willing to learn, most of the interaction was in English" (*Nists'i* 12/07/2016, CO#23, 00:01:11,3 – 00:02:54,9).

Roper, 44, also commented that her mom only spoke T̄silhqot'in to them and she still does even today, so she keeps learning from her:

“When she [her mom] sits at home, she talks to us straight, she doesn't... there is not a bit of English to us from her eh?” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:19:00,5 – 00:20:05,7).

A similar response was reported by *Chickadee*, 39: her parents were “fluent speakers so they always spoke around” her and her siblings “and they would always explain” things to them and “do storytelling a lot in the evening”. Her Elders and her grandmother from her dad's adopted side were also some of her mentors:

“She taught us a lot too, she was very cultural; always practicing her traditional rites. So she was always explaining things to us too” (*Chickadee*, 12/07/2016, CO#22, 00:01:08,4 – 00:01:19,1).

She also acknowledged her language teachers as a good source of learning not only to read and write in the language but also to interpret the land:

“I also had a great T̄silhqot'in teacher and she is the one that taught us, how to write and how to read it... And how to kind of interpret, like, you know, looking at the land, and let's say, looking at a track... looking at different animal tracks and what are the different place names, [...] going by seasons...what are those seasons throughout the year and break it up by month... (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:01:21,4 – 00:02:32,2).

Charlie Brown, 47, also recalled learning from her family as well as from her language teachers:

“[I learned] through mom and my grandma. We had people teaching us, like Nemiah, Susie Lulua, here [Yunešit'in], Selina Myers” (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:01:45,2 – 00:02:01,6). “We did like ABCs, we had worksheet, she wrote on the board, like repetitions, and how to speak certain words, just to learn it properly” (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:02:06,1 – 00:02:25,8).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh, 35, said that, even though his grandparents always spoke to him in English, they would speak T̄silhqot'in to each other and he would catch up on it. He also commented he learned at school later on when they introduced the language programs as part of the curriculum, back in the 90s:

“Well, like my granny, when my mom was in college, she did a little bit of school and then work, so I would be with my granny and grandpa and they always speak but for some reason sometimes they would always speak English and then they speak T̄silhqot'in I can hear them talking about me or something, it's like I could pick up on it a little bit, it's like they are very fluent, it's just they... somehow they didn't enforce it for us” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, CO#18, 02/20/2016 00:02:54,7 – 00:03:41,8). [...] But yeah, it was like our great granny and everybody would speak to each other, and then you kind of like do what they are pointing, kind of like a guideline of what they are talking over there, like *ganah*, ‘up there’ or *gadah*, ‘go down there’, and stuff like that, but that was mostly just from hearing it, but we never had any type of writing or programs. When I was young until like Grade 8 high school, they started kind of pushing it into the school, because... all the language speaking people around Williams Lake, like Secwepemc and then T̄silhqot'in, and *nechat'in*, the Carriers (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:01:11,4 – 00:02:53,2).

Some participants reported to have learned the language also while working. For example, *ʔElagi*, 39, who is a film-maker, learned some of the language while editing the footage of some interviews that were done in T̄silhqot'in:

“One thing that it was really amazing that really I think bump my language up a bit more, and I don't know if it is just having to have be with familiarity but, when I was working for a magazine [...]. I did a lot of interviews in T̄silhqot'in, what was really awesome, because I could understand enough to be able to understand what was happening and being said, but not every word, right? And then the editing process, so it would get transcribed or... and translated and I would go through the translations that is how it is selected, going editing, listening to whatever I was trying to capture. I remember certain words that I learned that way, stronger in the language, focused

on the editing. That was very cool to feel that” (*?Elagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:04:55,6 – 00:05:56,8).

Theme 1.7. Participants with basic language knowledge learned the language at school but also at home and on the land with their family

In a conversation with cousins *Britt*, 25, *Datsan*, 27, and *Dani*, 28, all of them stated that they learned the language mostly at school (*Britt*, *Datsan* and *Dani* 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:01:45,8 – 00:1:52,7). *Dani*, 28, acknowledged her auntie, who is a language teacher, for teaching her the language in the T̓silhqot’in class: “I think I learned more from her than all my T̓silhqot’in teachers” (*Dani*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:01:52,7 – 00:02:01,0).

Jo, 23, also said she learned in the “T̓silhqot’in classes, in elementary [school]” from her language teachers:

“Like my auntie [in Stone], and then I went to Alexis Creek and that was Mary [William] and then I moved out to town, and then we learned from Wanda [Dick], and then [...] in high school I learned it from Patsy [Grinder] (*Jo*, 11/10/2016, CO#16, 00:01:07,7 – 00:01:44,9).

She also recognized to have learned from her family since both parents “speak English and T̓silhqot’in” (*Jo*, CO#16, 12/05/2016, 00:03:24,0 – 00:03:25,5), especially her dad:

“My dad is fluent, my mom... she speaks it but like I guess she has some hard times... and she speaks English mostly, but she understands, like she can hear Elders and she knows what they are saying...She can’t speak it, but she remembers certain things (*Jo*, 11/10/2016, CO#16, 00:02:52,2 – 00:03:16,3). “My dad is mostly like.... he says ‘oh, this is this’ or... like he says something and he asks what it means for us to try and figure it out (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:02:28,9 – 00:02:47,7).

She remembered how her dad taught her traditional activities, like hunting or trapping, when she was young:

“My dad did try to teach me how to do certain things, to trap. He taught me at a younger age when I was too busy to pay attention; but everything, snare, how to do it with a piece of string, a circle on the ground, put food in it, and the rabbit comes and gets trapped to the feet. He wanted to show how to skin but I didn’t want to do that because I was too much into animals and I didn’t want to kill it, I was like ‘no’... I’ll let it go” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:19:09,3 – 00:20:00,0).

Other youth also commented they learned the language at school from their language teachers and from their family as well. *Omi*, 22, said the following:

“I learned in school, because Wanda [Dick] was my teacher, and then after that I just learned at home [...]. I spent summers and holidays with my grandparents, and then they would teach me” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:12:27,0 – 00:12:43,9).

Rissa, 24, said that at school “they just taught basics” and that she “learned to understand” being “out there” around her grandparents (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:01:48,8 – 00:02:04,5). *Roper*, 44, also said her youngest niece, who is 25 years old, would understand more than her cousins, because she was raised by her grandparents:

“Usually [her sister] will always tease them and say ‘well, what did she say’ [their grandma], ‘what did she mean’ so they will try to guess at first but at the end we kind of jump in and help them eh? [laughs] But we try let them figure it out first. And she does that at home too and she bugs and teases our nephews and nieces, ‘what did she say’ ‘what did granny say’ [laughs]. They would try to figure it out. Even my youngest niece, even her, she understands it fluently because she is pretty much raised under her grandparents’ home, so she understands it fluently, so she always braves her other cousins and say ‘I understand what they say!’ [laughs] (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:25:57,5 – 00:26:46,1).

Children on school age, between 5 and 13 years old, stated to learn the language from their “mom”, “grandpa”, “grandma” and other “Elders” as well as at the school with their “language teachers” (SC#1, 11/24/2016).

5.2 Topic 2 – T̓ilhqot'in language usage in Yunešit'in

The second topic of this analysis covered the usage of the T̓ilhqot'in language in Yunešit'in and other related language attitudes presented by participating community members. Under this topic, I included results regarding the following: who uses the language in the community; what is the language used for; where is the language used; challenges speakers face to use the language; the consequences of not using the language; reasons for the low number of speakers; intergenerational language transmission in the community; strategies to promote the language; and the future of the language in the community.

5.2.1 Who uses the language in the community?

In this first section, I will discuss community perspectives about who uses the language in the community; that is, who speaks it independently of the language knowledge or fluency they have:

- Theme 2.1. Most of the fluent speakers use the language regularly
- Theme 2.2. Yunešit'in middle-aged generations understand the language but don't speak it
- Theme 2.3. Yunešit'in children don't speak the language

Theme 2.1. Most of the fluent speakers use the language regularly

For Elder *Pauline ghinli*, 82, it was hard to tell who spoke the language in the community (*Pauline ghinli*, 04/20/2017, CO#20, 00:00:19,04), but her sister *Theresa*, 60, pointed out it is mostly community members who are 50 years old and over and some younger people on their 40s, who learned with their grandmothers; she could name at least three people (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:00:19,35 – 00:00:21,05). *Blondie*, 57, also considered that “a lot of people” speak the language, regularly “probably above about fifty years old”; “there is no more language after that age [younger]” (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#11, 00:00:05,49). *Nundi*, 69, however, stated that there are also younger fluent speakers, in their 40s or mid-30s:

“*Yagh, guyen, forty years old gu?en, k'es thirty-five years old, gu?en jid t'ajegultin ?eyen k'es, k'es nenqayni ch'ih yajelhtig gubenis?insh* [I have seen people forty years old and

older and thirty-five-year-old (speaking the language)] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:00:13,01 – 00:00:13,38).

Chelʔig, 48, disagreed with that though:

“[...] people that are my age and older [speak the language]. I am one of the last residential school survivors from this community, so I would say those that are age of 46 and up speak T̂silhqot’in as their first language (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:34:26,9 – 00:34:44,6)

The same was reported by her niece *Omi*, 22: “I know my parents and my grandparents and so my auntie, uncles, all my mom’s side”; although it still varies in families, as she said when she thought about her “dad’s side”, who don’t speak “as much” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:4:25,6 – 00:04:40,1).

As *Nists’i*, 35 explained, “it definitively becomes a hybrid situation where the Elders might talk to each other in the language and some of the generations below them”; however, “almost 90% to 100%” of community members around his age and under only speak English (*Nists’i*, 04/03/2017, CO#23, 00:10:24,5 – 00:12:23,0). *LM*, 78, agreed on that. He commented that he usually speaks in T̂silhqot’in and his children, who are in their late 30s and 40s, always speak to him in English, even though they understand the language:

“*Gagunlhchugh. Guyen ʔesqax gayt’insh hanh, midugh ch’ah yajelhtig. Xun, nenqayni dzanh ch’ah yaltig*” [The kids only speak in English while we only speak in T̂silhqot’in] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:15:02,0).

BW, 61, thinks there is “lots of people who speak [the language]” (*BW*, 11/09/2016, CO#6 00:03:57,6 – 00:04:04,1) and *LM*, 78, *Saina*, 65, and *Filly*, 49, also think you can still hear “quite a few people” speaking the language in the community today, however, “just the older people” (*Filly*, *Saina* and *LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:00:19,55 – 00:00:20,40). *Nun*, 57, also think it is “mostly [...] Elders” the ones that speak the language (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:26:04,1 – 00:26:07,3) in their “homes” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:33:48,7 – 00:34:27,0). *Chickadee*, 39 also commented that it is her “parents’ generation and Elders” the ones you can hear the most (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:08:06,7 – 00:08:51,8), and *Jo*, 23, had a similar opinion: you hear

T̓silhqot'in "a lot around the Elders", "when they are speaking to one another, like cultural camps or... anything like that" (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:05:27,8 – 00:05:40,8).

Lily the Pink, 62, commented she liked to visit with the Elders, since they will always speak T̓silhqot'in to you (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:04:04,0 – 00:04:38,3); and fluent speaker *Theresa*, 60, corroborated this by saying she would speak T̓silhqot'in to "everybody that speaks the language" (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:07:46,6 – 00:07:55,2). However, her daughter, *Gex*, 34, commented that "that it is not automatic for people sometimes"; since there is times "when you will speak T̓silhqot'in and they'd answer in English" (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:07:55,1 – 00:08:09,0), even if they are fluent.

In fact, *Lily the Pink*, 62, stated that she speaks T̓silhqot'in "sometimes", not as much as she did when she was young, and she speaks "more English today" than she did decades ago (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, Lily 00:03:08,0 – 00:03:31,7). Nevertheless, she said she and her husband *BW*, 61, usually "speak to each other" (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:03:34,3 – 00:03:45,0).

Pauline ghinli, 82, said, even though she is a fluent speaker, she doesn't get to speak the language too often. She would speak the language to everybody that speaks it; however, she lives in Williams Lake with her daughter and son-in-law, who are not fluent, and she doesn't get to drive out to the community as much, so she speaks English most of the time:

"*Nenden hin, lha nenqayni deŕts'iny han. Lhajid.* [These ones (daughter and son-in-law) they don't understand the T̓silhqot'in language. They can't.] *?Eyen chuh lha gagunlhchugh gwejeyeniŕen hanh.* [They don't really understand everything too] You have to talk in English, sometimes" (*Pauline ghinli*, 04/20/2017, CO#20, 00:00:06,08 – 00:00:06,20).

Theme 2.2. Yuneŕit'in middle-aged generations understand the language but don't speak it

MJB, 68, doesn't hear the youth "speaking it" (*MJB*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:14:19,7 – 00:14:25,1). *Nun*, 57, commented that "there is some, maybe only 5%" that speak it (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:26:27,7 – 00:26:30,9). *Roper*, 44, said that her generation "and probably anything lower" won't speak the language (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:21:19,2 – 00:22:08,6). *Blondie*, 57, added that some youth "won't speak", even though

sometimes “they’ll know just a little bit” (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:00:36,5). That was corroborated by *Tay*, 23, who said that even if she only knows “the basics, like colors, etc.” she won’t usually say those words (*Tay*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:02:11,2 – 00:02:13,9). However, *Jo*, 23, recognized to use some words that she sees every day, “some of the birds in there, real names or certain things” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:37:08,7 – 00:37:34,5). *Maureen*, 51, stated that “a lot of the young ones” “can understand what you’re saying, but they can’t speak it back to you” (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:36:53). That was confirmed by her daughter *Datsan*, 27:

“It’s my generation and the older generation that don’t speak it very much... They understand it but they don’t speak it (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:26:34,5 – 00:26:36,9).

LM, 78, had noticed the same about their children, who are on their late 30s and 40s; they would just understand some:

“*ʔEgu, guguh, town tidilh, xwelh ʔejalhqwes teʔaytʔin, nenqayni chʔih yaltig gagunlhnaʔ. Lha guba gadidinh yeneʔinl hanh, gwatish* [laughs]. *Nenqayni dzanh chʔih yaltig ghangh. Gwatish ʔejeditʔiny han, gan lha gatsʔi hilih*” [When we go to town and they are driving we speak in the language and they seem to not understand everything we say but some] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:00:10,51).

His wife *Saina*, 65, also commented that their daughter would understand “quite a bit”, since she works with Elders, as well as their oldest son too:

Only [Daughter’s name] *dzanh, gagunlhchugh gweditʔiny han*. [She understands quite a bit] [Daughter’s name] *hin, gun tʔagultinqi belh ʔanatʔin. Gwelawh jighajeyenelhten* [She works with the Elders and she is taught different things by them] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:00:05,49) *ʔEyen hin, lheʔagulhched ʔeditʔiny hanh*. [Oldest son’s name] *chuh...* *Nenqayni*, [their oldest son’s name] *chuh nenqayni chʔih yalhtig hatʔish* [He understands quite well. (Oldest son’s name) too... He speaks the language] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:00:05,36).

However, according to her husband *LM*, 78, their youngest one doesn't speak as much:

[Youngest son's name] *hin nenk'ed se?ant'ah hanh* [but our youngest son not that much] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:00:15,02).

Dothy, 64, also made a similar comment about her oldest children, who are in their late 30s and early 40s:

“*Sešiqi, ?ech'an jadex, tan ?eyen dzanh su, nenk'ed yajelhtig han, gan lha gweched jeyiyalhtig. ?Eguh, yagh, t'agult'in belh yajelhtig ?eguh, ?eguh hink'ed nenqayni ch'ah yajelhtig layt'insh*” [The three of my oldest children don't speak it, they understand, so when Elders are speaking to them they still can catch on what they are saying] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:00:16,20 – 00:00:16,58).

And *Kalikala*, 39, also sees that in her own family. She and her siblings don't speak it either:

“My other brothers and sister, they don't really... they weren't really taught either. I don't know what happened in that age gap, but it seems that this generation a lot of us missed it (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:03:21,3 – 00:04:35,1).

Matilda, 60, also said that her “son doesn't speak it; he lost his language.” Even though the family speaks it a lot at home, “he won't catch on” (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:01:32,8 – 00:01:41,8). She thinks that they are losing the language to the next generation “already as it is, since the next generation don't even speak it” (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:02:49,1 – 00:03:10,2).

On a positive note, *Omi*, 22, pointed out she knows two people from her generation who can speak it fluently (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:02:23,2 – 00:02:34,2) and *Maureen*, 51, also said her late oldest son would do sometimes:

“My late oldest one, when he used to answer the phone, he'll get talking straight Tšilhqot'in. ‘What?’ ‘Where?’ And then, they'll be asking for me, then he'll say, ‘I

don't know." He'll be saying it all in T̂silhqot'in. And my mom will say, 'who is this?' [laughs] (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:46,06).

MQ, 66, also thinks her kids "understand but keep talking English". She said she even gets mad at them: "They gotta speak it" (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:26:30,9 – 00:26:42,4).

Theme 2.3. Yunešit'in children don't speak the language

As *Theresa*, 60, explained, all the children spoke T̂silhqot'in four decades ago, but "over the years, it's the way it is now". (*Theresa*, 11/30/2017, CO#15, 00:33:11,7 – 00:33:28,8): "kids are not speaking in the playground; you hear English in [...] and you want to hear T̂silhqot'in" (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016, CO#19, 00:51:56,5 – 00:52:15,7). The same was stated by *BW*, 61, who said that "you don't really hear many kids speaking T̂silhqot'in" (*BW*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:26:34,5 – 00:27:59,3) or *MQ*, 66, who pointed out that "there is only some of them that speak it" and "a lot of [...] the ones growing up [...] are really losing it" (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:14:19,5 – 00:14:36,2).

Some parents like, *Gex*, 34, said that although her kids don't fully speak it, they would understand some and call their parents *inkwel* [mom] and *ʔabba* [dad] (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:00:17,1 – 00:31:15,4). *Omi*, 22, also stated that her niece "was raised with her grandparents so she understands more of it" (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:04:17,5 – 00:04:24,8) but now kids learn the language at school too and can say few words, as *Nundi*, 69, stated too; however, they don't speak in sentences or fully understand:

"K'an ʔeguh, k'andzin, yagh, ʔesqax ʔesgul nenqayni ch'ih yajelhtig jijegwedelʔanx sagunt'i, gan. K'an ʔeguh, yagh, lhajid nelh yajulhtig gulih. Yagh, gan, word ʔinlhi dzanh ganelhjedinish. Lha, lha sentence ch'ih yajelhtig" [Right now the kids are learning the language in school. They don't speak to you in the language. They tell you some words in T̂silhqot'in but they don't speak in sentences] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:00:03,16)

LM, 78, agreed with that:

“?Eyen chuh gad... nelh yaytilhtig gayduni gayt’insh, “?Esqax lha did ghayanlhtig gwejeyenižen jedenish, gwatish. Hugunlhched gwiyaubenilhten chuh” [They say that the younger ones don’t understand what is talked about even if they are taught] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:00:20,40).

5.2.2 What is the language used for?

Participating community members stated that they use T̂silhqot’in for several purposes, such as daily communication, for joking or teasing and as ‘code language’. These will be the themes described below:

- Theme 2.4. The T̂silhqot’in language is used for communication with family, Elders, other fluent speakers, children and animals
- Theme 2.5. The T̂silhqot’in language is used by speakers so that non-speakers cannot understand what they are talking about
- Theme 2.6. The T̂silhqot’in language is used for joking and teasing each other
- Theme 2.7. The T̂silhqot’in language is used for naming people
- Theme 2.8. The T̂silhqot’in language is used for praying
- Theme 2.9. The T̂silhqot’in language is used when referring to traditional places

Theme 2.4. The T̂silhqot’in language is used for communication with family, Elders, other fluent speakers, children and animals

All fluent speakers affirmed that they communicate with their family in T̂silhqot’in. When *Theresa*, 60, asked her sister *Pauline ghinli*, 82, if she spoke the language to other speakers, she mentioned speaking it mostly with her siblings and other family that comes to visit her:

Theresa: Nenqayni nandayash, yanlhtig hant’insh? [When a T̂silhqot’in comes to you at home, do you speak T̂silhqot’in?]

Pauline ghinli: ?Eyen chuh beghex nasah ?egun nenqayni ch’ih belh yastish [If I am around her (sister’s name), I usually speak to her in T̂silhqot’in] (*Pauline ghinli and Theresa* 04/20/2017, CO#20, 00:00:06,24).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, reported that his “granny and grandpa would always speak to each other” in the language (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016,

CO#18, 00:02:54,7 – 00:03:41,8). *Matilda*, 60, also stated that she speaks with her husband and family in T̓silhqot̓in (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:01:23,4 – 00:01:26,6) and *Omi*, 22, also said that her parents speak to each other in the language (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:01:22,4 – 00:01:25,9). *Maureen*, 51, acknowledged to speak with her mom in the language all the time and feel comfortable about it (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:04:22,0).

Fluent speakers also use the language when communicating with Elders. It is considered polite since, as mentioned before, some of them are not fluent in English (cf. 5.2.1; Theme 2.1); in fact, I was encouraged by community members to always greet Elders and introduce myself in T̓silhqot̓in as a sign of respect, when I meet an Elder for the first time. *Charlie Brown*, 47, said that “they are happy with it, when someone that knows the language speaks to them”; that way, “they get to speak, because there is mostly English spoken and they probably don’t understand English”. She added “it feels pretty good because you are speaking [...] and understanding each other” (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:06:33,7 – 00:06:38,8).

Chel?ig, 48, who worked in the community as a nurse, felt very fortunate to be T̓silhqot̓in fluent speaker and go to Elders’ homes and be able to communicate with them in the language (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:02:42,3 – 00:05:03,6). *Jo*, 23, commented that, although her parents won’t speak T̓silhqot̓in to her, they would speak it “to other people, like other Elders when they come” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:03:34,0 – 00:03:43,8). Likewise, *Datsan*, 27, commented that her parents won’t speak it to them either, but they do “to Elders” (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:02:28,0 – 00:02:37,7).

Fluent speakers also speak the language when they are with other speakers. *Theresa*, 60, acknowledged she speaks T̓silhqot̓in every time she runs into somebody who she knows is fluent:

“Over there, 7/11 [store], there is a woman, [...] I speak to her in T̓silhqot̓in. [...] And if I find any in the fast-food restaurants, I talk to them in T̓silhqot̓in, except the ones I know they don’t speak it” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:53:40,6 – 00:54:09,6).

Her brother *Nundi*, 69, also stated that he talks to those who know the language:

“Deni guzun jid nenqayni jedits’i hin, ?eyen, ?eyen, yagh, T̄silhqot’in ch’ih gubelh yalhtig. Gwatish, yagh, T̄silhqot’in hink’an English, ?elhtex nagwedlish, gu yajelhtig, belhdan. Belhdan hin, nenk’ed T̄silhqot’in ch’ih, yagh, gubelh yalhtig. Jaded chuh gajet’in hany. Nendan guzun yajelhtig hin guzun jid gubelh yalhtig” [I speak the T̄silhqot’in language to those who know the language well. Some people talk in the T̄silhqot’in language mixed with some English words. I talk to some in only T̄silhqot’in and they do likewise. I enjoy talking to people that speak fluently] (Nundi 11/14/2017, CO#10, 0:00:05,21 – 00:00:05,52).

Some participants also reported speaking T̄silhqot’in to their kids, like commands or short phrases, such as *ts’?eyan* (eat) (Gex, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:07:25,6 – 00:07:34,5). Omi, 22, also said she likes to say things “every now and then” to her nieces and nephews” (Omi, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:01:49,8 – 00:01:59,5). Jo, 23, who sometimes babysits her kids, also commented she tells them basic words in T̄silhqot’in or names of animals they might find on their walks:

“I tell them like, if I see a dog, I say ‘oh, *lhin*’; I see a cat, ‘*busi*’; I just try to do little things like, *nulh* [bird/animals]” (Jo, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:03:57,7 – 00:04:14,4).

Community members also stated that they use the language to speak to animals or pets. Gex, 34, remembered doing that during her childhood:

“Even mom talks about it. When I had a dog, I would teach it commands in T̄silhqot’in and people were like ‘oh it’s T̄silhqot’in?’ (Gex, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:00:17,1 – 00:31:15,4).

Theme 2.5. The T̄silhqot’in language is sometimes used by speakers so that non-speakers cannot understand what they are talking about

Kalikala, 39, wondered why she and her siblings did not learn the language and joked about it, by saying that perhaps the reason was that “they [fluent speakers] wanted to speak T̄silhqot’in so they [non-speakers] couldn’t understand them” (Kalikala, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:03:21,3 – 00:04:35,1). Amid laughter, she also commented her mom wouldn’t share much of the language with her because she might rather have her not understanding her conversations:

“I just ask her about words, when she talks. I asked her, ‘what that means’, but she doesn’t like to share too much [laughs]. I think she likes her conversations private [laughs]” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:25:53,2 – 00:26:05,6).

Omi, 22, also made reference to that and said she thinks sometimes her family would use T̄silhqot’in “when they are talking about someone” and they know they “don’t speak it” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:04:50,3 – 00:05:02,7). She also joked about how her parents would still do that at home, so she and her siblings don’t understand when her parents are talking about them (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:13:13,7 – 00:13:39,1)

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, also recalled how his grandparents would “speak T̄silhqot’in for talking about him”; however, he could “pick up on it a little bit” and understand what they were saying (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:02:54,7 – 00:03:41,8).

Mom and daughter, *MJB*, 68, and *Charlie Brown*, 47, also laughed and recognized sometimes they speak in T̄silhqot’in so they “can talk about people” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:03:43,7 – 00:03:47,8; *Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:03:47,8 – 00:03:50,2). *MJB*, 68, also commented that, when her daughter was young, she would know when they were talking about her “because they were talking in the language” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:17:23,8 – 00:17:30,1)

Maggie, 76, also made reference to this. When she is speaking the language, her grandkids would ask her ‘Granny, what are you talking about?’ and she would answer, “I’m talking about you! [laughs]”. She said she does that so they would start wanting to catch on it (*Maggie*, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:37:21,7 – 00:37:41,8).

Saina, 65, and *Filly*, 49, also admitted speaking T̄silhqot’in to talk about the kids, as we can see in the following fragment of their conversation:

Saina: Sid, qungh gast’insh. ?Esqax guba yaltig, lha gwejeyenižen hayt’insh. [Laughs]
Gwatish, gubayaltig, lha gwejeyenižen hany [I do at home, we talk about the kids and they wouldn’t know about it [laughs]. They don’t know we are talking about them sometimes].

Filly: Nenjenilh?in sayt’ish? [Maybe they are looking at you?].

Saina: Yeah [Laughs]. Sa yanlhtig hanh, denish, nenjudelhqed hayt’ish [Yeah, they would say, ‘Are you talking about us?’].

Saina, 65, also mentioned that she thinks non-First Nation people might also think they are talking about them, when they hear them speaking T̄silhqot'in:

Saina: “Gagunlhnaž, didah gats'iny, nenqayni ch'ah. Gan nenduwih, nents'in nayah. [unclear], ?inlhed town nenqayni ch'ih yaltig xaghini, yagh, midugh xweghen nažed. Lha....gweched nenqayni ch'ah yats'elhtig, deni xuzišt'an. Did ghayalhtig xaghini, nexwelhnah xaghini. Nenqayni ch'ah gwetuh gudzish [Laughs] ?Uqich'id nadžed, gwa nagulniğ” [Laughs] [Anywhere you go, I say things in T̄silhqot'in all of the time. One time in town we were talking together in T̄silhqot'in when a white guy was standing near us. We were there in the store mentioning things in T̄silhqot'in when he told us, ‘I don't hear native speaking in their language very much. What were you talking about? Non-First Nations think you are talking about them] (*Saina* and *Filly*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:00:05,13).

Chel?ig, 48, also joked around that (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:35:48,8 – 00:36:19,7), as well as *Pauline ghinli*, 82, who suggested T̄silhqot'in can be used when you don't want non-First Nation people to understand what you are saying:

“Yagh, midugh nenjeduts'an ch'a, nenqayni ch'ih ?elhelh yanltig” [you could speak the T̄silhqot'in language to each other, so non-First Nations people wouldn't understand you] (*Pauline ghinli*, 04/20/2017, CO#20, 00:18:07,0).

Theme 2.6. The T̄silhqot'in language is used for joking and teasing each other

Chel?ig, 48, commented that when they “get together as a people, as a community, it's just so much laughter”, because they “are always teasing each other in T̄silhqot'in” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:30:16,3 – 00:32:00,4) and added she loves being able to speak her language so she can “tease the Elders as they come to the community” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:51:49,6 – 00:53:27,8) as well as *MJB*, 68, who also mentioned she would “tease” her “Elders in the language” when she visits (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:24:44,1 – 00:24:55,4).

Roper, 44, also said she and her sister would tease her nieces and nephews by asking them what their grandma said in T̄silhqot'in:

“Well, usually [her sister] will always tease them and say ‘well, what did she say’, ‘what did she mean’ so they will try to guess at first but at the end we kind of jump

in and help them eh? [laughs] But we try let them figure it out first. And she does that at home too and she bugs and teases our nephews and nieces, ‘what did she say’ ‘what did granny say’ [laughs]. They would try to figure it out. Even my youngest niece, even her, she understand it fluently because she is pretty much raised under her grandparents’ home, so she understands it fluently, so she always braves her other cousins and say ‘I understand what they say!’ [laughs] (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:25:57,5 – 00:26:46,1).

Theme 2.7. The T̂silhqot’in language is used for naming people

Traditionally, newborn babies received T̂silhqot’in names. Some Elders still have their T̂silhqot’in names and other speakers use them as well, as we can see in this conversation between *Theresa*, 60, and *Pauline ghinli*, 82:

Theresa: “*Nenqayni nandayash, yanlhtig hant’insh?* [When a T̂silhqot’in comes to you at home, do you speak T̂silhqot’in?]

Pauline ghinli: *Haʔanh. Like...* [Yes. Like...]

Theresa: *Douglas?* [Douglas?]

Pauline ghinli: *ʔUndidanx, ʔEpin...* [A long time ago, ʔEpin (Josephine)...]

Theresa: *Haʔanh.* [Yes.]

Pauline ghinli: *...belh yastig* [Laughs]. [I talk to her.]

Theresa: *Haʔanh.* [Yes.]

Pauline ghinli: *Or, Delizah chuh.* [Or, Delizah (Theresa) too.]

Theresa: *Hm-hm. ʔEpin belh Delizah* [Hm-hm. ʔEpin (Josephine) and Delizah (Theresa)]” (*Theresa and Pauline ghinli*, 04/20/2017, CO#20 00:06:24,0 – 00:06:42,0).

Today some parents still follow that tradition. In fact, every year there is naming ceremonies where babies or even older kids receive their T̂silhqot’in name, usually from animal names or words from nature. *Kalikala*, 39, for example, named her daughter *Ts’utanchuny* (hummingbird) *qwen* (fire), as Elders gave her that name when she was born:

“When I had my daughter, I named her... didn’t name her actually, a healer from Nemiah named her, because traditionally the Elders are supposed to name the babies that are coming. And I gave her, well, she gave her a traditional name and I thought that was neat and I just kept that name. I didn’t change it to an English name [...], I named her *Ts’utanchuny*. It’s a hummingbird and her middle name is *qwen*, fire (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:29:01,7 – 00:29:47,7).

Theme 2.8. The T̄silhqot’in language is used for praying

T̄silhqot’in prayers can be heard at the community events. Usually an Elder does a prayer before starting a meeting, a gathering or community feast, in order to start the event ‘in a good way’. Sometimes they catholic are prayers translated into T̄silhqot’in, as *Braids*, 72, explained, “people that went to church are the ones that are very strong with the T̄silhqot’in songs and prayers” (*Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:31:00,0).

Some participating community members, like *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, also admitted to using the language “when usually having a prayer” or “putting tobacco”, and “always try to speak [...] the best” he can (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:03:45,7 – 00:04:47,7).

Theme 2.9. The T̄silhqot’in language is used when referring to traditional places

Most of the place names today have the English version, but community members, both fluent and non-fluent, tend to use the T̄silhqot’in names for traditional places. For example, *Yunēsit’in* or even the older term *Gex Natsenaghinlht’i*, are often used instead of the English name for this place, ‘Stone’, as *Jo*, 23, explains:

“My dad says that they are making it more English than the actual old way of saying it. Like *Yunēsit’in* is the short version for English people to understand more, the longer version is too hard for them to say it. I don’t know how to say it: *Gex Natsenaghinlht’i*. Something with clubbing the rabbit above of the head. That is the definition of our area, that’s how people have lived mostly, they caught a lot of rabbits in our area” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:26:27,0 – 00:27:20,4).

We can also see this use in the following fragments by *Theresa*, 60:

“*Nenjan, qwentowh, Yunešit’in, nendan nenqayni ch’ih yalhtig ghungh?*” [Over here, in the community of Yunešit’in, who speaks the Tšilhqot’in language?] (Theresa, 04/20/2017, CO#21, 00:18:26,0 – 00:18:45,0).

Yanah dilhtš’ish te?at’in Gex Natsenaghinlht’i nanadinsh [When I was a child we stayed at Yanah and moved back to Stoney] (Theresa, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:01:41,3 – 00:02:02,1).

5.2.3 Where is the Tšilhqot’in language used?

According to participating community members, the language can be heard in different places and environments inside and outside the community. Covered themes in this section will be the following:

- Theme 2.10. The Tšilhqot’in language is mostly used in the homes and the family environment
- Theme 2.11. The Tšilhqot’in language is used in community public spaces
- Theme 2.12. The Tšilhqot’in language is used in community events and gatherings
- Theme 2.13. The Tšilhqot’in language is used in town

Theme 2.10. The Tšilhqot’in language is mostly used in the homes and the family environment

As *Nists’i*, 34, commented, the language is mainly used by “the Elders [...] in their own homes” and family environment (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:33:48,7 – 00:34:27,0). *MQ*, 66, said she speaks with her kids (30-40 year olds) at home (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:02:12,3 – 00:02:15,9) and *Nundi*, 69, would also talk with his wife since she speaks mostly Tšilhqot’in, as well as with their children (35-40 year olds) who would also communicate with their mom in the language:

“*Ah, se?ad, yagh, nenk’ed nenqayni dzanh su selh yalhtig. Sesqiqi, sesqiqi nenqayni ch’ih yajulhtig qe?ayt’in hanh. Yagh, nenk’ed, nenk’ed thirty-five years old hilin, gu ?ilhetah sajint’i. ?Eyen, se?inkwel, yagh, se?ad belh yajelh... yajelhtig. ?ilhetah jid, yagh, nenk’ed nenqayni ch’ih yajelhtig gebuzestš’insh.* [My wife only speaks Tšilhqot’in mostly. My children try to speak Tšilhqot’in, they are around thirty-five years of age. They talk to my wife and I heard them talk in Tšilhqot’in] (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:13:56 – 00:14:49).

Theme 2.11. The T̄silhqot'in language is used in community public spaces

Semi-speaker *?Elagi*, 39, commented she “rarely” hears T̄silhqot'in in the community; however, assumed her mom would, since she is a fluent speaker and visits often (*?Elagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:07:41,5 – 00:07:46,6). Elder *Pauline ghinli*, 82, confirmed this and explained that, T̄silhqot'in can be heard “sometimes on the *reserve* [communtiy]” when “you run into somebody” (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:11:40) or at some public spaces, like community gas stations, for example:

“*Hink'an, yagh, nenqayni jedilht̄'sh lah, gwatish gas, gas deni ghajelhchog* [Also, in T̄silhqot'in communities, and also where they give you gas]. *Jeritta chu Elsie chu, qa bid, ?inlhch'es tah ghidelh ?egu, nenqayni ch'ih najegulnig qe?aydinh hanh* [Jeritta, Elsie and I were traveling somewhere (by car), they were trying to tell stories in the T̄silhqot'in language] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:11:40,0).

Pauline ghinli, 82, also mentioned Yunešit'in *?Esgul* as a place where the language is spoken (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:13:11,0), as well as *Nundi*, 69:

“*K'an ?eguh, k'andzin, yagh, ?esqax ?esgul nenqayni ch'ih yajelhtig*” [Right now the kids are learning the language in school] (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:03:16,0 – 00:03:23,0).

Chel?ig, 48, said one can hear the language at the Yunešit'in Health and Administration Office where she used to work (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:35:48,8 – 00:36:19,7). This was corroborated by her niece *Omi*, 22, who also recalled her auntie and her mom communicating in the language at work (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:04:50,3 – 00:05:02,7), as well as *Roper's* sister:

“I know my sister does that at work too. All of a sudden, she will speak her language and this person is standing beside her, like looking at her like ‘what did you just say?’ [laughs] So she has to hold herself and go ‘ahhh’ I gotta remember that you don't understand the language very well, so... But when she comes to me in her office, she just speaks straight T̄silhqot'in eh? looking at her... ok! [laughs]” (*Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:25:14,3 – 00:25:41,4).

Blondie, 57, Maureen, 51, and Peter, 72, agreed (Blondie, Maureen and Peter, 11/16/2017, CO#12). However, Blondie, 57, added that “[some of them] won’t speak” because, “maybe they’ll know just a little bit” (Blondie, Maureen and Peter, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:36:53,0); “[some] can understand what you’re saying, but they can’t speak it back to you. Like, a lot of young ones.” (Maureen, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:36:53,0).

Theme 2.12. The T̓silhqot’in language is used in community events and gatherings

Community members also mentioned events and gatherings as another scenario where the language is spoken: it can be heard “a lot around the Elders; when they are speaking to one another, like cultural camps” (*Jo, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:05:27,8 – 00:05:40,8*) or other events like Lhats’as̓in Memorial Day [cf. 3.1.1], where “there’s always all these Elders from different T̓silhqot’in communities and they all come together” (*Chel̓ig, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:17:34,1 – 00:18:17,0*). The same was echoed by *Blondie, 57*:

“You’re going to go gatherings, if you speak, there’s lots of T̓silhqot’in there. Elders, go to Elder’s camp. Pick up some stories there” (*Blondie, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:06:16,0 – 00:06:29,0*).

However, when it comes to public speaking, English seems to become the main language, as *Lily the Pink, 62*, explained: “we went to Siwash gathering and everything they say is in English not in T̓silhqot’in” (*Lily the Pink, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:21:57,3 – 00:22:13,9*).

Theme 2.13. The T̓silhqot’in language is used ‘in town’ (Williams Lake)

The language is spoken in Williams Lake too. *Pauline ghinli, 82*, said you can hear it in the stores, restaurants, gas stations or when you run into a community member who is fluent (*Pauline ghinli, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:11:48,0 – 00:11:56,0*). In fact, *Maureen, 51*, said she would speak in the language with her mom when in town:

“I feel comfortable talking about it, when I shop with my mom. In the stores, we’ll be talking our language, and we’ll be talking about the price, and what’s good for her. I feel comfortable and, I still stick with my cultural teaching (*Maureen, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:04:22*).

Both *Maureen*, 51, and *Peter*, 72, agreed that “sometimes, they do have some T̂silhqot’in [staff] working in the stores in town now” (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:32:49,0); “you can speak to them” (*Peter*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:32:49,0) and “say ‘how are you’ in T̂silhqot’in, and then they’ll respond back” (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:32:49,0).

5.2.4 What challenges do speakers find to use the language?

When analyzing the challenges that fluent speakers face to speak the language, we can find a wide range of factors playing a part. This section includes the following themes:

- Theme 2.14. Community members are geographically dispersed
- Theme 2.15. Community members still suffer the consequences of colonization and assimilation practices
- Theme 2.16. There is a lack of T̂silhqot’in vocabulary for “new” concepts
- Theme 2.17. English prevails as dominant language
- Theme 2.18. Community members are afraid of making mistakes
- Theme 2.19. Speaking the language requires motivation and effort

Theme 2.14. Community members are geographically dispersed

As *Nists’i*, 34, the physical location of community members represents a challenge for speakers: “how scattered people are and how hard it is to like collectively come together” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:17:52,5 – 00:19:03,0). We can also see this idea in a fragment from a conversation between the two Elders *Theresa*, 60, and *Pauline ghinli*, 82:

Theresa: ...?eyen. Yeah. Gunzun jid hejen hanh, ?eyen [...I mean her (Kathleen). Yeah. She can sing well]

Pauline ghinli: Ha?anh [Yes]

Theresa: Yeah. Gan yadah teni...?ena tex sedex. [Yeah. But she lives eastward, amongst Shuswaps] (*Pauline ghinli* and *Theresa*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:37:38,0)

This was also pointed out by Elders like *Saina*, 65, and her husband, *LM*, 78. Nowadays, community members live out of the community and even if they are fluent in the language, they may find no opportunities to speak and may even lose it:

“Gweched gwelax xats’edilh gwežlin” [It became that people go anywhere] (LM, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:22:13,0) “Belhdan gweched sex ?ets’en... ?ets’en midugh ghajedeltš’ish ?eyen lha... gagwelnah, gagwenah jid gagunt’ih jinajegwedel?anx” [Some of the people for a very long time they are around the white people, it is hard for them to speak the language] (LM, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:01:16,0 – 00:01:20,0) [...] Gweched midugh dzanh belh ?anats’et’in te?awt’in. ?Undidanx lha gweched ya?unx ?anats’êšt’in. Nenduw h dzanh ?elhelh ?anats’et’in, ?eguh shuh lha midugh ch’ah yats’elhtig. Guh jid ghungh, gweched gunzun jid yats’elhtig. ?An ?abenaž danh nididilh han, nenqayni ch’ih yajelhtig hany. Gu, gagwelnah jid. Lhe?alhad ?inajilnig layt’ish. [A long time ago people didn’t work for the white man all that much, they work around here working together, that is why people talk very good Tšilhqot’in. Right now, people work somewhere far away and don’t speak the language forgetting quite a bit of their words.] (LM, 11/07/2017, CO#1 00:19:30,0 – 00:19:48,0) [...] Sid ?eguh lha gaŵešnax ?at’ah. Gun, guyen hanh, k’anijalilh gwelax xajedilh. Yagh, nidugh tuh ?anayt’in ?eyen dzanh. Lhe?agulhched jid jeyinadedinh sani. [I wouldn’t, those young people who go here and there working for the whites they might lose their language quite a bit] Guyen xwelh jedilhtš’ish hin, gu?en jid jeyigwedel?anx hanh [those who are staying with us they will learn more] (LM, 11/07/2017, CO#1 00:21:52,0). ?Undidanx ?eguh lha gweched ?elhch’aghatš’êsdilh hanh. ?Anats’êšt’in hink’an. ?An, nulh qe?ats’et’in te?agwet’in. Gagunlhnaž, ?elhelh nenqayni dzanh ch’ah yats’elhtig. [A long time ago people didn’t leave very much doing things like trapping always speaking the language] K’an ?eguh gweched nenqay gagulhchugh jits’ededilh [Right now the Tšilhqot’in people go everywhere] (LM, 11/07/2017, CO#1 00:21:52,0 – 00:22:02,0). Xenchuh six-month gwech’aghayah, xenchuh one year. Gan midugh dzanh ch’ih yanlhtig. Nenjan naninjah, belhdan ?inaydadish hanh. [Six month to a year you speak only in English and when you come back you lose some of the language]. Nenduw h, year 2000 ghungh, guntsel jid ?ets’en gwežlin ghungh [It became a little bit different in the year 2000]. 1900 yu?en tsel xaghinih [In the years 1900 the Tšilhqot’in people were together] (LM, 11/07/2017, CO#1 00:22:18,0 – 00:22:50,0).

Theme 2.15. Community members still suffer the consequences of colonization and assimilation practices

According to *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, past experiences of their language being denied and them being forced to speak English have a direct influence in the use of T̄silhqot'in nowadays:

“[...] English has been yelled into our people to forget the language and take up as adopt this other one so they learn how to suppress things when the natural feeling is to speak in the tongue. But now they might be good in their teeth speaking English because it was forced into them and then we learn how to speak like that with the grid of our teeth because they are like that. But we don't know why, you know, they didn't explain the torture it took for them to lose their language, and being you know almost punished to speak this one. So that's another feeling that we... I was born with and now in my time that I am living to now I had to decide from where it came from, and it was, you know, it was a painful experience, 'cause my mom didn't want to admit it and my granny didn't want to admit it and then when I admitted, it did me pain. Like, you know... But then again, they didn't know how to take that and then enforce the language on me (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:12:40,1 – 00:14:08,8).

Gex, 34, also mention trauma from colonial practices and the residential school as some of the main factors for not speaking the language (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:28:20,5 – 00:29:11,2) as well as *Chel?ig*, 48, who also made a similar comment:

“Trying to revitalize, one of the challenges is the residential school, so that should be an issue, a lot of my community members have gone through trauma or are still experiencing trauma, and I find that's a great barrier” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:39:25,7 – 00:41:09,6). “We are recognizing the impact of the genocide and the colonialism, colonization of our people” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:39:25,7 – 00:41:09,6).

Theme 2.16. There is a lack of T̂silhqot'in vocabulary for "new" concepts

Another challenge expressed by community members is not being able to find T̂silhqot'in words for all the new concepts introduced in the last decades. That might be the reason why fluent speakers sometimes insert English words when speaking T̂silhqot'in, as *Nundi*, 69, explains:

"Deni guzun jid nenqayni jedits'i hin, ?eyen, ?eyen, yagh, T̂silhqot'in ch'ih gubelh yalhtig. Gwatish, yagh, T̂silhqot'in hink'an English, ?elhtex nagwedlish, gu yajelhtig, belhdan. Belhdan hin, nenk'ed T̂silhqot'in ch'ih, yagh, gubelh yalhtig. Jaded chuh gajet'in hany" [I speak the T̂silhqot'in language to those who know the language well. Some people talk in the T̂silhqot'in language mixed with some English words. I talk to some in only T̂silhqot'in and they do likewise] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:05:21 – 00:05:52,0).

High numbers, ages or 'new' (post-colonization) concepts or objects are some of the words used in English, as we can see in the following extract:

"Yagh, guyen, forty years old gu?en, k'es thirty-five years old, gu?en jid t'ajegultin ?eyen k'es, k'es nenqayni ch'ih yajelhtig gubenis?insh [I have seen people forty years old and older and thirty-five year old] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:13,0 – 00:13,38).

"Lhajid gats'in tex xadeghulzi gulah sagunih. Gan xunilt'a xi jaghinda yenizen? Sid nenk'ed tsel sixty ghesdlilh, next month. [You probably couldn't really name all the ones who do speak the T̂silhqot'in language. How old do you think they are (the ones who speak the language)? Next month, I will be turning sixty] (*Theresa*, 04/20/2017, CO#21, 00:18:26 –00:18:45).

"Gágúlhnáz nendidégátš'i nenqayni ch'ih gán néndowh gán nénts'in náyáh. Síd ?inlhéd town nénqayni ch'ih yáltig hághint'í midugh nexweghén nážéd"¹ [Anywhere you go say things in T̂silhqot'in all of the time. One time in town we were talking together in T̂silhqot'in when a white guy was standing near us] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:27:15,0).

"Neyax, Yunešit'in Band Office ?anasest'in, gebužistš'an. ?An ?eyed gagulhched midugh ch'ah yajelhtig. ?Id guqa gweched sinsh nenqayni ch'ih yastig. Deni, ?inlhanx, Band

¹ Fragment transcribed and translated by William Myers. He reflects tone in his transcriptions.

Manager ghinli ?eyen lha gwanilil ghangh, gweched sinsh nenqayni ch'ah yastig. Gweghagughinih xaghint'i. [Over at the Yuneŝit'in Band Office where I worked, I listen to them. They speak English to the children. Because of that I spoke strongly in Tŝilhqot'in. And the person, the Band Manager, couldn't believe I was speaking Tŝilhqot'in strongly. He boasted of it.] (*Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:04:49,0 – 00:05:12,0)

“*Jijegwedel?anx sagunt'i, gan. K'an ?eguh, yagh, lhajid nelh yajulhtig gulih. Yagh, gan, word ?inli dzanh ganelhjedinish. Lha, lha sentence ch'ih yajelhtig.*” [They don't speak to you in the language. They tell you some words in Tŝilhqot'in but they don't speak in sentences] (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:03:16,0 – 00:03:23,0)

“*Gas qe?adint'in chulah gazat'ish, xanx?*” [One tends to see others at the gas store too, hunh?] (*Theresa*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:11:59,0).

Pauline ghinli, 82, also commented about this:

“*Sid, lhe?agulhah lha ?egwiyeneŝen hanh.* [There are quite a few things I do not know about]. [...] *Lha, ?egu...gu ne-uncle dinih, gu auntie,* [or your step- or your father-in-law] Mother-in-laws. I don't know how to say those. [...] Sometimes, I couldn't remember things. *K'an, t'agultin ts'elish hanh.* [...] I mean now, when one gets old” (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:32:14,0 – 00:32:29,0).

Same was expressed by language teacher *Theresa*, 60:

“when we have to do bank business... so how do you talk about bank business!” [laughs] (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:54:28,9 – 00:54:43,2).

And she suggested they should resume the task of word coining:

“We don't coin words anymore. It stopped long time ago with the monolingual speakers I think... And it would be nice to go back and start coining words for different things (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:27:41,6 – 00:28:05,7).

Chel?ig, 48, agreed, as she also sees the need of “updating the language” in order to stay in it, instead of using borrowed words from English:

“update our language so that things that have been introduced into our realm of world we can identify in T̄silhqot’in, give it a name, and know it is that; and instead of saying here is your *Ipod*, you know being able to give it its own name” (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:30:16,3 – 00:32:00,4).

As a response to this challenge, the Language Committee include this idea on the Vision Statement developed under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Planning Program:

“5. Our collective approach to successfully revitalizing the language is multifaceted. Language is, as culture, in constant flux and we must be open to creating new words to express ourselves” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement).

And also aimed to address it on the Language Revitalization Plan under the strategy “B4. Create new language resources” – “Develop new vocabulary to fit modern communication needs” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan).

Theme 2.17. English is the dominant language

Many community members expressed they find challenging to stay in T̄silhqot’in sometimes because of the power of the English language. According to *Jo*, 23:

“everybody we are around speaks English, and we speak English at school, work... Everywhere is like English around here” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:39:25,7 – 00:41:09,6).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, also admitted that:

“It’s just like the greeting. It’s easier here to speak English so we don’t... you know, we just say *sagunt’ih*, ‘I’m feeling good’ or, you know, *d̄zinaš*, ‘it’s afternoon time’, like something simple and it’s like English comes out after that” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:03:45,7 – 00:04:47,7).

Blondie, 57, thought that the reason might be that speaking in English usually makes things easier, since that is the language everybody understands:

“Over there, there’s communication again. You gotta compromise with what their skill is. They’re powerful in English. Well, gotta deliver, deliver English lingo and things get done faster, instead of, “what are you talking about?” You know, they don’t understand T̂silhqot’in. They’ll be lost too” (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:36:53,0 – 00:37:25,0).

As a curiosity, some participants also commented, that even if they are fluent in T̂silhqot’in, they often use English to react with anger and frustration, like we can read from *MJB*, 68, and her daughter *Charlie Brown*, 47:

MJB: She talked to them in the language. She never spoke English, unless she gets mad, then she would talk in English [laughs] (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:09:15,9 – 00:09:56,4)

Charlie Brown: [we use the language] to swear! [laughs] just kidding... (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:10:03,3 – 00:10:03,9).

Theme 2.18. Community members are afraid of making mistakes

It is common for semi-speakers and community members with basic language skills to feel shy as they realize they may make mistakes when speaking the language. Yunešit’in Language Committee is aware of this challenge and committed to address it under the Vision Statement developed within the Language Revitalization Planning Program 2015-2016:

“We will create spaces of learning so that people are not afraid or intimidated to learn” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, §10).

This concern was in fact expressed by few semi-speakers during the conversations:

“That for sure is something that I struggle with, what corrected or said it a little bit off or whatever like, people feel that...” (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:08:18,8 – 00:08:39,7); “I try to speak T̂silhqot’in to the boys [her kids], and I am like ‘oh probably I’m not conjugating that properly, I shouldn’t even say it because I am teaching the wrong way of saying things’ or whatever, like you know, speaking to

two, you know, that type of stuff, like I don't ever conjugate properly, so that I'm like, 'oh I shouldn't say it', so I just stop... (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:21:15,2 – 00:22:23,1).

Nun, 57, even acknowledged to feel offended sometimes when fluent speakers may correct her, as well as *Filly*, 49:

“Sometimes you've been judged and said you are doing the wrong way too” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:45:27,0 – 00:50:45,1). “[...] the Elders have more wisdom and when the younger ones are coming up trying to learn and they do the different way or whatever [...], talk not in the right way and sometimes then some of us would get offended or whatever, you will back off...” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:39:33,5 – 00:40:13,0).

“*Sid, gwech'an gasjagh, se?inkwel... or se?intsu nenqayni ch'ih belh yastig xaghini. ?Inlhitah, ?ets'en ?adesnih satedlux ghangh*” [It happened to me when I was talking to my mom... or to my grandma, she laughed when I said it the wrong way] (*Filly*, 49, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:28,52 – 00:29,15).

Speakers are aware of this and know it can be a challenge for learners to overcome that fear:

“*?Eyed chuh... ?eguh jijeniljed hanh... lha... lha gweched gagunt'ih yajulhtig jegut'in*” [They are afraid of that... they are afraid to say it different] (*LM*, 78, 11/07/2017, CO#1 00:29:00,0 – 00:29:30,0).

“They're afraid they might just say it differently [...] Or they're thinking they might not be right or something like that. They're kind of afraid to speak out [...] That's the reason why they... they don't want to speak out is ah... somebody laughing, maybe. It might be the real reason” (*Nundi*, 69 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:37:21 – 00:38:19,0).

However, most of the speakers think as *MQ*, 66, who always reminds her grandkids, “there is not right way or wrong way” (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:40:40,1 – 00:40:55,9) and “you learn from the mistake” (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:40:27,0 – 00:40:40,1).

In some cases, as *Omi*, 22, explains, those differences are not even mistakes but different ways of saying, and in her case, for example, of singing a song, and people should respect it:

“About singing and stuff, a lot of the kids don’t like to sign, because a lot of the old-time Elders would tell you ‘you’re doing it wrong’. Me growing up I was told everyone we sign the same songs, just a bit different. We might sing the longer version or the shorter version. Everybody need to be respected. [...] When I sing... I used to sing really quiet and shy; my uncle told me you got sign loud” (*Omi*, 22, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015).

Theme 2.19. Speaking the language requires motivation and effort

Many community members expressed that it takes effort to speak the language and that finding motivation can be one of the challenges that may limit the use of T̄silhqot̄ in the community. But as *Chel̄ig*, 48, wondered: “what is the community willing to do?” (*Chel̄ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:39:25,7 – 00:41:09,6). She said that she is ready to put her effort on it and volunteer, but not everybody may be:

“I am willing to partake. I’m starting to take responsibility myself and being accountable to my people and speaking it to them and I do it for the love of the people, whereas some want money” (*Chel̄ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:39:25,7 – 00:41:09,6).

Gex, 34, she can see that sometimes, when, for example, community members would ask the teachers to speak the language to the students at school, but they won’t make the effort themselves to speak the language to their kids when they are back home:

“Well, it think that is the thing of having families invested in that, you only... like we keep talking about school because it is easy avenue but that is only a part of the day and that’s... you know going home and sharing that... speaking out, maybe they are sharing but not... I guess the investment is not there, I think, in a lot of family

homes...” (Gex, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:25:19,3 – 00:25:55,6). “And just like I said earlier, how do you switch people’s brains into... There is like an investment, they want their language teachers and fluent speaker and that is what they want to do, it’s teach people how to speak but then they don’t speak to them” (Gex, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:28:20,5 – 00:29:11,29).

5.2.5 What would be the consequences of not using the language?

Participating Yuneŝit’in members also foresaw several awful consequences if the language wasn’t to be used; they are summarized in the following themes:

- Theme 2.20. If the Tŝilhqot’in stopped using the language, it would be lost forever
- Theme 2.21. If the Tŝilhqot’in stopped using the language, the culture would disappear
- Theme 2.22. If the Tŝilhqot’in stopped using the language, they would lose their responsibility to themselves and to the land
- Theme 2.23. If the Tŝilhqot’in stopped using the language, intergenerational communication would be interrupted

Theme 2.20. If the Tŝilhqot’in stopped using the language, it would be lost forever

Lily the Pink, 62, believed it is important to keep speaking the language, since, if it they don’t it, it can get lost; “[they] probably never get it back” (Lily the Pink, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:09:14,6 – 00:09:58,8) and “everybody will speak straight English” (Roper, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:18:34,5 – 00:18:49,8).

Theme 2.21. If the Tŝilhqot’in stopped using the language, the culture would disappear

Nundi, 69, expressed a general concern in the community. He thought that, if the language disappeared, the whole culture would be affected and go away with it:

“Nenk’ed gajedenish, guyen, yagh, lha ch’ih ya... lha ch’ih yaŝilhtig, Tŝilhqot’in ch’ih yaltig jideghidiny hink’ed, nexwe-culture chuh, yagh, lha yadi gul’in teghadlax. Guh gagunt’ih, gats’edinh yats’elhtig gwelan guŝeŝtŝ’insh” [That is what they say, if we are not speaking our language and lost it we are not going to think highly of our culture. Many times, I hear people say that] (Nundi, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:08:41,0 – 00:09:25,0)

“*Yagh, nenk’ed ch’ih yaltig, T̂silhqot’in nidlin, yadi jid xedadanidžed sagunt’i. Nenqayni ch’ih yaltig jideghidiny hink’ed, lha gweched guzun jigwenil’in. ?Inlhes jideteghadinh. Gangu, midugh lanint’ih nateghadlax* [It is better that we try. As T̂silhqot’in people we think highly of ourselves in speaking the language. It wouldn’t look good if we lose the language. If we lose it, we are going to be just like the white people] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:00:17,10 – 00:00:17,37).

For *MJB*, 68, and her daughter *Charlie Brown*, 47, losing the language could cause a “culture shock” and they would lose “the way they live” (*MJB and Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:08:44,7 – 00:09:13,1). *Chickadee*, 35, doesn’t even want to think that could happen. In her opinion, language and culture are much related and that would mean the T̂silhqot’in would lose their identity and even their rights as First Nations people:

“I would never want to say that, that we will lose our language [laughs]. Only because it would take our rights away. We would lose our rights as First Nations people, as you lose your language, you lose your knowledge, that knowledge of how to interact with your Elders, how to connect to nature, how to even practice your traditional rites, like you know fishing, hunting, all that is all in time with... so for me it’s not even a thought, to even think [laughs] that we could lose our language. That’s who we are!” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:11:12,2 – 00:12:00,5).

Theme 2.22. If the T̂silhqot’in stopped using the language, they would lose their responsibility to themselves and to the land

According to *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, the T̂silhqot’in language is much related to the land and losing it would affect the responsibility they have been given towards the land:

“I feel that by losing the language we are kind of giving up our responsibilities as the people, as the beings” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:40:18,8 – 00:44:59,7). “Losing the language, they lose their responsibility to themselves and to the land that’s been honored to them. It’s been honorably given that we can use it to survive, to live, to eat food, to trade and then even to move away and come back another time [...] And that’s what I see with the language too, letting

it go it makes easier to let go off the land, like go off what's really important. What's in the water, our stories and mountains... you know, that's what I see the language disappearing makes it easier for people to let go. I find that... it's unhealthy. [...] That's our gift from this land, from the world we are living in, how we can perceive then here what it gifted to us and that's an honor that they are trying to take away.” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:15:54,4 – 00:20:44,9).

Chel?ig, 48, also reflected on the consequences of her personal decision to not speak the language to her kids and how that affected to their own identity and connection to the land, and even to other skills she was taught by her family when she was a kid:

“The consequences of me personally was my children don't speak and because of that I feel they are somehow, somewhat disconnected to the land. I feel there is a disconnect there. I also feel, because of their language loss there is a disconnect to the people as a whole, like... self-identity of them being T̂silhqot'in is really not there because they cannot speak, so that's a consequence. The other consequences are... [pause] I would just say, just not picking up on things I was taught, such as body language, facial recognition, intuition, just getting the feel of people, you know, that is a consequence” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:48:15,5 – 00:50:31,3).

Nists'i, 34, also expressed his concerns from the leadership position he currently holds about how some community members may have lost that important connection to the land:

“I think the big consequences and I can sort of sense it right now in the leadership position is that if I don't have enough people that have cared enough about their history, that have traveled a lot within their own territory, that relationship with the land would be further eroded [if the language got lost]. That actually really scares me. [...] It's harder to find people that are like, extremely motivated to learn like the place name, the history, the... and actively try to learn all these things (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:21:14,3 – 00:22:47,2).

Theme 2.23. If the T̄silhqot'in stopped using the language, intergenerational communication would be interrupted

Chel̄ig, 48, expressed her concerns about her children not being able to communicate with their grandparents because of the language barrier and how she is trying to improve that:

“They are very sad, I think, for not being able to speak to their grandparents, it breaks their heart that they cannot converse, and so just trying to make a difference for them, just trying to speak to them now and getting them to visit with my parents. I feel they will feel different once they start becoming more fluent because they will have to speak from their heart, ‘because right now, I do treat them, I taught them how to... body language, facial recognition, reading lips, and... the intention, I guess it’s one, and that is all part of being a T̄silhqot'in, they’ve picked up all that, and now the speaking part is happening so... I think they are on a good road, but I can sometimes sense that they are very hurt ‘cause they can’t speak with my parents (*Chel̄ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:27:34,6 – 00:28:59,7).

Cousins *Datsan*, 27, *Britt*, 25, and *Dani*, 28, also expressed sadness and even shame for not being able to communicate with their grandparents and parents in the language:

“I kind of feel ashamed not being able to speak it. Our generation, we kind of lost it and it’s very shameful that we can’t even speak it to our own Elders or parents. (*Datsan*, *Britt* and *Dani* 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:03:42,8 – 00:04:00,2).

5.2.6 What are the reasons for the low number of speakers?

When *MJB*, 68, asked her mom, *̄Etsu ghinli*, 92, if she spoke the language when she was a kid, she answered *yedanx*, which means ‘in the past/long time ago’, and *MJB* continued translating: “everybody talked T̄silhqot'in then. She spoke it all the time and she still does” (*MJB* 11/16/2016 CO#13, 00:00:07,3 – 00:00:32,5). *Pauline ghinli*, 82, also commented that “in those days, even the kids, all talked the same language, and anybody who lived in the same house talked in the same language” and explained: “my grandfather, my grandma [...], and my mother, my dad, my brothers, sisters, and even any uncles who come by” (*Pauline ghinli*, 20/04/2017, CO#20 00:01:39 – 00:02:09). Her sister, language teacher *Theresa*, 60, also found that in the classrooms all children spoke

T̓ìlhqot'in before (*Theresa* 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:33:11,7 – 00:33:28,8). So what happened in the last decades? What are the reasons for the drop on the number of T̓ìlhqot'in speakers? In this section, I will present Yunešit'in community perspectives included in the following themes:

- Theme 2.24. Community members still suffer consequences from colonialism and assimilation practices, such as the residential school system
- Theme 2.25. Community members that were raised by foster families lost their language and the connection with their culture
- Theme 2.26. The contemporary education system has affected the younger generations' T̓ìlhqot'in language fluency
- Theme 2.27. Substance abuse is a consequence of the identity and language loss
- Theme 2.28. Trauma caused by racism can negatively affect the language learning and use
- Theme 2.29. The lifestyle change has affected the language acquiring and use
- Theme 2.30. The loss of traditional medicine knowledge is affecting the language
- Theme 2.31. There is a lack of concern and motivation towards speaking the language
- Theme 2.32. The number of speakers keeps going down

Theme 2.24. Community members still suffer consequences from colonialism and assimilation practices, such as the residential school system

As we can read on the Vision Statement developed under the Language Revitalization Planning Program 2015-2016: “the T̓ìlhqot'in are persistent in overcoming the challenges of cultural disruption caused by the past and ongoing process of colonization. The residential school experience and the after effects have altered the natural patterns of the family dynamic” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement, §3). Likewise, participating community members also referred to residential school as the main reason of today's language situation (*Peter*, 72, *Blondie*, 57, and *Marlene*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:17:21,0 – 00:18:35,0) and the disruption of all aspects of cultural traditions, health, lifestyles and roles. *Chel?ig*, 48, pointed out that for her it is clearly related to colonization and related events: “residential school, the Government [...], colonization, the genocide of [her] people from 1862, the hanging of my Chiefs [Warriors] in 1865” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:26:10,1 – 00:27:31,5). She

explains we “need to be aware where human beings are coming from and if they’ve been hurt”; “that could be why [they] all quit talking [T̄silhqot’in]” (*Chel̄ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:02:42,3 – 00:05:03,6).

Theresa, 60, commented that “people who went to [residential] school with [her] somehow looked down on their own *indianess* and their own culture and everything that had any meaning towards that” and, since they went through that “they somehow could not pass the language along”, her included (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:48:47,5 – 00:49:33,1). *Lily the Pink*, 62, also blamed residential school and believed “it did a lot of damage” (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:05:50,8 – 00:05:54,7). She explained that she speaks more English today than when she was young as a result of her experience there (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:03:08,0 – 00:03:31,7). *Pauline ghinli*, 82, shared her experience about how they were treated at St. Joseph Mission residential school and prohibited to speak their mother tongue:

“They were yelling at us to talk in English. The nuns. *?Eyed chulah xwelh tsa’ghenilch’osh ghangh. Midugh ch’ih yalhtig xwelh ts’edenish* [They used to get mad at us over there too. They told us to speak in English.] *Xwets’en jen...jenijedetsig hanh, yaŝalhtig tŝ’iqih* [The nuns used to yell at us] *?Inlhes, nenqayni ch’ih yaltig, ?inlhes lha jegut’in hanh. Hink’an, midugh dzanh ch’ih yaltig, nen...ghudlax xe?anexwelh?insh. Ganexwejaghinh?in lagujagh.* [When we spoke the T̄silhqot’in language fluently, they didn’t like it. They wanted us to only speak in English. It seems that’s what they did to us.] *Hink’an Mission nendajenindil ?id gu?en, gu?en gwatish lha ?egwejeyeniŝen ŝelin.* [After they entered the Mission, they started to forget some of the language.] *Lha nenqayni ch’ih yajulhtig jegut’in, [...]* *Lha sejuŝilhtŝ’an hanh. Sid dzanh midugh ch’ih yas... yateŝilhtig ghilih.* [They did not want to speak the T̄silhqot’in language. They weren’t listening to me] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:08:15,0 – 00:01:04,0).

Maggie, 76, also commented about “all the punishment there” because of talking in the language:

“We would do the dishes for one week, we would [...] do the laundry for one week, sewing one week... [...] I was punished all the time when I was there. I talked my language, I don’t care. I really... I had to talk. Someone said you are just a little kid

eh? you don't understand English [...] I was 5 years old... (*Maggie*, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:03:02,2 – 00:04:16,2).

MQ, 66, also shared her experience talking what a nun would call “devil language”:

“I was going to school in Anaham. Like these nuns they used to strap us because we were talking our language, and then I went home and I told my dad, and my dad went up and got mad at one nun, and that one nun said ‘that’s devil language’. My dad got really mad and I guess that nun was trying to hit him with a ruler... [...] He said ‘there is no devil language, don’t try our child change her language’, he told them” (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:33:06,2 – 00:34:02,1).

Nun, 57, is also convinced her inability to speak the language comes from her traumatic experience at the residential school:

“Me, I understand it but can’t speak it very good. It’s my... Still loss between the English version and the T̄silhqot’in thing. It has to do a lot when I was at the residential school. We were strapped, we were punished, we weren’t allowed to speak our language so, that’s when the fear comes in.” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:02:21,5 – 00:02:57,8). Me, as being a grandmother right now... I don’t have time to speak T̄silhqot’in. Well maybe I probably do but I am just lazy to speak it, I don’t know... Maybe it’s just that for being punished at the mission too, it’s really...I mean, that’s with me today still (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:28:38,5 – 00:29:22,3). I don’t think you lose it. You are just ashamed to speak it. I think so” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:31:14,7 – 00:31:30,2).

Maggie, 76, agreed with this and said that in her opinion community members are “afraid” to speak because of their experiences in the past:

“[...] I talk them in my language in front of the white people. It looks like some are ashamed to answer you back. They will just walk again, they are not going to answer you if you ask them in your language, they are afraid. They don’t want to talk in front of white people. What’s wrong with that?” (*Maggie*, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:46:17,0 – 00:47:02,8).

Chel?ig, 48, is one of the youngest residential school survivors, but even though she attended the residential school in later years, still has the same opinion about the consequences. Here is a fragment of her testimony:

“I didn’t speak English until that December 1977, December 1st 1977. I am sure it is when that happened and that is when I quitted talking [T̂silhqot’in]. But it was like December 1st 2014 when I realized that some of that needed to let go and start speaking it more. It took like 1977 to 2014 for me to be able to come forward and be more true to my human being just T̂silhqot’in” (*Chel?ig*, 12/08/2016 CO#17, 00:11:24,9 – 00:12:11,2). It was... in September 1997. I was asked... or I attended the St. Joseph Mission [residential school] and my first winter there I was great and so when I tried to speak it to supervisors I was doing in it in T̂silhqot’in and at that time we weren’t allow to speak T̂silhqot’in and I kept speaking of my heart to those who were to protect me and they decided that they pretended they couldn’t hear me, so from that point on I made the decision to learn English really well. I made a promise to my 7-year-old self that I was going to learn English so that if this were to happen again I would be able to speak a bit of English and actually report to the appropriate people so that it wouldn’t happen again. And for years I hadn’t realized but I quit speaking T̂silhqot’in for years. I just refused to speak T̂silhqot’in. (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17,) 00:01:09,1 – 00:02:42,3). And it was April of 2014, my oldest daughter, we were in our way to US to play stick games and my oldest daughter, I had all my daughters with me, ‘mom why don’t you speak T̂silhqot’in? why don’t you...?’ and it took me a while to figure out why and... so...it was very hard. But I was able to explain it to them that April...I said I was hurt and I only knew T̂silhqot’in and when I tried to make a report of the hurt, nobody wanted to listen, so I told my daughter and that is why I made the decision at that time to just speak, learn English and learn well, to teach my children English, so that if they were hurt, they were be able to report it. So that was and after I was able to discuss this with my children something shifted once I was able to speak about that with them and since then I’ve made a colossal effort to speak my first language which is T̂silhqot’in. Very fortunate that I go to Elders’ homes whose first language is T̂silhqot’in. Yeah, so I made more of an effort to speak it in the office now (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:02:42,3 – 00:5:03,6). They didn’t know English when I came home and also too in that

experience not just the rape that happened, it was also whipped quite a bit as a child when my September, October, November I got whipped quite a bit for speaking T̄silhqot'in, so I didn't want to get whipped when I came home and I... because I didn't want to get whipped again, I quitted speaking the language, so when I came home I remember pretending not to know [...] T̄silhqot'in, just to protect myself because of the fear of retaliation I guess... but I am just really grateful that my parents still spoke it and... so I was able to pick that. Revitalize that, within myself, which was very cool (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:13:14,3 – 00:15:10,4). We were very fortunate that our language is still here, [...] because we were always known that we survived to speak the language, but at the same time from my situation is too why my children don't speak, it was recognizing I had trauma and now that I have recognized I am starting to speak with them on a daily basis. Not knowing that for years I just couldn't speak it but now that I know why it's... but I do apologize to my kids, I say, I am so sorry, I am because they are hurt too, they are hurt by not knowing the language (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:26:10,1 – 00:27:31,5).

Even community members that didn't attend residential school also think that it was the main reason for the lower number of speakers (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015; *Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:08:43,9 – 00:08:44,7; *Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:28:20,5 – 00:29:11,2). *Kalikala*, 39, daughter of a residential school survivor, *Braids*, 72, added that the trauma caused by residential school influenced not only the use of the language and the pride of being First Nations but also the parent-child relationship:

“I think most of it had to do with parents kind of lost their bond with their children and the pride of being First Nations because of residential school. We were taught to be ashamed of ourselves and to think that is dirty, you know, not to take part in our own traditions and speaking the language is like not allowed, so I guess that was pass on to us as children, and as years went on that really got changed, everything got exposed with residential schools and that is changing now and... It is still hard for my mom to kind of, you know, accept that, you know, because it was a huge thing that happen with all of this” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:04:48,4 – 00:06:14,0).

Pauline ghinli, 82, also reflected on the effects that residential school had on the parent-child relationship and the communication barrier that was created:

“ʔAn, belhdan, ʔesgul jeghinqi hink’an, midugh dzanh ch’ah jjegwedalʔin hink’an, qungh najenjah hink’an, guʔaba, guʔinkwel lha midugh jedeštš’iny lah. Lha midugh ch’ih yajelhtig chuh ʔegwejezenižen hink’an, hink’an ʔelhelh, guyen ʔes....gusqi, gulh yaŵelhtig qeʔat’insh. ʔAn ʔeyen shuh lha nenqayni jedeštš’iny. ʔInlhes, lhajid chuh, lhajid chuh ʔelhelh yaghunltig gulih talax. Gan, nalhtsed jid gulh yaghanlhtig” [Some who went to school spoke only in English, and when they got home, their father and mother did not understand English. They (father and mother) did not know how to speak English, and their child would try to speak to them in English. They (the children) did not understand (and speak) the Tšilhqot’in language. When that happens, you can’t even speak to each other. The only way you could communicate with them (father and mother) is by sign language] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:25:39,0 – 00:25:53,0).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, believes that the experiences lived by his mom’s and grandma’s at the residential school have affected him indirectly (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:12:40,1 – 00:14:08,8), and modified their beliefs and the stories of creation, the way they perceive their existence:

“That’s our gift from this land, from the world we are living in, how we can perceive that here... what it gifted to us and that’s an honor that they are trying to take away. When they are taking our ceremonies so we don’t pray the Creator with dance and song anymore, you are sitting on your knees in a church, you know head bend down, eating a piece of Jesus and drinking his blood, where do that come from? That doesn’t make sense, we are meant to rejoice. Like at one time they say we joice so loud because we thought Creator forgot us, that a tear fell off of his eye and when it hit the ground turned into a tobacco plant, and that was when we were shaking feathers, rattling, drumming as loud as we could, jumping as high as we could in the air, you know, rejoicing ‘come Creator, bless us! Bless us!’ and he was so removed by it that they said a tear hit the ground, and he said ‘whenever you are in need of me smoke that tobacco, because this is... I love you [Creator]’ (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:15:54, 4 – 00:20:44, 9).

Nists'i, 34, told about his mom and auntie's experiences; the trauma suffered by residential school survivors even shaped their life decisions and had an influence on where to live and how to raise their children:

“[...] The broad high level thought it's just mostly processes of colonization so I see... you know, residential school as being a huge one. When I talked to my auntie [...], her reflection is that, you know, they stopped teaching the language when the time that they went to residential school so... if she was 6 years old when she went to residential school then that's when she stopped teaching their children and it's probably the same for my mom as well, and then they started getting into more main stream education [...] But they came back and they still learned it, they had the chance to teach their children but you know either they were shamed or they were... or things were just too tough or people, I think, started to scatter, like I think, just my life story with my mother... She left the reserve not wanting to raise her children around alcohol, some of the family violence, some of the bitterness or resentment that people had towards each other. She didn't want to raise me there or her children there and she want just space to her own, to deliver on life. I think that's like a personal decision that every person had to endure, life in the reserve [...]. They all had to make those decisions on where they wanted to be, kinda like they wanted to live, so it's not easy coming back to after maybe when the culture is being disturbed by residential school, they come back and say, we are going to be back exactly the way we want, where we had been before, but something is changed (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:12:31, 5 – 00:15:56, 4).

Chickadee, 39, also referred to the residential school system as the main reason for the low number of speakers, as well as the interruption of intergenerational language transmission:

“The gap I would say it happened when... [...] European contact, you know, there was a new culture introduced, there was new things happening and I think they were the real impact probably when the residential school, this is when Indian Act was imposed in our people... and you know, we weren't allowed to practice our traditional rites, speak our language, so I think those are where the gaps happened and it has impacted us today and... So... especially the generation that... you know, my

generation and my children... because I remembered my mom explaining that she... she is a fluent speaker but she was not allowed, she was punished for speaking her language. She would get in a lot of trouble so at the same time, too, what she was taught in residential school and when it came to her own children, she admits and that, you know, because of residential teaching she didn't really always speaks [in the languages] to us, otherwise we would probably be, you know, fluent speakers, if she did right from baby and on for us too" (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:09:11,6 – 00:10:49,0).

Even younger generations think similarly, as for example *Rissa*, 24:

"To be honest, it was the residential school. It kind of had a ripple effect in the generations so I don't know, I think some of our parents, I don't know, it is hard for them, because they didn't get to learn it, like how their parents learn it, they got snapped or abused because they were talking in their tongue in residential school" (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:16:49,9 – 00:17:45,5).

Or *Dani*, 28:

"I think it was because of the residential school. They used to get hit for speaking it and they didn't know English when they were forced to speak it and once they came home. I think they were so traumatized that they kind of stopped speaking it" (*Dani*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:14:57,8 – 00:15:29,1).

Her sister *Britt*, 25, added that it is still hard for older generations to talk about it and that perhaps language revitalization efforts would need to be focused on youth who didn't experience residential school:

"I don't think they can overcome it, we just have to get over it, like just try to teach the youth and whoever wants to learn but then it still kind of hurt when they talk about it or speak it" (*Britt*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:22:15,1 – 00:22:33,6).

There are also different experiences and some community members who went to residential school never lost their language, like *Matilda*, 60, who was there for “11 years” (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:17:57,6 – 00:18:08); or *Saina*, 65:

“*Mission ghida ?eguh chuh, xanaghesjah ?eguh chuh gagunlhnaž nenqayni dzanh ch’ah selh yajelhtig. Gwech’ez shunk’ah nenqayni ch’ah yastig gunešen*” [I stayed at the Mission and came back home I spoke in T̄silhqot’in, that is how I know the language.] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:04:25,0 – 00:04:42,0).

And Roper’s family members:

“People say they stopped because of the residential but... I am going to have to disagree on that, because a lot of people are different when they came out from residential [...]. Half my family went to residential, and they never lost their language. Their language is pure, straight T̄silhqot’in, when they talk to each other” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:16:47,1 – 00:17:52,4).

Other community members also mentioned they would try to speak the language in residential school, even if it was forbidden, like *BW*, 61, for example, “when [the] boss was not around” (*BW*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:05:57,6 – 00:06:09,8). His wife *Lily the Pink*, 62, also commented that they used to speak it in the bus too:

“I was funny too, at residential school, the bus driver’s daughter, she learnt our language really fast, I remember that. [...] She was *midugh*, white? I was surprised how fast she learned. Yeah, she [...] played with us and that, and with other kids, but for some reason she chose to learn T̄silhqot’in. ‘Cause there was T̄silhqot’in, Carrier and Shuswap, and for some reason she chose to learn T̄silhqot’in (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6 00:29:15,6 – 00:30:02,8).

Dothy, 64, also said she got to speak the language sometimes:

“Till I went to residential school, I never knew a word of English, and I got homesick. And then, some nun brought somebody that speaks my language. Asked me how I was feeling, sick or... I was so happy to hear her speak to me, but then she told me,

‘don’t speak to me [...] they’ll get mad.’ (Dothy, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:44:26,0 – 00:44:49,0).

English was the main language of learning at the residential school as Maggie, 76, remembers:

“I don’t know how did I learn, but the sister was good to me, and so I know, she bring my homework, she teach me right in it, so I know. That’s how I know how to write and speak English” (Maggie, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:03:02,2 – 00:04:16,2).

As MJB, 68, said, some of the families considered that learning English would be beneficial for their children so they could help their families with communication:

“We were taught that we had to learn so we can speak for them, so that is why he sent us over there. That’s what he [her dad] told us” (MJB 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:05:15,7 – 00:06:14,0).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, also reflected on that idea:

“Somehow they [their parents] didn’t enforce it for us. I kind of feel maybe they thought it was better for us to know English so that we could make things out in the world but they didn’t realize how important it should be held” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:02:54,7 – 00:03:41,8).

For *Chel?ig*, 48, learning English was a tool that allowed communication and she wanted her children to be able to communicate, especially if they had to report an event, as it happened to her (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:02:42,3 – 00:05:03,6)

Theme 2.25. Community members that were raised by foster families lost their language and the connection with their culture

Several communities members mentioned foster care as one of the reasons of the language loss and the detachment from their culture: practices applied by the Aboriginal Children and the Child Welfare System of Canada from the late 1950s until the 1980s, like the removal of thousands of Indigenous children from their communities and their

replacement in non-Indigenous environments (also colloquially known as the “sixties scoop”), have affected to the connection with the roots and the learning of their language (cf. 2.2.1). *Saina*, 65, and *LM*, 78, commented on this:

“?Esqax hin, belhdan, deni gwaxaguts’elish hin, nenqayni, lha nenqayni jeds̄t̄s̄’iny jelish. Deni gha xagu... ?esqax deni ghaxaguts’elish ?eyen. ?Eyen chuh... ?eyen chuh ?es... lha nenqayni jedit̄s̄’iny jelish. Gayt’insh” [Some of the kids who are taken from their parents they don’t understand the language] (*Saina* 65, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:01:49,0 – 00:01:60,0)

“?Eyen lah han, yagh, midugh gubilhchog, lhajid, yagh....tad xi, gu nad xi gwets’en lah, midugh dzanh jedit̄s̄’iny helish. Duwh nagubenilhtin, lhajid, lha did shuh ghayanlhtig gwejeyenižen hanh.” [The white man takes them and in three years they only understand English. When they come back they don’t understand whatsoever you are talking about] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:02:24,0 – 00:02:30,0).

Kalikala, 39, was raised by a foster family and thought that considerably affected her current language fluency, since they denied her the right to learn during her childhood:

“[...] I don’t know, I guess, we weren’t encouraged to speak our own language. I was with my sister at the time living and in the same families for a few years, and it just wasn’t encouraged for us to continue that and even our own ways” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:01:11,7 – 00:03:19,4).

Theme 2.26. The contemporary education system has affected the younger generations’ T̄silhqot’in language fluency

Generations of 45 years old and younger didn’t attend residential school. However, their language and culture were also disrupted when they started their formal education. residential school survivor *Pauline ghinli*, 82, shared her view about this:

“?Esqax ?esgul jinlin gwech’ez. Nengun, midugh ch’ih yajelhtig jelish han. Nengegun, gangu jijedenish gayt’insh” [Well, it’s because the children are going to school. They end up speaking English. It seems that’s when they don’t speak the T̄silhqot’in language anymore] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:22:35,0 – 00:22:35,0).

Roper, 44, experienced that herself:

“According to my sister I spoke it very well when I went to nursery, but I lost it through the school years. But I do understand fluently (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:01:56,4 – 00:02:09,4). “I didn’t keep it because I think I lost it as I was going from grade to grade in Anaham. When I did first *went* to school in Anaham I spoke it very fluently. There is even proof from couple staff over there that say ‘you used to speak fluently one time, what happened?’ (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:22:17,5 – 00:22:42,4).

As well as *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35:

“I was probably like 5 and under when I could listen and do things that I was told, but from that point to hitting education, to schooling and then like you are just immersed in English” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:01:11,4 – 00:02:53,2).

And *Datsan*, 27, agreed:

“I also think that the education... The government would rather have us to be educated more instead of speaking our own language and losing all the cultures that T̄s̄ilhqot’in had before. I think education kind of pushed our culture away” (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:15:29,0 – 00:15:59,5).

Likewise, *Juna*, 58, commented that the school system not only affected to some community members’ language fluency but also their cultural protocols:

“Going to school here was my first time I went to school. I felt like I had to learn English. And repeat, repeat, repeat. I couldn’t believe how [...] repeating, like, ‘See Janet run. See Janet run.’ Ugh, three times [laughs]. And then, at home, different Elders spoke to you, you’re not supposed to repeat anything [...]. Let her repeat it again, you’re in trouble. That was our strict. An Elder would say one thing, and with her voice [...]. We had to listen and make sure... Then we went to English school...

[and had to repeat, thus do the opposite that we had been taught at home] (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:50:30,0 – 00:51:57,0).

Theme 2.27. Substance abuse is a consequence of the identity and language loss

Community members believe many got trapped into alcohol and substance abuse to be able to cope with the devastating effects of the post-colonial practices. *Kalikala*, 39, narrated how that affected her own native pride when she was young:

“Back on those days were really different and there was a lot of alcoholism and abuse and... so... I didn’t carry the sense of proud I do today” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:01:11,7 – 00:03:19,4).

She also reflected on how the alcohol and substance abuse can have a negative effect on the children’s learning abilities:

“One thing that comes to mind I guess it would be... maybe some children would have disability learnings, I think that’s another thing too. There could be all kinds of things... Parents who drink... children can have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome so it reduces their ability to learn quickly” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:16:50,7 – 00:19:01,6).

However, as *Pauline ghinli*, 82, explains some parents are aware of that nowadays and try to change the patterns:

“Amanda has stopped drinking. *Nenk’ed, nenk’ed ?elhghenagwedişed, ?eguh chuh shunk’ah, lha taşedan gut’in* [She had a birthday, but she still doesn’t want to drink] *Besqi, besqi ch’ez. Nenden ba... sesqi gha, yagh, gagunlhnaş lha tasesdan hataş’inlh nah* [She’s doing that for her child. She said that she was not going to drink anymore, on account of her child]” (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:41:01,0 – 00:41:15,0).

Theme 2.28. Trauma caused by racism can negatively affect the language learning and use

According to the community members, trauma caused by racist behaviors has determined and still determines the learning and use of the language. As *Chel?ig*, 48, explained, she “grew up in a time where there was a lot of racism”; and still today, her

children face racism in Williams Lake (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:39:25,7 – 00:41:09,6):

“My youngest daughter, she says ‘mom I hear those boys when they walk by my they’ll say, ‘oh there is that damn Indian’ (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:41:43,8 –00:43:15,0).

She is convinced those attitudes have created trauma on community members and influenced in some way the current number of speakers.

Theme 2.29. The lifestyle change has affected the language acquiring and use

Some participants identified the change of life style as one of the main reasons of the decrease of the number of speakers. Life dynamics have changed and community members don’t live as their ancestors used to anymore (BW, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:13:45,6 – 00:14:40,6; Lily the Pink, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:13:18,0 – 00:13:18,1; Omi, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:16:59,9 – 00:17:22,6; *Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:16:13,8 – 00:17:43,5). *Theresa*, 60, reflected on that:

“The old style of living has pretty well changed. I think from [European] contact till now, I think we had the most rapid change and I think that’s probably the reason why we stopped talking to each other too, you know, visiting each other” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:26:16,1 – 00:27:25,5).

For them, language is inherently connected to the way of life and when that changes the language does too with it. Fluent speaker *MJB*, 68, helps her daughter, who is a language teacher, find ‘new’ words, which are actually just old words that are not used anymore due to the lifestyle change:

“I find new words for her, new words in our language. She doesn’t know most of it, like the harder ones. Long time ago I told her how people lived, all this stuff, we lived of the land, we did when we were kids. There was no white man involved” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:28:45,3 – 00:29:31,7).

In the past, language was learned in a natural setting. Community members would spend time with their families helping with traditional activities on the land, according to *Theresa*, 60, and *Pauline ghinli*, 82:

“*Guguh lah, gwatish lah, belhdan ?ežež ?anajeli, belhdan nazlhiny tah ?anajeli te?ayt’in, binajedilh, ?ets’ubah te?azt’in, gagunlhchugh. Xunlht’i jid, yagh, nenqayni ch’ih yanlhtig?* [I mean, doing traditional things such as how some work on hides, and some work with horses, riding horses, picking berries, and everything] (*Theresa*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:10:15,0 – 00:10:23,0) *Nenk’ed ?eguh hin se?agunt’ah xagughini, ?undidanx* [A long time ago, it was alright at that time] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:10:15,0 – 00:10:23,0).

Lily the Pink, 62, and her husband, *BQ*, 61 also talked about their childhood; they grew up spending time with their families and helping with daily chores:

“I used to have my late mom when we were out there, nothing else to do, you got to do learn something eh? We used to trap muskrats too and squirrels, skinning by yourself. I used to go hunting with my uncle too, when I was a kid, sit on a big horse. (*BW*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:13:45,6 – 00:14:40,6). [...] On those days they moved around with team and wagon, eh?” (*BW*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:14:47,5 – 00:15:08,2). “You can go on a hay field and help, instead of using like modern... and tractors and that. We used team horses and... that took a while but still it got done, that was sun up to the sun down [laughs]” (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:08:53,0 – 00:19:20,2).

But they can see the way has changed:

“[Today I have] no horse. I miss him days though” (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:14:47,5 – 00:15:08,2) “[...] Because nowadays people don’t do hay the way they did long time ago. Everybody got to have a tractor or... Not like what we did when we were younger. They say go out and exercise. That is go out and exercise! All day! [laughs]” (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:19:30,5 – 00:19:52,2).

Saina, 65, also talked about her childhood and activities she used to do with her parents and doesn't do anymore:

*“Yaniz danh gats’et’in. Belhdan hin tejelex hayt’insh, xanx? ?Undidanx, Lloyd be?inkwel denilin ?eguh ya?en, Biny Gunchagh težilyah xaghini. ?Abenax danh nixedidansh gun belh ne?ilqwish. Gun, ?inlhed xwelh taghints’ish, lhajid teghulyilh guyal. ?Egu, gan tabanx tsel tenilyah. Gwiyelhqan, gun nanadilh, lhan šidlosh [laughs]. Tabanx dzanh nadilh saghint’i, tizts’ih [laughs]. ?Egu gagulhchugh jighanexwenilhtan. Lhaghembinh [unclear] tah jinexwedeghinlh?in. Guh jid nenqayni ch’ah deni ts’aghinli, ?undidanx. K’an ?eguh lha gweched gats’ešt’in. Gu, qungh jiz ts’edilhts’ish gwežlin. [From way back it was done that way, some of them do gillnetting, right? When my mom was still alive, we use to gillnet at Fletcher Lake. We get up early in the morning and drive to there. One time it was so windy on the lake that we couldn’t set the gillnet so we just set it near the shore. The next day there was lots of fish on the gillnet [laughs]. Because it was so windy the fish might have been close to shore [laughs]. She taught us everything like setting and taking out the gillnet. That is how the Tšilhqot’in lived a long time ago but now it is hardly done in that way. People stay at home now] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:12:49,0 – 00:13:24,0).*

Juna, 58, thinks that, even if today people keep some of the traditions, like camping, today, it is not the same; the equipment and setting are different:

“Duwh k’andzin, ?esqax lah jetanilh, gagunlhnaž, ?inlhes ts’ed nezun xughiqid hink’an, ya?anxw niteghadinlh jedah. Suk’an, sesqi, yad yanid našenah gadanh, “Ts’ed nezun xughiqid yenešen, guh chuh lha... xesdlulh haghiti” denish. ?An, sid ?eguh, ?esqax nidlin, yanuw h nadiny, ts’ed, guyi, um, mus-žez, yagh, nats’edeghinlh dil, xats’edeghinlht’ax, mus-gha, gant’i hanh, yagh, yušitil ts’elhtsish. Gant’i ch’ed šitiz hink’an, lha ts’ed dižti qanežitah [laughs]. Xunlht’i lin, guh ganit’ih deni ghidli sanh. Gan qwenjah, lhiz ch’ed. Nenduw h k’andzin ?eguh, ?inlhes, lhes gwedižti jid gant’i qajenetah. Gayenešen, gwadanišed ghangh. Ts’ed hudadilti, hunišel jughinqid jeyenižen, ?eguh chuh jadrulh jedenish. ?An, xun, yaniz, ?esqax nidlin, yanuw h nadinsh. Gan waygen te?ant’i bid ?eguh nadiny, ?eguh chuh lha gweninq’ez ch’ih jinasesnih. [Today if you look at the kids that are going camping they have very expensive blanket but they are still getting frozen. To me, as kids we were in meadows and slept on mattresses stuffed with mouse hair

(laughs). We were never cold. That was all we had on the ground and slept on that but today everybody wants expensive stuff. And so they are for this expensive blankets are going to do for them, we as kids we had to make do what we had, we were always in wagons trips, I never remember being cold.] (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:40:41,0 – 00:41:37,0).

Even if today some families do spend time together doing traditional activities, the language may not be used, as *Gex*, 34, explains:

“You always hear people talking about the meadow days and the meadow days were amazing and... Nobody really goes out, There are some families that families do though, like, I think [community member’s name] and them go to Big Creek for couple of weeks and stuff and... but I hardly doubt they are doing language out there, but they are doing cultural activities (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:18:26,5 – 00:19:17,2).

Theme 2.30. The loss of traditional medicine knowledge is affecting the language use

Medicine practices have also changed. Even though traditional healing is still practised and there still are few *deyen* (traditional healers) in the communities, Western medicine is very present. Some community members believe that the reduction of the use of traditional medicine has an influence on the language and culture loss. *Juna*, 58, commented about that:

“*Deyens* were powerful people, [...] people were healthy and they were always around to make sure people were always well, eating right, and also, eating proper foods and we were always moving. Just to eat that proper food. We didn’t stay in one area. Just, we were always either gone to the mountains, to pick that special plant [...]. You know, for winter. Just certain medicines we picked. That medicines, we had to go out and do it. And, all the, um... people who were out there were always *deyens* that were doing it with us. [...] My dad was saying, and, nowadays, you don’t see that. Maybe that’s why we’re losing [our language] (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:45:39 – 00:48:05).

Theme 2.31. There is a lack of concern and motivation towards speaking the language

Participating Yunešit'in Elders considered that one of the main reasons of the current low number of speakers is that community members don't try to speak the language. *LM*, 78, thinks that youth don't make the proper effort:

“Gagunlhchugh. Guyen ?esqax gayt'insh hanh, midugh ch'ah yajelhtig. Xun, nenqayni dzanh ch'ah yaltig. Gu, jaded shuh najegweneyud hin, jinaygwedetal?anx han, gan...”
[The kids only speak in English while we only speak in Tšilhqot'in. If they try to speak the language they would learn again] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:15:02,0).

His wife *Saina*, 65, agreed on this and said “*tha najegwenesud* [they don't try] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:15:02); as well as *MJB*, 68, who said she “could see all kids don't learn it or speak; they choose English” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:08:05,0 – 00:08:14,8).

Speakers also acknowledged they don't find enough motivation sometimes, like *Nun*, 57, who recognized that even “being a grandmother”, she is “just lazy to speak it” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:28:38,5 – 00:29:22,3). *Nundi*, 69, showed frustration when talking about it. According to him, community members have good intentions at the language meetings; however, those intentions are not followed up by actions:

“You know, a lot... a lot of meetings. They're just words, from other people's mouths. No action after that. When you walk out, you forget everything [laughs] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:49:10,0 – 00:49:38,0).

Theme 2.32. The number of speakers keeps going down

Several community members mentioned that the reduced number of speakers is also affecting the use of the language: fluent speakers don't find enough opportunities to use the language since there are not too many speakers left, as *Theresa*, 60, commented:

“Most of our monolingual people have died so it seems there is no use for the language to be spoken now” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:26:16,1 – 00:27:25,5).

She also conversed about that with her sister *Pauline ghinli*, 82:

“*Guyen, nenqayni ch’ih yajaghinlhtig, nenqayni dzanh ch’ih yajelhtig hin lhajegul yajinlin* [All the ones who spoke only the T̄silhqot’in language are no longer here] (*Theresa*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:23:53,0)

“Yeah. *Belhdan ch’elejesggan*” [Some of them all died] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:23:57,0).

Younger community members like *Charlie Brown*, 47, had the same feeling:

[...] the Elders are passing away and we are not learning from them, and it’s been lost because they are passing away” (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:08:18,1 – 00:08:33,9)

5.2.7 Does intergenerational language transmission happen in the community?

In the next section, we will explore results about the transmission of the language in the family, since it is an important factor to determine the vitality and status of a language (Fishman 1991).

The following themes will be discussed:

- Theme 2.33. Grandparents speak T̄silhqot’in to their grandchildren
- Theme 2.34. Parents don’t speak T̄silhqot’in to their children

Theme 2.33. Grandparents speak T̄silhqot’in to their grandchildren

Many community members recognized that they speak the language to their grandkids (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:02:12,3 – 00:02:15,9; *Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:46:47). *Lily the Pink*, 62, was surprised to see her sister’s grandkid speaking in the language:

“Younger kids, I noticed, because my family they are teaching themselves how to speak. I was surprised by my sister’s granddaughter. [...] She came over with my sister and she is yapping away in our language and I was in there, where did she learn all this? [laughs] (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:04:04,0 – 00:04:38,3).

And now she is also teaching her great grandson too:

“I was going *inlhi, nanqih, tay* [one, two, three] and he is trying to learn that, he sees me *inlhi, nanqih, tay* [one, two, three] and he recognizes me, slowly teaching him” (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:09:14,6 – 00:09:58,8).

Maggie, 76, also speaks in the language to her grandchildren (*Maggie*, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:04:41,2 – 00:06:10,9). That was corroborated by her granddaughter *Omi*, 22, who said she learned from her grandma “growing up” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:03:00,3 – 00:03:11,0), as well as her niece, who was raised by her grandparents too (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:04:17,5 – 00:04:24,8).

Juna, 58, also remembered her mom speaking in the language to her children:

“*Se?inkwel gwebeneghinlhyax, nenjan qungh gweghil?a ?eguh. Se?inkwel, yagh, nenqayni dzanh ch’ah gubelh yalhtig*” [When my mother looked after them in the central [part of the] community, my mom only spoke T?silhqot’in to them] (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:18:24,0 – 00:19:00,0).

Braids, 72, teaches her granddaughter while doing home chores; when she is cooking, for example:

“*Nenduwh jid bed ?anats’eli jigubedeteghanlh?anx. Sid, k’an hink’an, guntsel jid sesqi jighanusten qe?ast’in hanh*” [Right now I am trying to teach my daughter. The little one mimics me, the one that walks on the floor] (*Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:07:49,0 – 00:07:27,0).

However, she said that not all the grandparents would speak in the language to their grandchildren:

“*?Eguh, nenqayni ch’ih yaghanlhtig hink’an, nenqungh t?sid je?adeteghant’ax. Guyen gube?intsu, gube?intsi gats’in, ?eyen hanh ?esqax jijegudetalh?anx hanh. ?An, ?eyed chuh nengagulhched jid midugh ch’ah yajelhtig*” [Whenever you are going to speak T?silhqot’in, you start at home. The children’s grandmothers and grandfathers are going to teach them, but then even them they used to speak English] (*Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:04:33,0 – 00:04:49,0).

Nun, 57, is not totally fluent (LRPP #4, 03/23/2016), but she still teaches her grandkids, not only the language but also their culture and traditional games, like *lehal* (LRPP #1, 12/01/2015) as well as the traditional way of life living from the land:

“Most of our kids around here don’t really eat our traditional food [...]. I grew up like eating beaver, muskrats... we lived of the land. I try to teach my grandkids how to eat traditional stuff” (*Nun*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

Charlie Brown, 47, also makes an effort to speak it to her grandkids but she is not fluent and feels she needs to learn more or have more resources to keep teaching them. Her mom and her sister, who is a language teacher, help her though (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:02:31,3 – 00:02:44,2).

Theme 2.34. Parents don’t speak T̄silhqot’in to their children

Young community members recognized that their parents would speak English to them, even if they are fluent and speak to Elders or their own parents in T̄silhqot’in, as we can read from *Rissa*, 24 about her mom: “she only talks in T̄silhqot’in for her work” when speaking to the Elders, but not to her or her sister (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:02:59,5 – 00:03:06,5).

Britt, *Dani* and *Datsan*’s parents are fluent but they wouldn’t speak the language to them either:

“They don’t really speak it to us, but they speak it to Elders (*Dani*, 28, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:02:28,0 – 00:02:37,7). No, [not to us] not that I know (*Britt*, 25, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:02:26,7 – 00:02:28,0). “I don’t think my parents spoke to me enough about it, when I asked them why they didn’t speak to me enough they said I had no attention like I didn’t care about it and didn’t listen to them. But I don’t think they spoke to us enough” (*Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:04:20,7 – 00:04:45,0).

Yunešit’in Elders *Theresa*, 60, and *Pauline ghinli*, 82, agreed on that and recognized they don’t speak enough T̄silhqot’in even to the kids:

“*Ganexwenilhan guntsel jid ganit’ih yagunlin. Lha nexweŝiqi nenqayni ch’ih yagh, gulh yaŝiltig* [We tend to all be that way now. We don’t speak the Tŝilhqot’in language to our children] (*Theresa* 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:10:34,0 – 00:10:42,0).

“*?An k’an ?eguh, guyen, gwatish, midugh dzanh ch’ih yalh....yalhtig hink’an*” [they can’t understand you, when you talk Tŝilhqot’in] Now, they [her children] tend to only speak in English, and they can’t understand you, when you talk Tŝilhqot’in (*Pauline ghinli* 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:10:34,0 – 00:10:42,0).

Theresa, 60, recognized that even her, who is a language teacher, didn’t pass it to her children (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:49:33,9 – 00:49:43,0), as well as all her siblings, who were fluent too but none of them spoke it to their kids either:

“Because when mom passed it along to us and I think most of us, even [her sibling’s name] spoke Tŝilhqot’in... but... and [her sibling’s partner’s name] did too but those kids didn’t learn the language... They know lots, but they don’t know everything, because they are not... the tradition hasn’t been in practice for quite a while, you know, that thing I am talking about the... fishing they do, the hunting they do... but they don’t do that necessarily in the language anymore” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:49:53,8 – 00:50:58,3).

MJB, 68, did speak the language to her first two children and they are fluent now (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:02:51,5 – 00:03:08,2), but she doesn’t see “very much younger mothers speaking to the kids either” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:10:03,8 – 00:10:32,9). According to many members, parents who are fluent and understand the language need to take back responsibility and pass on the language, as language expert *Nundi* said:

“I speak my language, but even those in thirty-five and forty age should try and speak more, so their kids would be listening. If they don’t do that, I guess, you know, those kids are, they’re not going to think highly of the language. They are going to lose... [...] I guess the more... the more you listen to the language... and then, I know there’s a lot of people that, ah, younger ones, they listen and they understand, but when it comes time to them speaking it, they don’t, they don’t say it, eh?” (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:34:26 – 00:35:21).

“*Nendan, nenqayni ch’ih yajelhtig hin, gubeŝiqi, guŝiqi belh yajelhtig, nenqayni dzanh hilin, ch’ih, ʔesqax belh yajelhtig guʔen jid seʔagwetat’ilh ghilih. Gan, lha gwechugh gatŝ’eŝt’in gwežlin jigwenilʔin*” [It would be good if those who know the Tŝilhqot’in to talk to their kids in the Tŝilhqot’in language. Right now, it looks like that is not being done] (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:21:13,0 – 00:21:22,0).

And some parents are taking this responsibility, like *Chelʔig*, 48, who acknowledged that she didn’t speak the language to her kids when they were young, but did start three years ago and wants to continue (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:02:42,3 – 00:05:03,6); as well as *Nists’i*, 34, who being a semi-speaker would try to pass on wherever he knows to his kids:

“I speak as much as I know [...] Almost most of the stuff that I know, my daughters know for the most part, as long as I kinda keep saying it. [His daughter] kinda forgets sometimes so I have to kinda keep reminding her” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:04:38,0 – 00:05:44,3).

And *Chickadee*, 39, who also tries to pass the basics to her children:

“[...] What I know [laughs] Like just introducing ourselves, who we are, who are out parents... kind of what we are doing in school, *Jessica sets’edihn* or *sid seghuzi Jessica sets’edihn* [my name is Jessica], *seʔinkwel* [my mom] who is you dad, who is your mom, where do you come from, and that something that your Elders always asked you anyway, they want to know that whole history” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:02:36,9 – 00:03:07,2).

5.2.8. What strategies can be used for promoting the use of the language in the community?

Community members also reflected on what strategies could be applied to encourage speakers to choose Tŝilhqot’in over English. As *Gex*, 34, said, “it’s just the matter of spiraling into more people doing that” and multiply “those sparks [...] you can create in the community and the different places” (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:30:17,1 – 00:31:15,4). Elder *Pauline ghinli*, 82, agreed by saying “*gunzun, nengeguh, ʔegun ts’enelt’i, nengeguh dzanh jid ʔesqax nenqayni ch’ih yajelhtig jetalax sajint’i*” [It’s a good idea to

continue pushing in that direction; that's likely the only way to get the children to speak the T̄silhqot'in language] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:09:23,0 – 00:09:37,0).

In this section, I'll present strategies for promoting the use of the language in the community suggested by the participants and grouped under the following topics:

- Theme 2.35. T̄silhqot'in needs to be spoken out
- Theme 2.36. Speakers and language learners need to be encouraged and supported
- Theme 2.37. Community members need to take back their own responsibility
- Theme 2.38. Specific time and space for speaking the language needs to be provided
- Theme 2.39. Language policies that promote the use of the language should be developed
- Theme 2.40. Promote the language in the public spaces in the community

Theme 2.35. T̄silhqot'in needs to be spoken out

As many community members said, the key to revitalize the language is “just speaking it more” (*Chel?ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:36:48,5 – 00:37:14,9), “speaking T̄silhqot'in as much as we can” (*Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:17:08,1 – 00:17:15,8) and “just talk to each other [in the language]” (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:04:08,0 – 01:04:31,0). *Pauline ghinli*, 82, agreed:

“?Elhch'iz, gagu...gagunt'ih dzanh jid yanlhtig guh” [The way to prevent it is to continue to only speak the language] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:09:37,0 – 00:09:43,0).

Dothy, 64, is also convinced that, if people continue keep talking, others would be encouraged to do it:

“?Elhch'iz guh jid yalhtig ?egu gawtanilh sagunt'ih” [if we continue to speak, it will probably happen] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:01:41,0 – 00:01:45,0).

Juna, 58, said that as well:

“We need to talk out there. If we don’t stand here and speak our language who is going to pick it up?” (*Juna*, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Theme 2.36. Speakers and language learners need to be encouraged and supported

Events and gatherings could be used to promote the use of the language, as many suggested:

“Elders who are strong in our community should be talking in gatherings to help promote strength and cultural knowledge” (*Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:17:43,0 – 00:18:01,0)

Speakers also need to be encouraged, as *Chelʔig*, 48, tries to do at work:

“Just encouraging it; just because right now me and my sister we banter, and the other staff are looking at us, so just being able to do that and encourage them” (*Chelʔig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:36:48,5 – 00:37:14,9).

And children’s “grandparents and parents” (*Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:16:09,5 – 00:16:29,3) who are already making the effort need to be supported, as *Gex*, 34, explains:

“[...] even just having boys calling me *inkwel* [mom], that was like a huge thing and it took forever because everyone wanted to be like ‘oh go ask your *mom*’ and even if I wanted to correct them ‘no, it’s *inkwel* [mom]’, they would never say it. Like help me teach them that’s how I wanted to be called. Even with my mom... it was really hard, like... that brain switch... (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:00:17,1 – 00:31:15,4).

Theme 2.37. Community members need to take back their own responsibility

Most of the people who participated acknowledged that bringing the language to full use in the community lies in the responsibility of each of them (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:20:47,3 – 00:24:18,5; *Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:52:18,3 – 00:52:42,3; *Chelʔig*, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yuneŝit’in meeting). *Nists’i*, 34, would like to see community members stepping up and taking leadership on this:

“I think, we decided... and I think is my first one belief that the language is all of our responsibility in a different way... It gets away from blaming sometimes people, like I can blame my mother for not sharing enough or doing enough, but you know, the onus is on me as well... I see shared responsibility all around, and that’s why even when we developed the Language Plan, we wanted to put it in different... you know, it’s not just the band administrations, you know, like need to find money for programs and stuff like that, it’s like, you know, you can’t stop speaking it at home, so there is still a responsibility of parents to speak it or learning about it, or still responsibility of the school to, you know, sort of work towards this... (*Nists ’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:49:39,6 – 00:50:40,7). [...] I see a real need for people to take on... more than just being teacher of the language... I see a real need for just more leadership and you know... you have your community champion, but I can see a real role for people that know the stories inside out in the language... you know, we’ve always sort of depended on people that... but nobody has really stepped up and said like... I am going to... since this person has passed way, I’m going to take on these roles. I am going to take on songs, or I am going to take on all the stories... yeah, you know... for myself, even as a leader I don’t know how to go about that because I’m not, you know... from my mom’s songs I’ve able to like locally learn most of them and then I still have access to some of her recordings and... But I do see like a huge need for people my age to really take a leadership role on that” (*Nists ’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:31:56,8 – 00:33:41,2).

Theme 2.38. Specific time and space for speaking the language needs to be provided

The majority of the participating community members believe that providing a specific time for the language would encourage people to speak it. A dedicated space for the language needs to be created (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:36:56,2 – 00:37:28,0) where people feel comfortable speaking it:

“In the schools there needs to be a space for it... [...] start maybe providing space for, you know, people to feel comfortable learning it within their own community [...] At Stone is hard, because we don’t have dedicated spaces... It’s like we don’t have enough infrastructure like I noticed it, we can have cultural events at the community hall or library, but we don’t have like really distinct spaces that have kinda... that can

kinda provide for kind like an Elders' centre or cultural centre that people feel comfortable in coming that's beyond the program, maybe like the can drop-in sort of thing or like regular storytelling, regular drumming (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:34:46,6 – 00:37:44,5).

Kalikala also mentioned the idea of a cultural place where community members gather to do traditional activities (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:20:30,0 – 00:21:35,5); and *Nundi*, 69, also suggested having “an Elder's group” or place where they can share stories with the younger generations:

“[...] Where the younger ones participate, or listening. Like, maybe community hall, certain date, maybe. Or they [...] can talk to each other, or stories. Even get fun into it, dancing. [...] And pictures, different [...] people from long time ago. And, and, like ah, great-great grandfather here. He spoke [...] language, all his life, and that. He was a really good hunter, trapper. Things like that. Catch their interest and try to speak” (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:53:45,0 – 00:54:44,0).

He also had the vision of a museum and how knowing more about their heritage would make the children proud and they would feel encouraged to speak the language:

“[Put] a lot of stuff they put in there, and something written about different things. Ah, get the kids in there, and then, they see all that. And, they start being proud. Proud. You want the kids to be proud of your heritage, or something like that. Ah, like, this is what the people did a long time ago. They were strong people, and all that. [...] Know where they came from. Be proud” (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:59:15-01:02:03).

Juna, 58, remembered the old Fish Lake educational training camp; it was “a powerful place” and “people still speak about what they learned”. This training centre was operating in the 70s and 80s and many community members participated in the programs (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:38:27,0 – 00:39:09,0).

Likewise, a specific time for speaking the language can also be secured in gatherings or events:

“If we did kind of a place that was just language that would be pretty neat to, like you know, kind of have somebody ‘that’s ok, T̂silhqot’in please’ or whatever, ‘T̂silhqot’in yalhtig’, you know ‘speak the language’” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:03:45,7 – 00:04:47,7).

“You could probably have a gathering of people and say, well this hour is going to be all in T̂silhqot’in, and if you don’t do T̂silhqot’in you are going to have to pay something... [laughs] (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:29:47,9 – 00:30:17,2)

Theme 2.39. Language policies that promote the use of the language should be developed

One of the main goals on the T̂silhqot’in Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016; LRPP doc#1, 03/29/2016) identified by the Language Committee was to “develop best practices and policies for using the language in the community”. They also identified a need of developing “research protocols and copyright policies” that would support those policies; a Terms of Reference document was already drafted under the Language Revitalization Planning Program 2015-2016 to support the creation of the Language Committee and the application of the Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#5, 03/29/2016)

All those language policies as well as the specific programs would need to be reviewed regularly and improved based on the results. As *Nists’i*, 34, suggested ‘cultural audits’ could be held for that:

“It could be like a *cultural audit*, so you would have Elders or people that are pretty close to the program or organization being able to comment on: are we actively improving on this part of the program, are we actively improving..., and you go through the list and I thought that was very effective [...] I think it needs like that cycle of evaluation and being able to learn from the year before, because I think it is it’s still a learning process for all of us, so... But I think those... to evaluate and reflect... actively work on something, I think it’s the important point of it all” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:51:14,5 – 00:53:27,2).

Theme 2.40 Promote the language in the public spaces in the community

Another strategy identified on the T̂silhqot’in Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was “promoting the language in the community buildings (i.e. Administration and Health Centre)”. Community members also provided some ideas for

that. It was suggested that government staff say “greetings” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) and “speak at least some basic conversation in T̄silhqot’in” (*Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:05:20,9 – 00:05:25,4) as we can read in a excerpt by *Nists’i*, 34:

“I think there is especially in terms of just greetings and stuff like that I think... I think even *midugh* people or people from outside the T̄silhqot’in, they kinda pick that stuff right away and they are always encouraged to say it, so I think it’s important even just to start with greetings and... and making people feel welcomed...I think there is room for improvement at the office as well (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:40:27,7 – 00:41:34,9).

As *Chelʔig*, 48, said there are employees that don’t speak it and “would have to learn” (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:37:17,2 – 00:37:21,7), and Yunešit’in Government could “offer incentives by reward system to employees who progressively increase language fluency and use the language at work” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016).

Another action identified on the Language Revitalization Plan was putting up “T̄silhqot’in signage” at the community buildings to encourage community members to use the language more (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016). *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, also suggested that “putting more names [...] starting to do more labelling, or signs could help (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 01:00:22,3 – 01:02:16,8); *Roper*, 44, admitted that having signs out would help her to use the language more (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:03:38,2 – 00:04:24,3).

Other community members also suggested that Yunešit’in office staff could have their answering machine message in T̄silhqot’in. Office staff in other communities do that already, like, for example, in Tl’etinqox (Anaham) as *Matilda*, 60, explained (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:05:25,4 – 00:05:30,2). *Roper*, 44 said she “did once a long time ago” too but doesn’t have it anymore. She also remembers that, when her sister worked at the T̄silhqot’in National Government, she had “straight T̄silhqot’in for her greeting on her voicemail” and “she repeated [the message] in English afterwards”. “She did straight that before the Christmas holidays” and “the Chiefs were very impressed with it” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 0:05:30,2 – 0:05:34,9).

Matilda, 60, also believed that “even at [work] meetings, T̄silhqot’in should be the main language (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:03:34,3 – 00:03:38,3). *Roper*, 44 agreed

on this but pointed out that nowadays not all the staff and leaders are fluent (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:03:38,2 – 00:04:24,3).

5.2.9 What is the future of the T̓silhqot'in language in the community?

According to the Vision Statement developed by the Language Committee under the Language Revitalization Planning Program in 2015, language represents a priority in the community and the Language Committee supports all kinds of language learning towards 'collective fluency':

“As T̓silhqot'in, nurturing the language back to collective fluency must be supported and reinforced. We therefore support safe spaces of learning, accepting any approach that suits the many different learning styles. Learning will take many forms, including the use of new technology (LRPP doc#3, Vision Statement, 03/29/2016).

However, when inquired about their vision for the next ten years, participating community members presented different attitudes about the future of the language in the community; those were gathered in the following themes:

- Theme 2.41. The future of the T̓silhqot'in language is still uncertain
- Theme 2.42. The future of the T̓silhqot'in language is promising

Theme 2.41. The future of the T̓silhqot'in language is still uncertain

Language teacher *Theresa*, 60, feels that, since she started teaching years ago, only a little has been done and that more teachers and resources are still needed:

“I don't know... it depends on how many teachers we get, eh? We don't have a whole lot of people but... and our language is holding for a while... [...] it has to be taught now... it should have been taught when I was beginning... do you know what I mean? just coming back alive and, you know, everybody doing it, but it never happened, they just let it *ssssh...* go down” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:51:18,7 – 00:51:55,7).

Roper, 44, doesn't have “that much hope”, but would still like to see a change at the schools and at home too (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:19:00,5 – 00:20:05,7); parent *Gex*, 34, commented that she feels that she has “been talking about it for years” but she hasn't

“even put the effort in it” (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:11:01,6 – 00:11:27,0); and Elders *Pauline ghinli*, 82, and *Theresa*, 60, are also concerned about children not willing to learn:

Theresa: “*Nenjan qwentowh, deni gats’in yajelhtig naytadlax yenižen? Yunešit’in* [Do you think the whole community of Yunešit’in will learn to speak the Tšilhqot’in language again?]

Pauline ghinli: *De?ax* [No]

Theresa: *K’es gan nents’in, qwentowh* [Or it could be any community]

Pauline ghinli: *Yeah. Lhajid gadeghuni, su gadeghuni gulah Yeah* [You can’t really say]

Belhdan lha ?eguh jid yajulhtig jegut’in. ?Esqax belhdan jaghenilch’ish, nenqayni jijegwedul?anx [unclear] *Lha dzamen ch’ih yawestig gust’in jeduni gayt’insh* [Some of them don’t like to speak that way. Some children tend to get angry, when encouraged to speak the Tšilhqot’in language. They tend to say, “I don’t want to speak Chinese”]

Theresa: *Ha?anh* [Yes]

Pauline ghinli: [community member’s name] *gats’edinh ghangh, besqiqi. Nenqayni ch’ih jijegwedul?ax qa... xe?agubelh’in.* [(community members name) was told that, by her children. She was trying to teach them to speak the Tšilhqot’in language]

Theresa: *K’an ?eguh gwanajedenildah sagunih.* [They must be regretting it now] (*Pauline ghinli* and *Theresa*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:27:37,0 – 00:28:16,0)

Britt, 25, is not sure about the future of the language either and she sees it “50/50”, meaning it could go both ways (*Britt*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:20:49,5 – 00:20:55,9); that is why *Nun*, 57, is concerned and believes steps need to be taken now:

“We have to worry about it, because it’s going to be a big gap within ten years you are talking about, probably if we are going to save it, we have to look at things, workshops, anything... (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:28:38,5 – 00:29:22,3).

And *Nundi*, 69, thinks likewise:

“*K’an ?esqax, lha, nenk’ed jijedetanih jigwenil’in. Nenqayni ch’ih yajelhtig jijedetanih. Lhe?agulhched jid ?aghit’in sink’an, yagh, nenjan gu?en, lha jijedetašnih*” [Right now it looks like the children are going to lose the Tšilhqot’in language. From here on we

have to do quite a bit for them not to lose it] (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:16:15 – 00:16:19,0).

Nists'i, 34, recognizes it is not easy as he sees that a lot of “damage” has been done and the community is still learning how to “deal with it as a collective”:

“I’m trying like, you know, you see the school is trying to reincorporate more language, you see more acceptance to it, but a lot the damage is really been done, and I think it’s hard to know where people are at, sort of, probably the level of healing, not only to themselves but to the... you know, I think I’ve learned just through years the amount of grief just the losses of family and friends and I think... I don’t think anyone is being able to really tackle how to deal with it as a collective” (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:12:31,5 – 00:15:56,4).

Theme 2.42. The future of the Tšilhqot’in language is promising

On the other hand, many community members felt optimistic about the future of the language, as *Maureen*, 51, expressed: “ten years down the road, *shunk’ah nenqayni ch’ih yateghaltig*” [they all speak the language more] (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:03:46,0 – 00:04:00,0). *Blondie*, 57, said that even with all the past experiences the language is still used and has been kept in the community:

“*Nendid hanh qa, yagh, lhajid yanats’ultig guyal lagujagh?* [It is been a long time we have been there. They tried that we forget but we kept it] (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:17:31,0).

Nun, 57, also feels positive because even if there is a big intergenerational gap right now, there are still lots of speakers around “that can help” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:13:36,9 – 00:14:17,7). *Theresa*, 60, thinks “it will happen” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:47:46,4 – 00:47:47,5); and if they were “consciously teaching”, [...] it’ll come back (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:51:18,7 – 00:51:55,7). She could even notice the change since she started teaching many years ago and now: “at the beginning when we were teaching hardly anybody was interested in what we were doing” and now there is more interest (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:47:52,2 – 00:48:19,4); so she is “excited about this” language revitalization process. She knows they “will make mistakes and find

remedies, but she is glad this is starting” (*Theresa*, LRPP #4, Yunešit’in meeting, 03/23/2016). Language teacher *Filly*, 49, agreed and said that “to bring the language back is a lot of work but this is a good start” (*Filly*, LRPP #4, Yunešit’in Language Planning Meeting, 03/23/2016). And Yunešit’in Elder *LM*, 78, also thinks that to keep trying is the key to bring up speakers:

“*Nenk’ed najegweneyud hanh. Sax helish ts’inajedilh lah hayt’insh.*” [They keep trying and once in a while it seems they wake up] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:19:26 – 00:19:40)

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, expressed that he can feel the change too and is open to it (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:48:18,6 – 00:50:43,7) as well as *Dani*, 28, who feels “like it’s opening doors for Tšilhqot’in to learn their language” (*Dani*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:23:26,9 – 00:23:36,5). *Kalikala*, 39, was also excited about “what’s happening here today” and thought that it would be good “if someone wanted to take that forward and bring it into exposure” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:08:32,5 – 00:10:30,9). Likewise, *Chickadee*, 39, felt positive since she could already see collective and ongoing efforts towards language revitalization:

“I’m positive because everybody is on board now. [...] Our leadership are on board, who are also working and finding, you... professionals, like yourself, that can help us work towards that, so in 10 years I see as in a very good place, because we are doing resource gathering whether if it is by yourself or other professionals so the stuff are there and people are being recorded so, I think we are on the right track. I see good things” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:07:11,2 – 00:08:00,2).

Nowadays, generally, community members have a positive attitude towards the language. “People are more accepting now” (*Theresa*, 60, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:32:53,0 – 00:33:02,3) and speakers are more open to use it (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:34:59,1 – 00:35:11,0). Some community members even “answer the phone” in the language (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:14:29,0 – 00:15:15,7).

Omi, 22, also thought people would participate in the language programs, as she would too (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:14:14,9 – 00:14:16,1), and “especially [...] the older generations”, who would “probably be ready to help” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14,

00:14:01,3 – 00:14:13,7); in fact, Elder *Nundi*, 69, said he would be happy to participate as a teacher (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:56:00,0 – 00:56:05,0).

Charlie Brown, 47, expressed she would like to re-learn it (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:05:20,9 – 00:05:26,5). Same with her mom, *MJB*, 68, who already worked with Yunešit'in language experts (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:05:26,5 – 00:05:29,0). She also said she teaches her “grandkids certain stuff”, like what it is, how to say it” and “they remember, when they come back [...]”.

Even when language learning challenges appear due to the use of both languages, community members still lean towards Tšilhqot'in, as we can see in the next fragment with a conversation with *MQ*, 66:

“I think that’s why our kids are having a hard time in school. They are taught English and they have hard time understanding because they are learning both languages English and Tšilhqot'in. I met with the teacher and she was telling me. She said, do you talk to them in Tšilhqot'in and I told her ‘yeah’, and when they come here, they speak English and I think it’s hard for them to understand... (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:27:23,7 – 00:28:00,9). But she told me just keep talking to them in Tšilhqot'in. That’s how you teach them” (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:28:01,8 – 00:28:12,3).

In the last years, the community has built capacity and developed resources, so now community members, like language teacher *Theresa*, 60, and her daughter, *Gex*, 34, have more “faith” in the new language programs (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:17:31,7 – 00:18:25,7). *Chickadee*, 39, talked positively about the new programs too: “we have our school [...] We have our Tšilhqot'in, eventually maybe make it into full time immersion; we have our babies, who are in daycare that have full time immersion” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:07:11,2 – 00:08:00,2). *Theresa*, 60, also sees opportunities with the new language programs happening in the community: “I think if Head Start goes and Language Nest goes, [...] there is a probability that the language will grow from those kids” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:11:29,8 – 00:11:49,6).

Kalikala, 39, also mentioned new programs that are being taught in Tšilhqot'in, where she takes her daughter to (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:01:11,7 – 00:03:19,4) as well as the Language Immersion and Cultural Camp that was organized in August 2016. She thinks that kind of initiative would “encourage young people”, “or people that

don't speak the tongue yet would go there and learn" (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:10:33,3 – 00:11:27,5).

Besides comparing to other First Nation languages, the Tšilhqot'in community has a high number of speakers and language resources that can be used to support the language programs, as we can read on *?Elagi*, 39:

"The one thing that is like positive, or that it is very positive and very exciting... or that is really different, [in the community she lives in, where they speak another language] there is two speakers left that are considered fluent and out of two, not all of them want to teach others or learn, like that's like just, you know, really one is more into it or whatever, so the fact that here there is so much options of resources, whatever type of program, sky-high, you know, it is going to be really incredible, the amount of people you get to choose from to create whatever..." (*?Elagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:12:38,7 – 00:03:35,1).

Gex, 34, also thinks there are lots of resources and materials that could be used as well as language experts and speakers that are willing to participate and work on it (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:16:19,8 – 00:17:08,1; *Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:30:17,1 – 00:31:15,4). Community members appreciate those resources and use them. *Omi*, 22, said excited that, for her birthday, she got the book title *Beghad Jigwetetaghel?an*, a visual dictionary published by Yunešit'in linguist Linda Smith in 2011 (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:17:44,1 – 00:17:48,7).

Elders are on board too as we can see in this conversation with sisters *Theresa*, 60, and *Pauline ghinli*, 82:

Theresa: "Shunk'ah gwechugh sinsh nenqayni ch'ih yats'elhtig xanagugheteghat'alh xe?ateghat'inlh hanh? [Should we try to bring back speaking the Tšilhqot'in language fluently?]

Pauline ghinli: Hm-hm.

Theresa: Xunlht'a qa? [Why?]

Pauline ghinli: ?Inlhes, ?egun gaghut'in ts'egušt'in ?egunk'ed sanh. [That's probably what they really want us to do.]

Theresa: Haʔanh. Nin xuyenilʔen? [Yes. What do you think (about revitalizing the language)?]

Pauline ghinli: Nenʔed seʔaguntʔih. [It's alright.]

Theresa: Haʔanh. [Yes.]

Pauline ghinli: Belhdan nenqayni chʔih jijegwedulʔanx jeguntʔin haytʔinsh [Some of them like to learn to speak the Tʔilhqotʔin language] (*Theresa and Pauline ghinli, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:26:34,0 – 00:27:14,0*).

Braids, 72, also think that times are changing and the language is used more and learned by the kids (*Braids, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:07:27 – 00:08:19*). Parents also know that learning the language is important and are taking responsibility (*Roper, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:19:00,5 – 00:20:05,7; Chelʔig, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:05:03,6 – 00:06:57,1; 00:10:37,1 – 00:11:20,2; 00:26:10,1 – 00:27:31,5; 00:29:55,5 – 00:30:02,5 and 00:48:15,5 – 00:50:31,3*). *Chickadee, 39*, tries to pass the basics to her children (*Chickadee, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:02:36,9 – 00:03:07,2*), as well as *Nistsʔi, 34* (*Nistsʔi, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:04:38,0 – 00:05:44,3*) and *Gex, 34*, although she realizes that she needs to learn the language in order to support her kids' learning (*Gex, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:10:30,3 – 00:10:58,1*). *Datsan, 27*, also wishes she could learn to pass on to her children (*Datsan, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:20:09,5 – 00:20:37,6*). As well as *Kalikala, 39*, who is also trying to find ways to teach her kid the language even if she doesn't live in the community at the moment (*Kalikala, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:03:21,3 – 00:04:35,1*).

Youth are getting involved too. *Jo, 23*, wants to learn (*Jo, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:04:20,1 – 00:04:25,3*) and would also like to see “everyone speaking it, the younger generations, [...] a 3 or 4 year old speaking it fluently” (*Jo, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:06:07,1 – 00:06:25,5*) and *Roper, 44*, also expressed the same wish; she would like to see it “way better than it is right now” (*Roper, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:23:04,4 – 00:23:25,0*).

In fact, youth are using the language more, as *Chelʔig, 48*, explains about her 17-year-old (*Chelʔig, CO #17, 12/08/2016, 00:09:05,1 – 00:10:33,3*). *MJB, 68*, also said she got a community member “to make a CD for [her grandson], so he can teach the kids” (*MJB, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:32:22,3 – 00:32:22,4*). That makes *Nistsʔi, 34*, keep his hope:

“I do feel positive in the sense that I think it’s almost like a obvious for young people. I think they all know that they need or want to learn it” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:17:52,5 – 00:19:03,0).

Matilda, 60, said that some youth are even fluent and that gives her hope for the language to be preserved:

“I picked up a young hitchhiker once to town. He is from Nemiah, a young kid, straight T̄silhqot’in. He is probably about 18. My oldest brother was really impressed by that. He introduced himself in T̄silhqot’in, who his parents were; he was speaking fluent T̄silhqot’in. He spent the night on the road and he was going to a funeral at Toosey. My brother was so impressed with him, we dropped him off where he wanted to go [laughs]. There is hope! I can’t say we are going to lose it; there is hope (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:23:25,6 – 00:24:44,2).

Children are also interested in learning the language. *Nists’i*, 34, said his daughter “soaks it up” and “she sees the importance of it even at her four years old, more of what” he “would of at that age” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:04:38,0 – 00:05:44,3). *MJB*, 68, also experienced that children’s curiosity for the language:

“I was in town... I was talking to a... what kind of language are you talking? Are you talking Shuswap? It was a little kid... No, I am talking T̄silhqot’in [laughs]. She was really cute. She kept banging around. She probably really learned (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:11:03,9 – 00:11:42,8).

Dothy, 64, also finds that her grandkids are interested:

“*Guh, gun ʔesqax nenk’eguh, yagh... gun sesqi, sechay k’an tad xi ghinda hanh. Yagh, gwatish nenqayni ch’ih yasalh... yaltig ghangh, Isaac shu. Xweghen nilgish hadah, ‘Xudelhnih hadih?’ [laughs] ‘Xudelhnih hadahnih?’ xwelhenish hat’insh. Haʔanh. Neʔaba selh nagwelniḡ hanh, lhesnish. No, neʔintsi. Selh nagwelniḡ hanh, lhesnish*” [My grandson 3-year-old, when we are speaking our language, me and her husband, he would say, ‘what are you saying?’ [laughs] ‘Your grandpa is telling me story’] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:22:40,0 – 00:23:00,0).

And language teacher *Saina*, 65, also said young students are always happy to learn:

“Hink’an, guyen ?inlhanx, ?esqi gwaxaghiltin, nendid din han lhidin. Gatš’iny yughinzin hanh. Guyen, ?esqi nentsutsel [But we brought this one kid, “What is this”, we ask him, this small kid named them all (the plants)]. ?An gunižen lant’ih hadesni denish [He seems to know] (Saina, 11/07/2017, CO#1 00:37:37,0 – 00:38:10,0).

Sometimes children understand more than youth, and that is the reason why *Lily the Pink*, 62, doesn’t want to “give up hope” either, because “kids are smart, but whether they speak it among themselves or to their grandparents, or you never know”, and she continues: “my sister, when our great-granddaughters came to visit and she was talking in Tšilhqot’in, it really surprised me so if she can learn, can all those other kids (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:10:29,2 – 00:11:06,0). *Omi*, 22, corroborates that:

“I feel very good about it [...]. It’s improving much better, because I know my niece understands way more than I do” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:03:48,6 – 00:04:24,8; and LRPP #1, Community Mobilization Meeting, Yunešit’in, 12/01/2015).

Children also cohabited with their Elders, which may increase the chances of getting exposed to the language, as *Dothy*, 64, pointed out (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2 00:22:40 – 00:23:00). *Nists’i*, 34, also commented on that: “they are lucky, like at Stone, a lot of kids have access to their grandparents and Elders” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:33:48,7 – 00:34:27,0). Some kids are even raised by their grandparents, *Saina*, 65, explained:

“Belhdan hin, t’agultinqi yagubenilhyax hin, nenqayni ?iguts’edelh?anx. Guyen, sediz gant’ih hanh. ?Esqi nelhyax. Nenqayni ch’ih yelh yalhtig. Deni gatš’in “Gagah” yelhdenish [laughs] Nendats’aghenash, “gagah”... [laughs] Nenqayni dzanh ch’ah yelh yalhtig. Gu, xeded, lhe?agušed, gagunlhnaž, lhajid gadeghuni guyah, ?eguh chuh. ?Esqax midugh dzanh ts’en jenelt’i, xanx? [Some kids are raised by Elders and are taught to speak the language. My younger sister is doing that, she is raising a kid and speaking to the kid in Tšilhqot’in. Everybody tells the kid, Gagah [laughs]. You just can’t tell,

the kids are pulling towards speaking in English] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:19:01,0 – 00:38:25,0).

Maggie, 76, who spend time with her grandchildren, said that her grandson likes to sing and listen when she is speaking the language:

“I’m pretty sure, one of my grandsons is going to learn pretty fast is [...] He knows how to sign on a drum, when people are playing; he would catch on. He sits down when I am talking my language and listens. I think he’ll learn fast” (*Maggie*, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:42:24,0 – 00:42:46,2).

MJB, 68, also explained to *Charlie Brown*, 47 that she taught her family’s Lehal songs to one of her older grandchildren so he could tell the other ones (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:29:31,6 – 00:32:09,8). *Nundi*, 69, also affirmed he speaks the language to his grandchildren (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:46:23,0 – 00:46:47,0); and *Kalikala* said that her mom speaks the language to her child too (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:01:11,7 – 00:03:19,4). Also, as *Theresa*, 60, said, uncles and other family members are passing the cultural activities onto the youth (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:40:59,3 – 00:41:11,2).

5.3 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the first part of the thematic analysis of the gathered data related to the T̄silhqot’in language knowledge (Topic 1) and usage (Topic 2) in Yunešit’in. Through the testimonies of participating community members, we have learned about their language fluency, which varies from the young generations’ basic level, acquired at school and in the family, to the middle-aged semi-speakers and fluent elder community members, who learned the language with their families and while being on the land. A description of the main uses of the language has also being provided and it includes daily communication, code-language and a ‘teasing tool’, among others. As we have read, the language can be heard pretty much anywhere in the community, especially in the homes. We have also become familiar with the reasons of the low number of speakers in the community, including the colonial past and assimilation practices, as the residential school and foster care system, and the change of the

community lifestyle, among others, as well the challenges that speakers still find today to use the language, which derive directly from those reasons. From the community's perspectives, some suggestions for strategies that could be used for promoting the use of the language have been presented; for example, developing language policies that support speakers and learners. The state of the intergenerational transmission of the language has also been assessed, showing that, even though grandparents may speak in T̄silhqot'in to the children, parents are not able to pass it down the younger generations as they are not fluent themselves. Participants believe the consequences of losing the language in the community would be dreadful, as part of their identity would be lost, as well as their responsibility as keepers of that land. However, most of them feel positive about the results of the recent language revitalization work towards recovering the use of the language in the community.

In the next chapter, I will present the results of the second part of the analysis of the community perspectives, corresponding to Topics 4, 5 and 6, about the importance of recovering the use of T̄silhqot'in in Yunešit'in and the T̄silhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies that could be applied, as well as the language resources that could support those strategies, respectively.

Chapter 6. Presentation of the learnings: Importance of recovering the T̄silhqot'in language in Yunēsit'in and language revitalization strategies and resources

In this chapter, we will continue reviewing the presentation of the results obtained from this study. I will focus on the last three topics of the thematic analysis: Topic 3 – Value of the T̄silhqot'in language in Yunēsit'in (22 themes); Topic 4 – T̄silhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies in Yunēsit'in (43 themes); Topic 5 – T̄silhqot'in language resources in Yunēsit'in (9 themes). The discussion will provide a description of why it is important to recover the language for Yunēsit'in members (cf. 6.1) and what language teaching and learning strategies (cf. 6.2), as well as resources they find appropriate for that purpose (cf. 6.3).

6.1 Topic 3: Importance of recovering the use of T̄silhqot'in in Yunēsit'in

This topic covers the perspectives presented by the participating community members about the importance of reviving the T̄silhqot'in language and the places where it should be spoken.

6.1.1 Why is it important to speak and learn the language?

In this first section, I will present community insights about the main reasons to speak and learn the language. They will be grouped under the following topics:

- Theme 3.1. There are not too many fluent speakers left in the community
- Theme 3.2. The language needs to be passed down to future generations
- Theme 3.3. Language is necessary for communication
- Theme 3.4. Some Elders are T̄silhqot'in monolinguals
- Theme 3.5. Language is connected to health and wellness
- Theme 3.6. Speaking your language helps express your own reality
- Theme 3.7 When you speak the language, you speak the truth from your spirit
- Theme 3.8 Our language makes us free
- Theme 3.9. Language connects us to our family and ancestors
- Theme 3.10 Language is ceremony and spirituality
- Theme 3.11 Language is the link to creation
- Theme 3.12 Having our language is an honor
- Theme 3.13 The language is part of the T̄silhqot'in identity

- Theme 3.14 Language empowers us as a people
- Theme 3.15 Language is closely tied to the land and culture
- Theme 3.16 Language is knowledge
- Theme 3.17 Learning and speaking the language is a way of showing respect to T̄silhqot'in people

Some of the ideas expressed by the community members were related to the number of speakers left and the language dynamics in the community, where Elder generations are not fluent in English and the language is needed for daily communication.

Theme 3.1. There are not too many fluent speakers left in the community

Participating community members from all ages expressed their concern about the language “slowly dying” (*Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:03:12,3 – 00:03:28,3) and “getting lost” (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:03:19,8 – 00:03:25,5; *Matilda*, 60, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:02:28,8 – 00:02:46,6); however, they are sure they “don’t want to lose it” (Grade 1-3 and 4-7, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting), as *Maureen*, 51 said in the language:

“*Gagulhan nenqayni ch’ih yaltig gu?en jid ?eguh guzun. Sa bidežidinsh ?eguh guzun*” [It is better to speak our language all the time and not lose it] (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:05:12).

Community members are aware of the fact that “the Elders that are here are all getting old and passing away and a lot of it is getting missed” (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:06:23,5 – 00:08:22,7); “pretty soon when the Elders die [...], they will die with it [the language] (*MJB*, 68, and *Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:03:25,5 – 00:03:37,5). As *Omi*, 22, said “not a lot of people do speak it anymore”, especially within her generation (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:02:08,6 – 00:02:20,5) and “not much kids know it” (*Datsan* 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:03:12,3 – 00:03:28,3).

Theme 3.2. The language needs to be passed down to future generations

Members, like *Theresa*, 60, want to speak the language “to pass it down to the younger generations”. For her, it is “a must”, passing onto her grandchildren since she’d “like them to know” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:09:06,1 – 00:09:21,8). *Nun*, 57, feels it is important to teach the cultural ways too, as she “is the last one in the family that

is trying to keep that traditional thing of life”, since she “taught her kids but they are not teaching their [own] kids” now (*Nun*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1). Parents like *Kalikala*, 39, see the importance on passing it on and encourage the grandparents to speak it to their children (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:01:11,7 – 00:03:19,4), and youth *Jo*, 23, thinks similarly and wants to learn it “to pass it down to the next person in her family, and have some people alive and going” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:04:27,4 – 00:04:40,1). Likewise, *Gex*, 34, sees the importance of the learning the language herself to be able to hand it down to her children (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:10:30,3 – 00:10:58,1), as well as *Nists’i*, 34, who still sees himself as a “broken bridge” for keeping the language in the family:

“I don’t think I understood at the time so... I was kinda clueless to what the importance was to my mom... she didn’t really explain why, she knew that she wanted to teach me and... but I didn’t understand at that age; I was just in play mode, kind of oblivious to the world, and just wanted to go outside and so something else so... Yeah, I mean for me now, you know, when I looked at the language I do see myself as sort of... I’m the broken bridge in a way. My mom had it, and if my mom or myself didn’t pass to my children, they won’t have a chance to really have the fluency within the family, so I gotta find other sources to do that” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:03:36,9 – 00:04:33,5).

Even for participating younger generations, “passing it down” is one of the main reasons to learn and speak the language. They said the following in the sharing circle held at Yunešit’in ʔEsgul:

“It is [important] because is something to hold on and pass it forward”. “[I want to] be able to teach others our language and culture”, so I “can pass it down to our children” (SC#1, 11/24/2017, Yunešit’in ʔEsgul).

Theme 3.3. Language is necessary for communication

In the present, the Tšilhqot’in language is regularly used for daily communication. As *MQ*, 66, said “Tšilhqot’ins, all speak their language fluently everywhere you go” (*MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:06:17,8 – 00:07:36,3). Many participants expressed the need to keep the language mainly to communicate, since “communication is [...] powerful”

(*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:20:43). *Chickadee*, 39, agreed and added the following:

“We need to go back to that [to speak the language] because long time ago that was the way we communicated; we had a way of doing things. [...] Without communication, world would be chaos” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:48:21,3 – 00:48:58,1).

The Language Committee also covered that idea on the Vision Statement developed under the 2015-2016 Language Planning Program:

“Our language – Nenqayni Ch’ih – is how we connect with each other” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016).

Likewise, *Nists’i*, 34, believes that the language “is tied to people relating to each other” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:16:13,8 – 00:17:43,5), as well as *Kalikala*, 39, who understand that “it brings [...] people together because it’s bond [...]”; how “you understand each other” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:10:33,3 – 00:11:27,5).

Theme 3.4 Some Elders are T̓silhqot’in monolinguals

Chelʔig, 48, remembered that during her childhood four decades ago her parents’ generation “didn’t know English” (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:13:14,3 – 00:15:10,4). This is still common, as many community members mentioned (*Charlie Brown*, 47, and *MJB*, 68, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:24:02,7 – 00:24:13,4); a lot of the Elders don’t speak English and only some can barely understand it (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:27:56,3 – 00:28:04,4), so T̓silhqot’in “is the only way you can talk to them, in their language” (*MJB*, 68, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:00:32,4 – 00:01:04,7) and “they are more comfortable with you”, if you do so (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:24:02,7 – 00:24:13,4 and 00:06:33,7 – 00:06:38,8). Therefore, another important reason for learning and speaking T̓silhqot’in is to maintain communication with their Elders.

As *LM*, 78, said: “[...] all the Elders [...] don’t talk in English, when you come to them; when you play with them like throwing horseshoes or when they gather” (*LM*, 07/11/2017, CO#1, 00:03,07 – 00:03,29). For community members, “it feels pretty good

[to speak the language] because you are speaking to Elders”; “you are understanding each other” and “they are happy with it” (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:06:33,7 – 00:06:38,8). *MJB*, 68, agreed and said that “everybody speaks T̂silhqot’in” to her mother, *?Etsu ghinli*, 92, as she is one of the few monolingual speakers. As she explained, “she did [go to residential school] for a little while, but not too much” and “she knows [only] certain words [of English]” (*MJB and ?Etsu ghinli*, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:07:16,7 – 00:08:38,0). During her conversation, *MJB*, kindly helped with the translation so we could understand each other¹.

Nists’i’s late grandmother was another the monolingual speaker. As he said, she would only speak T̂silhqot’in and some basic English words:

“[...] My grandmother, she passed in 2012. [...] Not only one of the most respected Elders in the T̂silhqot’in nation, but just in terms of losing someone who never cared to learn English, I mean, I don’t know maybe she wanted, maybe she would want it too, she was around it and talked but she never learned other than ‘hello’ and some of the numbers, few words. She was distinctively T̂silhqot’in. There still a few people like that in the community (*Nists’i*, 04/03/2017, CO23, 00:10:24,5 – 00:12:23,0).

Younger generations are also concerned about this. “*Omi*’s great aunty only speaks T̂silhqot’in (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:02:36,6 – 00:02:36,7) and she “cannot really talk” to her (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:02:46,2 – 00:02:49,5). Likewise, students covered the idea in the sharing circle we held at Yunešit’in ?Esgul. Some of them said that the main reason for them to learn the language was “to speak to [their] grandparents” and “because [their] Elders [only] speak T̂silhqot’in” (*SC#1*, 11/24/2017, Yunešit’in ?Esgul). A Grade 1 student also mentioned something similar, when the language teacher gathered their perspectives to present them at a Language Committee Meeting:

¹ That was the reality during the early Language Committee Meetings (cf. 3.3.2.1), where there was also a need of providing T̂silhqot’in translation so that the Elders who attended could understand what was being discussed. However, no translation system was available at that time and sometimes their own family or other fluent speakers would spontaneously translate for them. In recent years, a translation system has been available and used in meetings and events.

“My granny knows the language”; [...] “I want to be like my granny, [...] I can’t talk to granny; she knows no English” (Grade 1-3 students, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Participants could also see a connection between the use of language and their wellbeing. They explained that speaking the language can make you feel physically and emotionally better, as we can see in the subsequent themes.

Theme 3.5. Language is connected to health and wellness

Yunešit’in Government would like to “get the Health Department to develop some of the language programs” in the future (*Nists’i*, 34, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting). As it can be read on the Vision Statement developed as part of the Language Revitalization Plan 2015-2016, the language and culture are seen as important tools for healing:

“The Tšilhqot’in are persistent in overcoming the challenges of cultural disruption caused by the past and ongoing process of colonization. The residential school experience and the after affects have altered the natural patterns of the family dynamic. Enlivening the culture is a process of healing the grief, resentment, loss and despair” [...] “9. We will embrace the culture as a means of healing and building strength” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement, §3).

The relationship between language and wellness came up in the conversations as one of the three main reasons to keep the language alive. *MQ*, 66, didn’t know why but she can “feel lot better” when she talks in the language (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:12:59,0 – 00:13:00,6). *Juna*, 58, could even feel once how her “head ache [was] gone” as soon as she got to the territory and started speaking her language (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:49:41 – 00:50:00). *Nists’i*, 34 thought of the language as “probably being the antidote” for healing the trauma that the community suffers from (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:16:13,8 – 00:17:43,5) as well as *Chickadee*, 39, who also thought knowing the language helps build resilience in people:

“I think it is, you know, for your mental, for your health, you know, you look at the medicine wheel and it explains on resilience. It’s all about resilience and where you

are in your life, whether if you are working, whether if you are on your family time, what is your career, where is your culture. It's about balance [...] (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:47:42,2 – 00:48:02,6). “It's all based on resilience, because your language is healing, your language is through drumming and saying and that through prayer, and that's through wellness and you know it's good. It's something positive that you are putting out there. So yes, language is a big part of healing” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:11:12,2 – 00:12:00,5).

Nun, 57, also thought learning our language “it's probably lot of healing” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:32:39,2 – 00:33:06,3) and youth *Rissa*, 24, also saw it as “a powerful healing tool” (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:18:29,2 – 00:18:30,5). *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, believed the language combined with music can restore the health:

“We want to start a drum group [...] and then with the language it really feels we can sing songs that will bring rejoice and happiness and make people want to dance because that's the normal way to rejoice is to get up and dance and laugh and then your whole sacra and you whole body and everything actually start getting healthy from just that movement, your body is like ‘oh, I need health, I need...’ and you are moving and you are so happy, you don't know how much you feel, and I've... I've seen it, like I've seen it happened and I would like that from my people” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:31:21,4 – 00:34:01,8).

Several participating community members expressed that they feel happy when they speak the language and that there is certainly more laughter when language is spoken. We can see this in *Saina*, 65's conversation with *Filly*, 49, and *LM*, 78:

“*Nenqayni ch'ih yanlhtig ?egu gu?en jid guzun. Su xedidindih. Guh, gu?en jid ts'etedlux hawt'insh* [It is better to talk in the language, you feel better and people laugh more]. *Gagwet'insh. Nenqayni ch'ah yanlhtig ?egu.... ?elhghatats'edidiny gun gagwadlox* [It is funny when people tease each other]” (*Saina*, 65, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:08:30 – 00:08:40).

According to *Nists'i*, 34, “people just seem happier”:

“Well, I can’t say, ‘cause I’m not fully fluent, but when I’m around people and I’m sort of part of the conversation, I can pick up a lot of things and you can tell that people have like a full... their whole body is transformed in a different way than how they speak English and I can see that it’s more jovial, it’s more joking... people can take jokes [laughs] and it’s just light... I don’t know how else to explain it, but I think people just seem happier when they are actually expressing themselves in the language” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:23:46,3 – 00:24:38,0).

MQ, 66, also noticed even her grandson ‘brightens up’ when hearing the language:

“My grandson was like that. When I started talking to him mostly T̄silhqot’in and he started talking. And when he sees somebody that he really falls in love with he starts really talking away. Yeah, and one of my daughters came back and see him brighten up and start talking away. That is crazy” (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:44:08,7 – 00:44:52,8).

Yunešit’in students expressed the same feeling of joy at the sharing circle organized at the school. When talking about how we felt about our languages, they answered with a happy “T̄silhqot’in yay!” (SC#1, 11/24/2017, Yunešit’in ?Esgul). *Dothy*, 64, also feels that “good energy” herself when speaking with the Elders:

“Gwelax xe?adinish. Lhes, nenqayni ch’ih yanlhtig ?eguh ?inlhes gwelawh xe?adinish lawt’ish. ?Elhužiltš’an, su xugulht’i did ghayats’elhtig gwinižen ?eguh, ?inlhes gunzun jid gwadanišed hast’insh. Gan, nenqayni ch’ah yalhtig. Selh yajelhtig, gan, you know, gunzun jiguziltš’an. ?Inlhes gunzun jid xedinatilyish. ?Elhužiltš’an” [When you are speaking your language, you can say a lot more clear communication. For me, Elders speaking to me makes me feel really good. You feel good energy talking to them. Because you are sharing good energy] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:13:35 – 00:13:55).

As well as *Juna*, 58, who felt that way too in a gathering, when she heard a woman speaking the language in public:

“?Elhits’aghidilh gazt’in, lhes sa gunzun lagwedenish hanh. ?Inlhed dzanh senalh gagunt’ih nendanesgay ghinli hanh. Yadad, yagh, ?elhits’aghidil. Nenqayni tš’iqi ?inlhanx gunzun jid yalhtig. ?Inlhes yalhtig, guy, yagh, biyaŵelhtig qe?ats’inlagh. Gan gunzun jid nenqayni ch’ih yalhtig. Lhes, gangu gunzun jid ghesgish salagujagh [laughs]. Gagunhnaž lah deyež dzanh yajelhtig lah hayt’insh, midugh ch’ih. Nenden hin, nenqayni ch’ih yalhtig han. Lhes sa gunzun lagujagh. Nenk’ed guh gagunt’ih jid gwadanišized denish [In a gathering this is what I think happens only once I heard this at the gathering. This lady came on the microphone and start talking, make me feel very good, hear a woman talking on the microphone [laugh], because the difference today to me was because a woman started to speak (in the language) at the gathering] (Juna, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:14:27 – 00:14:55).

Community members who don’t speak the language also commented the opposite: they feel ashamed, sad and lost without their language. Cousins *Datsan*, 27, *Britt*, 25, and *Dani*, 28, admitted they feel “ashamed not being able to speak it” and added: “our generation, we are kind of lost it and it’s very shameful that we can’t even speak it to our own Elders or parents” (*Datsan*, *Britt* and *Dani* 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:03:42,8 – 00:03:44,0). *Chel?ig*, 48, can also see sadness in her kids for not being able to speak to their grandparents, “it breaks their heart that they cannot converse [with the Elders]” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:27:34,6 – 00:28:59,7).

?Elagi, 39, talked about “generations of blood memory of shaming through residential school and different things that are also part of the go hand and hand with language learning” and the “incredible amount of healing and shifting [needed]” for “those who don’t speak” (*?Elagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:37:56,1 – 00:40:08,5). Her mom *Theresa*, 60, also emphasized that idea and mentioned she had heard about studies “saying people who don’t have their language can commit suicide” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:40:32,1 – 00:41:47,7). *Chel?ig*, 48, added that “we cannot start the healing for others”, “just have to trust the Creator”; people need to go over their own healing process for the language, like she did for her children (*Chel?ig*, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting; *Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:26:10,1 – 00:27:31,5).

Theme 3.6. Speaking your language helps express your own reality

Community members stated that when they speak the language, they feel the message gets transmitted more clearly and complete:

“*Gwelax xe?adinish. Lhes, nenqayni ch’ih yanlhtig ?eguh ?inlhes gwelawh xe?adinish lawt’ish*” [when you are speaking your language, you can say a lot more clear communication] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:13:35).

Saina, 65, thinks that T̂silhqot’in works better especially when you talk about place names:

“*?Eguh nen guzuh... guzih te?agunt’ih, gu gagunlhchugh nen gweghi?in. Guh gwech’ez nenqayni ch’ih yanlhtig gu?en jid guzun* [Things like naming a lot of places you know. That is why speaking in T̂silhqot’in is better] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:07:26 – 00:07:49).

English, otherwise, doesn’t get to cover the full content and T̂silhqot’in speakers feel they need to “repeat things”, as *Dothy*, 64, explains:

“*Nenduwh, nenduwh hudilnih, gwelawh gwa yanlhtig lawt’insh. Yagh, midugh ch’ih ?eguh gangu, suk’an lin ganadindinsh lawt’insh* [laughs] *Lagwet’insh. Suk’an lin, nenqayni ch’ah ?egun. Nenqayni ch’ih yanlhtig ?eguh ?inlhes gwelawh, gwelawh, gwelawh gwa yanlhtig* [I spoke only T̂silhqot’in. Speaking your language is good. When you speak English it sees you are repeating yourself, T̂silhqot’in is a better understanding (laughs). It is exactly what you said earlier, T̂silhqot’in you can say a whole lot more] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:25:03 – 0:25:45).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, also talked about that feeling:

“[...] There is connected words to described what you are talking about a little more, even when you talk about counting with your fingers you know, *inlhi, nanqih, tay, diny, ?esgunla*, that’s ‘five’, but then there is a way to talk about five sticks or five people, you don’t say *inlhi dechen* [‘one’ ‘stick’]. There is a way to talk about how many sticks are laying there, so it’s a description of how you speak about the numbers too and then that kind of what I want to fill in because I want to decipher so..., like in a way, English is so vague, there is just one way of describe it, but in T̂silhqot’in might be four. Same like in Secwepemc that might be five to explain one word but

it's from a perspective that you are looking at it from a bird's view or your own view or from the person standing over there, you describe it from a different point of view" (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:07:41,1 – 00:09:35,9).

Maureen, 51, who is also fluent in both languages, would often choose T̂silhqot'in because, for her, it is "more understanding" (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:30:08). His husband *Blondie*, 57, admitted he goes back and forth between English and T̂silhqot'in when one language doesn't provide the meaning he is looking for. Sometimes he finds a word with a very close meaning, but yet not able to transmit full content (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:28:57 – 00:30:08).

"[...] I use both sometimes. Like if it's stuck with English wording, sometimes to get a real definite answer, I'll go T̂silhqot'in way. I'll ask myself in a T̂silhqot'in way, you know. Come back in the English way, and say it just a little bit better. [...] There is words that are like that; almost the same, but different (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:28:57 – 00:30:08).

Theme 3.7. When you speak the language, you speak the truth from your spirit

Community members agreed on the idea that speaking the language allows them to "being authentic to self" (*Chel̂ig*, FR#1, 28/04/2017); "somehow T̂silhqot'in makes more than just plain English", "there is more feelings, [...] more attachment to what you are talking" (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:07:41,1 – 00:09:35,9). Both *Chel̂ig*, 48, and *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, explained how they feel when they speak English and T̂silhqot'in:

"It gives a sense of my true feelings because English, you don't speak with feelings, whereas in T̂silhqot'in, when I am speaking, I am speaking from my heart, so it is my truth. Whereas in English I am not giving that, I can be sly I guess, I don't know. [laughs] I am more deceptive, whereas if I speak T̂silhqot'in I don't have the opportunity to hide the wrong words, it is my true self that I am opening up too" (*Chel̂ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:12:18,3 – 00:12:58,8).

"And that's a thing too is the language is speaking with your spirit. Because English you can be any culture, [...] but with the language like it makes your spirit come through this vessel and you are speaking from whatever connections you felt or

whatever” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:51:42,0 – 00:52:15,8).

Theme 3.8 Our language makes us free

Some participating community members commented on the idea of ‘feeling free’ when speaking the language. According to *Kalikala*, 39, if you learn the language, you would “take that pride back and want to speak it [...] more than English” and she sees “a sense of freedom to in it” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:10:33,3 – 00:11:27,5), as well as *Blondie*, 57, who also commented on it:

“*Gu, gu gwagwel?iny jid ?elhelh yats’eltig hawt’insh, xanx?*” [We have no bosses, we can speak our language anywhere] (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#11, 00:03:14).

Participating community members also saw the language as a tool for keeping the connection to their kind, as we will see in the next group of themes.

Theme 3.9. Language connects us to our family and ancestors

According to the community members, the language holds “connections with people” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:11:08,7 – 00:12:33,3), it bring them together (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:53:45,7 – 01:00:09,0) and it is a link to family, which it is considered “the biggest thing” (*Nists’i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:05:56,7 – 00:06:55,1). Yunešit’in students also expressed that idea at the sharing circle organized at the school, when they said the language allows them to keep that connection to their families (SC#1, 11/24/2017, Yunešit’in ?Esgul).

As it is reflected on the Vision Statement developed under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Planning Program (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement), the language also connects them with their ancestors and speaking it is essential for maintaining that connection (*Nists’i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:08:48,8 – 00:09:12,8; *Blondie* and *Peter*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:08:25 – 00:08:55). It links them to the “people back then when they used to speak” (*Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:04:43,8 – 00:04:56,5). *Nun*, 57, even remembers their Elders telling them that they needed to know “the family tree before you can really understand your language” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:20:41,4 – 00:21:02,7). For *Kalikala*, 39, language is also her “ancestor

background”, where she comes from; bringing the language back is just going back to their ancestral roots (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:06:23,5 – 00:08:22,7).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh considered that the language also links them with not only their ‘T̕ilhqot’in family’ but all peoples that speak Na-Dené languages:

“[...] In a way like that language ties us to the people on Northwest territories, ties us to people down in California, the Navajo, right down to the Andes, they speak the same; it’s just a little different sounds, like they have different birds with different sounds way down in South America. So the language is altered because of it, but still there is root words and things that are common, and then it just makes me realize that language shows how big of a family we are. [...] I want people to know that we are not just five thousand T̕ilhqot’in here, we are not a lost child. We chose to come out here because the mountains *Ts’il?os* and *Eniyud* chose us to be here for caretakers [but they belong to a bigger family, the *Dene*] (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:14:08,8 – 00:15:36,7).

Theme 3.10. Language is ceremony and spirituality

As “strong willed and spiritual people” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement; *Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016 Yunešit’in meeting), Yunešit’in understand language as part of their spirituality: “when we have the fire out or do smudge or sweat” (*Nists’i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:08:48,8 – 00:09:12,8) language is needed. *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, “would use it when usually having a prayer, putting tobacco”. He would “always try to speak the language the best he can” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:03:45,7 – 00:04:47,7). Also, when drumming and singing:

“It’s a way of kind of making the spirit awake, and then with the language it really feels we can sing songs that will bring rejoice and happiness” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:31:21,4 – 00:34:01,8).

Theme 3.11. Language is the link to creation

On the Vision Statement developed under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Planning Program, it is also reflected that the language ties the T̕ilhqot’in to “creation” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016). *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, agreed on this:

“[Language is] the gift I was given from Creator. No joke. This was given from the God that made us and through him the Creation he surrendered us, so [...] there is no value to put on it, it’s like inherited in your DNA in your heart” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:40:18,8 – 00:44:59,7). [...] “I want to be out in front and proud again [...] and I believe that it is... it’s a very... it’s a feature you see in people when they can speak their language; they can speak to creation and be honest about it” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:53:45,7 – 01:00:09,0).

Theme 3.12. Having our language is an honor

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, considered that keeping the language alive would help keep the responsibility and hold the honor that has been granted to all the T̄silhqot’in:

“We chose to come out here, because the mountains *Ts’il?os* and *Eniyud* chose us to be here for caretakers and [...] that was an honor, and [...] that’s kind of what I figured learning language and being able to speak it. I can share those stories and that the honor that’s there can be rekindled (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:14:08,8 – 00:15:36,7). With the T̄silhqot’in, everybody holds his honor, you are the same person either you are Elder or baby but you are still held in the same regard. And that’s one thing with having the language that gives you honor while you are speaking. It’s not just blah, blah, blah... you know it’s your association what it needs to be done or the mood that was setting. [...] But you know like the care, the care of it too. So it’s just like seeing different families and seeing how they hold on to what’s been given to them and the honor that, that it’s been given, you know, and honoration through time to remember how to be as beings, the language helps with that too (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:31:21,4 – 00:34:01,8). The language is responsibility, [...] it’s a way to hold down [...] like in respect, and in honor, you know, all comes with the language, there is a way to make sure there is proper honoration” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:34:03,4 – 00:35:38,6).

Participants also saw the language as a key to who they are. They understand it is linked to their culture and their land and keeps them united as a people, as we will read in the following themes.

Theme 3.13. The language is part of the T̄silhqot'in identity

As we can read on the Vision Statement developed under the Language Revitalization Planning Program, the language is the “foundation” of who they are and their identity (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement). It is their “nature, past, present, future” (*Omi*, 22, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting) and allows them to “being authentic to self” (*Chel̄ig*, 48, FR #1).

Participating community members believe that they carry their language “inside” (*Nists'i*, 34, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunēsit'in meeting) and it's always with them (*MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:30:41,7 – 00:30:54,1) as part of their cultural identity (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:16:13,8 – 00:17:43,5); it is what “makes you T̄silhqot'in”, as *Chickadee*, 39, said (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:49:21,0 – 00:49:22,0), and she doesn't “want to lose that identity”; she would like to “make sure that is always there” since “it makes who [they] are” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:03:12,1 – 00:03:30,8). Same was expressed by *Theresa*, 60:

“Because your language it's yourself, right? It's your identity... [pause] I don't know, if we lose our language, it is going to be... [sigh] I don't know if we can call ourselves T̄silhqot'in, if we lose our language [laughs] (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:40:32,1 – 00:41:47,7).

Tay, 23, and *Rissa*, 24, also agreed on this:

“I think it is important because it is part of us, part of our culture, in like being T̄silhqot'in” (*Tay* and *Rissa* 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:03:47,8 – 00:04:02,3).

Even the younger generations referred to that idea. Yunēsit'in ̄Esgul students expressed that they wanted to learn the language because “it's [their] kind” and if they know the language, “[they] know [their] nature” (SC#1, 11/24/2017, Yunēsit'in ̄Esgul). *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, even believes that “there is something there that [...] activates [their] DNA almost, when the language comes out” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:04:56,4 – 00:07:27,3); their language defines them and makes them different from other peoples, as *Nundi*, 69, explains:

“Yagh, nenk’ed nenqayni nidlin, lha midugh hidlih. Nenqayni nidlin, lhes yadi gul?in gu?en jid guzun. Jideghidiny hink’ed, yagh, lha gwechugh guzun jigwenil?in [We are the T̂silhqot’in people, not white people, it is better that we should think highly of being T̂silhqot’in people. It wouldn’t look good if we lose it] (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:20:18 – 00:21:13).

MJB, 68, also made reference to this idea when she said:

“We are not Shuswap [we are T̂silhqot’in, because we speak the language]” (*MJB* 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:34:16,1 – 00:34:54,4).

Chel?ig, 48, believes that the language connects the T̂silhqot’in people “as a whole”, and makes all communities one:

“We are all... we are one. There is no way, the government tried to divide and conquer but when we speak, we are all T̂silhqot’in” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:50:49,4 – 00:51:18,4).

Jo, 23, agreed on this but thought there was still people who saw that separation between the different communities:

“I wish we all accept each other as one, but certain reserves, they talk about how they don’t like the reserve and we always had mixed with each other, part Shuswap, part Carrier, and then kind of like think of it like a big community but from different areas, but it is not like that, it feels like it...” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:27:38,4 – 0:28:11,9). “And to see the younger people, to say, I don’t know like, consider they are better, but it is just like that, we all come together, and just like, work together” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:28:19,3 – 00:28:35,0). “They tried bring us together but it feels that the older generation just feels like, there are groups and everything, we are disconnected, we are all in different groups for a reason. But I try to correct them, no... we are all T̂silhqot’in, the names were the places we lived on is not really us. (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:28:35,4 – 00:29:09,3).

Some community members also commented on the perception that other peoples have about the T̓silhqot'in and how this has been passed throughout generations until today:

“My parents always said that’s T̓silhqot'in, you are T̓silhqot'in and you... when you go outdoor and you travel there are always T̓silhqot'in. If you are mixed with Shuswap and if you are travelling and you say you are T̓silhqot'in, lot of people are kind of scared of you. I was telling my kids that because T̓silhqot'in is a strong man” (*MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:06:17,8 – 00:07:36,3).

Omi's grandma would think similarly and tell her, “if they ask you, you don't say you are T̓silhqot'in”; and she continued explaining, “because she thinks that everybody hates T̓silhqot'in”. However, working at a restaurant located on the main road, where a diversity of clients would visit, she realized other people, First Nations and non-First Nations, are fascinated with the T̓silhqot'in culture and their land. Also, at the youth event called *Gathering our Voices*², she witnessed members of other nations and Elders congratulating the T̓silhqot'in. Therefore, she thinks the T̓silhqot'in pride needs to be regained and shown (*Omi*, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Reflections about the idea of feeling T̓silhqot'in without being fluent in the language were also brought up in the conversations. *BW*, 61, thought that “when you are T̓silhqot'in, you are supposed to speak T̓silhqot'in” (*BW*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:06:32,9 – 00:06:57,2). However, his wife *Lily the Pink*, 62, disagreed with him saying that perhaps “not nowadays” (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:06:32,9 – 00:06:57,2), since a lot of the youth don't speak it and still maintain their T̓silhqot'in identity, like *Jo*, 23, for example:

“I don't think it is like just because you don't speak it that means that you are not T̓silhqot'in” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:33:19,2 – 00:33:35,3).

Other youth like *Datsan*, 27, did believe that she “would feel more like a T̓silhqot'in” if she could speak the language (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:22:52,9 – 00:22:55,2); as

² *Gathering Our Voices* is an Indigenous Youth Leadership Training event hosted by the B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) and its Provincial Aboriginal Youth Council (PAYC) (Retrieved from www.gatheringourvoices.ca. Accessed on July 4th, 2020).

well as her cousin *Britt*, 25, who joked about how she might be “probably like half white and half T̄silhqot’in” because she doesn’t speak the language (*Britt*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:22:58,4 – 00:22:59,2).

Kalikala, 39, also felt the same way, not fully as an ‘insider’ in the community, since she is not able to speak the language fluently:

“I really wish I spoke it... because I would feel more connected to being here, you know, and being part of this community, and everything, and the people... I would feel more in tune with where I am from. Right now, just kind of feel I am looking from the outside looking in. But it’s neat, coming back and learning” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:26:23,4 – 00:26:52,2).

Chelʔig, 48, also recognized that she recovered part of her identity when she started speaking the language again:

“it took like 1977 to 2014 for me to be able to come forward and be more true to my human being just T̄silhqot’in” (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:11:24,9 – 00:12:11,2).

And even if she speaks better English than T̄silhqot’in, she still feels T̄silhqot’in (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:19:29,3 – 00:19:59,3). However, her kids don’t speak the language and she feels “because of their language loss there is a disconnect to the people as a whole, like self-identity of them being T̄silhqot’in is really not there because they cannot speak” (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:48:15,5 – 00:50:31,3).

Chickadee, 39, commented on the opposite idea: when a person learns the language and become fluent but he/she is not born T̄silhqot’in. According to her, somebody who is not born T̄silhqot’in would never be able to become T̄silhqot’in, even if they learn the language:

“Your language is what it makes you; it’s your culture, it’s how you practice your rites through your language (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:49:25,1 – 00:49:41,3). “That’s why they say first or second language [...] You know, my uncle is always telling that your language is everything, identifies you, you know that something that we are brought up within, you know. You look at cultures, you know

everybody has a different culture and way of living, different ways of doing things and different ways of saying things” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:50:07,4 – 00:51:07,2).

Yet, *Jo*, 23, had a different opinion:

“It doesn’t really matter I guess, where you are born, I don’t think that, other people might be other way. Where you have been born, but it doesn’t matter if you live with us and learn our ways and everything, you could be *Tsilhqot’in*” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:31:33,9 – 00:31:49,1) “Like I said, if you were speaking *Tsilhqot’in* and I didn’t know you, and you came speaking to an Elder, I’d think ‘oh she is probably someone from another area, like part of *Tsilhqot’in* family, so she is part *Tsilhqot’in*” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:32:36,4 – 00:32:57,3).

Finally, *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, explained he thinks they are not just *Tsilhqot’in*, but part of a bigger family called *nenqayni* (people of the Earth), meaning ‘Indigenous’:

“Right now, we are living by *Tsilhqox*, so we are *Tsilhqot’in* [“-in” meaning “people”], only for this time. If I go move by the Fraser, which is *Elhdaqox*, I would be *Elhdaqot’in* and then the people that live on the world, we were and are *nenqayni*. So *nenqayni* means a person of the world, or a person of the land, [...] so in a way, speaking with the people here, we are the *nenqayni* people [...] That’s one thing too that is really interesting like they kind of make us think something that it’s not real. Because that’s how they think of it in English. So, it’s kind of it does that to our people, presses a name on us that it isn’t the full meaning. We are *nenqayni*. So that means that it doesn’t mean that I am just *Tsilhqot’in*, I have Cree, I have Shuswap blood I have German, I have Russian, I have Irish... You know, I have seven bloods in my veins. I’m *nenqayni*. I am a person of the world for real [laughs]” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:40:18,8 – 00:44:59,7).

Theme 3.14. Language empowers us as a people

As *Chickadee*, 39, shared, the language gives them “rights as First Nations people” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:11:12,2 – 00:12:00,5), so speaking the language

makes them a stronger nation, especially when they do it during their negotiations with the provincial or federal governments, as *Nundi*, 69, commented:

“Nenk’ed, guyen, yagh, Chief gadajint’en gagunt’ah gwa yajelhtig hayt’insh hanh. Yagh, ch’ih yal... yastig ?eguh nagwedint’i jedenish. Gugun, yagh, government gubelh yalhtig ?eguh chuh. ?Inlhanx translate helin” [People like the chiefs talk to people about that, they say it is stronger that we speak our language when having meeting with the government when one is interpreting] (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:06:10 – 00:06:38).

Many community members reflected on the idea that “language is powerful” (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:18:21 – 00:18:35); it “empowers [them] as a people” (*Chel?ig* 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:38:53,6 – 00:39:14,6; (*Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:10:25 – 00:10:42) and can help “build strength with the community” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement).

As *Kalikala*, 39, explained they were taught to be ashamed of themselves and not to take part in their own traditions and speak the language (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:04:48,4 – 00:06:14,0). Bringing the language back would bring the pride back, and the self-esteem about their own identity (*Nists’i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:16:13,8 – 00:17:43,5). *Dothy*, 64, also reflected on that and how learning the language will help keep the youth strong:

“Gu, gatš’in, gun belhdan, dešniqi jinlin, k’anijalilh, ?eyen chuh. ?Eyen chuh, nenduwg gagunt’ih najegwedinhlt’i gunzun saguwet’i” [All the Elders and the younger generation, proud of speaking our language, it will keep them strong] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:29:04 – 00:29:38).

Theme 3.15. Language is closely tied to the land and culture

Yunešit’in, as all the Tšilhqot’in, have a very close relationship with the land. On the Vision Statement developed under the Land Use Management Plan in 2014, we can read that “[they] are part of the land” and “the land is part of [them]”. That relationship deepens when it comes to the language; as *Chickadee*, 39 explained, their language is attached to the land and to everything around them (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:03:12,1 –

00:03:30,8). The Vision Statement developed under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Planning Program states the following:

“1. Our language – Nenqayni Ch’ih – is how we connect with each other and our special relationship to the land.

[...]

6. Collectively, we will connect the people to the land that nurtures us” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement).

Nists’i, 34, said that “what makes someone T̄silhqot’in is [actually] that relationship to the place” and continued explaining how speaking the language allows you to understand the place:

“Certainly, the language deepens in it or strengthens in it so... I mean there is a lot of people that don’t have the language and are really tight to the places, [...] but when you are speaking about it, I think, people that are conscious of how the language is... how it’s said, I think, they understand that... they understand the personality of the... area. Like the stories that make the personality of even the animals, they know it’s a lot of the language that is sort of express how they are able to talk and talk to you, and those things actually do happen so... like it’s quite... I think for cultural identity I think it’s really just tied to peoples’ relationship to the land” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:07:19,3 – 00:08:31,9).

That is why he is teaching his daughter by “telling her that she is T̄silhqot’in and that she comes from a certain place”:

“Even in the trip to Nagwentled [Farwell Canyon] last year. I spent that whole week until she could actually say that word and... but she knows that that’s where... that’s where her identity is from. I think she knows that importance. It’s more even land-based, because I can share with her a few place names and then she’ll know where, you know, where I, you know, where her *ʔEtsu* (grandma) is from, from Stone, and those things are important” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:05:56,7 – 00:06:55,1).

Elder *Saina*, 65, agreed on this, as she believes that language is important for naming places and keeping that connection to the land:

“*?An, nenqayni dzanh ch’ah yanlhtig, gu?en jid guzun ?Eguh nen guzuh... guzih te?agunt’ih, gu gagunlhchugh nen gweghi?in. Guh gwech’ez nenqayni ch’ah yanlhtig gu?en jid guzun*” [It is better to only speak in T̂silhqot’in, things like naming a lot of places you know. That is why speaking in T̂silhqot’in is better] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:07:26 - 00:07:49).

Chel?ig, 48, believes that knowing the language also allows you to fully communicate with the land and to honor everything on it:

“[...] Being able to go to the land, just being able to give the land the name, is more significant, because by saying in T̂silhqot’in I am honoring that area and its sacredness to me when I say it in T̂silhqot’in, ‘cause... this Earth is really a sacred place for us, that we walked on and the area... (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:20:01,5 – 00:20:35,0).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, agreed and added the following on that idea:

“Because I know Mother Earth is going to decide and if we can speak to her the language she gave us, that’s how I feel, if Mother Earth decides, if I can say *sagunt’ih, sechanalyagh* for my family, if I can speak to her... you know” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:53:45,7 – 01:00:09,0). “That’s when [the language] is important especially when we are talking about land, because in a way the English language was develop for trade or for selling for, to sale things, to make it kind of a common around the whole world so it was never really a language to honor but we can’t say honor the tree, we can’t say it, but the language from the land is describing that tree from a long time ago, when the first time they saw it, there was a contact and then they might have been able to feel the spirit of it and then they ask what’s your name, and they said *tl’asbay*, so then that person *tl’asbay* is that’s what I am. So, it was from the tree and the land itself the words started forming” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:04:56,4 – 00:07:27,3). “That’s one thing I notice with the language, that the land had given itself to us. We were made

as people to be inherited, like inherited but at the same time we can move what needs to be move on the land and then we show our value, speak thank-you, and then you know. Like my transport to be ever from this pool because we don't need pool water there, we bring it up so we can make a pool up there and we change that water for irrigation, and then, you know, you talk to the Beaver, telling what you are going to do, you are not just taking him away from his home, you are going to give him a new one, and then just say that in the language because they were here before us as people but they saw us as babies, they saw us developing neat things, so they started giving us and that language came with it when the Beaver saw we were cold and offered his pelt, you know, there was an exchange and that's the honor that I want to feel more, the full connection because in a way this English just has bits and pieces" (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:09:45,6 – 00:11:08,7). "Now it's like coming back, we want to enforce it and then that's what this language to me is, knowing that I can feel the enforcement. It won't be just me; I'll be calling on all nature through the language to help (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:24:53,4 – 00:31:07,7). "We chose to come out here because the mountains *Ts'il?os* and *Eniyud* chose us to be here for caretakers and you know, that was an honor, and you know, that's kind of what I figured learning language and being able to speak it, I can share those stories and that the honor that's there can be rekindled" (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:14:08,8 – 00:15:36,7). "I want to be on the land speaking it" (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:11:08,7 – 00:12:33,3). "This *Tsilhqox*, *Dasiqox*, *Elhdaqox*, the biggest waterways in B.C., we have the names for them still, and then you know, that ties us to being responsible" (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:20:47,3 – 00:24:18,5). "Just from visiting people, losing the language they lose their responsibility to themselves and to the land that's been honored to them. It's been honorably given that we can use it to survive, to live, to eat food, to trade and then even to move away and come back another time. [...] That's what I have identified and I noticed the language. They are trying to make words for airplanes, they are trying to make words for... and that's good, that's how we evolve but at the same time, we should still enforce what's here, not let it go. And that's what I see with the language too, letting it go it makes easier to let go off the land, like go off what's really important. What's in the water, our stories and mountains... you know, that's what I see the language makes it easier for people to let go... I find that... it's

unhealthy... let go that way, like I don't think it's a good way" (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:15:54,4 – 00:20:44,9).

Some community members expressed that when the language is not learned, there can be a disconnection with the land. *Chel?ig*, 48, felt her kids don't have it because they are not fluent in *Nenqayni Ch'ih* (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:48:15,5 – 00:50:31,3); according to *Nists'i*, 34, learning the language can help regain that connection:

“[The language] is tied to cultural identity; it's tied to the relationship to the land; it's tied to people relating to each other and then you try to bring people together from like a place where everyone is being chaotically thrown in different directions whether it's like education, jobs, or... [...] family violence, so but I see... I see those probably being the antidote to all this, your self-esteem about your own identity, your relationship to the land and getting out there, and just being able to relate with each other more” (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:16:13,8 – 00:17:43,5).

For that, *Nists'i*, 34, also thought that other aspects of the community economy would need to change, so that the culture can be brought back and that relationship with the land can be fostered and reinforced:

“[...] Our economy is tied to our relationship to the land and the lifestyles, and being on the land to gather your food... I think those are like... that's probably the hard... the issue. You know, even at the community level, we create jobs and other things but it's also taking them away from developing their own economy for going out to the land and collecting things so... I don't know, my feeling is that, you know, we need to find, we need to find like an area where we can have like an acceptance of hybrid economy, when that you can... we still have like kind of a wage, but we still are really encouraging people to have to do the... all the cultural things that we need to feed ourselves in effect being on the land” (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:19:21,5 – 00:21:08,4).

And *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, agreed on this:

“It would be really good, like... in a way we need to make sure that the jobs on the land associate with the language” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:48:18,6 – 00:50:43,7).

For participating community members, culture was also very tied to the language and the land, as *Chickadee*, 39, explained:

“Without your language, you know, where are you? You know, it’s your culture” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:48:21,3 – 00:48:58,1). “They [language and culture] are very related because, culture is language, language is culture, you know everything we do in life has a name, has a purpose, you know. [...] What we do in our everyday lives has to do with the language that’s how we are able to communicate, that’s how we are able to demonstrate the understanding of what you do and how we are able to interact with the environment with each other, with your animals, with nature, water... you know our language has so much meaning that not even words can explain” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:04:49,0 – 00:05:49,5).

Matilda, 60, also believes that their language is part of their culture (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:02:49,1 – 00:03:10,2), as well as *Theresa*, 60, who added that “all go together to make up a language” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:19:40,0 – 00:19:54,5), and *MJB*, 68, even said that the language is the “the way [they] live” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:09:11,1 – 00:09:13,1). *?Elagi*, 39, reflected on this connection between the land, the culture and language fluency:

“We can still look at others who have such and incredible amount of vocabulary and probably lifestyle connection. You think that because she was on the land more and had way more, you know, knowledge in that sense” (*?Elagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:44:04,6 – 00:44:48,7).

Maggie, 76, talked about her grandpa who had a great knowledge on weather:

“We used to travel a lot together. He can read the clouds how the weather is going to be tomorrow, and what is going to be tomorrow, and then, we would look at the

clouds he reads it, and how the weather is going to be” (*Maggie*, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:04:41,2 – 00:06:10,9).

As well as *Juna*, 58, who recently remembered a weather expression her mom taught her:

“*Suk’an, ts’eman xaghinlagh lah. Ts’eman, qwen, yagh, ?undiny denetlig. Hulhts’edi jid ts’uzish yenešen, gwadanišed. Lhes jinasesned* [laughs]. *Guyi book ?ats’inlagh lah, bech’ed nas?is ghangh. ?Egun hink’an ts’eman naghe...ts’eman-nagh denetlig ts’edinh sani?* [Just recently at the time of the salmon was lightening in the sky, I forgot the name of the “light of salmon” to see a proper word that it was to it, and went and looked at a book here and finally got the proper name for it] (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:36:02 – 00:35:37). “*Ts’eman te?osh*” [‘the eye of a salmon blinking’ – dry lighting, no sound, no rain] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:35:37) “*?Elhgha?eyuw h jid gwa yajelhtig. Lhes lha gwanisdilil. ?Imagh ghinli, gagunlhnaž ?eyed tiyash, yagh, yadowh yetiž?in. Ts’eman ghedelh hagwet’in. Ts’eman ghedelh hawt’in, denish* [laughs] *?inlhes gwanini ladih, gwa yalhtig*” [So my mom would go out certain time of the year and told us “Salmon is coming” “Salmon is coming”. Saying it with excitement] (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:36:10 – 00:36:38).

Saina, 65, expressed that maintaining the cultural knowledge is important for keeping the language since they are both intrinsically related. However, in her opinion, people don’t follow traditions or do traditional activities as much anymore:

“*Yaniz danh gats’et’in. Belhdan hin tejelex hayt’insh, xanx? ?Undidanx, Lloyd be? denilin ?eguh ya?en, Biny Gunchagh težilyah xaghini. ?Abenax danh nixedidansh gun belh ne?ilqwish. Gun, ?inlhed xwelh taghints’ish, lhajid teghulyilh guyal. ?Egu, gan tabanx tsel tenilyah. Gwiyelhqan, gun nanadilh, lhan šidlosh* [laughs] *Tabanx dzanh nadilh saghint’i, tizts’ih* [laughs] *?Egu gagulhchugh jighanexwenilhtan. Lhaghembinh [unclear] tah jinexwedeghinlh?in. Guh jid nenqayni ch’ah 292magery’aghinli, ?undidanx. K’an ?eguh lha gweched gats’ešt’in. Gu, qungh jiz ts’edilhts’ish gwežlin.* [From way back it was done that way, some of them do gillnetting, right? When my mom was still alive, we use to gillnet at Fletcher Lake. We get up early in the morning and drive to there. One time it was so windy on the lake that we couldn’t set the gillnet so we just set it near the shore. The next day there was lots of fish on the

gillnet [laughs] Because it was so windy the fish might have been close to shore. [laughs] She taught us everything like setting and taking out the gillnet. That is how the T̓silhqot'in lived a long time ago but now it is hardly done in that way. People stay at home now] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:12:49 – 00:13:24).

And *LM*, 78, agreed on that:

“ʔUndidanx ʔeguh lha gweched ʔelhch'aghatš'ešdilh hanh. ʔAnatš'ešt'in hink'an. ʔAn, nulh qeʔats'et'in teʔagwet'in. Gagunlhnaž, ʔelhelh nenqayni dzanh ch'ah yats'elhtig. K'an ʔeguh gweched nenqay gagulhchugh jits'ededilh” [A long time ago people didn't leave very much doing things like trapping always speaking the language. Right now, the T̓silhqot'in people go everywhere] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:22:02 – 00:22:13).

Theme 3.16. Language is knowledge

According to youth *Jo*, 23, language is “basically [...] [their] knowledge”, “everything [they] have” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:17:14,4 – 00:17:17,4). *Chickadee*, 39, believes that the “language has so much meaning that not even words can explain” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:04:49,0 – 00:05:49,5) and she adds that “as you lose your language, you lose your knowledge; that knowledge of how to interact with your Elders, how to connect to nature, how to even practice your traditional rites, like [...] fishing, hunting” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:11:12,2 – 00:12:00,5).

Theme 3.17. Learning and speaking the language is a way of showing respect to T̓silhqot'in people

All members agreed on the fact that when we learn and use a language, we are respecting the people, especially the Elders. For *Chelʔig*, 48, that is another important reason to preserve the language:

“When we go to gatherings, *Lhats'asʔin* Memorial Day. There is always all these Elders from different T̓silhqot'in communities and they all come together. I introduce, reintroduce myself to them [in the language]. I shake their hands and sit with them for a few minutes, grab them whatever they need and then go to the next Elder. And I am teaching my kids because they are sitting in the corner, I say, you

have to be watching me, this is how you interact with your Elders to show your respect, this is what you need to do. And sometimes my youngest one will be right beside me and I'll be interacting with them in T̄silhqot'in (*Chel̄ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:17:34,1 – 00:18:17,0).

Community members, like *Chickadee*, 39, considered that it is good when even non-T̄silhqot'in people learn the basics and use it, since it shows respect to the community:

“It would be nice for other people that live out of other areas, even people that stay and they are not T̄silhqot'in because people can welcome or show more welcoming towards them to learn. Like we had... I remember in T̄silhqot'in, a girl learning it, well she looked *midugh* [white] and everything, but people were giving a hard time, the kids, and I kind of got mad at them, like if she wants to learn it she can learn it, I don't see why can't, even trying at least she is learning it” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:33:50,0 – 00:33:50,1) [...] “Like it is very nice hearing somebody else actually trying to learn, like... coming to our community and try at least, it shows acceptance towards us and us accepting them” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:35:20,6 – 00:35:33,8). [...] “Might encourage other T̄silhqot'in to learn it, because they do like, another person who is not even our culture or people they know or whatever and they don't so might make them more... [motivated]” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:34:41,1 – 00:34:42,7).

Chel̄ig, 48, thought that speaking the language can even create a higher connection with the ‘outsider’:

“The feeling [when a non-community member speaks the language]... I can pick up more from you, if you speak T̄silhqot'in. I can pick up your feelings from your words, I can pick it up from your facial, your body language, and when you speak my language I can feel more of your... the sense of where you are coming from so I am very in tune to people that way, and if you just speak T̄silhqot'in I am not having to really guess” (*Chel̄ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:37:53,1 – 00:38:33,1).

That was confirmed by Elder *?Etsu ghinli*, 92, when her daughter *MJB*, 68, asked her about me learning the language and she answered: “that’s good” (*MJB* and *?Etsu ghinli*, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:02:11,7 – 00:03:10,9).

6.1.2 Where should it be spoken?

In this section, I will present perspectives on where the language should be spoken and what spaces would be more appropriate for it. Themes that will be discussed below are the following:

- Theme 3.18. Language should be spoken everywhere
- Theme 3.19. Language should be spoken on the land
- Theme 3.20. Language should be spoken at home
- Theme 3.21. Language should be spoken at community buildings and events

Theme 3.18. Language should be spoken everywhere

Some expressed that they should speak the language “all the time” and “everywhere” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:06:10,2 – 00:06:56,0; *MJB*, 68, and *Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:07:08,4 – 00:07:12,4; *Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:20:17,5 – 00:20:33,5; *Dothy*, 64, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:24:23 – 00:25:03), “especially when you are talking to somebody that the only way you can talk to them is in their language” like Elders, in many cases (*MJB*, 68, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:00:32,4 – 0:01:04,7; *Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:05:45,0 – 00:05:48,6). Elders *Saina*, 65, and *LM*, 78, agreed on this:

“*Gan, gagunlhnaž, nenqayni ch’ih yanlhtig gu?en jid guzun hanh. ?Egu ?eguh gwetazulh*” [It is better to speak in the language all the time. It would be better that way] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:14:47). “*Nidiyah belh sanh, nenqayni ch’ah yalhtig hanh*” [From the time you get up in the morning you speak in the language] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:14:47).

And *Blondie*, 57, and *Peter*, 72, thought similarly:

“*Nents’in, k’es gan, nents’in, nents’in yats’elhtig, gan nents’in yats’elhtig, xuwêlnax, xanx?*” [You can speak the language anywhere and you can hear the language

anywhere] (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:04:37). *Hm, midugh lah gan nents'in yajelhtig hayt'ish. Dzamen chulah. East Indian chuh gan nendin yajelhtig. Xun chulah, ?eguh gaghut'i. Gan, xenchuh lha gagunlhchugh ?elhts'edištš'insh. Midugh ch'ih.* [White people talk anywhere; we can talk anywhere too. It is good to talk our language anywhere and people don't understand what we are saying] (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:04:49 – 00:05:03).

Ha?anh. ?Ech'eyanlhtig [unclear] *xužilhtš'an.* [Yes, you can talk it anywhere you are] (*Peter*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:04:37).

Chel?ig, 48, said that she would like to see people speaking the language “everywhere” just as speakers from other languages do:

“It is an envy in me to go to Williams Lake and walk amongst Punjabi immigrants that have made Canada their home and they speak Punjabi, and I am like, what a gift. That is what I want my people to do” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:34:57,2 – 00:35:21,2).

Theresa, 60, also thinks that speakers should talk “about everything and anything in the language”, even when going to the store, like her mom used to do:

“She used to go to the store and she'd say... *suka*, or sugar they will be giving there... and then she would say *lhiz* [rice], you know, and this woman, this elderly woman, [...] She learned a little bit of Tšilhqot'in and trade language to do that. So she used to order things there” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:52:50,3 – 00:53:29,5).

Theresa, still speaks it when she goes to the store or restaurants and notices cashiers are Tšilhqot'in speakers (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:53:40,6 – 00:54:09,6) as well as *Maureen*, 51, who does that with her mom “all the time” (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:32:38). According to *Chickadee*, 39, even non-Tšilhqot'ins should be trying to learn and speak everywhere, being “part of that language revitalization” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:36:56,2 – 00:37:28,0).

Theme 3.19. Language should be spoken on the land

Some community members specified that, even if the language should be spoken everywhere, it is on the land where the language comes out naturally, as we can see that in the conversation with *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*:

“[When we] come out west [to T̂silhqot'in territory] that's when the language come back out again” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:01:11,4 – 00:02:53,2). “So in a way it kind gives us a certain frequency and a tone but with the natural language when you speak it boost your frequency the tones can be a little higher of even lower but the natural language, and then those are the ones of nature [...] Like I noticed that there are connections with people that hold it and maybe there are not fully using it all. [...] Somehow they are leaving it behind just to be at home and speak T̂silhqot'in, instead of being on the land speaking it. Like that's what I... I want to be on the land speaking it” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:11:08,7 – 00:12:33,3).

Theme 3.20. Language should be spoken at home

Participating community members thought that the language “should be spoken at home” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:06:10,2 – 00:06:56,0; *Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:30:17,1 – 00:31:15,4; *Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:16:37,3 – 00:16:42,8) and with the “family” (*Omi*, 22, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:03:25,2 – 00:03:34,0). Fluent speakers also expressed that:

“?Eguh, nenqayni ch'ih yaghanlhtig hink'an, nenqungh t̂sid je?adeteghant'ax. Guyen gube?intsu, gube?intsi gats'in, ?eyen hanh ?esqax jijegudetalh?anx hanh” [Whenever you are going to speak T̂silhqot'in, you start at home. The children's grandmothers and grandfathers are going to teach them] (*Braids*, 72, 11 /07/2017, CO#2, 00:04:40 - 00:04:49). “Han, ne-yard šindah” [sitting in the yard] (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:04:40).

Theme 3.21. Language should be spoken at community buildings and events

One of the actions identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was to implement the use of the language at Yunešit'in “Administration and Health Office” (Big picture goal – E. Develop Language

Governance for sustainable language revitalization; Strategy – E2. Promote use of the language). Participating members also saw the need of promoting the language in the public spaces in the community (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:30:17,1 – 00:31:15,4; *Lily the Pink* 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:20:17,5 – 00:20:33,5). According to *Jo*, 23, “it would be nice if it were spoken in there so other people could catch on” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:05:54,3 – 00:06:03,3). *Tay*, 23, also said that “that would help” to learn the language (*Tay*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:04:59,2 – 00:05:05,2).

Even the staff meetings “should be straight T̄silhqot’in”, according to *Matilda*, 60: “it’s the only way they are going to learn; everything should be just T̄silhqot’in” (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:03:34,3 – 00:03:38,3). *Nundi*, 69, also agreed on that:

“Amongst the workers or... [...] meetings, maybe, or... The only thing, you can do that good is ah, people that know, know the language, aye? You can... meeting with them, ah, in T̄silhqot’in. Yeah, it would be good, aye? Yeah, I guess... maybe you have to tell them, ah, speak T̄silhqot’in. So the younger can listen, when you do. Speaking in straight T̄silhqot’in (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:05:35 – 01:06:17).

Kalikala, 39, even thought that “it should be a *criteria* for applying for jobs because most of the Elders [...] speak T̄silhqot’in, so that would be only really fair” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:14:19,6 – 00:14:44,6) and she continued:

“[...] In the Band itself should be encouraging the people to take up what they want to learn education and bring back to the people and come back to the people with that, running programs or becoming part of the staff” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:14:57,7 – 00:16:23,3).

Other idea that *Omi*, 22, brought up is to have “signs” and try “to spread the word somehow” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:16:22,9 – 00:16:26,0). Even having “sticky notes everywhere” (*Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:19:21,0 – 00:19:35,5). *Charlie Brown*, 47, also mentioned that:

“Like [language teacher’s name], she’s got *ch’ededan* [table], *ch’edesdagh* [chair] [...] at the school. You see it every day, you are saying it (*Charlie Brown*, 47,

11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:07:16,4 – 00:07:37,0). “Other people might learn” (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:07:44,3 – 00:7:52,7).

Another action identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was to implement the use of the language at Yunešit’in ʔEsgul (Big picture goal E. Develop Language Governance for sustainable language revitalization; Strategy – E2. Promote use of the language) and that was also one of the priorities of the most of the people who participated (*Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:05:54,3 – 00:06:03,3; *Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:04:59,2 – 00:05:05,2). Elder *Braids*, 72, wanted to hear more language at the school (*Braids*, 11 /07/2017, CO#2, 00:02:20 – 00:02:15) as well as *Dothy*, 64, who also thought that was important (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:16:49 - 00:16:58). *Charlie Brown*, 47, also suggested that even having words displayed around would help promote the use of it among students and staff (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:07:16,4 – 0:07:37,0).

Kalikala, 39, would like to see “not just the languages” but also their “traditions” by engaging the Elders:

“Preparing hides, and smudging, picking berries and fruits and sage and everything like that and being out there basically. And in elementary I think it would be very good for the students to do that. And making a part of our education in the schools that are part of each reserve, you know, and they would be helping the Elders get together with the youth and getting... feeling they are useful again” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:06:23,5 – 00:08:22,7).

Participating community members also mentioned places of higher level of education, like the universities. They would like to see their language as part of the academic programs (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:07:24,8 – 00:7:24,9; *Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:14:43,7 – 00:14:59,9).

Community events and gatherings is another setting where the language should be spoken (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:03:25,2 – 00:03:34,0), as *Braids*, 72, expressed:

“An ʔeguh gadidah sink’an seʔaguwet’i, ʔinlhetah ʔinlhes chexidilh. Nenqayni dzanh ch’ah yaghulhtig dini ʔeguh seʔawtat’ilh ghili [We should say that openly. When we

come together at an event, it would be better if we say: ‘only speak Nenqayni’] (*Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:08:19).

And *Nundi*, 69, agreed with that:

“*Nenk’ed, yagh, deni, deni lhan nenqayni ch’ih yajelhtig, chejaghiždil. ?Esqax ?ejužilhts’an gu?en jid guzun lagunt’ih. Gan ?ejužilhts’an. Yanuw, gwatish, camp ts’elish, ?esqax belh. Guyen, guzun jid nenqayni ch’ah yajelhtig ?eyen, ?eyen, nenqayni dzanh ch’ih yajelhtig. ?Esqax hin, jegužilhts’an. ?Eguh guzun saguwet’i* [When there is a gathering where only Tšilhqot’in is spoken it would be good that the children listen, just listen. Sometimes a camp way back in the bush those who speak fluently speak only in Tšilhqot’in and the kids listening, it would be good] (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:09:47 – 00:10:21).

6.2 Topic 4: Tšilhqot’in language teaching/learning strategies in Yunešit’in

The fourth topic of this analysis covers the community perspectives on language teaching and learning strategies for reviving *Nenqayni Ch’ih* in Yunešit’in. I included results about the community groups that should have priority on learning the language, the strategies that can be used for teaching/learning the language and the related challenges that community members face.

6.2.1 What community group should have priority on learning the language?

In this section, I will present community perspectives on what community group should be the target of the language teaching strategies. The following two topics will be discussed here:

- Theme 4.1. Language revitalization efforts should be focused primarily on the younger generations
- Theme 4.2. Parents need to learn the language to properly support their children’s learning process

Theme 4.1. Language revitalization efforts should be focused primarily on the younger generations

Although participants thought that everybody in the community should learn the language (*Theresa*, 60, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:11:59,5 – 00:12:06,0), most of them expressed that younger generations should have the priority at this moment (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:21:22 – 00:21:50/00:53:00 – 00:55:29; *Pauline ghinli*, 82, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:09:23; *Blondie*, 57, and *Peter*, 72, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:03:46 – 00:03:57; *Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:21:10,5 – 00:21:18,1 / 00:10:42,6 – 00:11:23,2; *Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:39:06,0 – 00:39:30,0; *Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit'in meeting).

Cousins *Jo*, 23, and *Omi*, 22, thought children should start learning the language at school (*Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:09:26,2 – 00:09:38,8), “maybe between [...] elementary to high school [grades]” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:07:57,6 – 00:08:02,6). However, according to *Chickadee*, 39, children should get started when they are still babies: “even before preschool, daycare” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5). *Nists'i*, 34, agreed on this; he thought “it needs to start around the early childhood education or development stage and trying to make a commitment to the children and then focusing all the energy on it” (*Nists'i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:24:55,5 – 00:26:31,9). He also thought the language should be encouraged even “around birth”, “having a commitment from a mother and their parents to want to start the child of” and “even from the womb” (*Nists'i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:24:55,5 – 00:26:31,9).

Participating community members also understand that it is actually easier for the young ones to learn the language: “children under the age of 10 are the ones that can learn it” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:39:06,0 – 00:39:30,0). As *Omi*, 22, said her “niece learned faster than she did”, as she is way younger (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:13:13,7 – 00:13:39,1).

In terms of logistics, some community members thought the school is also the easiest setting:

“[...] Kids are already in school, so it's seems easier, you know, that they have that space to do it, they are already there” (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:12:06,0 – 00:12:42,3).

Theme 4.2. Parents need to learn the language to properly support their children's learning process

One of the actions identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was to engage families in the language programs so they could support their children's learning (Big picture goal – C. Bridging the language gap between generations; Strategy – C2. Create immersion programs for families) and community members also thought that was important (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:18:26,5 – 00:19:17,2 / 00:10:30,3 – 00:10:58,1; *Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:31:10,8 – 00:31:49,5; *Chel?ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:30:16,3 – 00:32:00,4; *Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:14:04,6 – 00:14:15,4). *Roper*, 44, explained that idea:

“They should start with the middle generation and then work your way down to the kids so middle generations can teach their kids how to speak it too, so when they go to school they would say, ‘mom, how do you say that’, ‘why did you say that’ [laughs] It think just start from where... probably my generation, I would say, because the generations where [another community] and my sister are in, to me they are fine, they are perfect [laughs] They speak the language so... [laughs] It's generations like myself and probably anything lower than I” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:21:19,2 – 00:22:08,6).

6.2.2 What challenges do community members face regarding teaching/learning the language?

Community members shared about the challenges community members usually face when teaching or learning the language. They are covered under the following topics and are explained below:

- Theme 4.3. Community members face emotional barriers when speaking or learning the language
- Theme 4.4. There is an intergenerational communication gap
- Theme 4.5. There is lack of motivation for learning and speaking the language
- Theme 4.6. Frustration feelings may appear when learning the language
- Theme 4.7. Concerns about speech problems may arise when children start learning two languages
- Theme 4.8. Funding for language projects is limited

- Theme 4.9. Not enough time is dedicated to the language
- Theme 4.10. Opportunities to learn and speak the language are limited
- Theme 4.11. Language resources are limited
- Theme 4.12. Every day there are fewer Elders and knowledge keepers
- Theme 4.13. Language teaching methods are obsolete
- Theme 4.14. Education and school requirements hinder language teaching
- Theme 4.15. Expertise is needed to support the language revitalization efforts
- Theme 4.16. The T̓silhqot̓in language is difficult to learn
- Theme 4.17 The T̓silhqot̓in language presents different dialects
- Theme 4.18. There are many distractions nowadays

Some of the challenges mentioned were related to attitudes or feelings learners may show when trying to learn the language: emotional and communication barriers, frustration and lack of motivation, among others.

Theme 4.3. Community members face emotional barriers when speaking or learning the language

As explained before (cf. 2.2.1), systematic abuses at the residential schools and other consequences from the colonial practices have impacted community members' emotional health and their use or perception of the language (*Chel̓ig*, 48, FR #1). According to participants, that is one of the most important challenges they face when learning or speaking their language. Sometimes it may be hard to identify it but it certainly becomes a barrier, as *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, explained:

“English has been yelled into our people to forget the language and take up and adopt this other one so they learn how to suppress things when the natural feeling is to speak in the tongue but now they might be good in their teeth speaking English because it was forced into them and, then, we learn how to speak like that with the grid of our teeth because they are like that, but we don't know why, you know, they didn't explain the torture it took for them to lose their language and being you know almost punished to speak this one. So that's another feeling that we... I was born with and now in my time that I am living to now I had to decide from where it came from, and it was, you know... it was a painful experience, because my mom didn't want to

admit it and my granny didn't want to admit it and then when I admitted, it did me pain" (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:12:40,1 – 00:14:08,8).

Chel?ig, 48, also realized a few years ago that the abuse she experienced at the residential school made her quit speaking her language; for her, that was the main barrier she had to overcome (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:02:42,3 – 00:05:03,6).

Racism was another important factor mentioned by most of the participants. As *Chel?ig*, 48, explained, her daughters still experience racist behaviours today by non-community members and she is teaching them skills to deal with it (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:41:43,8 – 00:43:15,0); they need to overcome the feelings that have been created by those experiences and regain the pride of being T?ilqhot'in so they can learn the language.

?Elagi, 39, reflected on what is known as *blood memory* by some: historical and intergenerational trauma caused by experiences lived by their ancestors, that can reverberate through generations today and are been passed through certain behaviors. According to her, that can be another factor that can influence community members when learning the language:

“One of the things that [...] did incredible sense to me and was very powerful, it was talking about generations of blood memory of shaming through residential school and different things that are also part of the go hand-in-hand with language learning. So for those who don't speak it's huge. It's like and incredible amount of like healing and shifting but it is also huge block that are like in the blood so you know [laughs], that make it more difficult to actually learn our languages, and I thought that was fascinating when [a language expert] talked a lot about that and [...] the pain of all of that, or you know, the shame, or all the different aspects that there are in our bones and our blood” (*?Elagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:37:56,1 – 00:40:08,5).

Theme 4.4. There is an intergenerational communication gap

As many community members pointed out, communication between Elders and youth needs be restored. *LM*, 78, would like to see more youth doing cultural activities with the Elders, such as hunting (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:23:28). However, some youth think that it is hard for them “to relate” to the Elders since according to them, “they don't really socialize”, “they are not patient enough to teach” and “they need to talk”

more (*Omi*, 22, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting). The relationship between Elders and youth needs to be nurtured.

Theme 4.5. There is lack of motivation for learning and speaking the language

For some community members, “it feels like there is no interest” [for learning the language] (*Omi*, 22, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting) students are not motivated enough (*Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:15:51,6 – 00:15:56,2; (*Theresa*, 60, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:16:38; (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:24:42); and “they got to have the will”, if they want to learn (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:40:48):

“*Gagunlhchugh. Guyen ?esqax gayt’insh hanh, midugh ch’ah yajelhtig. Xun, nenqayni dzanh ch’ah yaltig. Gu, jaded shuh najegweneyud hin, jinaygwedetal?anx han, gan*” [The kids only speak in English while we only speak in Tsilhqot’in. If they try to speak the language they would learn again] (LM, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:15:02 – 00:15:13) “*Lha najegwenesud*” [They don’t try] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:15:02 – 00:15:13).

Her granddaughter *Tay*, 23, also think that motivation is one of the main challenges among the youth:

“[...] Basically it’s that people want to learn. I think that is the main challenge, you don’t have enough people who want to do with it” (*Tay*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:15:40,1 – 00:16:07,0).

Rissa, 24, agreed and said that “Elders are here to teach, but there is no youth; they are not interested in it” (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:06:09,1 – 00:06:14,1). *Datsan*, 27, also said that “you have many people who are not interested in learning at all” (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:18:23,2 – 00:18:25,6), but she can understand and knows it is hard even for herself to get motivated if she doesn’t find the activities interesting (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:13:42,0 – 00:13:51,2).

Sometimes it’s no easy to teach the children: “they lose their interest” quite easy (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:12:2; *Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10 00:23:20 – 00:22:55); “they have a short attention span” (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:14:25,0 – 00:14:29,0) and “you cannot keep them in the house very long, maybe just

for an hour on something” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:19:12,1 – 00:19:33,7); and with teenagers, it’s probably “harder for them to participate, get their attention” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:10:48,4 – 00:10:59,5). Language teacher *Saina*, 65, explained something similar:

“?Eyen dzanh. Gwechugh, ?egu... lha nenqayni ch’ah gwetah ?anaguli, lha gwechugh xanenjih?ah layt’insh. Belhdan hin, ?ijegwedul?anx jegunt’in. Belhdan hin lha gajit’ih”
[For them it is very... it seems they are not paying attention when you are mentioning things in Tšilhqot’in. Some like to learn, some don’t] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:29:28).

According to her teaching experience:

“Some of them play *Lehal* game, the older class. But some of them they don’t even want to touch the drum, and I’m like jeez... maybe they have to make them make their own drum or something” (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1). “[...] Kids don’t listen to you; they’re like, ‘you are not my mom’ [...] so it is hard teaching them, [...] you have to do a lot of discipline, because today [...] they don’t discipline them enough, it’s... I guess, that is the hard part too, we have to go back to the old ways, I guess, like everybody raised one child, everybody helped discipline, stuff like that, everybody helped each other, that’s how it was long time ago” (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

However, *Juna*, 58, has a different opinion. She thinks that “Elders think that kids don’t listen but they do”. She also thinks that “at school level, a lot has been done” and perhaps the focus now should be at home (LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting)

On the other hand, the fluent speakers may be the ones that don’t find enough motivation. *Gex*, 34, wonders herself “how you switch people’s brains”. “They want their language teachers and fluent speakers [...] to teach people how to speak but then they don’t speak to them” (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:28:20,5 – 00:29:11,2). Something similar was expressed by *Nundi*, 69. Speakers may not speak the language to the youth since they feel won’t understand them:

“*Nenk’ed, danx gwa yaghinlhtig sagunt’ih, gan yagh, nenk’ed, guyen guzun jid yajelhtig ?eyen gubebelh yalhtig ?eguh lhe?agusowh. Lhe?agusowh jigwenil?in. Lhe?agusowh jiguzilt’s’an. ?Undidanx ni gats’in hinlin, yagh, nenqayni ch’ih yajelhtig hagwaghint’i. ?Esqax jintsel chuh. Lha... lhe?agusowh jid, jiguzilt’s’an hagwet’insh. Nenk’ed, k’an ?esqax ?eyen, yagh, midugh ch’ih gubelh yalhtig, gan lhajid ?aguwet’i gulih. Lhajid nenjedut’s’an gulih*” [I might have talked about it already. I enjoy talking in the language to those who speak fluently, it looks good and it is good to hear. Way back everybody speak the language including the smaller kids, it was good to hear them. Right now we speak to the kids in English, we can’t help that, they wouldn’t understand us] (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:08:05 – 00:08:28).

Language teachers seem not to be full motivated with the school setting either, according to *Chel?ig*, 48 (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:43:56,3 – 00:44:54,4) and *Jo*, 23:

“[...] People do repeating, they don’t really teach us how to say sentences or... they are not motivated lately... because teaching at school is kind of boring but if they like go and do something is more fun, hands-on, not just sitting there and repeating” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:07:32,4 – 00:8:06,6).

In addition, a higher level of motivation is needed from parents too. *Gex*, 34, knows that even herself, who has been “talking about for a few years”, hasn’t “even put the effort in it” (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:11:01,6 – 00:11:27,0). School time is important but parents need to take the lead at home:

“We keep talking about school because it is easy avenue but that is only a part of the day and that’s... you know going home and sharing that... speaking out, maybe they are sharing but not... I guess the investment is not there, I think, in a lot of family homes... (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:25:19,3 – 00:25:55,6).

Nists’i, 34, knows it is “hard to find people that are extremely motivated to learn, like the place names, the history...” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:21:14,3 – 00:22:47,2), but he is also aware that a lot of the community members haven’t their basic needs cover, so it is hard for them to make language a priority:

“[...] Even people basics needs, just needing housing and food [laughs] I think that is huge in the community, when you don't have it and when your leadership is scrambling to try to address it, it's hard to deal with the other stuff when your basics or needs aren't really being met so... I think that's like a huge... There is barriers in all cases to actually dealing with this properly” (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:17:52,5 – 00:19:03,0).

Maureen, 51, is also aware of some of the reasons for the lack of motivation, mostly related to their loss of identity as T̄silhqot'in people:

“Some kids were born in foster homes, and then they come home when they're teenagers, and then, they think, just because they came from a foster home, they think they're white, and they don't want to learn. So, that's, that's kind of like pretty hard on some kids. Because I know a lot of kids been going to foster homes. I know it's hard, that they lost their language, and they probably give up on themselves, that they don't want to be... they're too ashamed” (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:41:20).

Theme 4.6. Frustration feelings may appear when learning the language

Frustration is another challenge that community members face when learning the language and some “just give up”, instead of “keeping trying” (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:16:07,0 – 00:16:30,8), as *Saina*, 65, and *LM*, 78, said:

“*Gubech'a gagwelnah gajet'insh*” [It gets too hard for them] (*Filly*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:34:42 – 00:35:09) “*Esqax belhdan najetelch'osh*” [Some kids get mad and go home] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:34:42 – 00:35:09). “*?Eguh... ?eguh lah jid... lhajid jigwedeghul?anx gulah hanh, jinalnig, ganagulzen. Sid, se?inkwel jisegwedeghinlh?in hanh, sex ghinli. Bedeqash xusqid ?eyi gatš'i je?anagwedilh?in ?egun, nad dzin, tad dzin desinh hink'an ?elhch'ene?asest'in ghangh. Lha ganašint'ih ?eguh gwetah ?igwedeteghanl?anx ghungh, nenqayni. Xenilch'osh, naguntšig hin, gu?en jid nagwaghetsinlh hawt'insh. Didah gatš'i bagwel?iny han, nagweniyud. Lha guqa xeneghulch'ux gulih*” [You could learn but you quit, my mom taught me... I started it again, in two, three days I was going along well. If you don't quit you will learn... you

are getting worse. It is easy when you try, you don't have to get frustrated] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:34:42 – 00:35:09).

However, sometimes learners can feel judged and get frustrated when being corrected by fluent speakers (*MJB*, 68, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:22:55,8 – 00:23:01,8), although there is no right way or wrong way (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:40:27,0 – 00:40:40,1; *Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:40:40,1 – 00:40:55,9); *MQ*, 66, always reminds her grandkids that.

For some middle age semi-speakers, frustration also comes from intergenerational trauma or “blood memory” of “shaming through residential school”, according to *PElagi*, 39 (*PElagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:37:56,1 – 00:40:08,5), and the sadness of not having had the opportunity of learning the language properly as children, either because their parents stopped speaking it to them (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:10:30,3 – 00:10:58,1) or because they were raised out of the community (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:9:05,1 – 00:10:33,3).

Community members also think that current language curriculum or the teaching methods don't meet the needs of the T̓silhqot'in people and that can create frustration among the students, as *Chel?ig*, 48 (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:43:56,3 – 00:44:54,4).

Theme 4.7. Concerns about speech problems may arise when children start learning two languages

Some community members were worried about children having speech problems when learning English and T̓silhqot'in at the same time (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit'in meeting). *Maggie*, 76, also commented about her grandson, who seemed to be behind on speaking, she thought because she speaks T̓silhqot'in to him (*Maggie*, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:43:43,1 – 00:44:08,8). *MQ*, 66, agreed on that as she believes “it takes longer to talk for the little ones when you are speaking language, English and T̓silhqot'in”; she noticed that on her grandson (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:44:08,7 – 00:44:52,8). *Chickadee*, 39, thinks that this could be caused by the difference between the two languages and how the speech gets influenced by both:

“One person told me, you know English is a backward language, because T̓silhqot'in, you know, is supposed to be our first language, sometimes, even if you don't know

your language fluently your mind is already connected to the language so you are thinking about it and sometimes we pause and think the answer, but it's coming through as T̓silhqot'in translated into English, and then you know when you translate it it's actually the T̓silhqot'in is backwards, but somebody would say, "no, it's not backwards, it's the other way around" [laughs] (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:03:41,6 – 00:04:38,8)

Chel?ig, 48, mentioned that the Health Department brought a speech therapist to the school a few years ago (LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit'in meeting). *Chickadee*, 39, said that it is also the parents and families' responsibility to support to their children's learning process:

"You are looking at where the child is at in their speak, because I think there is speech in language issues too. You've got children who have learning disabilities, you have children... it depends on where they are and readiness... if they are ready and able to learn" [...] "what the child is learning how well they are doing, where do they need support in their learning, how can the parents support them at home, ok, let's meet... do a parent-teacher meeting, or ok, let's have this individual education plan where what is what your child needs" (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:44:00,0 – 00:45:45,0).

Participating community members also identified some challenges related to the means that are currently available for language teaching. According to them, the resources and time dedicated to the language is currently limited. Expertise is also needed and teaching methods and school requirements need to be reconsidered.

Theme 4.8. Funding for language projects is limited

One of the actions identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was to secure funding from agencies and institutions that work towards language and cultural revitalization, as well as to organize fundraising events to support language projects (Big picture goal – E. Develop Language Governance for sustainable language revitalization; Strategy – E3. Secure funding for community projects). On the Terms of Reference document developed under the same program,

securing funding for covering Language Committee’s meetings was also identified as a priority (LRPP doc#5, 03/29/2016, Terms of Reference).

For many, “funding is a big issue” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:15:49,2 – 00:17:38,3; *Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:16:19,8 – 00:17:08,1; *Dani*, 28, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:18:35,4 – 00:18:39,2) and it is often a challenge for communities as proposal writing requires certain capacity (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:16:50,7 – 00:19:01,6; (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:15:49,2 – 00:17:38,3).

Nundi, 69, agreed and admitted that funding is necessary to “do it the proper way” (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:33:53 – 00:33:17). *Filly*, 49, also said “most people want to get paid to do things” (*Filly*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1). *Nun*, 57, who is being a Teaching Assistant for more than 30 years, learned that if you want to hire good professionals and language teachers you need to have funding sources and offer them good jobs that make them stay in the community (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:15:37,3 – 00:16:19,6). *MQ*, 66, was also concerned about salaries, since according to her, sometimes they vary depending on the teachers, but, in her opinion, language should be a priority and a valued position (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:16:19,5 – 00:16:37,5).

However, other community members like *Saina*, 65, thought that money shouldn’t be needed to speak the language:

“*Lha seniya gulih ?eguh chuh nenqayni ch’ah yaltig. Seniya ?eyi lha gwechugh hutezeghat’in sani, xanx?*” [Even if there isn’t any money, we will talk to each other in the language. We really don’t need the money that much, do we?] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:26:06).

That is how it was before, as *Juna*, 58, and *Dothy*, 64, said; people didn’t expect a payment for participating in events but today it seems different:

“*Yaniz, sid sech’ih ?eguh, yaniz, ?elhghen deni ghen ninats’elish ?eguh gan deni gha bed ?ats’elh?insh hagwaghint’i. Lha seniya bid nits’en ch’ixcets’elhtsish sagwaghint’i, xanx? Gan ?elhghen ninaguts’elish, gube... guba bed ?ats’elh?insh hink’an ?ejeyan*” [In my way of thinking back in the day, we brought Elders together for potlucks to share therefore there was no money to offer] (*Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:11:10 – 00:11:16). “*Nists’i-tsen, ben ghen nits’ebinelhtinsh hink’an lhuy te?ant’i gat’s’i. ?Eguh jid sanh gwajenini sajaghint’i*” [They know instead of money they were offer fresh deer meat,

steak cooked by the open fire, fresh food is all they need it for payment] (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:11:34 – 00:12:00)

“*Lha ?ets’ut’in sagwaghint’i, ?undidanx, gagunt’ih, ?elhelh chenats’aghedilh. Yagh, gu, gan gu gadinih, gu ?etsen tah, gu didah, ?inlhithah [unclear] gubats’aghelhnish saghint’i. Guh, k’andzin ?eguh ?ets’unt’in lagunt’ih*” [People probably didn’t need anything else back in the day, just what you mentioned, only payment needed was fresh meat, invitation to a potluck, but today they need more than that] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:12:12).

Other commented that nowadays it is hard to find volunteers since usually people “want money” when they contribute to projects (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:39:25,7 – 00:41:09,6). The same was expressed by *LM*, 78, and *Saina*, 65:

“*Seniya yanexwilhtsen hanh, k’andzin*” [Today the money spoiled us.] *Lha seniya gulih, lhajid nelh ?ats’ut’in gulih gwalilh* [It is *becoming* (turning out) that people are not going to help you] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:24:10). “*Gwechugh seniya dzanh ts’eyeni?en yagunlin, xanx?*” [it *became* (turned out) that people are thinking of only money] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:24:20).

Theme 4.9. Not enough time is dedicated to the language

Language teachers claimed that the time allocated for language teaching is not enough and more time is required to achieve better results. As *Saina*, 65, pointed out students are “in a rush like” and that way “it’s hard teaching them”. She would like to go back to the traditional way of teaching, “nice and slow”:

“We don’t have enough time to teach the language. It would be nice if we could teach it all afternoon, but cause in the morning from 8 till lunch time they can teach all the English stuff and then in the afternoon we can teach the kids cultural activities. [...] I think we need more time teaching T?ilhqot’in in school, because I don’t have enough time to teach them. It is just like them coming in and right out; we need more time; they have to go. It’s a rush thing so it’s hard teaching them, because we are in a rush like. Because long time ago, they didn’t teach us like that, they taught us nice and slow and stuff like that and I think, we need to go back to that” (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

Former Teaching Assistant *Nun*, 57, also think that teaching “is totally different from what [they] grew up from” and “everything is too fast for them” now (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:26:53,3 – 00:26:53,4 and 00:27:13,4 – 00:27:16,8).

Parents also agreed. As *Gex*, 34, said “30 minutes a day is not enough” (*Gex* 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:14:53,3 – 00:15:01,6). She also thinks that as a parent she doesn’t find the time to reinforce the language at home. For *Nists’i*, 34, it is not easy to find the time for it either. He used to have more time to focus on learning the language before having his kids:

“I... it’s always hard because I know I should be doing more, like I think every T̄silhqot’ in probably thinks that, like... I think with my work I get bogged down so I don’t have the chance, the timing to really study to learn a bit more but... I think.. before I had [his first daughter], I was doing the Master-Apprentice Program... It was a good opportunity for me to learn more about the vocabulary, but also hear a lot more in kind of an immersion setting” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:04:38,0 – 00:05:44,3).

Youth also struggle to find time to dedicate to the language. Jobs, school and other activities take over the time easily, according to *Omi*, 22:

“Kids my age nowadays, they are kind of busy so it would be harder for them with jobs, schooling, a lot going on... (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:09:31,4 – 00:09:46,5)

Theme 4.10. Opportunities to learn and speak the language are limited

Since not all of the parents are fluent or are teaching their kids (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:05:32,4 – 00:05:55,8), school plays an important role on language revitalization. However, language programs need to be revised, since, according to participating community members, they “learn the same thing every year” at school (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:05:32,4 – 00:05:55,8). *Omi*, 22, also believes that the language “needs to be spoken beyond the schools”; reading and writing is good but “it needs to go out [the school]” (*Omi*, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting) and she also thinks that there are more opportunities to learn other neighboring languages like

Secwepemctsin or Dakelh (*Omi*, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Gex, 34, wished she could participate in more conversations, or even “just sit and listen to recordings”, since she “never hears the language anymore”, especially since their *?Etsu* [grandma] passed away (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:05:56,7 – 00:06:38,5 and *?Elagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:06:38,5 – 00:07:09,6). It is usually “like 10 minutes conversation here and there”, but not for a long period of time (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:05:56,7 – 00:06:38,5). *Nists’i*, 34, also thinks that a proper space to learn the language needs to be created. That would help promote the use of it and encourage speakers to use it more (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:17:52,5 – 00:19:03,0).

Theme 4.11. Language resources are limited

Community members thought that more language resources should be produced: “materials and books” (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:23:56,1 – 00:24:10,2) or recordings (*Charlie Brown*, 47, , 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:27:06,5 – 00:27:27,7) and visual and audio resources, so the kids who don’t know how to read can still learn the language by sounds; and perhaps later they can learn how to spell it too (*Jo*, 32, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:04:34,2 – 00:04:51,3); also, flashcards and signs to name objects at the school for example, like *ch’ededan* (table), *ch’edesdagh* (chair) (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:27:06,5 – 00:27:27,7).

Language teachers also found difficult to gather materials for their lessons (*Theresa*, 60, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:15:20,7 – 00:16:19,9) since “there is not a lot of curriculum”. *Filly*, 49, thought there was not enough material especially for teaching the months of November and January³ (*Filly*, 49, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1), as well as the month of May, according *Saina*, 65 (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

Students also feel that the curriculum needs to be revised (*Chel?ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:45:03,9 – 00:45:47,6): “every year is the same, just like learning the basics, the colors, the numbers, the months and the weeks...” (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 2:00,9 - 2:21,2) and teachers “just repeat things over, like from grade 8 to 12”; “it’s the same subject, it’s the same coloring lessons, [students] are not learning new” (*Chel?ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:43:56,3 – 00:44:54,4).

³ T?ilhqot’in language curriculum is usually organized by the seasons and months of the year and the cultural activities they do or events that happen in nature (cf. 3.1).

Some community members, like *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, also think that some of the language resources haven't been accessible for them. He understands why community members wanted to protect the language and traditional knowledge; however, he thinks materials should be open access for community members, and especially for people who want to learn. *Chickadee*, 39, agreed on that. She said community members can be distrustful to outsiders and might not want to share the information with the public. However, once the trust is there, they are usually open:

“[...] They need to trust the person, what they are going to do with that information [...]; how they are going to implement it; is it confidential; is it not confidential. And you know, our people are one of those too that have to visit with you, get to know you. They'll hold down to their information really tight and once they trust you and get to know you, they'll share” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:17:42,7 – 00:18:21,5).

Theme 4.12. Every day there are fewer Elders and knowledge keepers

Community members are worried about the Elders and knowledge keepers passing away every day, since the knowledge and cultural traditions are going with them (*Nists'i*, 34, LRPP #2b, 02/04/2016, Tl'esqox meeting). Many identify that as a big challenge (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:15:49,2 – 00:17:38,3; *Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:17:43 – 00:22:26). Elder *Pauline ghinli*, 82, and *Theresa*, 60, were also aware of that:

“*Guyen, nenqayni ch'ih yajaghinlhtig, nenqayni dzanh ch'ih yajelhtig hin lhajegul yajinlin*” [All the ones who spoke only the T̄silhqot' in language are no longer here] (*Theresa*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:23:53 – 00:23:57). “*Belhdan ch'elejesggan* [Some of them all died] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:23:53 – 00:23:57).

Maggie, 76, realizes that and regrets not spending more time with some of the Elders before they pass away (*Maggie*, 11/09/2016, CO#4, 00:04:41,2 – 00:06:10,9) or before they get sick and are not able to share their knowledge with others anymore (*Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:13:30,8 – 00:13:35,2), like *MJB*, 68, commented about her mom *?Etsu ghinli*, 92: “she can't share with us” anymore since “she is in her own life” (*MJB* 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:02:11,7 – 00:03:10,9).

Even if Elders are still around, they may also forget the stories, as *Theresa*, 60, told about her own experience working on language projects. She realized that Elders needed to be recorded so those stories didn't get lost (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:29:25,4 – 00:30:47,6). *Nundi*, 69, who has been recording community members for the last decades believed that it is essential to record the Elders and fluent speakers to save not only the language but the traditional knowledge and stories (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:35:21), as well as the 'old Tsilhqot'in' that it is still spoken by the older generations:

“The full pronunciation, if they still want say it, the short-cut way, it's alright aye? But full pronunciation is the best, I think. And, a dictionary should be done with somebody older. Record it. [...] And I asked somebody older than me, and he agreed with me [...] Ah, that's *gotta* be done, the dictionary, aye? With older people. Before they are gone, aye? And, when making a dictionary, you don't want to rely on the younger ones. You'd rather go with the older ones that speak really fluent. [...] Recordings are important part” (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10 00:31:58 – 00:35:21). [...] making a dictionary, what, what you have to do, I think, the linguist *gotta* be there, and [...] when you record somebody older, you record one word, you record slower, say it slower, and even slower. So, they don't miss that pronunciation. Right now, I see the short-cuts. Lots of short-cuts” (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:31:16).

Theme 4.13. Language teaching methods are obsolete

Participants commented on the language teaching methods. *Jo*, 23, felt that they should be revised and matched to the students' needs:

“People do repeating; they don't really teach us how to say sentences or... [...] go and do something that is more fun, hands-on, not just sitting there and repeating...” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:07:32,4 – 00:08:06,6).

Theresa, 60, recognizes that it could also be the teachers' personality, since “a lot of them are quiet” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:49:53,8 – 00:50:58,3).

Nundi, 69, commented that children “come back from school” and they “say quite a few words” (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10). However, even if they learned how to read and write, they cannot speak it properly, as *Pauline ghinli*, 82, explains:

“[Community member] *besqi ?inlhanx, nenqayni ch’ih belh yawêstîg qe?ast’in. Jida... nenk’ed jidagwededli, ?eyed gwech’iyastig chuh ?ast’in, jigwas?in. Gan lhajid, lhajid jiyawêstîg gulih selhnih* [I was trying to speak the Tâsilhqot’in language to [community member’s] child. He told me, ‘I learned to write it, and I can read it. But I cannot speak it’” (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:22:39 – 00:23:02).

Theme 4.14. Education and school requirements hinder language teaching

Language teachers believe that the best way of learning the language is doing cultural activities on the land but that can become complicated under the school regulations (*Saina*, 65, and *Filly*, 49, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1); according to language teachers *Saina*, 65, and *Filly*, 49, school protocols and rules make it quite difficult to take the students outside the classroom:

“Sometimes we are not allowed to take them outdoors, that’s what I find but I think we just *gotta* plan what we want to really do with the kids, because I think outdoors is really good for them; you can really learn” (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

Kalikala, 39, thinks that that flexibility should be reflected on the curriculum too. She would like to see, especially in the ‘band schools’, not only “the languages” but their “traditions of preparing hides, and smudging, picking berries and fruits and sage”, as well as bringing the Elders to get together with the youth so they can learn from them (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:06:23,5 – 00:08:22,7).

Theme 4.15. Expertise is needed to support the language revitalization efforts

Chickadee, 39, thinks that finding experts is another current challenge for communities:

“Needing more experts, like... we don’t have enough people out there, you know, I think each community has somebody special, like you are our special [language specialist]... [laughs] Helping us out, your know, doing the... finding all those resources and see what we have and what else is out there and assisting us in our cultural activities and camps” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:15:49,2 – 00:17:38,3).

Theresa, 60, also thinks that recruiting knowledge keepers that have the appropriate teaching skills sometimes can be challenging (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:37:22,5 – 00:38:29,6).

Participating community members also mentioned the language itself as a big challenge: they find it difficult to learn and the existence of different dialects doesn't make it easier.

Theme 4.16. The Tsilhqot'in language is difficult to learn

Another challenge mentioned by community members was the high level of complexity of the language. Fluent speakers considered that speaking the language is easy for them, since they grew up in it, but can be hard to learn by the younger generations, as *LM*, 78, and *Saina*, 65, commented:

*“Gwagwélʔiny nágwéninyúd hínk'ed ʔejedítš'íny gubudilhqed hínk'ed, belhdán gweqa júnján ʔets'én jíd jégúwézilh xájégúlih gwéchéz lha gájedešnih”*⁴ [It is easy if you try, asking someone who knows the language] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:28:41).

Nenqayni ch'ah yaltig gu k'es gagwelʔiny. Guyen, k'anijalilh hin dzanh guts'en gagwetalnalh sagunih, xanx? [It is easy for us to talk in the language but it might be hard for the younger people, right?] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:29:11).

Yaniz danh gubenilhyax ʔeyen gubagwelʔiny hany [From way back...when you are raising the kids, they learn easy] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:29:40).

Elder *Pauline ghinli*, 82, and her sister *Theresa*, 60, agreed on that:

“Jan... lha jjegwedulʔanx jegut'in. Gwechugh gagwelnah” [They do not want to learn. It's too hard for them]. *ʔAn*, [community member's name], *ʔeyen, ʔeyen chuh lheʔagulhched t'agultin šelin, ʔeyen chuh, ʔeyen hinchuh gagwel... bets'en gagwelnah helish ghangh* [Although (community member's name) is quite old now, she still finds it's difficult] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:30:44).

And even fluent speakers sometimes feel they don't know it all:

⁴ Tsilhqot'in orthography showing tone, transcribed by William Myers.

“*Sid, lhe?agulhah lha ?egwiyenešen hanh*” [There are quite a few things I do not know about] *Lha, ?egu... gu ne-uncle dinih, gu auntie, or your step- or your father-in-law* [Such as when you say ‘your uncle’, ‘auntie’, ‘step or father-in-law’]. *Gwatish ?egun gagwelnah... gagwel?iny sagunih, gan, gwatish lhajid shuh...gu jidinlish ?egunk’ed. ?An lhes, ?inlhes dinaž helish*” [Sometimes it’s difficult... it must be easy, but, sometimes you can’t... unless you write it down. And then, the word becomes long] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:30:44 – 00:32:14)

That was also commented by *?Elagi*, 39. She felt that even those who are actually knowledge keepers always feel like they don’t know enough, like for example her mom (*?Elagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:44:49,8 – 00:44:56,0). She recalled that when her mom was living with her grandma, she could not understand “10 words a day” (*Theresa*, 60, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:31:40) and that is why she says she is “60%” fluent (*Theresa*, 60, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:43:53,8 – 00:44:02,2), even though she is fully “fluent, first language” and “linguist” and still has “an incredible amount of vocabulary and probably lifestyle connection” (*?Elagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:44:04,6 – 00:44:48,7)

Chel?ig, 48, also thought the syntax of the language is very “poetic” and different to English and sometimes might seem complicated:

“[...] Just knowing that the syntax of our language is very poetic and when we speak [laughs] we are very poetic if you were... Like when my dad, when he starts speaking in a very old Tšilhqot’in you hear him speak like he is singing like it’s a flow of... like he is singing, but that is how we used to speak and if you were to translate is very poetic, and so from the translation from what people used to translate to English a lot of it is missing” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:05:03,6 – 00:06:57,1).

Kalikala, 39, expressed a similar opinion and compared Tšilhqot’in to French. She found the language fast and difficult to pronounce:

“[...] French is easy compared to Tšilhqot’in. Yeah, it’s like all done with the tongue, you know, I can’t even do most of it... [laughs] even when I was younger, your tongue would be easier to pronounce. But I think as you get older, you are like ‘what?’ you know, and then it’s really fast so... I can pick words here and there but, my mom

speaks really fast [laughs] and then there is slang too (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:25:12,9 – 00:25:47,9).

Gex, 34, made the same comparison:

“[...] Especially with how many irregular verbs there are. With French there is the common ones and then there is like a few irregular ones where... In T̄silhqot̄in it is like all irregular” [laughs] (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:22:24,8 – 00:22:41,4).

Her mom and language teacher *Theresa*, 60, also thinks that the language structure can be complicated to learn and also to teach:

“[...] Ours is so complex like there’s so many irregular or traditional... traditional grammar? Because somebody was trying to teach [...] the image instruction with pictures and then learning the nouns the verbs and the postpositions, and they put it together and make sentences orally and stuff but it doesn’t work. It changes. The verb changes, you know what I mean? So I found that not to be the best way of doing it but it is a way of doing something” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:33:33,6 – 00:35:08,9).

Elder *MJB*, 68, also had examples about that:

“Who is this?, *nendad ninlin*; *nendad nadih*, there is two of them; *nendad ninlin*, might be just one person; *nendad nadih* more people. That’s how I was telling [her daughter]. She was saying ‘this is our land’. She was saying different way, and I told her ‘that’s not how you say it’. I said ‘that is just one person’ [laughs] (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:15:31,3 – 00:15:39,3).

Her other daughter thought that there is “easy and hard” language and she still “needs to learn the hard [part]”, “the words that I can’t say” (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:22:04,0 – 00:22:17,0). As her mom said, it hard for the tongue if the person hasn’t been raised in the language:

“You put your tongue in a table and hit it with a hammer [laughs] Your dad he says that [laughs] (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:22:16,9 – 00:22:23,3).

Nun, 57, also mentioned the difficulty of the tongue movements; according to her, “you gotta lose your tongue to get the sounds out” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:23:25,3 – 00:23:28,8), which *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, found hard:

“It’s difficult, because like the... the tongue. It’s lazy speaking English. *Tsilhqox*, *Dasiqox*, you know like... I feel that *sechanalyagh*, you know you gotta hold you tongue and your teeth a little bit... yeah, *Tsilhqox*... like yeah, it’s like it is, it’s a working language. And then I think, because we don’t speak it change it our features too, ‘cause we are not using the glottal or not, our voice even is different because we are not exercising our vocals the same way... (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:50:49,7 – 00:51:28,3).

According to *Tay*, 23, “obviously it’s not” easy to learn the language (*Tay*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:12:48,9 – 00:12:58,3); however, her sister *Rissa*, 24, and cousin *Jo*, 23, thought that it really depends on each person and how much knowledge they have already:

“In between mostly, I guess if you already know the basics you can catch on a little bit more, but if you don’t know it is kind of hard to pronounce certain things or read it” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:09:45,9 – 00:10:21,3).

“It kind of depends on some people... (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:12:03,5 – 00:12:37,0). [...] Everybody has a different pace with learning... so sometimes it’s easier, sometimes it’s not” (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:12:37,0 – 00:12:49,0).

Some community members found it “pretty easy” (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:23:18,7 – 00:23:21,2 and 00:22:38,5 – 00:22:39,6; *Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:22:39,6 – 00:22:46,8) and mentioned that even non-community members learned it (*Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:20:14,5 – 00:20:20,8). For *Roper*, 44, it is “quite easy” and she thinks that if she “can learn it, so can anybody else” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:20:20,7 – 00:20:38,9). *Blondie*, 57, thought the key to “split it up” and look at the meaning of the parts of a word:

“*T̄silhqot’in*. Proper way to do that one. *T̄si*, rock, *lhhhh-qox... t̄si*, rock, *lhhhh*-mountain, *qox, qox*, range, *t’in*, people. *T̄si-lhxxx-qox-t’in*. Split it up. They’ll understand every word” (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:07:08 – 00:07:16).

Theme 4.17. The T̄silhqot’in language presents different dialects

The T̄silhqot’in people feel “all one [...], as a whole” because they all speak the same language (*Chel̄pig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:50:49,4 – 00:51:18,4); however, although “all the Elders can talk and understand” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:35:56,9 – 00:38:28,7), several variations or “dialects” can be identified (*Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:36:10 – 00:37:01; *Chel̄pig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:51:26,8 – 00:51:38,5; *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:35:56,9 – 00:38:28,7). *Blondie*, 57, noticed that “Nemiah [Xeni Gwet’in] or Anaham [Tletincox] got a different dialect than Stoney [Yunešit’in]”, since they drop the nasal sounds (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#11, 00:02:17 – 00:02:41) and *Nundi*, 69, also mentioned other kinds of variations depending on the different areas:

“Through the years, I, ah, different reserve got speak a little bit differently. From here and Nemiah and Redstone. Little bit different. And it, it’s alright, those, aye? Like, ah, car, like *tižqiz*, and Anaham *tižqaz*, Redstone, same way. And ah, that’s... a lot of them are alright aye? Like, corner of a building, *ʔets’ish*. And there’s *ʔests’ish*. Those are alright” (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:30:44).

According to *ʔElagi*, 39, even different families may present different variations (*ʔElagi*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:36:00,6 – 00:37:22,1) or sometimes it can be even be individual ways of speaking (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:48:20,5 – 00:48:43,6; *Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:34:51,0 – 00:34:53,3)

Rissa, 24, also mentioned that there is the “old T̄silhqot’in” spoken by the Elder generations and a “modern” way use by the younger ones (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:20:49,3 – 00:21:10,9). However, retired language teacher *Theresa*, 60, recognized between laughs that, although she accepts the different dialects, sometimes she “can’t accept the younger generations’ dialect” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:33:34,5 –

00:33:43,1). *Jo*, 23 commented that people sometimes would also adapt words into a “more English”-like way too (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:26:27,0 – 00:26:52,9).

These dialects or differences often become a challenge for learners (Gex, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:35:30,1 – 00:36:00,7; ?Elagi, 39, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:36:00,6 – 00:37:22,1). *Jo*, 23, found some discrepancies, especially with the language teachers at the schools, that got her confused:

“I went to three..., four T̂silhqot’in teachers and sometimes this T̂silhqot’in teacher says this way and another T̂silhqot’in teacher says his way and I am confused, what is the right way of saying it and my grandparents... when I bring my T̂silhqot’in book home and I have to talk with my grandparents, and they help us, we learn from them but they look at our work and say ‘what is this?’, that is not how you say that, that’s is not how you pronounce that, or that’s not the worked for that, it is like competing to... I don’t know... (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:24:26,1 – 00:25:43,1).

Chickadee, 39, has also had similar experiences and she would like to see teachers and fluent speakers showing more accepting attitudes towards the different variations:

“I think that [dialects] can be a challenge because... I learned T̂silhqot’in, you know from my mom and dad; I learned it that way at school. I’ve learned a certain way how to write it and say and speak it and then when you go to another community, they are like ‘no, that’s not how you say it, this is how you say it, no that’s not how you write it, this is how you write it’ an then you are like ‘oh’ [laughs], and then sometimes that can cost a little bit of frustration, and when I went to school in town, that’s what I run into. Our T̂silhqot’in teacher said ‘no, you are wrong’, you are learning it my way, this is the way I am teaching it, so there was not like an ‘oh yeah, that’s how you say it, this is the way I say it, this is how we learned ok, how are we going to...’ you know, to work with that together so... Our T̂silhqot’in teachers need to be ok with how we learn it and be able to accept that in, say ok, there are... there is different ways of, saying things and communicating that and writing it” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:30:14,8 – 00:30:23,3). “I remember I had two girls when I went to school that spoke it fluently, wrote it fluently and they were always having... you know, going back and forth with the language teacher and actually... I guess that frustrated her, because they were young, youth, they were like

16, fluent speakers, she was fluent and then they were not quite on board with each other [laughs] So that was interesting to see and then... disrespecting... And learning from each other, that's what it should be, learning from each other and I think it was kind of upsetting too from my friends and they were my cousins, being told 'no', you know, 'we are not going to do it your way, this is how you learn it and how your parent, or how the T̄silhqot'in teacher told you how you are going to do this way, so just being happy that they learned it would it being good too, to say 'ok, yeah, this is how you say it, this is how I say it, let's learned it both ways'. That's what I would like to see. I would prefer to be it that way anyway" (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:33:25,7 – 00:34:45,0).

The dialect topic also brought up discussions about the possibility of standardizing the language. Some participants thought that developing a standard written code (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:30:14,8 – 00:30:23,3) and a dictionary would be helpful for teachers to keep coherence when teaching the language (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:27:45), whereas others think that there is no need of developing a standard language since T̄silhqot'in was traditionally an oral language, as *Nists'i*, 34, explained:

"[...] Everyone can have their own kind. They don't really care to standardize it. It's oral language to begin with; it should just be spoken and... and if my sound and my tongue is different than your tongue, so be it... [laughs] If our... my community uses a nasal to express things, it's ok" (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:47:32,4 – 00:48:17,9).

Finally, participating community members also mentioned that today's new life may bring new challenges to learn the language.

Theme 4.18. There are many distractions nowadays

As *Nists'i* expressed when developing the Vision Statement under the Language Revitalization Planning Program, "we are distracted so much" nowadays (*Nists'i*, LRPP #2b, 02/04/2016, Tl'esqox meeting) and technology is one of the new "distraction" (*Saina*, 65, and *LM*, 78, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:09:43 – 00:09:57; *BW*, 61, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:26:34,5 – 00:27:59,3; *Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:03:00 – 00:03:26; *Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:05:33 – 00:05:43; *Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:14:36,2 –

00:14:52,5; *Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:08:18,1 – 00:08:33,9; *MJB*, 68, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:19:12,1 – 00:19:33,7; *Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:14:01,1 – 00:14:06,2; *Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:26:16,1 – 00:27:25,5). According to them, computer games, I-pads and TV keep them off from not only learning the language but communicating with each other. As *Dothy*, 64, explains, family moments, as dinner time, when they would have talked and told stories before, have changed today, because of those new “distractions”:

“*Yagh, ?eteghadinh chuh lha ?elhelh tediltš’ish. Yax, yagh, T.V. ts’en gwe?iyash, yagh, nents’eyan belh [laughs] Denish. Lha ?elhelh yats’elh... xedint’ah dzanh ?eyed ch’ed?edan k’abah tesedex hadenish [laughs] Guyen dzanh saxgwedeltish denish, ?eyed ?eteghanyilh ?eyed, yagh, yaghunlhtig lhesnish. Nenk’ed ?alh?adinh. ?Undidanx gats’at’in, ?elhelh tets’edilhtš’ish, ?ets’eyan. Yagh, nats’egwelnig te?azt’in sanh*” [When we are going to sit down to eat we separate and one goes to the TV instead of the table (laugh) and he is the only one left at the table (laugh). Why should we talk when we are going to eat? This is true because Elders long ago sat together and eat and tell stories] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:08:53 – 00:09:59).

Nundi, 69, pointed out that the language of the technology is English, too, so this doesn’t help promoting the learning of the Tšilhqot’in language:

“*K’andzin chuh, yagh, gwechugh TV ts’eninlh. Midugh dzanh ch’ih yats’elhtig. ?Eyi dzanh jeguzilhtš’an. Guyi, yagh, guy yagh gubatš’uqig, guyi, yagh internet ch’ed jegwenilh?in say... sayt’insh, yagh, ?esqax, k’an. Gatš’i hilin gant’i jalilh. ?Eyi dzanh jeyuzilhtš’an. Lha gwechugh nelh yajelhtig lagunt’ih. ?Eyi, midugh dzanh ch’ih yagwetig*” [Today they are looking at TV and speaking in English, they are only listening to the English, they are only listening to the English language. Things they buy for them they might be looking at the internet with it, almost all of them have it in their hands. They only listen to it and it seems they don’t talk to you enough. They only listen to English language] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:04:00 – 0:04:35).

Teacher *Saina*, 65, also thinks “technology is taking over” even at the school and she thinks is “it’s better if they leave [their devices] at home” (*Saina*, 01/22/2016,

FNLTPD#1). As Braids, 72, said parents are also on to those “gadgets” and sometimes they are keeping them of carrying out their responsibilities:

“Nenduwh k’anijalih, gulh town niyah, lhajid nenjužuwêlhts’an gulih. Gan ?eyed, yagh ch’ed jan gajet’in. Belhdan ?ejalhqwes. Gagwedanish jigwenil’in. Gulh xenesch’osh hast’insh. [unclear] ch’ed nižinlan, nesqi nats’aghetilhchud sin lha gunezeghuzax lhesnish, gun sesqi. Gant’i ghagwedanish gwezlin. Lhes ya?en, tintowh, gadinish, gun yu?en jid gunzun. Lha nendid jašlih chu” [Now they are always on the cellphone, computer, that is the only communication they have, they are not paying attention. I get mad at them. My daughter might get distracted by her cell phone and somebody has to grab her daughter or she can get hit by something. It is very annoying] (*Braids*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:39:50 – 00:40:16).

Roper, 44, believed that the change should start at home:

“It starts with the parents so the parents have to tell their kids, you know, maybe you should get rid of that TV or whatever, let’s go outside for a walk, and they teach their kids as they are going for a walk what’s this, what’s that, and they ask them how you say that in Tšilhqot’in. Just give them knowledge, and just give them all the traditional teachings of the lands and everything” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:09:08,4 – 00:09:53,0).

Elder community members reported that, when they were young, they didn’t have those “gadgets” and language was not a problem then, so perhaps they should get back to that (*MJB*, 68, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:20:04,9 – 00:20:13,2; *Dothy*, 64, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:06:43 – 00:07:04 and 00:28:09 – 00:28:28). *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, commented on that:

“I feel it would be positive like I mean, all the kids, I mean, if we had no power for a month, I bet you everybody was starting to speak Tšilhqot’in, because there would be no more TV, no more games, they have to speak” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:31:21,4 – 00:34:01,8).

Before they used to spend more time on the land without any technology, just “swimming or, skating or fishing, picking berries” (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:20:13,2 – 00:20:27,4), and “telling stories”:

“When you are out on the land a lot of stories come up. When you at home the TV is on or whatever, people are doing their own thing; you are not sitting and chatting and telling stories, as much as you would if you were out on the drive and getting triggered by the land” (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:19:57,5 – 00:20:15,0).

Saina, 65, agreed and said that they try to do that with their grandchildren, just bring them out to the land, but the electronics is a constant “fight” with the youth; she told this story about going hunting with her grandson:

“My... [grandson], he went hunting with us out there and... I didn’t really watch him, but we all got in the truck and we went way in the bush and we went way in the bush and we were hunting and I didn’t know he brought his iPad, I didn’t see it with him I should have checked his pockets before I put him in the truck, but I really didn’t check him, I thought he knew. So we went in the bush and [husband’s name] got out and he went behind a mountain and there is like five big deers, point deers, they are all running around my truck and he [grandson’s name] is in the back seat, tititititi... [all laugh] playing with his iPhone. [grandson]! Hurry up! Those deer running around my vehicle. Get your gun! By the time he got out all the deer was gone [all laugh] and I told him, jeez, if I stay with you, I’m going to starve [all laugh] you and your iPad... [laughs] That’s what happened to me so... [...] I didn’t tell [her husband’s name] about it, he probably would have hang his I-Pad somewhere in a tree [all laugh] (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

6.2.3 What strategies can be used for language teaching/learning?

In this section, I will present community perspectives on language teaching/learning strategies. The following themes will be presented:

- Theme 4.19. Collectiveness and community engagement need to be promoted
- Theme 4.20. Elders need to be engaged in the language projects
- Theme 4.21. Youth need to be engaged in the language revitalization process

- Theme 4.22. Families need to be engaged in the language learning process
- Theme 4.23. Sharing between communities needs to be encouraged
- Theme 4.24. Time of language exposure needs to be increased
- Theme 4.25. We need to be respectful when teaching and learning the language
- Theme 4.26. The pride of being T̓silhqot'in needs to be promoted
- Theme 4.27. Language programs should cover students' needs and interests
- Theme 4.28. Language learning should start at a young age, even during pregnancy before children are born
- Theme 4.29. The mentor-apprentice approach is appropriate for securing intergenerational transmission
- Theme 4.30. Language programs should be based on active learning and hands-on cultural activities on the land
- Theme 4.31. Language immersion strategies should be applied
- Theme 4.32. The Total Physical Response (TPR) approach may be useful for teaching some aspects the language
- Theme 4.33. Reading and writing skills in the language should be developed
- Theme 4.34. Listening and body language reading skills should be developed
- Theme 4.35. Storytelling should be used as language teaching strategy
- Theme 4.36. Art, visual and audio materials can be used for language teaching

According to the community members, revitalizing the language is a collective responsibility and all Yunešit'in Elders, youth and their families should be engaged. Communication with other communities should be promoted to enhance the language teaching strategies by sharing their experiences.

Theme 4.19. Collectiveness and community engagement need to be promoted

Just like for promoting the use of the language (Theme 2.37), language teaching also entails shared responsibilities. The Vision Statement developed by the Language Committee under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan Program shows a “collective approach”, where everybody at every different level needs to be on board – “individual, family, community, administration and nation”:

“Every T̓silhqot'in – every generation from unborn child to Elder – is responsible for maintaining their connection to the people, earth and ancestors. It is the responsibility

of the individual, family, community and nation to accept the responsibility of bringing the language to life.

[...]

5. Our collective approach to successfully revitalizing the language is multifaceted. Language is, as culture, in constant flux and we must be open to creating new words to express ourselves.

6. Collectively, we will connect the people to the land that nurtures us.

7. We will embrace every generation as responsible for transmitting the language to future generations.

8. We will delegate roles between the individual, family, community, administration and nation.

[...]

11. And, as strong willed and spiritual people, we will continue to support each other in cultural regeneration” (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016).

Chel?ig, 48, also commented on the idea of the “circle”, where everybody in the community ought to become involved and to have their own role in the process (*Chel?ig*, 48, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting). Therefore, all need to work together (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:48:18,6 – 00:50:43,7) and “community engagement” becomes essential (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:19:00,8 – 00:19:28,9) According to *Juna*, 58, everybody should stand together:

“*Sid sets’en ?eguh, nendid, yagh, ?ech’ilh?ah, um, nenjan nexwedeni tah, nendan su nenqayni ch’ah yalh?ig gagunlhchugh gubets’en ?igwedil?anx*” [To me in this ending version, in the community here we have to gather all the people who speak their language fluently and use them for future teachers along with Elders, teacher and youth to stand together] (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:17:43).

And the same was commented by *Chickadee*, 39:

“Everybody has a responsibility, especially the language speaking people, that really falls heavily on their shoulders I think; you know our Elders, our parents, our language teachers, and even us, as teachers or even; it takes a community to raise a

child; let's all do it together" (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:46:55,0 – 00:47:22,6).

However, due to the challenges families still face, *Nists'i*, 34, doesn't see community members ready "to really tackle how to deal with it as a collective" (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:12:31,5 – 00:15:56,4). This sense of collectiveness seemed to be more common in the past, according to *LM*, 78, *Saina*, 65, and *Filly*, 49:

"*Qungh chuh ?elhelh ?ajet'in, qungh ?ajegwelh?insh. K'andzin... k'andzin ?eguh lhajid nelh ?ats'ut'in guyah*" [People working together to make a house, right today one couldn't help you] "*Gan winda qex nenilh?iz*" [They are looking at you through the window] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:22:59). "*Se?inkwel ?eyed, ?eyed gwayalhtig hat'ish, xeded chuh*" [My mom use to talk about that also] *?Ilhetah... ?inlhed dzin dzanh qungh ?ats'egwelh?insh sats'et'insh sanh, ?elhelh ?ajet'in* [they used to use to build a house in one day helping each other] (*Filly*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:23:10 – 00:23:17). *Ha?anh* [yes] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:23:17).

Community unity needs to be built up for language teaching too (*Chel?ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:30:16,3 – 00:32:00,4) and, according to *Chickadee*, 39, support needs to be provided since the children are born: "daycare, preschool", school staff, and language teachers need to be "on board" [...] (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5). *Saina*, 65, can see a big difference nowadays: "long time ago it was just teachers working on the language; it is nice to see that today there are more people involved" (LRPP #3, 03/04/2016, Xeni Gwet'in meeting).

Theme 4.20. Elders need to be engaged in the language projects

One of the big picture goals identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was "(C) bridging the language gap between generations" and one the strategies developed for that was to "(C3) engage Elders in the language and culture programs" through the following actions: "recording and transcribing conversations; storytelling and songs; invite Elders to school to do traditional activities (cutting fish, meat, making tools), encourage conversations between Elders and students; visiting Elders at home; and learning the prayers from the Elders (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan). This strategy was considered

a priority and received most of the votes from the Language Committee members (LRPP doc#1, 03/29/2016, Community Priorities).

Another action identified under another the big picture goal “(A) increase the number of speakers” was “to engage the Elders” in the language programs for children. Participating community members agreed (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting; *Saina*, 65, 03/11/2016 FNLTPD#3) and considered that engaging the Elders in the projects was one the key strategies for Tšilhqot’in language revitalization in Yunešit’in (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5).

According to *Theresa*, 60, there was a time when the Elders’ knowledge was not “treasured”, or at least that was what her late brother thought and he always insisted they needed to be recorded (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 C0#19, 00:38:42,4 – 00:39:23,3). *Nun*’s husband had the same thought (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:37:45,1 – 00:38:02,5). However, *Theresa*, 60, thinks that that is coming back and people realize that Tšilhqot’in people themselves are the ones who know to be Tšilhqot’in and can teach it (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 C0#19, 00:39:28,3 – 00:40:16,0).

All participants think it is essential to learn from their Elders (*Britt*, 25, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:12:19,8 – 00:12:30,4; *Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:19:12,1 – 00:19:33,7). They are the knowledge keepers, “they lived there” (*Dani*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:12:03,8 – 00:12:19,9) and it is through them “those stories are still speaking” (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#11 00:08:10 – 00:08:20; *Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:19:24,7 – 00:20:27,2). Elders are important for teaching the proper way; “they know all the medicines” (*Dani*, 28, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:12:03,8 – 00:12:19,9) and some “might know a lot more than just the [school] teacher[s]” (*Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:12:39,2 – 00:12:54,0). It is good to engage all of them since they all may hold different knowledge (*Braids*, 72, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:10:25 – 00:10:42). *Kalikala*, 39, also thought that helping the Elders get together with the youth would “make them feel they are useful again” (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:06:23,5 – 00:08:22,7).

Another action identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan) was to “develop mentor-apprentice programs” (Big picture goal – A. Increase the number of speakers; Strategy – A5. Develop language immersion programs for youth and adults). Many participating members mentioned that the best way to learn is having an Elder as tutor (*Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:19:17,5 – 00:19:52,7), since traditionally that was the way to

learn; “one on one with an Elder” learning the language and other cultural activities (*Rissa*, 24, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:07:51,5 – 00:08:28,3).

Participating community members also found important to engage the Elders in the school programs “to learn with the kids” (*Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:08:08,9 – 00:08:15,8), by including their visits in the curriculum, for example, dedicate the morning for the “English curriculum” and free the afternoon to “spend time with Elders” as *Kalikala*, 39, suggested (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:08:29,1 – 00:08:58,2). Elders can sit in the classroom and tell stories about different themes (e.g. salmon, deer, moose...) and do hands-on activities with the kids. “The grandfathers can teach the boys how to hunt”; “they can do that in T̄silhqot’in, “show them how to gut it and cut it” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:38:14,4 – 00:38:38,0). Elders can also teach them how to speak in public (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunēsit’in meeting) and the ones that know how to write it can teach literacy (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:08:03,7 – 00:08:08,5).

Language teacher *Saina*, 65, thinks having Elders in the classroom would be helpful for the teachers too:

“*Sid, t’agultinqi gebudesqed, gwatish lha gunēšen ?eguh nagebudesqig, ganasejededinsh*” [I ask the Elders about what I don’t know and they tell me] “*Gu, jighananjeneltinsh hayt’insh*” [The Elders will show you again] (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:37:12 – 00:37:37).

And school students also thought it would be a great idea to have Elders visiting, as they are aware that they “need to listen to Elders” (Yunēsit’in ?Esgul Grade 4-7 student, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting) to learn the language (Yunēsit’in ?Esgul Grade 1-3 student, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting). According to *MJB*, 68, this has been done in other communities, “like Bella Coola school” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:35:34,6 – 00:35:45,7).

Elders can also participate in programs outside the school organized by the youth worker, for example (*Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:10:42,6 – 00:11:23,2), language immersion camps (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting) or other traditional gatherings and events on their traditional lands, as *Juna*’s dad envisioned, according to her (*Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:38:27 – 00:39:09).

There could also be “an Elders’ group, where the younger ones participate or listen, maybe at the community hall” on certain dates; they could tell “family stories” and show

“pictures” or even organize a “dance” to catch younger generations’ interest (*Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:53:00 – 00:55:29). Other communities, like Xeni Gwet’in, organize that kind of events (*Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:55:29).

Participating youth would like to see this interaction happening between Elders and younger generations (*Omi*, 22, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:10:16,7 – 00:10:19,0 and 00:14:01,3 – 00:14:13,7) and are willing to participate (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:12:40,1 – 00:14:08,8) or even assist Elders (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:11:48,2 – 00:11:54,8; *Britt*, 22 and *Dani*, 28, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:11:54,8 – 00:11:57,9). Elders are also ready to “step up” and get engaged in the language programs (*Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:11:59,6 – 00:12:21,5; *Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:56:00 – 00:56:05; *LM*, 78, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:09:00 – 00:09:12) and answer questions (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:12:22) or tell stories (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Participating in the programs might be challenging for some Elders too. As *Dothy*, 64, points out, a lot of them have health problems that could limit their engagement (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:42:16 – 00:42:44); and according to *Theresa*, 60, some might need assistance while they teach (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:37:22,5 – 00:38:29,6) and help for building the relationship with the youth (*Omi*, 22, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Theme 4.21. Youth need to be engaged in the language revitalization process

Next generations also need to be involved in planning and developing the language revitalization efforts since they are the ones that will continue in the future with the work that has been started. *Theresa*, 60, said that is the strategy that other First Nations are following (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:46:39,4 – 00:47:31,2), and that is also one of the Roles and Responsibilities of the Language Committee under the Terms of Reference developed within the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Program was to “(d) encourage youth or volunteers to participate in activities involving language revitalization” (LRPP doc#5, 03/29/2016, Terms of Reference).

According to *Omi*, 22, they need to “catch the youth’s gaze” (*Omi*, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting), encourage them “to become teachers and then to become learners of the language, to have that bridge there” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:38:29,4 – 00:39:47,0). According to *Saina*, 65, that is the “red flag today”: “there’s not enough language teachers”; (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1);

therefore, she brings youth to the classroom so they can assist her with the cultural art projects while they learn from her (*Saina*, 04/19/2016 FNLTPD#2).

Nundi, 69, thinks that youth could also pursue their education and help develop resources for language teaching, like, for example, cartoons or animation stories:

“*Nenk’ed, yagh, T.V. ch’ed gwatish, yagh, cartoons gagunt’ih ts’enilh?in. Yagh, guyi, animation ?ats’elh?insh, ?inlhax tah jigwedal?in se?awta’ilh. ?Esqax gagunt’ih jijegwedel?anx se?awtat’ilh. Yagh, school xenjegwedilagh, gagunt’ih, gagunt’ih, yagh, jijegwedal?in, guntsel jid movie lant’ih ?ajilagh ?eyi bech’ed nenqayni dzanh ch’ih yajelhtig. Gangu ?esqax, gangu, ?esqax lah cartoon ghajenini. ?Id nexwe-language belh cartoon ?eguh, yagh, ?esqax gu?en jid, ?eyed xwe-language ?inajegwedetal?anx desagunt’ih*” [Looking at TV, someone should learn to do animation. It would be good for the kids to learn that, those that finish school should learn that. They will make a movie with the T̄silhqot’ in language spoken in it. The kids like to watch cartoons, have our language in the cartoons the kids might learn the language] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:11:05). “*?Yagh, ?inlhax tah high school xengwedilagh, gagunt’ih movie ?anali, nenqayni ch’ih. K’es legend story gant’i, yagh, animated ts’elhtsin, ?eyi nenqayni [unclear] Gangu, ?esqax, ?ilhetah jid movie lant’ih, yagh, jeyu... jeyenuwêlh?in jegušt’in. Gant’i ?alagh ?eguh*” [Someone who finish high school he-she make a movie in the T̄silhqot’ in or make animations of legend stories in T̄silhqot’ in. Make a movie where they would want to look at it] (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:18:19 – 00:18:57).

Theme 4.22. Families need to be engaged in the language learning process

Another one of the actions identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was to “engage parents for volunteering” (Big picture goal – A. Increase the number of speakers; Strategy – A1. Develop a Language Nest, A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs, A3. Develop a Head Start Program, A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities) and “(C) bridging the language gap between generations”. To achieve this, several strategies were identified and to “Create immersion programs for families” was voted as a priority by the Language Committee (LRPP doc#1, 03/29/2016, Community Priorities). Some of the potential actions for that strategy were the following: “develop language programs in a home-like setting – everyday day language (greetings, instructions, descriptions, directions, buying, selling,

eating, cooking , naming objects and places, shopping list); promote speaking the language at home –label names of objects and places at home; combine school curriculum with family activities, share resources and materials for families to use at home; develop hands-on activities so kids can learn from their grandparents (i.e. learn how to make their own tools)” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan).

All community members who took part also see the importance of engaging the families in the language learning process (*Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:21:11,9 – 00:21:14,6). *Nists’i*, 34, thinks that programs should also support the families when children are still young (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:24:55,5 – 00:26:31,9; *BW*, 61, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:05:33,4 – 00:05:42,4); if families are involved “the connection [with the language] would be stronger” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:29:55,5 – 00:30:01,5). *Nists’i*, 34, also believes that “it comes full of circle”, “[...] when you focus on the child”, it’ll “impact their parents and that generation of parents”; also, “the larger family would have to support those parents so there would be like the Elders or grandparents, creating “a triple effect” that way (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:27:58,1 – 00:28:29,1).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, and *Gex*, 34, added that the children’s language learning needs to be supported at home (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:48:18,6 – 00:50:43,7; *Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:10:30,3 – 00:10:58,1 and 00:19:17,2 – 00:25:19,3): children spend “5/24h at school”, but parents have them “for the rest 19/24h” (*Chel?ig*, 48, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting); therefore, parents should be encouraged to continue practising the language at home (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5). According to *Roper*, 44, for that to happen, opportunities to learn the language should be provide to parents who are not fluent (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:21:19,2 – 00:22:08,6).

Most of the participating members also mentioned the importance of the grandma’s role in the process of learning the language. *Charlie Brown*, 47, was convinced that children “would learn more if they have their grandma learning with them” (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:27:58,2 – 00:28:11,6). Language teacher and grandma *Theresa*, 60 suggested some ideas:

“Just start talking to them when they are babies and just switching and say *nendid nendidan?* [what is this?] [...] just look at the picture and talk about it or say what it

is or talk about it or else tell stories, you own little stories form your own childhood. Mom use to do that for us” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:28:46,4 – 00:29:21,1).

Same was pointed by *Kalikala*, 39, grandparents can tell “stories” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:19:24,7 – 00:20:27,2) and talk to them (*Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:16:09,5 – 00:16:29,3; *Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:44:00,0 – 00:45:45,0). “Grandfathers can teach the boys how to hunt”, “show them how to gut it and cut it”; and “they can do that in T̄silhqot’in” (*Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:38:14,4 – 00:38:38,0).

Theme 4.23. Sharing between communities needs to be encouraged

On the Terms of Reference document developed by the Language Committee under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Planning Program, we can read that the purpose is “to bring [...] communities – Tl’eqox, Xeni Gwet’in, and Yunešit’in – together and empower the Language Committee to work in collaboration towards our common goal: language revitalization”. The Language Committee is “mandated to promote the implementation of the Language Plan developed by all three communities” (LRPP doc#5, 03/29/2016, Terms of Reference) while acting “on the Vision Statement” (LRPP doc#5, 03/29/2016, Terms of Reference).

Communities may be in different stages regarding language revitalization (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting) and present different ideas to address the language revitalization strategies (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting). Therefore, it can be beneficial “to share information with other groups” and learn from each other’s experiences (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting). Youth *Omi*, 22, said that she liked listen to knowing “everyone’s opinion and going to the different communities and hearing what they had to say” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:19:18,5 – 00:19:30,1).

Other community members also commented that it is always “nice to see people from different communities working together” (*Nun*, 57, LRPP #3, 03/04/2016, Xeni Gwet’in meeting), “language masters getting excited” (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:16:19,8 – 00:17:08,1) and teachers sharing year plans and language materials (Filly 04/19/2016 FNLTPD#2 and 03/11/2016 FNLTPD#3).

Participating community members are also open for non-community members to participate, learn and share in the community: “anybody in the world could come here

and learn” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:46:11,4 – 00:48:09,7). As *Chickadee*, 39, said, it doesn’t matter if they are not T̄silhqot’in, they should be a part of that language revitalization too (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:36:56,2 – 00:37:28,0). Like her husband, “he is not Shuswap and he is learning Shuswap” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:37:35,1 – 00:37:58,6). She thought that having a “second language is good”: “it could be French, could be T̄silhqot’in, Shuswap, Carrier; it doesn’t matter” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:37:59,5 – 00:38:51,0,).

Theresa, 60, thinks that non-T̄silhqot’in people are usually interested in learning (*Theresa*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:36:15). In fact, as *Nists’i*, 34, said some non-T̄silhqot’in students do choose the T̄silhqot’in language over French at school (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:42:31,8 – 00:43:06,0) and *Nun*, 57, also remembered bringing non-First Nation students to Xení and they would learn the language (*Nun*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

As at the Nation level, *Nists’i*, 34, also mentioned some of the roles that the T̄silhqot’in National Government (TNG) could have:

“I guess what I saw sort of more of the Nation is in trying, I guess, link itself up with universities to see... get more the professional involvement, whether is like linguists, teachers or people that can really actively help on the research side or collecting materials and... that’s where I saw the Nation fit” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:51:14,5 – 00:53:27,2).

Community members also commented on the language teaching initiatives and the approach they should follow.

Theme 4.24. Time of language exposure should be increased

Many agreed that the time that non-fluent community members are exposed to the language is not enough and it should be increased. *Gex*, 34, wishes she could be listening to constant conversation (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:05:56,7 – 00:06:38,5). *Juna*, 58, thinks that gatherings are a good opportunity for that since there are always many Elders and fluent speakers (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:17:43 – 00:22:26). *Chel?ig*, 48, also enjoys the opportunity that gatherings provide to visit and speak with the Elders (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:17:34,1 – 00:18:17,0).

Regarding the school, *Saina*, 65, thought that time dedicated to language should be increased since right now it “is not enough”. Students only get 45 minutes/day, 4 days/week (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

Nun, 57, also suggested possible strategies to increase the language exposure, like teaching them “at least one word per week, maybe two words, and expand it” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:35:10,5 – 00:35:31,1); or start with 2 hour language immersion (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:49:02 – 00:50:35) and move into full time immersion eventually, as *Gex*, 34, suggested (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:14:36,7 – 00:14:50,0) *Theresa*, 60, also thinks that the language exposure out of the school should be promoted, like cultural camps with hands-on activities (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:17:31,7 – 00:18:25,7) or just being on the land with the Elders while doing cultural activities as *Jo*, 23, suggested (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:08:29,1 – 00:08:58,2).

Theme 4.25. We need to be respectful when teaching and learning the language

According to the Vision Statement developed under the Language Revitalization Program 2015-2016, a respectful approach should be followed and all ways of learning should be valued (LRPP doc#3, 03/29/2016, Vision Statement). As *Nun*, 57, pointed out students need to be treated with respect so they feel comfortable: “if you are mean in teaching, the kids will back off” (*Nun*, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting). The language itself also needs to be treated with respect. We don’t want to “butcher the name[s]”, as *Nists’i*, 34, said, “like when people say ‘bananas’ for *?abenaneš* [good morning]” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:42:05,4 – 00:42:21,3). *Chickadee*, 39, also believed that language diversity should be embraced. There are different variations of speaking and writing and all of them should be respected (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:28:56,8 – 00:34:45,0).

Theme 4.26. The pride of being T̄silhqot’in needs to be promoted

Community members think that the T̄silhqot’in pride needs to be restored so children and adults feel comfortable and motivated to learn their language. “Accepting that it’s ok to be native”, and it is “something to be proud of” will encourage people to learn it (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:06:23,5 – 00:8:22,7).

Nundi, 69, suggested telling the children stories about “what the people did a long time ago” and “where they came from” would help make them proud (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:59:46 – 01:02:03). Language teacher *Saina*, 65, also thought that doing

traditional activities can bring some of that pride back (*Saina*, 65, 04/19/2016 FNLTPD#2). Youth *Omi*, 22, realized that “natives and non-natives (tourists) are fascinated with [the] culture and land”, so “T̄silhqot’in need to regain pride in being T̄silhqot’in” (*Omi*, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Theme 4.27. Language programs should cover students’ needs and interests

Language programs should be designed based on students’ interests so they catch their attention (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:17:59,0 – 00:17:59,8). “Different levels of language” and topics should be covered, such as “work, town, business, family and Elders’ stories” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:22:15,6 – 00:23:36,1). Times and location should also accommodate students’ schedules, especially “working people” who usually miss out on those programs (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:20:10,1 – 00:20:33,8). Different learning methods should be used to address the different ways of acquiring knowledge: some people are “visual”, others prefer to read “written” language (*Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:08:46,7 – 00:08:55,9) and others, “hands-on” activities (*Rissa*, 24, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:20:49,3 – 00:21:10,9). We also need to be aware of learning disabilities. For example, as *Kalikala*, 39, mentioned, some children may present levels of the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome so it reduces their ability to learn quickly (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:16:50,7 – 00:19:01,6).

Theme 4.28. Language learning should start at a young age, even during pregnancy before children are born

The Language Committee identified developing early childhood education language immersion programs, such as “(A1) language nest”, as one of the priorities in order to meet one of the big picture goals, “(A) increase the number of speakers”, under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#1, 03/29/2016, Community Priorities).

Language teachers also believe that children need to start learning the language when they are still young (*Filly*, 49, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1; *Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:18:46,8 – 00:19:04,6); start talking to them “when they are babies” (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:28:46,4 – 00:29:21,1; *Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:11:36,5 – 00:11:52,6) at programs like the Language Nest (*Filly*, 49, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting) so children “get a good foundation of understanding” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:09:11,6 – 00:10:49,0).

It is also easier for “children under the age of 10” to learn it (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:39:06,0 – 00:39:30,0; *Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1, 00:52:09,8 – 00:56:25,1), since when they grow it is already impregnated in their brain (*Tay*, 23, and *Rissa*, 24, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:10:35,3 – 00:11:03,1). *Maggie*, 76, believed that children “learn only by listening”, “you don’t need to teach them” (*Maggie*, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:45:25,2 – 00:45:51,1). And *Nundi*, 69, agreed: sometimes “you don’t think they are learning, but they are; they are grasping it in their head” (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:39:06 – 00:42:51). *Dothy*, 64, observed the same in her three-year-old grandchild:

“Jintsutsel danh, nenqayni ch’ah gulh yanlhtig, gwetah jighagubenilhten. Jintsel hin, ?eghal tejegwaghelchud layt’ish. Guyen, sechay, yagh, three years old sani, ?eyen sech’itah xajeyi hat’ish. ?Eguh jighanesten. Lha... gagulhghen gadenish lat’insh. Jintsel dzanh gagubinh?in ?eguh guzun yene?en. Gu, gwetah gwech’idadilhtsin, nulh tah ch’idadilhtsin, ?eyi, nenqayni ch’ah hunzih, gu ?eguh did hant’ih jighagubenilhten ?eguh gunzun yene?en” [When they are small, you speak to them in T?ilhqot’in, teach them something, they seem to catch on easily. My grand child, the 3-year old, mimics me when I am teaching him something. They quickly say it if you teach since they are tiny, it is a good way. Whatever is illustrated, you tell them what it is as you teach them, that is good] (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:03:57 – 00:04:25).

Family should also support the early childhood language development and “make a commitment to the children” (*Nists’i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:24:55,5 – 00:26:31,9) and they should be “talked T?ilhqot’in all the time by mom and dad, mostly at home” (*MJB*, 68, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:09:15,9 – 00:09:56,4; *BW*, 61, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:05:33,4 – 00:05:42,4). Their first words should be in T?ilhqot’in (*MJB*, 68, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:11:42,8 – 00:11:52,9), such as *inkwel* (mom) and *?aba* (dad) (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:30:17,1 – 00:31:15,4).

In fact, one strategy identified within the big picture goal “(A) increase the number of speakers” was to “(A6) develop language programs for pregnant women”. The main action was to “introduce language in the health programs” so parents speak in T?ilhqot’in to their babies before they are born (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan). *Dothy*, 64, also believes in the importance of speaking the language when women are pregnant:

“?Egu, nenduw h ?esqax chax ježdex danh nenqayni ch'ah gunlh yanlhtig. Gunlh nagulnig. Gu, nenduw h, ?undidanx t'agultinqi, yedaghda jaghinli ?eyen gunzun saghint'i. ?Eguh, guyi, xwech'ah jid deni ts'inlin, ganagwetadinlh sagunt'i” [When you have children in your tummy you speak to them in Tšilhqot'in. You tell them stories. Our Elders living long ago, it had to be good] (*Dothy*, 64, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:05:12 – 00:05:36).

“Sid chuh, k'esel, ?eguh jid gayenešen. Yagh, gunzun jid tenajegwaghetalchel hink'ed, deni-chanx ježdex danh, nenqayni ch'ah yats'elhtig ?egu deni južilhts'an. Nenqayni dzan h ch'ah yalhtig, guh nalgash hink'ed. Ješdlan, gu?en jid gubets'en gwagwel?iny lagwet'insh san h. Guh, nenqayni ch'ah. ?Ejužilhts'an. Nenduw h jid, gagulhchugh tegwaghel... tejegwaghelchog layt'insh. ?An, xun sin ganexwets'aghišin san h. Yagh, deni-chanx dežilts'ish dan h, yanuw h nats'eni, ?eguh ?anats'et'in. Nenqayni dzan h ch'ih yats'elhtig sagwaghint'i” [This is what I think that babies in the stomach is when they are going to catch the language, so when they are born, they can comprehend the language a lot easier. By listening they can understand easier and it is like that with us when we were babies in our stomach and Elders were in the meadows this is the only language they spoke] (*Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:31:51 – 00:32:11).

It is crucial to create and nurture that language connection with the baby. *Juna*, 58, “did that with one of the babies”: “talked a little bit and when he was born, [she] would say something in Tšilhqot'in and his eyes would turn around” and look at her (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Drumming and singing when the women are pregnant is important too, and even reading to them (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:11:58,2 – 00:12:05,3). *Nists'i*, 34, “used to sing to [his daughter] when she was in the womb” and when she was born she recognized the songs:

“I remember her pausing and crying and then she recognizes the song and then stops and then she cries a little bit more... and just wait to hear the song again so... I thought that was... you realize you can make a connection to your babies right away” (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:24:55,5 – 00:26:31,9).

Nun, 57, also experienced that with her granddaughters and believed that is “a very powerful thing”:

“She used to drum away and today she is only two years old and she is also drumming and singing without us teaching her. She learned from that... even inside the womb. So I say that’s really powerful thing, you know, you have to start right from the womb I think (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:16:57,6 – 00:17:52,3) .

According to her, there should be “workshops for the moms to go to a place listen to only fluent words”, “stories”, “recording tapes”, etc. Those programs could also include traditional parenting and values that need to be taught in the language (*Charlie Brown*, 47, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting), since according to *Kalikala*, 39, not a lot of people follow them anymore (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:33:04,2 – 00:33:17,6), but she still did (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:33:21,1 – 00:34:24,4).

Theme 4.29. The mentor-apprentice approach is appropriate for securing intergenerational transmission

One of the strategies identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was to “(C4) develop mentor-apprentice programs” based on immersion activities (Big picture goal A. Increase the number of speakers; Strategy – C4. Master-Apprentice Program; LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan) and one of the actions identified was to “encourage family members to participate together” (Big picture goal C. Bridging the language gap between generations; Strategy – C4. Master-Apprentice Program, LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan).

Young community members expressed interest in this kind of program (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 01:05:41,2 – 01:05:45,1) where they are taught one-to-one by an Elder (*Rissa*, 24, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:20:49,3 – 00:21:10,9), like a “tutor” (*Tay*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:19:17,5 – 00:19:52,7) “somewhere in the community, like in the library”, “once a week”, for example.

Theme 4.30 Language programs should be based on active learning and hands-on cultural activities on the land

One of the actions identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan was to “do more hands-on activities both for children and adult language programs” (Big

picture goal A. Increase the number of speakers; Strategy – A5. Develop language immersion programs for youth and adults; Big picture goal C. Bridging the language gap between generations; Strategy – C2. Create immersion programs for families; LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016). Community members also agreed that language programs should be based on interactive activities (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit'in meeting; *Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:20:30,0 – 00:21:35,5). Language teacher *Saina*, said that students need more “hands-on activities” (*Saina*, 65, 04/19/2016 FNLTPD#2; *Juna* 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit'in meeting) since “they are really focused on their work” when doing something with their hands, “but when you are doing paper work, it’s [...] different” (*Saina*, 65, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1). Youth *Rissa*, 24, also thought that “crafts” can be useful to teach the language (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:20:13,5 – 00:20:17,8) as that is what people used to do in the old days (*BW*, 61, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:13:45,6 – 00:14:40,6). *Maureen*, 51, taught beadwork to “16 students, from age 6 to 12”, and “they really enjoyed it” (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:14:28):

“Speak to them, and teaching them while they’re doing their crafts. Oh, they’ll listen. They’ll really get happy for themselves, when they make themselves something for them to keep” (*Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:25:14).

Blondie, 57, also suggested “rock painting”, like old pictographs of “the thunderbird with people hanging off it [...] at Farewell Canyon [Nagwentled]” (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:25:42 – 00:25:50). Children could also learn cooking with “the Elders” or “make bannock” (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:24:37 – 00:24:53), cut moose meat or gut it (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:05:44,8 – 00:06:07,6) and prepare it (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan). Youth *Rissa*, 24, and *Tay*, 23, suggested there could even be a “cooking channel” for showing how to cook “traditional foods” (*Rissa* and *Tay*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:09:48,2 – 00:09:54,9). *Nun*, 57, also think that there is a “need to bring traditional food back”. She grew up eating beaver and muskrat, but nowadays children don’t like to eat that because they are not used to it (*Nun*, 57, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1). *Filly*, 49, told similar stories from her childhood when she used to trap and eat squirrels and muskrat. She doesn’t think children like much traditional food nowadays (*Filly*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1). However, *Juna*, 58, said her kids “crave for traditional foods” (*Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:31:51 – 00:34:38).

Participating community members also emphasized that activities should be done outside; we should take the kids “take out of the house” (*Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:10:33,7 – 00:11:07,6) and “out of the classroom” too (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:39:28,3 – 00:40:16,0); “outside learning”, “that’s how we learn best” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5). “When you are out on the land a lot of stories come up, [...] we get “triggered by the land” (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:19:57,5 – 00:20:15,0). We need to “teach them the cultural part, like fishing, hunting, making hide” (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:11:09,9 – 00:11:19,3), “hunting, fishing, riding horses, deyen [or traditional medicine]” (Grade 4-7 Yunešit’in ?Egul students, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015 Community Mobilization Meeting).⁵

Some youth don’t have the opportunity to learn all that with their families (*Omi*, 22, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:14:17,5 – 00:14:26,3) since not “many people are doing that these days” (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:20:30,0 – 00:21:35,5). However, there are good teachers in the community that could share their knowledge (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:07:53).

All those activities could be done as part of the school programs (*Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:08:28,7 – 00:08:34,0). One of the actions identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was also to create the opportunity to bring the language to “different environments” (Big picture goal. B.

⁵ Other activities mentioned by participating community members were the following: “preparing hides, smudging, picking berries, fruits and sage” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:06:23,5 – 00:08:22,7) “traditional drum making, beading” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:11:45,6 – 00:12:58,8), crafts, sewing, beading, hands-on, cooking (*Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2) in the language, “games, Elders stories, [...] “sew moccasins and earrings, making indian ice cream”, “prepare fish or meat, [...] freezing it in the freezer or drying it” (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:20:30,0 – 00:21:35,5), “go camping” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:19:24,7 – 00:20:27,2), picking “dadaben” [traditional medicine] (*Braids*, 72, 11 /07/2017, CO#2, 00:37:25 – 00:37:43; *Juna*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:41:53; *Dothy*, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:37:25 – 00:37:43; LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan), Labrador Tea [*ledum groenlandicum* (Parish et al. 1996)] (*Saina*, 65, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:38:32), “pitch gum”, “balsam root”, “bulbs for flour” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:48:18,6 – 00:50:43,7), “mushrooms” (*Dothy*, 64, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:42:16), “picking berries, things like soap berries” (*Saina*, 65, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:30:06 – 00:33:29), “hunting, fishing, trapping” (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:40:25,4 – 00:40:37,2; *Filly*, 49, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1; *Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:12:34,7 – 00:12:48,4), “skinning” (*Maggie*, 76, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:38:38,0 – 00:38:42,4), “drying meat and fish” (*Saina*, 65, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:30:06 – 00:33:29), make “hide” (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:09:46), “make a dipnet” (*LM*, 78, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:34:09; *Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:07:51,5 – 00:08:28,3), bows, [...] traditional toys” (*Rissa*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:07:51,5 – 00:08:28,3), “bone arrows” (*Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:28:05,5 – 00:28:07,0), “arrow heads”, “spear heads”, “fish hooks” (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:09:46), “riding horses” (*BW*, 61, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:13:45,6 – 00:14:40,6), “tanning hides” (*Matilda*, 60, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:11:31,7 – 00:11:38,2), “making moccasins, beadwork” (*Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:11:44,5 – 00:11:48,8).

Document the language and secure language resources; Strategy – B5. Review language curriculum and language instruction and evaluation methods; LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan), especially outside the classroom (SC#1, 11/24/2017, Yunešit'in ?Esgul; *Omi*, 22, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting; *Filly*, 49, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit'in meeting). *Nists'i*, 34, remembered the “bitterness” being indoors at school (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:28:43,2 – 00:30:47,2), and after working for about 9 years “doing culture camps and those sort of programs”, he realized that “[learning outside] really works and can be very effective:

“It’s not as structured, so there is not that built-up resistance and even the kind of, type of authority within it, like you know, in the school system you have a teacher-student relationship that it’s sort of different type of authority then having a camp or you are allowed to be yourself in nature... I mean there is rules and stuff, but it’s a different feeling of how people can communicate and what the expectations are so... I don’t think there is that built-up resistance that people would have... at least what I observed when I was with youth, you know I always used to do circles and stuff like that or I would always bring people in and then I would always encourage the youth to sort of... I mean, in a sense, they started making their own rules up and they started developing a voice for being able to talk openly, where in a classroom, you often talk to basically shut up and sit down [laughs] and listen and be obedient so... I see outdoor education as the real strong driver of building that relationship between the language and people’s relationship to the land” (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:28:43,2 – 00:30:47,2).

Saina, 65, also thought language teaching should be seasonal: “a lot of them they don’t know what happens on the land in each month, what you can do and what you can’t each month” (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1) and all seasons should be included (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:46:11,4 – 00:48:09,7) *Theresa*, 60, said that, for example, language teachers in winter teach about “underground houses” so they can probably “build [one]” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:21:07,0 – 00:21:21,9).

Name of animals and plants should be taught too. Yunešit'in students were interested in learning about birds, for example (SC#1, 11/24/2017), and Elder *LM*, 78, think it is important they know about the animals that live around:

“*Gant’i, gats’i ʔighagubenilhten guʔen jid guzun hanh. Nulh bigwenijed gats’i. Belhdan lha nulh jaʂʔin hanh. Gu chelʔig shuh lhajid gweched trust ghunlhʔin gulah hanh. Xedenilhti* [It is better to show them everything, all the scary animals, some of them don’t know the animals, you couldn’t trust the coyote also, they are wild] *Gu nundi teʔant’i, nanjez teʔant’i, ʔeyi i lha gwechugh hulht’in hanh. Guyi, cougar jeyelhdenish, ʔeyi gweched bigwenijed. Gunan nists’i ch’adinlagh* [things like lynx, fox, they are alright] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:40:40 –00:41:06).

Another action identified under the Language Revitalization Plan 2015-2016, “Big picture goal C. Bridging the language gap between generations, Strategy – C2. Create immersion programs for families was “fieldtrips to sacred sites”. This action was also identified for programs targeted for younger children (Big picture goal A. Increase the number of speakers; Strategy – A1. Develop a Language Nest, A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs, A3. Develop a Head Start Program, A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities). Language teacher, *Saina*, 65, said that students asked to go visit traditional places like “Lady Rock that turned to stone”, “the Three Puppies” (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1) or places like *Nagwentled* ‘Farwell Canyon’ where there are pictographs (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:25:50 – 00:26:28).

Traditional places in Tʂilhqot’in should also be taught since not all children know them (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:15:28 – 00:15:34), or even the older generations (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:07:26). Place names should also be displayed on the land for people to see (*LM*, 78, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:15:34). According to *Juna*, 58, “mountains are markers of the territory” and “it is always interesting to know why it is called” like that (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Also, going for nature walks was a strategy mentioned by several members: “walk in nature as opposed to doing writing on the board” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 01:02:27,6 – 01:04:25,3) and “just teach them what kind of willow it is, or a tree, as they walk by; things like that, grass, [...] and different names” (*Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:51:27 – 00:52:04). As *Saina*, 65, pointed out “some of [the children] have never been in the bush” and she thinks it is important to show them that (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1). *Braids*, 72, suggested they could go for a walk with children and point out things, like she does with her grandchildren (*Braids*, 11/07/2017,

CO#2, 00:29:46 – 00:31:23); or collect nature items and make crafts, *Saina*'s group “picked up Red Willow branches to do a dreamcatcher” (*Saina*, 04/19/2016 FNLTPD#2).

According to *Omi*, 22, games like “scavenger hunts” and other outdoor active games would “grab [youth’s] attention” and help them learn faster (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:08:11,0 – 00:08:25,8). Same was expressed by Yunešit’in students at the sharing circle organized at the school (SC#1, 11/24/2017) as well as by other participating community members (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:05:41,7 – 00:05:44,9; (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:19:24,7 – 00:20:27,2). Teacher *Chickadee*, 39, did think games are “the best way to learn, because it’s fun!” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:26:56,8 – 00:27:01,1):

“playing games... in Tšilhqot’in, you know, like Mix and Match, let’s say animals or stuff that you see all the time and say them in Tšilhqot’in, maybe like a bingo game that has numbers that you can say in Tšilhqot’in, or if it’s animals or something, you know, I have seen actually a game, where the teacher would have all these cards, have a point system, and she hold up the card and the student would have to guess and would be like a competition thing and I thought that was pretty neat because the students enjoyed it” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:24:44,5 – 00:26:04,5).

Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh, 35, also thinks that language learning “affiliated with fun” activities, like “the tail on the donkey” “in Tšilhqot’in” and physical movement will help to engage the youth (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:46:11,4 – 00:48:09,7). *Roper*, 44, suggested that the youth worker could “do a language night with the kids, do some games and figuring out, how to say one to ten but do it into a game” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:7:36,0 – 00:08:07,3). That was, in fact, another action identified on the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan was also to organize “language activities and games in community gatherings, so children can show their language skills”, e.g. “write invitations, songs, plays, traditional dances, language games” (A. Increase the number of speakers. Strategies A1, A2 and A3 programs for younger generations; LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan).

Traditional games, like “lehal”, can also be played for learning the language, as Yunešit’in students suggested at the sharing circle (SC#1, 11/24/2017). *Charlie Brown*, 47, said that “they [children] seem to pick up at Lehal” and “they like it” (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:12:14,2 – 00:12:26,5). Drumming and singing was also suggested

by Yunešit'in students and most of the community members think that “they [will] pick [...] up quicker” all related to drumming and singing “than anything else” (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:12:30,3 – 00:12:34,6). At the school, they could teach them “the Tšilhqot'in songs that the Elders know” (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:11:45,6 – 00:12:58,8). For younger kids, “you can sing [...] nursery rhymes” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:12:46,9 – 00:12:56,0) anything “in the language” (*MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:13:01,4 – 00:13:07,3; *Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:19:42 - 00:20:08). In fact, some of the popular songs have been translated into Tšilhqot'in. However, sometimes teachers like *Saina*, 65, and *Filly*, 49, have found resistance from the older kids to sing, unlike younger students, who are usually up for singing and drumming (*Saina*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

Programs could also be “extracurricular”, “evening classes”, or “weekends”, like “mini cultural camps” or “intensive summer immersion programs” (Big picture goal A. Increase the number of speakers; Strategy – A1. Develop a Language Nest, A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs, A3. Develop a Head Start Program, A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities). “Organizing cultural camps” was one of the main priorities for achieving the big picture goal “(C) bridging the language gap between generations” and “establish frequency –yearly, seasonally”, “secure funding” and “recruit volunteers” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan; LRPP doc#1, 03/29/2016, Community Priorities). Organizing cultural camps was one of the main actives stated on the Terms of Reference (LRPP doc#5, 03/29/2016, Terms of Reference).

According to most of the participating community members, cultural camps are probably one of the best settings for learning (*Saina*, 65, 04/19/2016 FNLTPD#2; *Filly*, 49, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting) since you can do hands-on activities and show them “how to do it [referring to cultural activities]” (*Theresa*, 60, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:07:31,7 – 00:18:25,7) and keep the immersion in the language (*Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:09:47 – 00:10:21). As *Chickadee*, 39, explains that cultural camps not only provide a great place to learn the language but to learn the culture and the protocol related directly from the Elders and on the land:

“I think cultural camps are very important because cause a lot of kids nowadays are inside, want [video] games and that's not our way. We need to be out on the land, practicing our culture, you know, activities; teaching them how to do, why you do protocols; make sure we include the Elders on that, you know; it's always the Elders

teaching the youth, so it's a fun thing as well, not just to learn, classroom environment sort of thing. It's outside learning, and that's how we learn best" (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5).

Cultural protocols can be taught, like for example when you go hunting, *Theresa*, 60:

“*Belhdan hin, guyed yeqox ninlin hin, xugwalt'in ?eguh gwa yajelhtig hayt'insh. K'es, yagh, gwatish lah nadindah, yagh, lha nents'en guzuh helish lah, nats'ebish te?azt'in. Guh gagunt'ih gwa yajelhtig hayt'insh*” [some of them had to talk about the river that flows by there. Or, ah, sometimes when you hunt and you have bad luck, they would have a bath to fix it. They usually talk about things like that] (*Theresa*, 60, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:16:02 – 00:16:03).

Yunešit'in students also expressed their willing to participate in cultural camps (SC#1, 11/24/2017, Yunešit'in ?Esgul; Grade 1-3 and Grade 4-7 students, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting), which was also one of the actions identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan: “develop intensive summer immersion programs – hands-on projects, learning history through acting, traditional games, songs, traditional medicines and food preparation; themes: deer, moose, salmon... and related hands-on activities” (Big picture goal A. Increase the number of speakers; Strategy – A1. Develop a Language Nest, A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs, A3. Develop a Head Start Program, A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities; LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016).

Camping is part of the Tšilhqot'in culture (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 01:00:31,0 – 01:02:16,8) and language comes out easier when speakers are out on the land (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:36:19,7 – 00:36:42,5 and 00:35:41,4 – 00:36:09,2). With those type of programs, you can also do small groups which is always better for teaching (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:36:51,1 – 00:37:10,4) and families could be engaged (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:19:24,7 – 00:20:27,2). As language teachers pointed out, cultural camps have been organized in the past and they have been quite successful (*Saina*, 65, and *Filly*, 49, 01/22/2016, FNLTDP#1). *Theresa*, 60, commented about it:

“Suk’an, nenqayni, yagh, guyed, yagh, Nagwentled gughex nijeninah, yagh, cultural camp jegwedinh. Yagh, um, lhuy ?anats’eli, ?esqax belh yaytalhtig hawt’insh. [A while ago, T̄silhqot’in people moved and camped around Farewell Canyon, and called it a ‘cultural camp’ Ah, um, when they were fishing, they had to speak the T̄silhqot’in language to the children] (Theresa, 60, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:15:08 – 00:15:15). Belhdan lah t’ajegultin hin. Um, yagh, gwatish mus jedenilhtih, ?et̄sen-gen ?ajelh?insh. ?Eyed chuh gwa yajetalhtig hawt’insh [I mean some of them that were elderly. Um, ah, sometimes they would shoot a moose, and they would make dried meat. They had to talk about the process (in the language)] (Theresa, 60, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:15:18 – 00:15:33).

Participants consider summer may be the easier season to hold that kind of events, since winters are quite rough in the area (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:46:11,4 – 00:48:09,7; Theresa, 60, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:07:31,7 – 00:18:25,7). However, Jo, 22, said she would like to see them teaching the youth “how to survive in the winter, where [they] used to go” (Jo, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:17:53,1 – 00:18:47,0; Dothy, 64, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:06:43 – 00:07:04) and some of the winter activities like “trapping” (Theresa, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:36:19,7 – 00:36:42,5) since youth are not used to be in the bush anymore (*Saina*, 65, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

Participating community members also talked about the language teaching methods and suggested some ideas about the approach they can take. They mentioned language immersion, Total Physical Response, storytelling, and art, among others.

Theme 4.31. Language immersion strategies should be applied

Immersion strategies were voted as a priority by the Language Committee (LRPP doc#1, 03/29/2016, Community Priorities). Two of the big picture goals identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) were to “(A) increase the number of speakers” and “(C) bridging the language gap between generations”. To achieve this, several strategies based on language immersion were identified: “(A1) create a language nest”, “(A4) organize after-school language immersion activities”, “(A5) language immersion programs for youth and adults” and “(C2) create immersion programs for families”.

All community members also expressed positive opinions about language immersion and saw it as the best language teaching strategy towards language revitalization. They said this a general opinion in the communities (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:17:18,3 – 00:17:31,7). Elders (*MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:15:05,3 – 00:15:13,9; *Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:15:20,9 – 00:15:22,3; *Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:51:27 – 00:52:04) and young parents would also like to see a T̂silhqot’in immersion program at school (*Datsan*, 27, *Britt*, 25, and *Dani*, 28, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:29:48,3 – 00:29:51,6; *Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:14:36,7 – 00:14:50,0), like they do in French or English (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:11:45,6 – 00:12:58,8), and get the school staff to speak T̂silhqot’in “all the time” (*Chel̂ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:32:14,5 – 00:32:18,9; *Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:06:10,2 – 00:06:56,0). For that, extra training and opportunities to learn the language and how to teach in the language should be provided to the teachers (*Chel̂ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:32:19,8 – 00:32:36,0), like they do it in other communities (*Nists’i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:38:29,4 – 00:39:47,0), such as Bella Coola (*MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:15:22,3 – 00:15:30,4), Chase (*Saina*, 65, and *Filly*, 49, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1) and Alaska (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:11:45,6 – 00:12:58,8).

Teacher *Chickadee*, 39, would like to see immersion programs from daycare, preschool and the school grades and have language teachers on board (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5). However, retired language teacher *Theresa*, 60, knows that keeping full immersion can be difficult for teachers sometimes. Even for her, who understands the importance of immersion, it is hard not to give English translations to the students (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:26:28,1 – 00:26:45,8 and 00:35:41,4 – 00:36:09,2). It is not easy when “your surroundings are English” and “modern”, “and you don’t have a whole lot of words for modern words” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:35:41,4 – 00:36:09,2). *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, thinks that even if they are not able to go full immersion at the moment, half English and T̂silhqot’in would work for the transition (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:48:18,6 – 00:50:43,7), like they used to do some years ago (*Theresa*, 60, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:15:20,7 – 00:16:19,9). Also, creating language immersion materials can be challenging, but there are already teachers who have translated “everything into T̂silhqot’in” (*Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:36:02,8 – 00:36:18,7).

Immersion programs are quite successful with young kids (*Rissa*, 24, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:11:03,0 – 00:11:47,3) and can be applied to adults too. *Chel̂ig*, 48, envisions

courses where adult learners are “just speaking T̓silhqot’in with one another” (*Chel̓ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:30:16,3 – 00:32:00,4), doing “cultural activities like fishing, hunting and making hide, and all of that speaking the language” (*Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:10:33,7 – 00:11:07,6) and learning from mentors (*Filly*, 49, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting). Adult community members are up for it (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:23:39,9 – 00:23:42,5; *Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:05:56,7 – 00:06:38,5) and would like to try the challenge (*Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:19:56,5 – 00:20:08,6). *Nists’i*, 34, had a good immersion experience in the Master-Apprentice program he took some years ago. He felt that “the more you are immersed into it, the quicker become to learn things” (*Nists’i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:22:55,3 – 00:23:44,3). Students could learn all levels of communication: work, everyday life, talk to an Elder, listen to stories from long time ago, communicate with their parents, with their grandparents and their own family (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:22:15,6 – 00:23:36,1).

Theme 4.32. The Total Physical Response approach may be useful for teaching some aspects the language

The Total Physical Response (TPR) method has been used in language teaching for several years now. According to the participating members, it can be useful for beginner learners, where students have to act commands like *na̓zed*, (stand up) *̓sindah* (sit down) that are said by the teacher (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:12:56,0 – 00:13:01,4):

“*Gwen̓ig tah. Gu, gwetowh gagwel̓iny̓ ?eyi, ?eyi bid je?adint’insh̓ ?eguh. Like, ?esqax, ‘?Eghadilish’ dini te?adinih, gu, ‘gudin ghinyalh’ chuh.* [you could start by doing something easy. Like, you could say to children, ‘*?eghadilish*’ (come), and ‘*gudin ghinyalh*’ (come here)]. Yeah, such as stories (*Pauline ghinli*, 82, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:10:07 – 00:10:22). “*Te̓sindah’ dini te?adinih*” [you could say things like “*te̓sindah*” (sit down)] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:10:45).

Theresa, 60, commented that in “Chase” (referring to Chief Atahm School’s Language Immersion Program located in Chase, B.C.), they have successfully used the TPR method. She thinks it might work better for their language (*Secwepemctsin*) than for T̓silhqot’in (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:33:10,7 – 00:33:23,9). She recognized that the TPR method “does work” at some level for all languages (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016

CO#19, 00:27:15,4 – 00:27:33,7) if you adapt it to the different ages: “kids do a lot of jumping; they can stand on a table; it’s not nonsense to them, but for an adult it’s a nonsense thing to do” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:27:38,3 – 00:27:51,6). However, some of the commands that are usually taught are seeing as “unnecessary” by some of the Elders (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:27:59,5 – 00:28:38,0):

“[When I was teaching TPR] my mom looked at me and said, ‘I’ve never seen anybody doing this [referring to one of the commands she was saying to the students]’ (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:26:50,5 – 00:27:14,3).

This method can be useful for teaching “body parts” too, although sometimes this a complicated topic for the Elders to talk about (*Juna*, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting). The TPR method could also be used combined with cultural activities. As *Nundi*, 69, explains you could do the action while saying it and then give students time to do it (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:45:29).

Theme 4.33. Reading and writing skills in the language should be developed

As *Chickadee*, 39, commented, the Tšilhqot’in alphabet and the pronunciation of the letters can be taught; then, words; and finally building full sentences (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:45:56,3 – 00:46:51,6). Teaching grammar can be useful for some students, who have studied other languages, like *Gex*, 34, who comes from a French immersion background and knows about “verb conjugation” (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:21:15,2 – 00:22:23,1).

Translating exercises can also be used for learning the language, according to *Britt*, 25, (*Britt*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:09:32,3 – 00:9:40,8). Reading might be a preference for other students (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:16:57; Grade 1-3 Students, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting; SC#1, 11/24/2017), as according to *Omi*, 22, a lot of children visit the library regularly (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:18:05,3 – 00:18:17,7).

Repetition was also mentioned as strategy (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:18:48,9 – 00:19:09,9), as well as rewarding the students (i.e. give them stars) in order to encourage their learning (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:12:38 – 00:13:00).

Theme 4.34. Listening and body language reading skills should be developed

One of the actions identified under the 2015-2016 Language Revitalization Plan (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016) was to “model behavior and develop communication skills so children are mindful of body language – what are animals and other people telling us” (Big picture goal A. Increase the number of speakers; Strategy – A1. Develop a Language Nest, A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs, A3. Develop a Head Start Program, A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities).

Community members agreed that culturally it is important to teach children to pay attention to body language and being able to read it (*Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:17:43 – 00:18:36; *Chel?ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:09:05,1 – 00:10:33,3); “Elders tell stories and they use their tone and body language” (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting) and according to *Juna*, 58, even “Elders would get mad at you, in the community, if you didn’t say things with your body language” (*Juna*, 58, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:52:11 – 00:52:37). *Chel?ig*, 48, likes to teach her kids to do facial recognition to be able to tell what family a person belongs too (*Chel?ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:15:38,1 – 00:17:18,2).

Children should also be taught to listen; that is how it was long time ago (*MJB*, 68, 11/16/2016, CO#13, 00:07:16,7 – 00:08:38,0; *Dothy*, 64, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:24:23 – 00:29:38). According to *Nun*, 57, “listeners are fast learners” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:42:46,2 – 00:42:48,0), and they should “listen to the Elders” (*Nun*, 57, 01/22/2016, FNLTDP#1) and “parents and teachers” (Yunešit’in Grade 4-7 students, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting). Traditionally, stories would be told and children would sit and listen (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:34:42) and learn the language at the same time (*Theresa*, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:36:05). According to *Nundi*, 69, that could be done at the gatherings (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:09:47 – 00:10:21), or an Elders’ group could be created, where Elders can talk to each other, or tell stories, and children can learn the language while listening (*Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:53:45 – 00:54:17).

Theme 4.35. Storytelling should be used as language teaching strategy

Storytelling was identified as one of the actions for the strategy (C3) “engage Elders in the language and culture programs” in order to reach the goal “(C) bridging the language gap between generations” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan). Participating community members also mentioned storytelling by the Elders as the

traditional way of teaching (*Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:49:02,3 – 00:49:08,7; *Braids*, 72, 11 /07/2017, CO#2, 00:04:49 – 00:05:12; *Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:12:22). According to them, both women (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:28:46,4 – 00:29:21,1) and men would tell stories in the family, as *MQ*, 66, (*MQ*, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:49:12,5 – 00:49:34,6; *Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:49:34,5 – 00:49:48,4).

A lot of them also mentioned how stories bring families together (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:19:24,7 – 00:20:27,2) and are usually “triggered by the land” (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:19:57,5 – 00:20:15,0). Their stories hold “the history of the T̄silhqot’in” (*Theresa*, 60, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting; *Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:49:02,3 – 00:49:08,7; *Braids*, 72, 11 /07/2017, CO#2, 00:04:49 – 00:05:12; *Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:12:22; *Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015 Community Mobilization Meeting). *Nundi*, 69, thought that talking about “people from long time ago” (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:54:24, 00:54:24 – 00:55:29), for example, about the children’s “great-great grandfather” and telling them that “he was a really good hunter, trapper” could help “catch their interest” and they might want to continue learning the language (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:54:24, 00:54:24 – 00:55:29; SC#1, 11/24/2017); or even “the story of the Sasquatch”, that children like to hear (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Stories could be learned from Elders at the gatherings (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#11, 00:06:29) or at school. There could be a book reading session (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:06:10,2 – 00:06:56,0) or students could create their own story, “draw pictures”, “write the sentences” and “read it to the group” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:24:44,5 – 00:26:04,5). Children could also write a play and act the story (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:14:08,8 – 00:15:36,7). One of the actions identified under the early childhood education strategies (A1, A2, A3, A4) towards increasing the number of speakers (big picture goal A) was “learning history through acting” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan); puppets could also be used for telling stories in T̄silhqot’in (*Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:43:53 – 00:44:49).

The history of the T̄silhqot’in (*Theresa*, 60, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting) should be included as part of the curriculum, since now children are “just learning the history of the settlers”. However, Indigenous peoples have “their stories too” and it “would be really great to learn [it] in history class” (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:32:14,6 – 00:32:44,6). First Nations celebrations should be also included as a way of

celebrating the history and “acknowledge it too as a normal thing” (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:32:45,7 – 00:33:04,3).

Besides, lineage is something that some of the community members would like the children to learn. They should know about the story of their people lived through their family generations. That is something that *Chel?ig*, 48, feels proud to have learned (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:51:49,6 – 00:53:27,8). According to *Nun*, 57, that could be “one of our school subjects”, her Elders say “you need to know your family tree before you can really understand your language” (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:20:41,4 – 00:21:02,7); however, this can be hard sometimes since families are quite large (*Maggie*, 76, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:21:58,6 – 00:22:17,6). Language teacher *Theresa*, 60, remembered that one time she did a unit on family tree. Each student had to work on her family tree with their families and bring it back to class. However, not all families thought the activity was appropriate, as making the family tree may bring up past events in the family, that they may prefer not to recall or talk about (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:14:12,9 – 00:15:22,8).

Theme 4.36. Art, visual and audio materials can be used for language teaching

Yunešit’in ?Esgul students said they would like to learn the language though “art” and artistic activities like “drawing” (SC#1, 11/24/2017). *Maureen*, 51, also thought to that “draw a picture, and write” the words in the language would help them to learn (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:12:38 – 00:12:36), as well as Elder *LM*, 78:

“Destl’és ?anlágħ nendid ch’édéjis gatš’i xuzih nenqayní ch’ih jídágwédilí te?anent’in ?egú gwétuwħ jeguzih jįjegwedetal?ánx”⁶ [Making a book whatever you take a picture of or sketch, you name it in Tšilhqot’in and write it down, that is how they will learn how to name things] *Midugh ch’ih béłħ nénqayní ch’ih* [in English and in Tšilhqot’in] (*LM*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:36:54).

Pictures and other visual aids, like flashcards (*Dani*, 28, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:05:14,9 – 00:05:35,8) can be used for teaching, as Elder *Pauline ghinli*, 82, explained:

⁶ Transcribed by William Myers showing tone.

“*Gu, det̄sig lant’ih, gu, yagh, nulh ch’ededisjez, huts’edinh ʔeguh*” [Things like playing cards that have pictures of animals/birds...what is it called?]; “*lhuy teʔadant’ah*” [such as (pictures) of fish]; “*nulh*” [animals/birds] (*Pauline ghinli*, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:06:18 – 00:06:25).

And they can be used for storytelling too as some of the Elders used to do:

“Just look at the picture and talk about it or say what it is or talk about it or else tell stories, you own little stories from your own childhood. Mom use to do that for us” (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:28:46,4 – 00:29:21,1).

Puzzles with images and words can be a fun way for the younger children to learn the language, according to *Datsan*, 27:

“Something fun, like little puzzles... T̄silhqot’in words in there and you just tell to repeat... you know, *ʔabeleš* and bananas and just have a little board and just have them connecting the apple to the board where the picture is, something simple for them... like puzzles” (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:6:35,1 – 00:07:16,4).

Audio materials like “recordings” were also considered a useful resource to learn the language by participating community members (*MJB*, 68, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:16:41,8 – 00:16:54,4; *Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:05:56,7 – 00:06:38,5). For younger kids, even toys could be used to record phrases in T̄silhqot’in, so children can play them and repeat after (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:05:29 – 00:05:55).

6.2.4 Where should it be learned?

In this section, I will present community perspectives on which places would be the most appropriate to learn the language. Many community members expressed that the language should be learned “everywhere” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:36:56,2 – 00:37:28,0; *Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:30:17,1 – 00:31:15,4; *Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:20:17,5 – 00:20:33,5; *Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:03:15,9 – 00:03:34,3; *Matilda*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:25:04,3 – 00:25:14,4) and “anytime” (*Pauline ghinli*, 82, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:08:51 – 00:08:53 and 00:14:01 –

00:14:14; *Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting). However, most of them identify specific places too. The following topics will be presented:

- Theme 4.37. Language should be learned on the land
- Theme 4.38. Language should be learned at home
- Theme 4.39. Language should be learned at school
- Theme 4.40 Language should be learned in community spaces

Theme 4.37. Language should be learned on the land

All participating community members agreed on the idea that people “need to be out on the land” to learn the language (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5; *Dothy*, 64, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:06:43 – 00:07:04; *Filly*, 49, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1; *Nun*, 57, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1; *Saina*, 65, 1/22/2016, FNLTPD#1; *Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).; they could do fieldtrips (*Dani*, 28, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:08:34,0 – 00:08:53,8; *Pauline ghinli*, 82, 02/20/2017, CO#20, 00:14:23; *Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:10:33,7 – 00:11:07,6). According to *Chel?ig*, 48, the land is sacred and, when they are out there, it is more respectful to use the T̄silhqot’in language to honor it (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:20:01,5 – 00:20:35,0).

Language teacher *Theresa*, 60, thinks that it “would be really the best way of teaching”. It is easier to learn the language outside, while doing activities that the T̄silhqot’in used to do and keep doing in the language (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:19:23,8 – 00:19:40,1; *Theresa*, 60, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:19:22,8 – 00:19:23,8); “not in the classroom” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:36:19,7 – 00:36:42,5), where all your “surroundings are English” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:35:41,4 – 00:36:09,2). Also, on the land there are no distractions (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:20:13,2 – 00:20:27,4) and stories come out easily (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:19:57,5 – 00:20:15,0). Smaller groups would also work well in that kind of setting (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:36:51,1 – 00:37:10,4), which provide a better setting for language learning.

Theme 4.38. Language should be learned at home

Most of the participants community members agreed that the best place to learn the language is at home (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:46:11,4 – 00:48:09,7; *Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:28:46,4 – 00:29:21,1; *Chickadee*, 39,

03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:36:56,2 – 00:37:28,0; *Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:10:30,3 – 00:10:58,1; *MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:34:48,2 – 00:34:49,9; *Maggie*, 11/07/2016, CO#4, 00:35:06,4 – 00:35:10,5; *Matilda*, 60, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:02:49,1 – 00:03:10,2; *Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:03:15,9 – 00:03:34,3; *Pauline ghinli*, 82, 02/20/2017, CO#20; 00:46:02; *Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:24:07) from their “mom and dad” (*MJB*, 28, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:09:15,9 – 00:09:56,4; *Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:05:03,3 – 00:05:22,3; *Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:38:19) and “their grandparents” (*Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:13:46,5 – 00:13:56,7; *Rissa*, 24, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:13:03,1 – 00:13:09,4; *Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:05:03,3 – 00:05:22,3; *BW*, 61, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:05:33,4 – 00:05:42,4; *Braids*, 72, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:04:49). Youth also expressed that they wanted to learn from their Elders and at home with her grandparents (SC#1, 11/24/2017).

In fact, expectations are often put on the school (*Chel?ig*, 48, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting) but, as we have seen earlier (cf. 2.37), community members think that parents should take back that responsibility (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:29:05,1 – 00:29:33,6). One of the strategies of the Language Revitalization Plan was to “create immersion programs for families”. Actions identified for it were the following: “developing language programs in a home-like setting with everyday day language: greetings, instructions, descriptions, directions, buying, selling, eating, cooking, naming objects and places, shopping list; promote speaking the language at home –label names of objects and places at home; combine school curriculum with family activities: share resources and materials for families to use at home; develop hands-on activities so kids can learn from their grandparents (i.e. learn how to make their own tools)” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan). According to *Charlie Brown*, 47, parents would be up for it, “if people have the materials and feel comfortable with it” (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:04:55,6 – 00:05:18,2).

Theme 4.39. Language should be learned at school

Community members also think that the language should be learned at the elementary school (*LM*, 78, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:30:51; *Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:13:26,4 – 00:13:28,8; *Rissa*, 24, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:13:28,8 – 00:13:46,5; *MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:34:57,3 – 00:34:59,7; *Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:03:15,9 – 00:03:34,3; *Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:03:15,9 – 00:03:34,3; *Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:08:28,7 – 00:08:34,0) and high school (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016

CO#22, 00:36:56,2 – 00:37:28,0; *Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:04:34,2 – 00:04:51,3), especially in ‘band schools’ or schools that are led by First Nations groups (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:31:50,4 – 00:32:44,6). Yunešit’in ʔEsgul students also expressed that they would like to learn from teachers a school (SC#1, 11/24/2017).

According to the participants, children should get started “at a younger age” (*Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:11:36,5 – 00:11:52,6), having “full time immersion” (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:14:36,7 – 00:14:50,0) “for the babies” at “daycare and preschool” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5), “Language Nest”, and “immersion from K to 6” (*Theresa*, 60, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:20:39,9 – 00:20:48,7).

Teachers need to be “on board” together with the parents “to continue practicing those things at home” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5). Resources and curriculum need to be developed (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5) and it would be good if the school was available for other community members that want to learn (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:04:55,6 – 00:05:18,2).

Some community members also expressed that language should be also learned at university level (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:24:07; *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:46:11,4 – 00:48:09,7; *Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:14:43,7 – 00:14:59,9 and 00:36:56,2 – 00:37:28,0; *Blondie*, 57, and *Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:16:20). One of main picture goals on the 2016 Language Revitalization Plan was to “(D) build language teaching capacity and teaching capacity in the language” and specific actions identified for it were “develop agreements with colleges and universities to develop language teaching certificates and language revitalization certificate programs” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan).

Theme 4.40. Language should be learned in community spaces

Community members commented that the language should be acquired in the community (*MJB*, 68, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:04:31,2 – 00:04:34,2; *Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:28:08). They also see the need to introduce the language in the work spaces, like the “Band Office [Health and Administration building]” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:36:56,2 – 00:37:28,0; *Matilda*, 60, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:02:49,1 – 00:03:10,2; *Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:03:15,9 – 00:03:34,3), even in community meetings (*Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:03:38,2 – 00:04:24,3), health

programs (*Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:18:02,8 – 00:18:11,1), language programs separated from the school (*Datsan*, 27, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:07:36,8 – 00:07:55,1), library (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:04:55,6 – 00:05:18,2; *Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:19:17,5 – 00:19:52,7; *Omi*, 22, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:18:05,3 – 00:18:17,7), youth centre (*Lily the Pink*, 62, 11/09/2016, CO#6, 00:05:23,4 – 00:05:33,4; *Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:10:42,6 – 00:11:23,2) and community gatherings (*Omi*, 22, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:10:16,7 – 00:10:19,0; *Dothy*, 64, 11/07/2017, CO#2, 00:10:25 – 00:10:42; LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan).

6.3 Topic 5: T̄silhqot'in language resources in Yunešit'in

In this last topic, we will review community perspectives related to T̄silhqot'in language resources in Yunešit'in. Results regarding the language materials existing in the community, new language materials that should be developed and the community vision of a repository of language resources will be presented.

6.3.1 What language materials exist in the community?

One of the questions aimed to be answered in the course of this research was what language materials were available in Yunešit'in. As I will explain more deeply below, no official archive exists in the community and language materials and resources are usually stored in community members' private homes or at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul. As part of this research, an inventory of language materials was carried out at the school (Appendix 21) and results were used as background to the knowledge provided by participating members during the conversations and from the analysis of the language project meeting minutes and other documents.

Themes covered under this section will be the following:

- Theme 5.1. There is a variety of language resources in the community
- Theme 5.2. Existing language materials need to updated
- Theme 5.3. Elders and fluent speakers are an important language resource

Theme 5.1. There is a variety of language resources in the community

Some community members, like language teacher *Theresa*, 60, have dedicated their lives to documenting the language. She started getting involved in language work in the mid-70s, “with [American linguist] Ed Cook”, when she was “about 18 or 19”, (*Theresa*,

11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:01:10,4 – 00:02:28,0). Bella Alphonse, William Myers, Standley Stump and Fanny Stump were other fluent speakers involved in the early language work. They did a lot of “linguistics, “grammar” and “verb conjugations”. During that time, *Theresa*, 60, developed some language teaching materials, such as the “Readers and Workbooks” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:01:10,4 – 00:02:28,0): *Nenqayni Ch’ih ?Eyalhtig: Teacher’s Guide* (1981); *Nenqayni Ch’ih ?Eyalhtig* (1st ed. 1979; 2nd 1983); *Nenqayni Ch’ih ?Ech’ede?ijez* (1980-1981). Those educational resources for language teaching are still being used at the schools and other language programs. *Theresa*, 60, kept doing language work later on with SD 27 teacher Alan Haig-Brown (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:02:28,8 – 00:02:39,1). Dora Grinder did “quite a few word collections”, for example on “bird and berries”. Later on, Linda Smith joined the group and worked on “ducks names, some other bird names, [...] berries”, “the animal [...] the different stages”: “small [baby]”, “yearling”, etc. (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:06:03,3 – 00:07:08,9). With some of those materials, Ed Cook developed “his life time work”: the *T̓silhqot’in grammar* (published in 2013). According to *Theresa*, 60, some of the materials might still be at the computers at Calgary linguistic department” or “his place” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:10:26,8 – 00:10:44,4).

According to *Gex*, 34, T̓silhqot’in language curriculum was also developed by Bella Alphonse for the School District 27, and later on, Freda Alphonse also worked on curriculum for the District too (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:50:54,7 – 00:51:15,1) Linda Smith developed a curriculum on social studies based on Stoney stories (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:20:27,2 – 00:20:55,2), and June William produced a unit on the T̓silhqot’in warrior chief *Klatsassin* for “Remembrance Day” (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:21:25,4 – 00:21:47).

There are also other books available in the community, such as the “T̓silhqot’in dictionary” that was developed by William Myers and Standley Stump and for which several “Elders were taped” (*MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:19:09,3 – 00:19:30,5); a plant studies book by Agnes Haller (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 C0#15, 00:24:13,0 – 00:25:11,1), a book about Dasiqox Tribal Park that includes both, T̓silhqot’in and English languages [*Nexwagwežpan: There for us* about the Dasiqox Tribal Park]; history books, like the one about the “Athabaskan natives” (*MQ*, 66, 11/07/2016 CO#4, 00:20:06,9 – 00:20:41,5); a book titled *Learning About The Law* with protocols and beliefs, such as puberty time and children “going into manhood” when they are “around 13”, and for “the women, on their moon” (*Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:16:10 – 01:22:30). There also exist materials

with religious content developed by *Nundi*, 69, and missionary linguist Quindel King: the Gospel of Mark, [...] the shortest one in the bible, the Jesus Movie and the Book of Genesis (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:23:00 – 01:23:23). There are also children's storybooks written in the language by community members during their school years (*Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:12:36 – 00:12:45).

In her early years, *Theresa*, 60, also worked with other experts from the Royal B.C. Museum in Victoria recording "memories of older people" (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:29:25,4 – 00:30:47,6). They gathered stories from Elders, but as she explained, "some of them were forgetting them; they didn't know the whole story", except for "Charlie Quilt" who "used to tell really good stories" (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:29:25,4 – 00:30:47,6). Those stories were "transcribed by June Williams" later. "It's a red book and has [...] a white plastic binding" and among community language experts, it is called "the June's book", although "it's not hers", as explained *Theresa*, 60 (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:07:11,4 – 00:08:51,1). "Linda [Smith]" has worked extensively and "got a lot of tapes" (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:24:13,0 – 00:25:11,1), as well as late "Ivor [Myers]", who dedicated his life to record and preserve the stories, especially his grandfather "George [Myers]'s songs" (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:24:13,0 – 00:25:11,1). Other community members also mentioned having CDs with recordings of T̓silhqot'in songs (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:34:12,8 – 00:34:16,1), in addition to some electronic resources like the First Voices website developed by Xeni Gwet'in that are available online (*Dani*, 28, and *Britt* 25, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:09:40,8 – 00:09:54,8)

Regarding Yunešit'in ʔEsgul language materials, a total of 186 materials were found during the inventory developed within this research, and they were classified according to different factors. In this section, I will present the different classifications together with a brief discussion of the results and a table and a diagram including the number of items and the percentage of the total they represent.

First, we will have a look to the results according to the classification by type. Language materials were sorted by the content they included and the purpose they were developed for. Results show that a high percentage of the total number of language materials are children's story books (38%, 71 items). This group includes mainly English-written stories by non-First Nations authors (61 items). They were published between the 60s and 90s and translated into T̓silhqot'in by community members. There are one or two copies of each book available. T̓silhqot'in translation has been printed on white tape and

glued on top of the English text. They are printed, half-letter sized and have between 8 and 32 pages. They include drawings and text. There are also stories created by the Yunešit'in Immersion Committee and other Yunešit'in members in the 90s as part of a Yunešit'in ʔEsgul language project (10 items). They have between 6 and 20 pages and most of them are written straight in Tšilhqot'in, or except for copyright blurb and other small text on the cover, first page and/or last page (i.e. "written by", "illustrated by"). There are 1 or 2 copies of each booklet. Most of them are letter sized, printed and bound and contain drawings and text. They tell stories about animals, children and family, among other topics.

We can also find a high number of educational materials for children (67 items, 36%). Most of them are written by Tšilhqot'in authors (57 items) and produced by Yunešit'in ʔEsgul and Denisiqi Services Society. They were developed between 1980 and 2016. They are mostly letter size and some of them are half letter size. Most of them are printed and some are handmade (pictures and text are printed separately and then glued on the booklet). The number of pages range between 5 and 47. They are written straight in Tšilhqot'in except for copyright blurb and other small text on the cover, first page and/or last page (i.e. 'written by', 'illustrated by'). Most of them contain phrases and pictures or drawings. There are one or two copies of them and cover different topics such as weather, animals, food, body parts, clothes, school, work, community places, health, etc. There are other educational resources that are written by non-First Nation authors (12 items) and translated into Tšilhqot'in; in some of them the copyright blurb and other small text on the cover, first page and/or last page (i.e. 'written by', 'illustrated by') reads in English. Their publication dates range between 1953 and 1995 and they contain between 10 and 53 pages and are mostly letter or half-letter size. There are one or two copies available and cover topics like animals, colors, home, counting, opposites, etc. This group also include flashcards of the alphabet, with pictures and words (200 flashcards), some made out of old news scraps written in English (i.e. local newspaper published in the 80s and 90s named *Wolf howls*) and some pictures of community members (30 of them).

There are also several materials focused on cultural activities (25 items, 13%). Most of them are written by Tšilhqot'in community members and Denisiqi Services Society and cover topics such as drying soopallalie, tanning moose hide, drum making, making tree pitch medicine, drying meat, making nets and dip net, picking cambium, fishing and preparing salmon, hunting, harvesting vegetables, horses and rodeo. Some of them also include Tšilhqot'in songs and prayers. They are published between 1995 and 2012 and

most of them are written in T̓silhqot̓in. Some of them also include the English translation underneath the T̓silhqot̓in text. They are printed, letter sized and have between 12 and 28 pages. They include pictures and text and there are between 1 and 4 copies available. There are two educational resources that are written by a non-First Nation authors for the School District 27 and include T̓silhqot̓in legends and stories in English.

We can also find language teaching resources (9 items, 5%) published by other First Nations (i.e. Secwepemc, Haida) and First Nation Education institutions (i.e. First Nations Schools Association of British Columbia, FNSEA) between 1988 and 2015. They are printed, letter sized and written in English. One of them includes sample sheets in T̓silhqot̓in. They contain mostly text and there is only one copy of each available. These resources cover language teaching content, curriculum and Total Physical Response strategies for teaching First Nations languages.

We can also find some resources on T̓silhqot̓in language curriculum (6 items, 3%) developed mostly in the 80s by T̓silhqot̓in language experts. Those resources are written mostly in English with some phrases in T̓silhqot̓in. They contain mostly text and there are between 1 and 3 copies of each material available. Content includes curriculum for elementary, secondary and senior secondary grades (k-12) and teaching units on classroom objects and school personnel, body parts, colors, commands, shapes, numbers, clothing, family members, school and playground, household and food.

There are also pamphlets with religious content (4 items, 2%) translated from English into T̓silhqot̓in by The Chilcotin Bible Translation Committee in 1990. They include drawings and text representing content from the Bible (i.e. Luke 12:13-21 and 17:11-19; John 8:2-11; Mark 4:35-41). There are many copies available (around 100).

Also, couple materials that include T̓silhqot̓in wordlists (3 items, 1%) developed in the 80s by the Cariboo Chilcotin District can be found. They are printed, letter sized, have between 35 and 112 pages and show lists of T̓silhqot̓in words in alphabetical order. There is only 1 copy of this resource available. To finish, one binder with many coloring sheets (1 item, 1%) is also available. Each coloring sheet includes an image and a word or phrases in T̓silhqot̓in.

See the number of items for each category on the table below:

Classification by Type	
Description	Number of items
Storybooks	71
Coloring	1
Cultural	25
Curriculum	6
Educational	67
Language teaching	9
Religious	4
Wordlists	3
TOTAL	186

Table 5.1 Classification of language materials by type

In addition, below is a diagram with percentages to the total number of items per type:

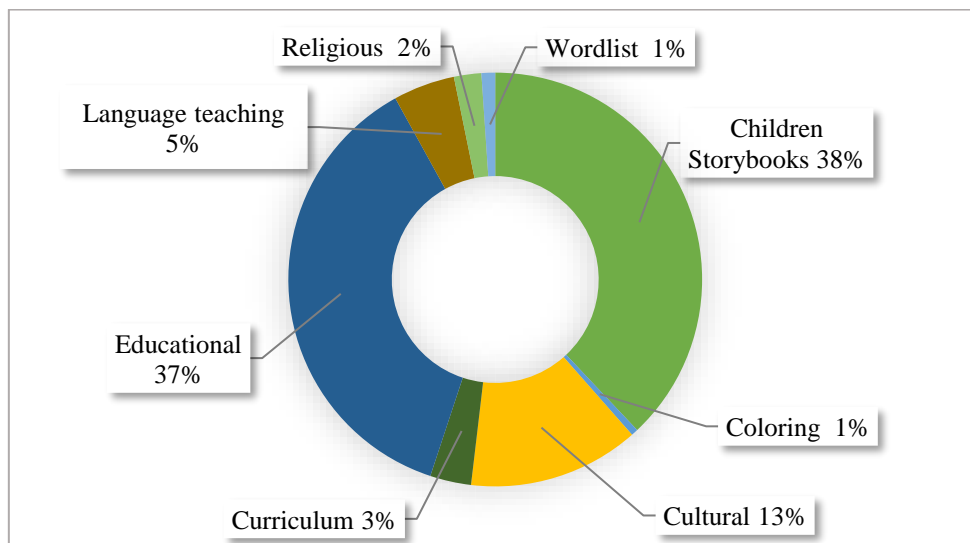


Figure 5.1 Classification of language materials by type

Next, we will have a look to the classification of the materials regarding the language they are produced in. Most of the language materials are written in T̓silhqot̓in and only have a few English words to introduce the author and illustrator on the cover and the copyright information (112 items, 60%). This group includes mostly children's story books, educational resources and materials with religious content.

Some of the materials are T̓silhqot̓in monolingual and no English text appears on them (37 items, 20 %); those are mostly cultural resources, education resources and

wordlists. Others are bilingual (13 items, 7%), written in English and T̄silhqot'in; however, priority is given to the T̄silhqot'in language: it goes first and in black larger font and English shows underneath in light grey smaller font. This group includes resources describing cultural activities and a song book with popular English children songs translated into T̄silhqot'in.

Other resources are written mostly in English with some T̄silhqot'in text (3 items, 2%). These resources represent curriculum material where English is the main language and some sample phrases are provided in T̄silhqot'in.

Some resources are English monolingual (20 items, 11%) and no T̄silhqot'in is whatsoever included. This group includes curriculum and language teaching material as well as some T̄silhqot'in stories that are told in English. There are also flashcards with pictures of community members that include no words (1 item, 0%).

See below a table with the classification of language materials regarding the language they are written in:

Classification by Language	
Language description	Number of items
Monolingual T̄silhqot'in	37
Mostly T̄silhqot'in, with some English words (e.g. author and illustrator on cover, copyright blurb, introduction)	112
T̄silhqot'in and English – bilingual	13
Mostly English with some T̄silhqot'in words (e.g. sample sheet)	3
Monolingual English	20
No words	1
TOTAL	186

Table 5.2 Classification of language materials by language

Below is a diagram with percentage to the total number of items classified by language:

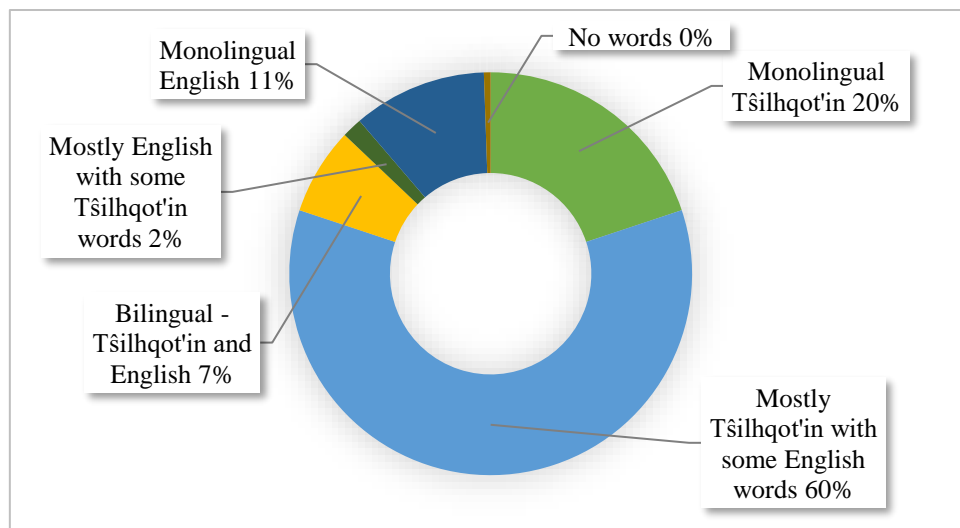


Figure 5.2 Classification of language materials by language

Regarding the author's origin, almost half of the language materials are written by Tsilhqot'in language experts or community members (75 items, 40%). They include educational and cultural resources, children's story books and wordlists, curriculum and language teaching materials. The other half (73 items, 40%) are produced by non-First Nation authors (children's book authors) or institutions (School District 27) although some of them are translated by Tsilhqot'in language experts after. This group includes mostly children's stories, some cultural and language teaching materials and couple materials with Tsilhqot'in stories. Materials with religious content are developed by Tsilhqot'in and Non-First Nation authors (4 items, 2%) and other resources are developed by Tsilhqot'in in collaboration with other neighboring First Nations, i.e. Secwepemc and Dakelh (25 items, 13%); those are resources on cultural activities and a resource with stories told by residential school survivors from St. Joseph's Mission in Williams Lake, B.C. Some curriculum resources are developed by other First Nations, (i.e. Secwepemc, Haida) and institutions (First Nations Schools Association, FNSA) (9 items, 5%).

Below is a table with the classification regarding the author's origin:

Classification by Author's origin	
Author	Number of items
Tsilhqot'in	75
Tsilhqot'in and other First Nation	25
Other First Nation	9
Tsilhqot'in and Non-First Nation	4
Non-First Nation	73
TOTAL	186

Table 5.3 Classification of language materials by author's origin

Below is a diagram with the percentage to the total number of items classified by the author's origin:

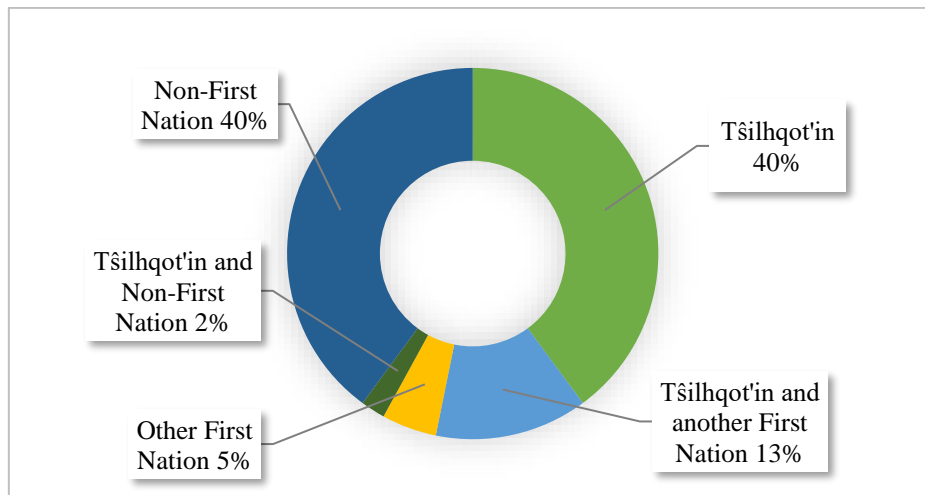


Figure 5.3 Classification of language materials by author's origin

Regarding the target or the public that the language materials are developed for, most of them are meant to support children's language learning (146 items, 80%) and they include story books, cultural and educational resources and coloring sheets. Some of the cultural and educational resources are developed for all ages (20 items, 10%). Resources for language teachers (20 items, 10%) include wordlists and curriculum resources.

Below is the classification regarding the language materials target:

Classification by Target	
Target	Number of items
All ages	20
Children	146
Language teachers	20
TOTAL	186

Table 5.4 Classification of language materials by target

Below is a diagram with percentage to the total number of items classified by target group:

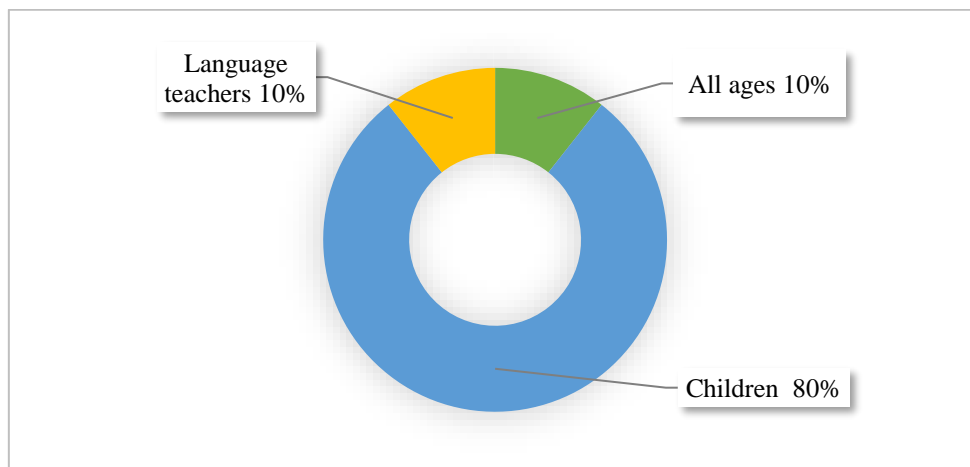


Figure 5.4 Classification of language materials by target group

Theme 5.2. Existing language materials need to be updated

“Review and update existing language resources” was one of the identified actions (Step 3) for Repository of language resources, where it is stated that “materials will be reviewed and updates will be made, if needed (i.e. digitizing, transcribing)”, and “needs and gaps in language resources will be identified so new materials can be created” (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources). Also, one of the community priorities determined by the Language Committee under the Language Revitalization Planning Program was to “review language curriculum and language instruction and evaluation methods” (LRPP doc#1, 03/29/2016, Community Priorities). Actions included under that strategy were the following: “review curriculum for sequence learning progression –critique change; develop multiple approaches and staged progression on levels of understanding and writing – high level-low level (age-appropriate and proficiency based language curriculum); introduce new vocabulary– math, science; identify ‘survival words’ –basic grammar structures and vocabulary; use songs/music for

repetition; methods of teaching –classroom, different environments, cultural activities, engage Elders, TPR method, themes of seasons (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan).

Language teacher *Theresa*, 60, commented that Ed Cook’s “grammar” is too “intense” and needs to be revised in order to make it more user-friendly (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:23:15,5 – 00:23:35,6). Language expert *Nundi*, 69, also thought that some of the books could be updated, since even the spelling has changed since they were created (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:17:28 – 01:19:39). Participating community members agreed that “more experts and specialists” are also needed, for example, to help with technology and recording (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:15:49,2 – 00:17:38,3) or “even linguists” (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:26:37).

According to language expert *Nundi*, 69, language curriculum should also be revised (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:14:52). Students thought similarly. The feedback that *Chel?ig*, 48, got from her teenage daughter is that current curriculum “is not successful” and “the teachers just repeat things over”; “from grade 8 to 12 it’s the same subject; it’s the same coloring lessons” and “they are not learning [...] [anything] new”. “They feel the curriculum at the high school is not meeting the needs of the T̂silhqot’in people” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:43:56,3 – 00:44:54,4). Her daughter thinks that “by the time they are in grade 12, they should be fluent speakers” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:45:03,9 – 00:45:47,6) but that doesn’t happen currently. Same was pointed out by her cousin *Omi*, 22: “[at school] basically you learn the basics sentences, colors food, clothing, some places (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:01:39,5 – 00:01:47,8). Both decided not to take T̂silhqot’in language on Grade 12 for that reason (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:05:32,4 – 00:05:55,8; *Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:45:03,9 – 00:45:47,6). *Datsan*, 27, said something similar: “it seems like every year is the same; just like learning the basics, the colors, the numbers, the months and the weeks... (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:02:00,9 – 00:02:21,2).

Likewise, many materials included in the inventory could be updated and digitalized (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources).

Theme 5.3. Elders and fluent speakers are an important language resource

When talking about language resources, participants also mentioned “people” as knowledge sources. Elders and fluent speakers become an important language resource, especially since the language is still mostly based in oral communication:

“Like all the tool would be my uncle. They have all their tools and how they’ve written” (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 00:01:02:27,6 – 00:01:04:25,3).

“[A community member’s name] for plants. Her husband [...] used to do a lot of things, carving... [Community member] in Nemiah. And I think my brother could probably still make bows and arrows because they did it as kids” (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 C0#19, 00:25:11,5 – 00:25:58,4).

It would be useful to create a list with names and contacts of community members that are experts on each field.

6.3.2 What new language materials should be developed?

One of the community priorities identified by the Language Committee under the Language Revitalization Plan was to “(B3) create new language resources”. Specific actions for that strategy included the following: “recording and transcribing Elders and fluent speakers; create books, posters, flash cards, phrasebooks, visual dictionaries and how-to booklets for cultural activities; use technology –audiobooks, Videos, Apps, DVDs, animation, cartoons; develop an inventory of traditional place names; record storytelling and songs; develop new vocabulary to fit modern communication needs; collecting stories of how we were raised; and develop traditional law at nation level (LRPP doc#1, 03/29/2016, Community Priorities). In this section, the following themes will be presented:

- Theme 5.4. Language teaching and reference resources should be developed
- Theme 5.5. Technology should be used to develop electronic resources
- Theme 5.6. It is crucial to record Elders and fluent speakers

Theme 5.4 Language teaching and reference resources should be developed

Most of the participating community members identified developing new curriculum as one of the priorities. Teacher *Chickadee*, 39, strongly believed that a new resource “on what to teach, from September till June and separate that by grades; what do you need to know by kindergarten, what do you need to know by grade 10, what do you need to know by grade 12” is necessary (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:12:19,8 – 00:14:42,5).

Language teacher *Filly*, 49, thought that new curriculum should include experiences on the land. Children should have the opportunity to see things that her generation has experienced as a child, such as trapping, skinning and eating squirrel and muskrat (*Filly*, 01/22/2016, FNLTPD#1).

Nundi, 69, also sees the need for creating a dictionary that teachers can go back to when they are not sure about word spelling. In his opinion, it should also be an electronic resource so it is easier to consult and other options can be incorporated as well, like recordings for each word (*Nundi* 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:27:03–00:33:53). *Blondie*, 57, also mention a thesaurus dictionary (*Blondie*, 11/16/2017, CO#11, 00:07:09) and *Maureen*, 51, said that even an electronic one or an app, like “Nemiah” [referring to the First Voices project that includes meanings of words and phrases classified by theme] would be useful (*Maureen*, 11/16/2017, CO#11, 00:07:09).

Jo, 23, also thinks that place names should be recorded (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:26:27,0 – 00:27:20,4). Language teacher *Theresa*, 60, thinks that you could also record “people’s houses”, “who lives there and stuff on the reserve”; it could be a good learning experience on how to map for young children (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:05:57,4 – 00:6:02,6).

Other community members mention other type of materials , such as “big charts of words that you can just place on the wall” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:12:49,0 – 00:13:33,6), “posters for numbers and the months” (*Dani*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:28:46,2 – 00:28:56,9), “colors” (*Britt*, 25, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:28:56,8 – 00:28:57,5), “flash cards” (*Charlie Brown*, 47, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:17:13,0 – 00:17:16,2; (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:12:49,0 – 00:13:33,6) , etc. Those materials could be shared with the families so they could practice at home (*Dani*, 28, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:28:57,5 – 00:29:15,5).

Books were also mentioned in the conversations with community members. *Chel?ig*, 48, “would like to see more books in T̓silhqot’in” (*Chel?ig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:45:56,2 – 00:47:00,0); either translated or originally written in the language. *Jo*, 23, thought that it would nice to start with kids’ books. She is trying to make one for her niece that includes numbers and colors (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:14:16,8 – 00:14:34,2). *Datsan*, 27, suggested having “books for little kids”, organize “storytelling” sessions “and have it over in T̓silhqot’in” (*Datsan*, 11/10/2016, CO#7, 00:10:11,8 – 00:10:23,7), or even telling a story and youth have to draw what they hear, “like some sort of like a comic”, as *Jo*, 23, suggested (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:22:01,5 – 00:22:14,9).

Yunešit'in students also expressed that they would like to see more children's books in the language (SC#1, 11/24/2017). For older youth or adult learners, *Tay*, 23, said that books might not be very appealing and they may not feel interested in reading them (*Tay*, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:21:36,7 – 00:21:55,2), but perhaps if they included recordings, like an audiobook, that would be very useful for learners, especially for people that “can't live in the reserve for whatever reason” and that cannot listen to the language regularly, as *Kalikala*, 39, shared (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:03:21,3 – 00:04:35,1). Books could include short sentences and pictures of Tšilhqot'in people doing different activities, according to *Nundi*, 69, (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:13:32). *Juna*, 58, stated that there are lots of stories about places and she thinks that could also be included in a book (LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting). One of the ideas that *Jo*, 23, had was to develop one of “those audio books” that you “press buttons and it says the word”, “it tells what that thing is”. They would be helpful for kids “that can't read the language” yet; they can use the “buttons for certain things to hear it and they repeat it” after (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:22:44,1 – 00:23:12,1). Then “when they hear [the word], they learn how to say it, and then they recognize [it]”; “they easily remember the word, how to spell it and they can say it” too (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:23:56,1 – 00:24:10,2). She thinks it would even help her to learn the language, since even though she “can read sounds”, she doesn't know how to say some words sometime or she forgets (*Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:24:26,1 – 00:25:43,1), so this kind of materials would help her and other learners to review their knowledge.

Theme 5.5. Technology should be used to develop electronic resources

Teacher *Chickadee*, 39, also thought that they should rely on technology more “to make it more open to the community”, more “accessible” by using iPads, computers, “anything to help get that out there for us to learn” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:40:06,4 – 00:40:45,2). According to *Roper*, 44, “that would really work” because that would motivate the kids to use it and learn the language” (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:13:49,3 – 00:14:01,2). As *Saina*, 65, and *LM*, 78, said “they stay up all night pressing those things”, so “it would be good if they have those in Tšilhqot'in” (*Saina*, 11/07/2017, CO#1, 00:09:57 – 00:10:07). *Kalikala*, 39, wishes the same:

“I'd like to be able to look out, go on browsers or whatever and being able to find like Tšilhqot'in language. And you just click on the link and you would have like, you know, anywhere from like when a toddler is starting to talk all the way up to, you

know, when you are done learning the language, all the words and everything, however long that takes, old and new T̄silhqot'in. I think that would be great, you know, or being able to download an app in your phone and just being able to listen to it, or go buy a CD at the store" (*Kalikala*, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:22:21,6 – 00:23:02,1).

According to *Jo*, 23, "the app could record something and put it in the app, like storage for other people to see" (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:15:43,9 – 00:15:45,4); "like a dictionary" (*Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:13:24 – 00:13:31) or something similar to *First Voices* (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:15:49,2 – 00:17:38,3). Maureen's grandson "got that on his I-pod, and he listens to it" (*Maureen*, 51, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:13:24 – 00:13:31). *Kalikala*, 39, also mentioned that a Facebook page dedicated to language learning would be very useful: one person "started a page" and "was trying to teach people how to speak T̄silhqot'in" (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:23:05,0 – 00:23:21,7).

DVDs could also be developed (*Charlie Brown*, 47, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting) with "short videos" or "movies" (*Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:19:17,5 – 00:19:52,7; *Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:13:32 – 01:14:12), "small snippets" including "some of the legends, like *The Cave*" (*Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:23:16,3 – 00:23:58,2), or short videos of traditional places and archeological findings (*Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:16:20 – 00:17:11).

Animation stories and video games in T̄silhqot'in would be useful to reach children. As *Nists'i*, 34, explained, "we are competing against media and multimedia" today (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:43:29,0 – 00:44:20,4). Children are already into it (*Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:14:04,8 – 00:14:21,0) and it would be an easy way to pass on stories and reflect back about themselves (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:43:29,0 – 00:44:20,4). *Nundi*, 69, said that youth could work on this (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:18:19 – 00:18:57).

Theme 5.6. It is crucial to record Elders and fluent speakers

T̄silhqot'in oral history and legends are important to community members (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:15:06,3 – 00:15:37,8) and they should be preserved before the change overtime (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit'in meeting) and while the Elders are still here (*Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:28:38,8 – 00:28:45,3). *Theresa*, 60, thought about the "war stories" and that some of

the men still know them. She thought it would be good to record them now since “a lot of them are going right now; they are dying” (*Theresa*, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:22:15,6 – 00:22:57,6). *Chelʔig*, 48, would have them recorded in CD:

“How we tell stories at night, before we are going to bed, you can put it on play and can just keep going until the kids fall asleep with it. That’s how I learned our history was my grandparents or my parents speaking of the war and I’d be going to sleep and I could be imagining what was happening as they were speaking (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:45:56,2 – 00:47:00,0). [...] Because as you are sleeping you will pick it up and you’ll get the feel of the language, yeah, that would be amazing, CDs” (*Chelʔig*, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:47:05,3 – 00:47:16,3).

Also, recording the different dialects would be useful (*Charlie Brown* and *MJB*, 68, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:15:31,3 – 00:16:54,4). A lot has been done already (*Theresa*, 60, 02/21/2017, CO#21, 00:13:19; *Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:33:54 – 01:33:57) “but it is often stuck in someone’s home where we do not share it” (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Charlie Brown, 47, and *MJB*, 68, thought it would also be interesting recording the different *lehal* songs that belonged to different families (*Charlie Brown* and *MJB* 68, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:29:31,6 – 00:30:17,1) and Tšilhqot’in music in general (*Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:23:05,2 – 00:23:10,0; *MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:33:12,5 – 00:33:14,8) which could be useful for teaching the language at school (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan; *Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:19:42).

6.3.3 What is the community vision for a repository of language resources?

Community insights related to the idea of creating a repository of language resources were also collected during this research work. As I have already mentioned (cf. 6.3.1), no official archive or “safe place” exists in the community and language materials and resources are usually stored in community members’ private homes, and some of them, especially language teaching materials, are found at Yunešit’in ʔEsgul too. Themes discussed in this section will be the following:

- Theme 5.7. Language resources need to be compiled and organized
- Theme 5.8. A repository of language resources needs to be created
- Theme 5.9. Policies for accessing, using and sharing language materials need to be developed

Theme 5.7. Language resources need to be compiled and organized

One of the primary strategies identified on the 2015-2016 Language Plan was to “(B2) gather and examine existing language resources” to developed an inventory of language resources. Specific actions for that strategy are the following: “identify primary resources that all communities should have; support schools and teachers with resources –sharing between institutions and individuals; examine resources and identify materials that can be used or update; gather traditional knowledge –hunting rules for winter and summer; and mapping of significant sites –while being aware of sacred places exposure (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan). One of the roles and responsibilities of the Language Committee was “(g.) Assisting in gathering information and knowledge” is (LRPP doc#5, 03/29/2016, Terms of Reference).

Participating community members “feel that there’s tons of resources” in the community (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:16:19,8 – 00:17:08,1) and that they should “get them pass over and be able to do a whole inventory” (*ʔElagi*, 39, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:46:25,0 – 00:46:53,4). *Gex*, 34, and *Theresa* “have been trying to organize” her language teaching materials but they keep finding “more and more boxes”. She thought that this would be similar for other language experts or teachers’ homes (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:46:54,3 – 00:46:59,0); they might also have put curriculum and lesson plans together “because they thought it was never enough” and “to compile it all would be interesting” (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:48:54,8 – 00:50:34,9). According to former Teacher Assistant *Nun*, 57, there is a “whole bunch at the school” too (*Nun*, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:19:35,8 – 00:19:43,9).

In addition, many language and cultural resources, artifacts, etc. remain outside the community, in museums and other institutions, as *Nundi*, 69, commented, and they need to be brought back to the communities where they belong to:

“Get back some stuff from, ah, Victoria [Royal B.C. Museum and B.C. Archives]. All the woven baskets, T̓silhqot’in stuff in there, aye? They used to sell those here, ah, traditional use gathering, we ah, we interviewed Elders. This one guy, his wife did that. Not very big [...] basket. Woven spruce roots, and they, they got pictures of animals on there, on the sides. Kind of a design, and ah... she wants money, and then, ah, he makes it pretty fast. It’s hard work, they say, but, she can make it pretty, pretty fast, aye? And, she sells it aye? For so much. Those ends up in somewhere. I don’t

know. Yeah. Or... museum, and ah, in Victoria maybe. I think there's lots of T̓silhqot'in stuff in there. Be good to bring some of them back" (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:09:33–01:10:39).

Nists'i, 34, also mentioned the archives of "the Union of the B.C. Indian Chiefs". They store a lot of resources but keep the access closed, "even for students" (*Nists'i*, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:44:45,4 – 00:45:31,3).

The Language Committee also emphasized the value of the community people as a resource, especially considering the oral nature of the language and cultural transmission. Therefore, when identifying language and cultural resources "a list of people considered experts on different fields will be also created to serve as reference for evaluating or developing new resources, as well as for implementation of activities under the Strategic Language Plan" (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources). As explained before (cf. 5.6), community members also thought the most valuable language resource they had it was their families and Elders (*Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:22:01,5 – 00:22:14,9; *Theresa*, 60, 12/08/2016 CO#19, 00:22:15,6 – 00:22:57,6; 00:25:11,5 – 00:26:11,6; *Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:06:14,1 – 00:6:15,4; *MJB*, 11/10/2016 CO#8, 00:28:45,3 – 00:29:31,7; *Rissa*, 24, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:22:32,9 – 00:22:40,0; *Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:57:00 – 00:57:07 and 01:19:18 – 01:33:57; *Chel?ig*, 48, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit'in meeting; *Charlie Brown*, 47, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit'in meeting).

Theme 5.8. A repository of language resources needs to be created

Once materials are localized, a repository of language resources would need to be created: "a public sharing system where all T̓silhqot'in feel comfortable to pick up resources" (Strategy B2. of the Language Revitalization Plan, LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016). As the Language Committee described: "the Repository of Language Resources will be a central place where T̓silhqot'in language materials will be stored and maintained. A sharing system will be developed to facilitate access to all T̓silhqot'in members. Copyright policies will also be developed to ensure protection of the materials" (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources). The main objectives of the Repository of Language Resources are the following: "to protect language resources and ensure they remain available over time; to help locate existing language resources; to help identify needs and gaps for creating new language resources; to facilitate community members' access to the language resources; and to provide support for undertaking the

strategies and actions of the Strategic Language Plan for T̓silhqot̓in language revitalization” (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources).

To achieve those main goals, five main steps were identified. First step will be to “identify a safe place to store the resources”, both at “community level” and “nation level”. At community level, “each community will identify a physical place to keep copies of the language resources and facilitate access to community members”. The copies can be stored in a locked and fire safe cabinet. The possible places identified by the Language Committee for the three participating communities were the following: Yunešit̓in Library, Xeni Gwet̓in Elders Centre, Tl̓'esqox Band Office or Youth Centre” (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources). At nation level, “the Language Committee discussed the possibility of creating a museum-like place as a central place to keep original copies of the language resources. Resources would be stored in a locked and fire-safe place. A possible location identified by the Language Committee is the old Riske Creek School” (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources).

The second step will be to “identify and locate existing language resources in each community and create an archive”. As the document states:

“An inventory of existing language and culture resources will be done. Language materials available in the communities will be located and gathered [...]. Materials produced by both the communities and/or external linguists and other parties (museums and other archives) will be gathered. Resources about language revitalization may be also collected for further reference on language revitalization strategies. A list of people considered experts on different fields will be also created to serve as reference for evaluating or developing new resources, as well as for implementation of activities under the Strategic Language Plan” (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources).

The third step will be to “review and update existing language resources”, by, for example, “digitizing, and transcribing”. The fourth step will be to “share language resources with other communities” by creating a sharing system; and the fifth and last step identified will be to “create new language resources” “based on the identified needs and gaps” presented (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources).

Community members that participated in the conversations also talked about the idea of creating a “safe place” to secure existing T̓silhqot̓in language and historical resource (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:15:49,2 – 00:17:38,3; *Lily the Pink*, 11/09/2016,

CO#6, 00:22:57,6 – 00:23:03,9; *Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:19:55,7 – 00:20:02,6) or even more than one if possible, as *Jo*, 23, suggested (*Jo*, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:16:07,1 – 00:16:13,3). A question that was brought up was where the repository would be located. *Nists'i*, 34, thought that “it would be nice if [...] the nation at some point had a big library” (*Nists'i* 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:44:45,4 – 00:45:31,3) and *Gex*, 34, and *Theresa*, 60, also talked about a “centralized” library in town managed by the Nation (*Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:47:28,2 – 00:47:29,1; *Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:47:42,9 – 00:47:45,8).

One of the strategies on the Language Revitalization Plan was to “(E6) create a cultural centre or place of knowledge as a safe place to speak the language, where knowledge and language resources can be shared” (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016). *Nundi*, 69, also envisioned a T̄silhqot’in museum with “a lot of stuff” and “written [...] about different things” for “kids” to learn (*Nundi*, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 00:58:54–00:59:15). *Juna*, 58, would also like to see a “museum or cultural centre”, as a place where knowledge, history, stories, books and documents can be stored and shared (LRPP #1, 12/01/2015, Community Mobilization Meeting).

Most of the participating community members envision a place for storing language resources in each community (*Chel?ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:47:48,1 – 00:48:00,4; *Nun*, 57, 11/07/2016, CO #4, 00:21:56,0 – 00:21:58,7; *Matilda*, 60, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:15:46,6 – 00:15:52,6) “because it’d just be harder for anyone to travel” as *Omi*, 22, mentioned, and “there’d probably be conflict” on where to locate it (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:18:39,0 – 00:18:56,5). She also suggested the materials should be “evenly divided between the communities” (*Omi*, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:18:23,7 – 00:18:29,2). Similar ideas were expressed by *Chickadee*, 39:

“For me, I would rather prefer that each community has their own resources and you are going to have issues, because you have Elders that can only get out of the community once a month; SA [Social Assistance] that can only get out of there once or twice a month; then you got people like myself, you know, where they are there once a week, or we get out once a week, you know, in two weeks. So depends on your transportation, money... so in terms of accessibility, I think it is very important that each community has their own library of resources and, I guess, in terms of time frame too, you know, when do they access it; then, having after hours too, because people like myself is busy from 8 till 4.30, so looking at those barriers as well, so... those are

my thoughts. Everybody should have one” (*Chickadee*, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:41:02,5 – 00:42:20,4).

Participants also discussed about which building would work best for holding the repository of resources in Yunešit’in. Some suggested the Health and Administration building, even if one copy is “on file” there and few copies are stored in another place for community members to borrow (*Roper*, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:15:52,6 – 00:16:06,9). The library was mentioned by most of them (*Jo*, 23, 05/12/2016, CO#16, 00:16:23,0 – 00:16:27,1; *Nists’i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:44:28,8 – 00:44:34,2; *Tay*, 23, 11/07/2016, CO #3, 00:23:25,4 – 00:23:26,4; *Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:15:52,6 – 00:16:06,9; *Blondie*, 57, 11/16/2017, CO#12, 00:11:32,3 – 00:11:34,1), as well as the school (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:23:50,0 – 00:25:05,0; *Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:15:52,6 – 00:16:06,9; *Nundi*, 69, 11/14/2017, CO#10, 01:08:59).

Theme 5.9. Policies for accessing, using and sharing language materials need to be developed

One of the objectives of the repository of language resources was “to facilitate community members’ access to the language resources” (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources). As *Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 35, explained language resources have been kept in private homes with restrictive access due to several reasons (*Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad’alh*, 12/07/2016, CO#18, 01:04:29,2 – 01:05:38,4) and the creation of the repository could give access to the materials. Many participating community members expressed interest in consulting the materials (*Chel?ig*, 48, 12/07/2016, CO#17, 00:48:02,0 – 00:48:07,6; *Charlie Brown*, 11/10/2016, CO#8, 00:27:39,3 – 00:27:42,0; *Omi*, 22, 11/16/2016, CO#14, 00:17:28,4 – 00:17:35,2). Parents would also borrow materials to learn with their children (*Kalikala*, 39, 10/11/2017, CO#9, 00:03:21,3 – 00:4:35,1), as well as students for the school work, assignments, research, etc. (*Nists’i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:44:45,4 – 00:45:31,3). Language materials would be shared and “multiple copies for the [other Tšilhqot’in] communities” would be made, as the B2. Strategy on the Language Revitalization Plan states (LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan) as well as the Step #4 on the Repository of Language Resources document (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources). Distinctions will also need to be made between community members and non-community members (*Nists’i*, 34, 03/04/2017, CO#23, 00:46:23,5 – 00:46:59,5), or

even leadership (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:42:55,4 – 00:43:26,5) or other groups in the community, like teachers, etc.

The other objective of the repository of language resources is “to provide support for undertaking the strategies and actions of the Strategic Language Plan for T̄silhqot’in language revitalization” (LRPP doc#4, 03/29/2016, Repository of Language Resources) as well as to “support schools and teachers with resources –sharing between institutions and individuals” (B3 Strategy of the Language Revitalization Plan: LRPP doc#2, 03/29/2016, Language Revitalization Plan). Protocols for using and borrowing materials will need to be developed to ensure protection of the resources. Having a “sign out, like a library, tracking system on who has what, time frame on how long you should have it, and what are you using it for” (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:42:25,3 – 00:42:53,2) and “what the protocol would be”, in the case that a resource gets lost (*Roper*, 44, 11/09/2016 CO#5, 00:22:57,6 – 00:23:03,9). Also, if materials can be copied (*Theresa*, 11/30/2016 CO#15, 00:47:58,2 – 00:48:04,3; *Gex*, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:48:04,3 – 00:48:14,1) and if a copy should always stay safe out of public use (*Gex*, 34, 11/30/2016, CO#15, 00:48:28,0 – 00:48:46,3)

Community members also thought that intellectual property and copyright policies would need to be developed to ensure knowledge protection (*Juna*, 58, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting). *Chelʔig*, 48, emphasized we need to be “aware about sacred places and exposure” (*Chelʔig*, 48, LRPP #4, 03/23/2016, Yunešit’in meeting), what knowledge should be accessible and what should not (*Chickadee*, 39, 03/03/2016 CO#22, 00:42:25,3 – 00:42:53,2).

6.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the second part of the thematic analysis of the community perspectives, corresponding to the importance of recovering the use of *Nenqayni Ch’ih* in Yunešit’in (Topic 4), the language teaching and learning strategies that could be applied (Topic 5) and the language resources that could support those strategies (Topic 6). Besides, we have also learned about community members’ motivations to maintain the language, as the language is an important part of their T̄silhqot’in identity and the way they can speak their own reality; it is also inherently connected to the land and links them to their ancestors and family.

Perspectives have also shown that language revitalization should be a collective effort, where every community member holds responsibility and, therefore, should be engaged in the process. Some of the challenges that community members face when speaking/teaching/learning the language have also been discussed, such as the emotional baggage that they carry from their past experiences at the residential school, the reduced number of speakers and the lack of resources and the limited time and space that is dedicated to the language, among others. According to community members, language teaching strategies need to be reviewed and programs should be focused on language immersion, hands-on activities and learning the language on the land.

In addition, I have also included the results of the inventory at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul together with the commentaries of community members about the existing materials and new resources that could be developed. Gathered insights also reflected the idea of the creation of a repository or archive for language materials and the policies that would need to be developed for it.

In the next chapter, I will provide an interpretation of the results and present a suggestion for their application towards enhancing Yunešit'in language revitalization efforts.

Chapter 7. Discussion and application of the learnings

Once I have presented the results of the thematical analysis, we can now go over their discussion. In this chapter, I will answer the research questions and prove the accuracy of hypotheses stated for this study (cf. 7.1). Subsequently, I will put the results into perspective in relation to other Indigenous language revitalization experiences, such as the Māori and Hawaiian (cf. 7.2). To finish, I will suggest the application of the research outcomes as part of the development of 2021 Yunešit'in Language Revitalization Plan (cf. 7.3).

7.1. Revisiting research questions and hypotheses

As we have seen in chapters 5 and 6, a total of 121 themes emerged from the thematical analysis of the community perspectives, which were organized in five main topics. With those, I revisited each research question and hypotheses and developed a discussion based on the related themes.

7.1.1 Answering Research Question #1

For answering the Research Question #1 – What are the community needs regarding the Tšilhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies and language resources towards Tšilhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in? (RQ1), I used outcomes of every topic identified: Topic 1 – Tšilhqot'in language knowledge in Yunešit'in; Topic 2 – Tšilhqot'in language usage in Yunešit'in; Topic 3 – Value of the Tšilhqot'in language in Yunešit'in; Topic 4 – Tšilhqot'in language teaching/learning/acquiring strategies in Yunešit'in; and Topic 5 – Tšilhqot'in language resources in Yunešit'in. By using the results, I validated the hypotheses assigned to this question and the discussion is presented below:

Hypothesis #1	<i>It is necessary to develop and implement language immersion programs in order to increase the number of speakers and level of language fluency (H1).</i>
Variable #1	Language teaching/learning techniques (V1)
Discussion	Language teaching methods are obsolete (Theme 4.13) and language immersion strategies should be applied (Theme 4.31) as it has been proved as the most successful approach and effective way

	<p>of learning or recovering a language. T̂silhqot'in fluent speakers and semi-speakers, older than 45 years old, and in their late 30s, respectively (Theme 1.1, Theme 1.2), learned their language as kids in a natural setting just by listening to their families at home and on the land while carrying out daily and cultural activities (Theme 1.5, Theme 1.6). However, younger generations who learned the language mainly at school acquired some basic language knowledge but never became fluent (Theme 1.3, 1.7).</p> <p>Although T̂silhqot'in is used mainly as an oral language, in addition to conversational skills, programs need to develop also reading and writing (Theme 4.33), as well as listening and body language reading skills (Theme 4.34). The Total Physical Response approach may also be useful for teaching some aspects the language (Theme 4.32).</p>
--	--

Hypothesis #2	<i>It is necessary to develop language programs that support intergenerational transmission (H2).</i>
Variable #2	Engagement of different generations and community groups in the language programs (V2)
Discussion	<p>Language revitalization requires responsibilities at different levels: individual, family, community and nation; therefore, strategies need to be based on collectiveness and community engagement (Theme 4.19). Elders (Theme 4.20), families (Theme 4.22) and youth (Theme 4.21) need to be engaged in the process and sharing between communities also needs to be encouraged (Theme 4.23).</p> <p>T̂silhqot'in language revitalization efforts should be focused primarily on the younger generations (Theme 4.1). Language learning should start at a young age, even during pregnancy before children are born (Theme 4.28). That way, parents would develop their relationship with their babies in the language and address the intergenerational language gap that currently exists (Theme 2.34). Community members are still suffering consequences from</p>

	<p>colonization and assimilation practices (Theme 2.15) and face emotional barriers related to residential school trauma when speaking the language (Theme 4.3); therefore, language is not being passed from generation to generation. Grandparents may speak T̓silhqot̓'in to their grandkids (Theme 2.33), but parents may not (Theme 2.34).</p> <p>Language programs need to support language learning at home and in the family environment (Theme 4.38), so language is passed down to future generations (Theme 3.2). Programs need to engage the families (Theme 4.22), so parents can learn the language and properly support their children's learning process (Theme 4.2). The mentor-apprentice approach may also be an appropriate language learning strategy for securing intergenerational transmission (Theme 4.30) and increasing the learning success, as it is based on intergenerational one-on-one learning.</p>
--	---

Hypothesis #3	<i>It is necessary to develop and implement new strategies to teach/learn/acquire the language on the land (H3).</i>
Variable #3	Strategies that promote language teaching/learning/acquiring on the land (V3)
Discussion	<p>The T̓silhqot̓'in people have a strong connection to the land and consider themselves caretakers of the land they live on (Theme 2.22). The T̓silhqot̓'in language is closely tied to the land (Theme 3.16; Theme 3.20; Theme 4.30; Theme 4.37). Fluent speakers learned their language from their families while living on the land (Theme 1.5). Therefore, language programs should be based on active learning and hands-on cultural activities on the land (Theme 4.30) to strengthen the relationship while facilitating the traditional knowledge transmission (Theme 2.22, Theme 3.16, Theme 3.20, Theme 4.37).</p>

Hypothesis #4	<i>It is necessary to develop culturally oriented language programs and materials that support language teaching/learning while simultaneously acquiring traditional knowledge (H4).</i>
Variable #4	Presence of cultural traditions in the language programs and resources (V4)
Discussion	<p>Fluent and semi-speakers learned their language from their families while carrying out cultural activities (Theme 1.5, Theme 1.6). However, community members that were raised by foster families lost their language and the connection with their culture (Theme 2.29).</p> <p>Community traditional lifestyle has changed (Theme 2.29) and language learning strategies have adapted to the new settings and environments. However, language programs should still meet students' needs and interests (Theme 4.27) and include cultural knowledge and traditional ways of teaching, like storytelling (Theme 4.35). Art together with visual and audio resources can also be used to enhance the language learning experience (Theme 4.36).</p> <p>Education and school requirements should be reviewed so teachers can easily conduct cultural activities (Theme 4.14). More time for learning and using the language should be also secured (Theme 4.9, Theme 4.10, Theme 4.24).</p> <p>Culturally sensitive language resources also need be developed (Theme 4.11; 5.2) and Elders and knowledge keepers need to be recorded in order to secure language and traditional knowledge (Theme 4.12; 5.6), like T̄silhqot'in prayers (Theme 2.8), traditional medicines (Theme 2.30) and traditional stories and places (Theme 2.9).</p> <p>There is a variety of language resources in the community (Theme 5.1.), such as dictionaries, wordlists, recordings of songs and traditional stories and law, language teaching curriculum as well as religious materials. Other online resources, such as the <i>First Voices</i> online portal (developed by FPCC) have also been created.</p>

A significant amount of resources is located in private homes; however, they are not aimed for the public use and its use is limited to family members due to respect to the person who developed it (i.e. songs, prayers) (Theme 4.11; 5.1).

Some language resources are stored at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul and remain available to the language teachers. According to the inventory conducted for this study, there is a total of 186 materials (Theme 5.1). Regarding the type of resource, the inventory included the following: children's story books (71 items, 38%), mainly English-written stories by non-First Nations authors and translated into Tšilhqot'in; educational materials for children (67 items, 37%), most of them developed by Tšilhqot'in authors (57 items) between 1980 and 2016 and written mostly in Tšilhqot'in; materials focused on cultural activities (25 items, 13%), most of them written by community members and in Tšilhqot'in, covering topics such as drying soopallalie, tanning moose hide, drum making, making tree pitch medicine, drying meat, making nets and dip net, picking cambium, drying meat, fishing and preparing salmon, hunting, harvesting vegetables, horses and rodeo; language teaching resources (9 items, 5%) published by other First Nations and First Nation Education institutions between 1988 and 2015; resources on Tšilhqot'in language curriculum (6 items, 3%), written mostly in English with some phrases in Tšilhqot'in; pamphlets with religious content (4 items, 2%) translated from English into Tšilhqot'in by The Chilcotin Bible Translation Committee in 1990; Tšilhqot'in wordlists (3 items, 1%) developed in the 80s by the Cariboo Chilcotin District; and one binder with several coloring sheets (1 item, 1%).

Regarding the language they are written in, there is a majority of resources (112 items, 60%) that are developed mostly in Tšilhqot'in, with some English words (e.g. author and illustrator on cover, copyright blurb, introduction); some are also monolingual in Tšilhqot'in (37 items, 20%), bilingual in Tšilhqot'in and English (13 items, 7%), monolingual in English (20 items, 11%) or written mostly

	<p>in English with some T̓silhqot̓in words (3 items, 2%). Few contain no words, such as flashcards with pictures of community members (1 item, 0%).</p> <p>Regarding the author’s origin, almost half of the resources are developed by T̓silhqot̓in authors (75 items, 40%) and the other half by a Non-Indigenous (73 items, 40%). A few are developed by T̓silhqot̓in and other Indigenous authors (25 items, 13%), T̓silhqot̓in and Non-Indigenous authors (4 items, 2%) or entirely by authors from other Indigenous communities (9 items, 5%).</p> <p>Regarding the target group, most of the resources are written for children (146 items, 80%); some are for all ages (20 items, 10%) and a few are developed specifically for language teachers (20 items, 10%).</p> <p>Existing language resources need to be compiled, organized (Theme 5.7) and updated (Theme 5.2). A repository of language resources needs to be created (Theme 5.8). Policies for accessing, using and sharing language materials need to be developed (Theme 5.9) to secure language and cultural resources.</p> <p>Overall expertise is needed to support the language revitalization efforts (Theme 4.15) and, additionally, more funding is required to implement language projects (Theme 4.8).</p>
--	---

7.1.2 Answering Research Question #2

For answering Research Question #2 – What is Yunešit̓in community members’ knowledge and usage of the T̓silhqot̓in language? (RQ2), I used outcomes on Topic 1 – T̓silhqot̓in language knowledge in Yunešit̓in and Topic 2 – T̓silhqot̓in language usage in Yunešit̓in and the discussion is presented below.

Yunešit̓in community members’ knowledge and usage of the T̓silhqot̓in language varies depending on the generation they belong to. Community members older than 45 years old are T̓silhqot̓in fluent speakers (Theme 1.1), learned their language from their families at home and on the land while carrying out cultural activities (Theme 1.5) and speak the language regularly (Theme 2.1). Community members in their 30s are semi-speakers (Theme 1.2), learned the language at home from their families and at school

from their language teachers (Theme 1.6) and use the language to communicate with the Elders. Community members under 30 years old have basic level of T̓silhqot'in (Theme 1.3), learned some language at home with their families but mainly at school (Theme 1.7) and do not speak the language but understand some (Theme 2.2). Younger generations keep learning the language today (Theme 1.4), mostly at the school or their grandparents (Theme 1.7), and rarely speak the language outside language programs (Theme 2.3).

The language is used for communication with family, Elders, other fluent speakers, children and animals (Theme 2.4), for naming people (Theme 2.7), referring to traditional places (Theme 2.9) and for praying (Theme 2.8). The language is also used for joking and teasing each other (Theme 2.6) and when speakers don't want non-speakers to understand what they are saying (Theme 2.5). T̓silhqot'in and English are sometimes mixed in the conversations (Theme 2.16). English is often used especially for referring to high numbers, ages or "new" (post-colonization) concepts or objects (Theme 2.16). English is the language of preference when speakers react with anger and frustration (Them 2.17).

The T̓silhqot'in language is mostly used in the homes and the family environment (Theme 2.10), also in community public spaces (Theme 2.11), events and gatherings (Theme 2.12) and "in town", referring to Williams Lake, B.C. (Theme 2.13). Speakers find several challenges for using the language and speaking it may require motivation and effort (Theme 2.19). Lifestyle has changed (Theme 2.29) and community members are geographically dispersed (Theme 2.14). In many cases, families don't have their basic needs covered and language doesn't become a priority (Theme 2.19). Community members are still suffering consequences of colonization and assimilation practices (Theme 2.15) and dealing with trauma caused by past and ongoing racist behaviours (Theme 2.28). Community members are sometimes afraid of making mistakes when using the language (Theme 2.18). English also prevails as dominant language (Theme 2.17) and there is a lack of T̓silhqot'in vocabulary for "new" concepts (Theme 2.16).

Strategies to promote the use of the language need to be applied. T̓silhqot'in needs to be spoken it out (Theme 2.35) and speakers and language learners need to be encouraged and supported (Theme 2.36). Community members need to take back own responsibility to speak the language (Theme 2.37); however, language policies that promote the use of the language in the community public spaces should also be developed (Theme 2.40; Theme 2.45) and specific time and space for speaking the language would need to be secured (Theme 2.38).

7.1.3 Answering Research Question #3

For answering Research Question #3 – What are the reasons for the T̂silhqot̂'in language loss in Yunêsit̂'in? (RQ3), I used outcomes on Topic 2 – T̂silhqot̂'in language usage in Yunêsit̂'in and I provide the relevant discussion next.

There are several reasons for the T̂silhqot̂'in language loss in Yunêsit̂'in. Colonialism and assimilation practices, such as the residential school system, have affected community members' relationship to the language and caused trauma related to it (Theme 2.24). Community members that were raised by foster families didn't acquire their language nor the connection with their culture (Theme 2.25). The contemporary education system has affected younger generations' T̂silhqot̂'in identity and consequently their language fluency (Theme 2.26). Substance abuse is also a consequence of identity and language loss (Theme 2.27). In addition, community members still suffer trauma caused by racism which hinders the use of the language (Theme 2.28). The community lifestyle change has influenced the language acquiring and use (Theme 2.29). The loss of traditional medicine knowledge is also affecting the language use (Theme 2.30). In addition, language hasn't always been fully accessible to community members (Theme 4.11).

All those factors can hinder the use of the language and cause a lack of motivation towards speaking the language (Theme 2.19; 2.31; 4.5). In consequence, the number of speakers keeps going down (Theme 2.32). Although the future of the T̂silhqot̂'in language is still uncertain (Theme 2.41), most of the participating community members are optimistic about restoring T̂silhqot̂'in language use in Yunêsit̂'in (Theme 2.42).

7.1.4 Answering Research Question #4

For answering Research Question #4 – Why is it important to recover the usage of the T̂silhqot̂'in language in Yunêsit̂'in? (RQ4), I used mainly outcomes on Topic 2 – T̂silhqot̂'in language usage in Yunêsit̂'in and Topic 3 – Importance of recovering the use of T̂silhqot̂'in in Yunêsit̂'in and below is the explanation.

It is important to recover the usage of the T̂silhqot̂'in language in Yunêsit̂'in for several reasons. There are not too many fluent speakers left in the community (Theme 3.1). However, some Elders do not speak and/or understand English (Theme 3.4) so the T̂silhqot̂'in language is still necessary for communication (Theme 3.3). Learning and

speaking the language is also a way of showing respect to T̓silhqot̓in people (Theme 3.18) and it needs to be passed down to future generations (Theme 3.2).

It is easier for them to express feelings in their language (Theme 3.7) and speaking the language helps express their own reality (Theme 3.6). Speaking the language also increases their level of happiness (Theme 3.5; 3.7) as it is connected to health and wellbeing (Theme 3.5). It also links them to their family and ancestors (Theme 3.9). For community members, the T̓silhqot̓in language is ceremony and spirituality (Theme 3.10) and it is an honor to have it (Theme 3.12). It is always in them (Theme 3.13) and their link to creation (Theme 3.11). When they speak the language, they speak the truth from their spirit (Theme 3.7). They feel entitled to speak the language (Theme 3.14). It makes them free (Theme 3.8) and empowers them as a people (Theme 3.15).

The language contains the knowledge passed down through generations (Theme 3.17). It is closely tied to the land and the culture (Theme 3.16) and it is part of the T̓silhqot̓in identity (Theme 3.13). If the T̓silhqot̓in people stopped using the language, the intergenerational communication would be interrupted (Theme 2.23) and, together with the language (Theme 2.20), the culture would be lost forever (Theme 2.21). The T̓silhqot̓in people would then lose their responsibility to themselves and to the land (Theme 2.22).

After having presented the Yunešit̓in language perspectives, in the next section, I'll provide a brief review of other Indigenous language revitalization experiences around the world in relation to the outcomes of this study.

7.2 Yunešit̓in language revitalization from a broader perspective

Language revitalization processes are unique to each people, as each language community presents different sociolinguistic contexts based on the past experiences they have lived; that is why language revitalization frameworks shouldn't be applied as 'models' and squarely placed upon a community expecting they will work in the same way they did for the language for which they were designed (Rewi and Rewi 2015: 150). If we see the language in the abstract, the revitalization strategies might seem transferrable; however, once we understand that language revitalization comes in hand with cultural revitalization, we realize the direct transference of those techniques can become more complex (Wilson and Kamanā 2009). Yet it still becomes useful to review other processes, as other peoples' experiences can show similarities that may help reflect on the case of the language in question. Looking at other's successes may also provide inspiration as it proves that

revitalization is actually possible. Also, reflecting on the lessons learned from other processes can bring up some light on the challenges peoples may face during their own process of reviving the language, giving them the opportunity to prepare or adjust in advance.

The revitalization of the *Te reo* Māori from the Polynesian language family (Warschauer and Donaghy 1997: 1) is often regarded internationally as a reference for Indigenous language revitalization, due to its ground-breaking nature and high rates of success, and it has been well documented (Barrington and Beaglehole 1974; Smith 1986; Simon 1990; Nepe 1991; Bishop and Glynn 1998; Simon 1998a, 1998b; Pere 1999; Grin and Vaillancourt 1998; Mead 2003; Pihama, et al. 2004; Chrisp 2005; McIntosh 2005; May et al. 2006; Rata 2007; Morrison and Vaioleti 2011; Cowell 2012; Olsen-Reeder and Higgins 2012; Gloyne 2014; O'Regan 2014; Rewi and Rewi 2015; Te Huia 2015; King 2018). The revitalization of another Polynesian language, the *‘Ōlelo Hawai’i* (Hawaiian), has also been widely studied (Warschauer and Donaghy 1997; Warschauer 1998; Warner 2001; Kawai’ae’a et al. 2007; Wilson and Kawai’ae’a 2007; Wilson and Kamanā 2009; Osorio 2010; Brenzinger and Heinrich 2013). Even though each process is particular to each culture, both Indigenous communities, as well as the neighboring ones located in Australia (Walsh 2001; Purdie et al. 2008; Al-Munawwarah 2019) or Indonesia (Arka 2013), have a similar history of colonization resulting in the current sociolinguistic situation. Therefore, one can expect that they may also present similar struggles and efforts in reclaiming their languages and that those can be extrapolated to other Indigenous peoples around the world, as it is the case of the Indigenous language communities in Canada, and the Yunešit’in in particular for this study.

The Māori language documentation activities started in the early 19th century when the first alphabet was developed in 1826 (King 2018: 603). However, the language revitalization efforts became strong in the early 1980s. Since 1930, the number of Māori speakers had dropped radically and the concern about the disappearance of the language resulted on several actions as part of a broader movement for the recognition of Māori sovereignty (King 2018: 592) It started as a grass-root movement led by “the Māori activist group Ngā Tamatoa (the young Warriors), city raised and university educated young people, empowered by the worldwide city rights and black consciousness of the era” (King 2018: 293). One of the first actions was to organize the first *wānanga reo*, language camp for adult learners, in 1981, with the main goal of supporting intergenerational transmission and developing participants’ language skills for daily communication, as at that time there were still few speakers under

the age of 30 (King 2018: 600). Since then, the Māori language and culture revitalization experience has been at the vanguard internationally.

The Māori process has gone through three main phases: from the *disruption* and the grassroots efforts to get the children raised in the language and taught in school, to the institutionalization of the movement by securing funding, developing programs, and lobbying the government in order to support the efforts by making it a national concern; and finally, to the normalization of the language, by encouraging people to speak it. In this last stage, the ZePA model was developed for assessing language knowledge as well as the progression or regression of the *te reo* Māori (Rewi and Rewi 2015: 139). The model classifies the speakers into three states: Zero (Ze), which means “zero receptivity towards the Māori language” for those who are “dismissive and resistant to any acknowledgement of, or advocacy for, the Māori language” and “intolerant of the Māori language and have positioned themselves at a place of indifference, for whatever reason (not necessarily a lack of wanting)”; Passive (P) for a position of receptivity to the Māori language” referring to “an inert cohort who may have no proficiency in the Māori language whatsoever” but “in terms of receptivity they are accommodating of the language and do not restrict the use of it in society, in the home, or in the workplace” and “service Māori language needs upon request and support Māori language endeavours activated by others”; and active (A), which refers to the “individuals who actively strive to advance the Māori language in all arenas” (Higgins et al. 2014: 23-28).

Nowadays, similarly to the Yunešit’*in* community (cf. 5.1.1; 7.1.2), Māori fluent speakers are aged over 65 years (Te Huia 2015: 611). There are also some younger speakers in the communities but securing intergenerational transmission is still needed; according to a study conducted by Te Huia (2015: 612), participants recalled that, even if their parents were fluent in *Te reo* Māori, the main language was usually English. While Yunešit’*in* participating members stated that the language is spoken mainly to Elders, for praying and for naming traditional places (cf. 5.2.2; 7.1.2), the main domains of the use of the *Te reo* Māori were the *marae* (gathering place), the church and, now, the schools (King 2018: 596).

For the ‘*Ōlelo Hawai’i*, the first language revitalization efforts known as the ‘Hawaiian Renaissance’ occurred in the 1970s and 1980s and they were based on Hawaiian dances and songs (Brenzinger and Heinrich 2013: 3). They were also “largely [relied] on efforts to apply existing ‘foreign language’ learning models to Indigenous languages, with little success” (Cowell 2012: 171). Then, a second wave happened in the 1990s, recognizing that “responses to language shift need to be much more nuanced in terms of local contexts and cultures” (Cowell 2012: 171); and now, they are on the third wave, where they understand that

language shift is a symptom of deeper socio-cultural changes and that “the ecology within which language is embedded must change if shift is to be reversed” (Cowell 2012: 171); therefore, the Hawaiian language revitalization experience is a movement about “reformulating identities” in which language knowledge is only one of the goals (Cowell 2012: 172).

The key strategy of the process was the development of immersion schools, by promoting the Hawaiian culture and also embracing the ongoing changes in technology and the society at the same time (Cowell 2012: 175). They started the *Pūnana Leo* immersion programs for preschoolers (similar to the Māori *Te Kōhanga Reo* programs), and gradually expanded to higher levels year by year, while developing parental classes simultaneously, so they could support their children learning and promote language transmission in the family. They also developed immersion programs within the public-school system, as well as outside to reach individuals of all backgrounds (Cowell 2012: 172-175). Other actions that also became essential were as follows: building political support, at least at “tribal” or nation level in order to obtain sustainable resources (Warner 2001; Wilson and Kamanā 2001); overcoming legal barriers and developing processes led by the Hawaiian people with the support of other peoples in the same situation; creating a group of experts for curriculum development as well as a rich web infrastructure and other digital technologies to support the programs (Warschauer and Donaghy 1997); developing new university education courses that helped support the recruitment process of native speakers to staff the immersion schools (Wilson and Kawai’ae’a 2007); and forming a language committee to oversee the development of new lexicon. Linguists and other university experts also provided support, however, without holding essential roles in the process (Cowell 2012: 172-175).

Regarding the challenges that the Hawaiian language community has faced, some of them were interestingly related to the “too radical of a discontinuity between dispersed and language-specific identity” (Osorio 2010), which, according to some authors, may have also occurred recently within the Māori, “due to their emphasis on tribalism” (Rata 2007).

That idea may be compared to the dialect-related challenges explained by Yunešit’in members for the Tšilhqot’in language (cf. 6.2.2, theme 4.17). In Māori, dialects are mutually intelligible with phonological, lexical and syntactical differences, but linguistically those differences are small (King 2018: 606). According to King (2018: 604), one dialect has become more used, as a majority of the resources, such as dictionaries, grammars and online materials have been developed in that dialect; nonetheless, there is no accepted standard orthography for any of them yet.

A current challenge for the Māori is that the language diversity keeps increasing nowadays, as most of the speakers live outside their dialect areas and, in many cases, they learn their language from second speakers, which increases the amount of ways of speaking. Their pronunciation and syntax is affected by the English phonology and they use new coined words that fluent speakers don't necessarily recognize sometimes (King 2018: 601). In general, there is a widespread attitude of understanding that languages evolve, but older fluent speakers' speech is still seen as exemplar and the one new speakers aim to acquire (King 2018: 603).

With respect to the reasons for the loss of the Māori language, the history of contact with English, as a language of colonization, is parallel to many endangered languages in the world. As also expressed by Yunešit'in members (cf. 5.2.6. Theme 2.24) about the Tšilhqot'in language, the "systemic practices of colonization enforced by the Crown" since first contact, in the case of the Māori, in the 17th century, along with the mass arrival of the European immigration in early 1800s and, later on, in 1840, when New Zealand became part of the British Crown under the Treaty of Waitangi (King 2018: 293), resulted in the development of "Western political and economic power structure" and the attempt to dominate and assimilate the Māori people (King 2018: 293) and their culture and language. After a period of bilingualism and gradual language shift, first in the urban Māori homes and, later, in rural communities, a generation of bilingual speakers and younger generations who didn't know the heritage language coexisted until 1955, when English ended up becoming the main language for raising the children (King 2018: 293).

In the case of Hawaii, the first contact with the Europeans was in 1778 and, according to Warschauer and Donaghy (1997: 1), in 1820 the 'Ōlelo Hawai'i was still the main language spoken. With the arrival of the missionaries, an alphabet was developed and, in the next years, several newspapers were published, a number of religious and literary works were translated and traditional oral literature was also transcribed in the language. Literacy rates were as high as other places in the world; yet the culture was being devastated, as traditions and art forms, such as *hula*, were prohibited. Also, the number of people was significantly reduced by the diseases introduced by the settlers; 85% of the indigenous population was killed over a century (Warschauer and Donaghy 1997: 1). In the late 1800s, a large number of foreign workers were brought from Asia (Warschauer and Donaghy 1997: 1) and English started to take over the 'Ōlelo Hawai'i. In 1893, the United States overthrew the sovereign Hawaiian monarchy (in power from 1810 to 1893) and the Hawai'i was annexed (Brenzinger and Heinrich 2013:2). In 1896, the ban of the Hawaiian-medium schools was declared and

the ‘English only’ ideology became stronger. That was the key turning point of the decline of the language (Warner 2001): Hawaiian was still used in the church and the political campaigns; nevertheless, by the 1950s, the language shift was already complete in most of the territory (Brenzinger and Heinrich 2013:3).

For the Māori, another important factor of the language shift was the introduction of the Western education system and formal *pakeha* (non-Māori) schooling structures (Simon 1994; Simon 1998a and 1998b), which caused that the traditional mechanisms through which *ako*¹ Māori was transmitted became interrupted and fragmented (Pihama et al. 2004: 28). The first Mission school was established in 1816 by the Church Missionary Society and the formalization of schooling occurred in 1847 under the Education Ordinance (Pihama et al. 2004: 29), with the primary goal of assimilation (Simon 1998b: 66) and “removing the Māori children from the demoralizing influence of Māori villages in order to hasten their assimilation to the habits of the European” (Barrington 1970). It was used as a means of social control (Simon 1990; Simon 1992) and the objective was to “civilize” Māori people in order to facilitate a process of Christianity (Pihama et al. 2004: 29) and destroy “less visible aspects of Māori life” like “beliefs, value systems, and the spiritual bonds that connected people to each other and to their environment” (Smith 1986: 2). In 1867, the *Native Schools Act* brought the start of the of the colonial secular schooling for Māori and it was formalized in 1877 under the *Education Act* (Pihama et al. 2004: 29).

Those assimilation strategies may remind of the residential school system implemented for the Indigenous peoples in Canada. The same way Yunešit’in members explained within this study (cf. 5.2.6, Themes 2.24 and 2.26), in the case of the Māori, there are also many testimonies about the psychological and physical abuse that children of the later 19th experienced in state funded schools (Te Huia 2015: 611) as well as the punishment for speaking the language (King 2018: 293). Similar events took place in Hawai’i, where the language was strictly forbidden anywhere within schoolyards or buildings and children who spoke it would receive physical punishment (Nahoa Lucas 2000: 9).

The Catholic missionary schooling system denigrated the people and contributed to the development of negative attitudes towards the language; in the case of the Māori, people started thinking that a good knowledge of English would help them secure jobs, especially in government departments (King 2018: 293); Māori families were attracted to the urban areas

¹ *Ako* is a traditional concept meaning both to ‘learn’ and to ‘teach’. According to Morrison and Vaioleti (2011: 305), it integrates the “educational development of the whole person incorporating intellectual, spiritual and physical of the self and the community rather than the economic and labor imperatives”.

and “by the 1970s the main domains for the use of Māori had receded to the *marae* (meeting place) and the church (King 2018: 293). It was then when the Māori people saw the urgent need to rekindle the use of the language and the culture (Te Huia 2013: 626).

According to King (2018: 608), some Māori learners’ main motivation is not only to revitalize the language itself, but the idea that the language will revitalize them, so language revitalization becomes more about self-respect and empowerment through the reclamation of one’s ethnic identity (Craig 1992). In fact, for both the Māori and Yunešit’in (cf. 6.1.1, Theme 3.16), the language embodies the knowledge that has been kept for generations. They believe their language provides them with “a window into the culture” and “a set of cultural resources, including access to a worldview that reflects the cultural ideologies” of the past and contemporary Māori culture; in a way, learning their language enables them to learn more about themselves “through the eyes of their ancestors” (Te Huia 2015: 612) and to understand the common experiences and relationship with them (Pihama et al. 2004: 23-24). The language is “the life line and sustenance of a culture and it provides the tentacles that can enable [the individual] to link up with everything in his or her world”. Learning the language is “a whole opening” (Te Huia 2013: 618), an “alternative worldview” and “new forms of holistic thought” (Te Huia 2015: 628). It provides the people with an “enhanced cognition to perceive information from multiple cultural viewpoints” (Te Huia 2015: 619). In fact, according to Hong et al. (2003), Māori learners seem to develop a greater depth of understanding of the internal thought process of the older generations, the culture and the community as a whole, by creating cultural identity and emotional security, as they can understand what is being said and can hold an active role in the community events. In addition, the *Te reo* Māori keeps an “intimate link with the earth and the physical world” and “landscape of the Tribal areas specifically to mountains, rivers, lakes and sea”. As for the Tšilhqot’in (cf. 6.1.1, Theme 3.15), places have been named by and after their ancestors and stories of the people are transmitted through the language (Morrison 1999).

Similarly to what was pointed out by Yunešit’in members (cf. 6.1.1, Theme 3.5), the Māori people also ‘feel better’ when speaking their language; they believe it supports their spiritual and intellectual states and helps them regain a greater feeling of connectedness and cultural awareness to their Māori identity (Te Huia 2013: 618). Similarly to the Yunešit’in (cf. 5.2.4, Theme 2.18), a feeling of shame comes up in those with language limitations, since they feel or think that the others may see them as ‘inauthentic’ members of the cultural group (McIntosh 2005); therefore, the Māori believe that with the language, they also acquire the feeling of belonging to a social group. As some Yunešit’in members commented (cf. 6.1.1,

Theme 3.13), learning the language is also essential for the empowerment of the people (Pere 1991: 9); the *Te reo* Māori provides the grounds for cultural reengagement in the community (Te Huia 2015: 61) and it enables individuals to regain the pride and be encouraged to take leadership and fulfil cultural roles that require language knowledge (Benet-Martinez et al. 2002).

7.2.1 Language immersion: a successful language teaching strategy

An icon of the Māori language revitalization process par excellence is their language immersion programs for the youngest generations. Language immersion is internationally recognized as a highly successful form of language education for obtaining bilingual and academically successful students (May et al. 2006: 2; Rewi and Rewi 2015: 145) and it is seen as the best way to “produce critical masses of fluent speakers” and “create [new] social domains where the use of the Indigenous language is actually beneficial and necessary” (Cowell 2012: 172-175).

The first *Kōhanga reo* ‘language nest’ Māori immersion preschool program was established in 1982 (Pihama et al. 2004: 34) and, since then, has become “a politicising and conscientizing agent” (Smith 1997: 258) as well as “a means of exercising organisational and administrative autonomy and self-determination” (Bishop 1998: 5). It has also been proven as a successful intervention strategy for producing fluent Māori graduates while “nurturing their Māori identity” at the same time (Pihama et al. 2004: 35), and also preparing them for the school by providing them with the necessary education to facilitate academic growth in the future (Bishop 1998). In this program, the *whanau* (‘extended family’ that supports the school) “provides the backbone for the educating and the nurturing of the child” (Pihama et al. 2004: 34) and plays an important role in the decision-making process on what the children learn, how they learn it and who is involved in that learning (Bishop 1998: 5).

The *Kōhanga reo* has become the most influential Indigenous language program in New Zealand and has been replicated by other peoples around the world (Al-Munawwarah 2019: 252). The Hawaiians were the first ones in importing the learning model and, later on, they were followed by the Ojibwe and the Lakota in the United States, and some Indigenous peoples in B.C., like the Secwepemc or even the T̓silhqot̓in, as we have learned about Yunešit̓in *Nenqayni T’ox* program (cf. 3.3.2.4). Similar language immersion strategies have also been developed in Estonia for the *Võro* language and in Finland and Russia for the *Sami* and Karelian languages.

A couple years after the start of the language nest programs, in 1985, the first *Kura Kaupapa* Māori (immersion school) was opened at a community called Hoani Waititi Marae (Nepe 1991) and “operated outside of the state schooling system” until 1990, when those schools were included in the legislation and became “a legitimate state schooling option” (Pihama et al. 2004: 35). Later on, the *Whakekura* (secondary schools) opened their doors for students generally above 8 years old (King 2018: 596). Nowadays, those schools also receive state funding and are recognized under *the New Zealand Education Act*.

Recent statistics from the New Zealand Ministry of Education show that the students from the Māori immersion schools obtain better academic results than the ones that attend English middle schools (King 2018: 596). Yet one of the current challenges of the Māori immersion secondary schools is to retain students, as they choose to enroll in other centres with a wider range of subjects (King 2018: 596); that shows the need of support from universities to “develop university-level language training programs that can produce teachers to eventually staff the immersion schools” (Wilson and Kawai’ae’a 2007), so that they can offer a more comprehensive courses. In fact, ensuring an appropriate supply of teachers that speak the language has been a priority for the Māori: teachers who want to become fluent in the language or fluent speakers who want to pursue their teaching education (Grin and Vaillancourt 1998: 232). According to them, that can be achieved by enhancing the work conditions of the teaching positions and providing financial incentives like bursaries or long-term contracts that encourage people to commit and invest in that position (Grin and Vaillancourt 1998: 233). Opening the immersion programs to a wider public with individuals of all backgrounds can help to raise enrolment numbers as well, as it “increases the population from which potential attendees can be drawn, thus allowing for more schools and larger schools, with more extra-curricular and social opportunities available to the students and more general political support” (Cowell 2012: 172-175).

As similarly expressed by Yunešit’in members for their language (cf. 6.2.3, Theme 4.24), according to the Māori, there is also a need for securing time for learning the *Te reo* at the secondary schools without immersion programs (King 2018: 596). Nonetheless, these programs where the language is taught as a subject don’t show a high rate of success in producing speakers. As Yunešit’in members expressed (cf. 6.2.3, Theme 4.3.0; 4.3.1), Smith (1986) also argues that the language needs to be taught as part of the everyday living and activities. Traditionally, the Māori young generations were included in the everyday contexts, and also formal gatherings and ‘adult conversations’, where they had the opportunity to learn the language but also “etiquette, protocols, family and tribal

issues and connections” (Pihama et al. 2004: 17); however, that doesn’t happen today, although since students may be fluent in the language, when they leave the school, they don’t *live* in the language. As Hermes (2007) explains, when language is taught at the school, there is the risk of becoming institutionalized, instead of acquiring the knowledge as “what we do” or “who we are”; that system also continues feeding the dichotomy between contemporary and traditional (Indigenous) culture (Cowell 2012: 189). Wilson and Kawai’ae’a (2007: 38–39) also point that out in the case of the Hawaiian, as they see a need to develop Hawaiian-medium structures and “social and conceptual mechanisms for actually living in the language”, as opposed to just providing cultural content, since it is the structures what creates the “identity and the interaction of human beings” and promotes the use of the language (Cowell 2012: 189).

Yet, the Māori and Hawaiian immersion programs present good outcomes, as the enrollment numbers continue becoming higher in pre-school institutions and primary schools; the overall number and level of competence of speakers increases over time and community members keep showing a favourable attitude to the learning and using of language (Grin and Vaillancourt 1998: 139-144).

7.2.2 Securing intergenerational language transmission

Even though schools have an essential role in the language revitalization processes, securing the language transmission in the family becomes essential to guarantee not only the ‘living in the language’ but the passing on of the language from generation to generation; therefore, it is important that language programs support that, as Yunešit’in members also explained (cf. 6.2.3, Theme 4.22). In the case of the Māori, traditionally, the child lived surrounded by at least three generations and was “exposed to a lifestyle that allowed their nurturing and education from their Elders”, on their traditions, stories, values and the relationship to their ancestors and the land through the everyday life (Pihama et al. 2004: 15). Today, Māori grandparents still hold an important role in the children’s education (Waldon 2004) as they are often responsible for the daily care of the grandchildren. When the learning and teaching comes from the nurturing relationship, the children’s intellect is developed to ‘think māori’ and they are nurtured to ‘feel Māori’ (Nepe 1991: 31); according to them, that is what the language programs need to support or try to emulate: children must hear the language on daily basis, imitate the speakers and learn the language through the everyday natural use while being nurtured from a holistic perception (Pihama et al. 2004: 16). Therefore, some of the Māori programs are committed to ensure that each family has a least

a native speaker and also provide a network of mentors that offer ongoing support and tips for language teaching strategies (King 2018: 600).

Similarly to the Yunešit'in people (cf. 6.1.1, Theme 3.2), supporting the children's language learning at home is one of the motivations of the Māori parents (Chrisp 2005), as they believe they hold the responsibility to speak to their kids in the language and provide support on their language learning process (Te Huia 2013: 618). However, they are also afraid of not having enough knowledge and making mistakes when they speak to their kids, as also expressed by some Yunešit'in parents (cf. 5.2.4, Theme 2.18). As proposed for the Hawaiian process (Cowell 2012: 172-175), language programs can offer complementary parental classes, which reinforce the children's language learning at home and, at the same time, help create another space where the language is used. The main objective of that strategy is to achieve second-language-speaker families that raise their children as first-language speakers, which will eventually allow the immersion programs to shift from language acquisition to language maintenance strategies.

During the Māori process, the language transmission from the Elders to the youth has also been promoted through mentor-apprentice programs (Te Huia 2013: 625), where, whether one-on-one or in small groups, the teacher uses 'cuisenaire rods' to explain sentence patterns and concepts while the students listen and repeat (King 2018: 595). In addition to enhancing the youth's language skills, those courses also build their teaching capacity, so they can support the other language programs, as "older and elderly native speakers obviously cannot be relied upon indefinitely" (Cowell 2012: 172-175). As we have learned (cf. 3.3.2.6), similar mentorship programs have also been implemented in Yunešit'in in the last few years.

7.2.3 Language revitalization as cultural revitalization

As expressed by the Yunešit'in (cf. 6.2.2, Theme 4.11; cf. 6.3.1, Theme 5.2), the education programs and materials also need to be based on and designed from each people's culture and worldview, so they provide the learners not only with the language but with the cultural knowledge that comes with it. In the case of the Māori, in the 1980s, the Taha Māori (cultural) component was included in the school curriculum in order to provide students with the understanding, attitude and skills they need to demonstrate their commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi. Nevertheless, according to some authors (Pihama et al. 2004: 31), that approach just perpetuates the status quo within the New Zealand school system by maintaining the position of *pakeha* (non-Māori) dominance in regard to

the control of the education over the Māori, and further more, by indirectly promoting the acculturation of the Māori.

According to them, pedagogies need to be created “by Māori for Māori” (Pihama et al. 2004: 11-13) and framed within the complex Māori pedagogy concept of *ako* and the *te Aho Matua* philosophical base “that incorporates the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of Māori society” (Nepe 1991: 41). The nature of the Māori traditional education is intertwined with religion and ritual, as traditionally “the importance of the act of acquiring knowledge was emphasised by surrounding the event with rituals” (Mead 2003: 307). It also enhances the child’s ‘relations’, their connection with their family, other community members and the land, similarly to the Yunešit’in perspective (cf. 6.2.3, Theme 4.30). The programs need to promote living Indigenous cultural practices, such *kapa haka* performances, fishing, taro farming, canoeing and voyaging in order to connect the students with their cultural identity, yet they may also integrate modern sports, art and other activities, as they do in the Hawaiian case (Cowell 2012: 172-175) in order to ensure that the children also acquire the necessary language they need to grow up in this world, without losing the essence of their own culture (Rewi and Rewi 2015: 138).

Māori programs also include language literacy; nonetheless, as well as for other Indigenous languages (Tšilhqot’in among them), the Māori knowledge has been “formed, shaped, constructed and transmitted through an oral tradition” (Pihama et al. 2004: 21); so, when it comes to literacy, challenges may arise (Street 1993: 9). According to Bielenberg (1999: 109-111), writing systems often conflict with the storytelling protocols of ownership and sharing, as writing the information opens the knowledge to the public and makes it available to all on an individual basis against traditional practices. Besides, it also affects the ways in which traditional knowledge is recorded and transmitted, as it may encourage the students to look for information on a book, instead of going to their Elders for the answer and interact with them on the land and in the home, while learning the language and the culture through mentorship activities, as traditionally occurred. Finally, for some communities, there may a lack of trust in one’s word when the message is in written form. When the language is oral, they trust one another and the word is sacred; yet, when literacy becomes more important, people “seem to detach themselves from what is written and likely to go against it”, which creates an “atmosphere of distrust and dishonesty”. Therefore, according to Bielenberg (1999: 109), “Indigenous literacy is really only likely to be accepted when the domains and functions for written communication exist prior to the introduction of a new writing system”; that is why, according to that author, some Indigenous communities have

decided against literacy, as the domain for language revitalization in the community is incompatible with [it and] would serve no function”.

Similar ideas may come up with the use of internet, media or other broadcasting systems for language revitalization purposes, as they allow open information to the world, conflicting with some of the protocols for the Indigenous knowledge; therefore, it may become a challenge for some Indigenous peoples to create their presence in the world while being congruent with their culture and beliefs. In the case of the Hawaiian, however, the use of internet as a means for language revitalization has been overall successful (Warschauer 1998: 10); developing a rich web infrastructure and other digital technologies has also promoted the interaction among students across islands as well as provided other domains to speak the language (Cowell 2012: 172-175).

Language broadcasting also has the power to establish Indigenous cultures in the modern life, as they are often associated with tradition and it is important to show they are not locked down in the past, but they live in the present and have access to all aspects of the everyday day associated with modernity. Media in the language are also likely to develop positive attitudes towards it and promote its use (Grin and Vaillancourt 1998: 120), and can become a useful tool for “disseminating and popularising controlled neologisms” (Grin and Vaillancourt 1998: 103). Language animation content, for example, can be strategically important as it targets young generations and can be easily used of language leaning purposes (Grin and Vaillancourt 1998: 96).

In the case of the Māori, the media also had an important role in the language revitalization process. The first TV show in the Māori language was broadcast in 1982. It was a 5-minute-long news program with Māori news in the language. Later on, it was extended for 20 minutes and other documentary style shows in Māori were broadcast as well. In 2004, the Māori television was finally created and started offering worldwide known cartoons in Māori, news, drama, sport, talent shows, documentaries and language teaching programs (King 2018: 598). Regarding the radio, the first dedicated Māori language presence was in 1983 during *Māori Week* and, three years later, the first program full-time in the language was aired. Nowadays, there are several Māori radio stations; they are located mostly in rural areas and received state funding (King 2018: 597).

7.2.4 Language revitalization: a collective effort

As Yunesit’ in members expressed (cf. 6.2.3, Theme 4.19), language revitalization is a shared responsibility and all levels of the society need to be involved, from the individual and

the family to the community and higher political spheres. Grassroot efforts are essential, but language revitalization processes also require a political infrastructure that supports the process and “allows to achieve outcomes in wider society which affirms the status of the language” (King 2018: 598).

As we have seen in chapter 2 (cf. 2.1), federal and provincial language legislation and political efforts that support Indigenous language revitalization are improving in Canada; however, it still varies between territories and Nations. In the case of the Māori, being the only Indigenous language spoken in New Zealand, may make it ‘easier’ to lobby the government for supporting the language revitalization efforts (King 2018: 603). Historically, several claims have been made to the Waitangi Tribunal (Waitangi Tribunal 1986) resulting in the recognition of the “Māori as an official language and consolidation of the obligations of the Crown in Māori language revitalization” (King 2018: 598) under *1987 the Māori Language Act*. That act was recently replaced by the *2016 Māori Language Act*, which also established a new independent statutory entity called *Te Mātāwai* in order to provide leadership on behalf of the *iwi* (‘tribes’, ‘communities’, ‘nations’), while also supporting and influencing the Crown’s initiatives. Nonetheless, in spite of those efforts, they are still working towards a cohesive national language policy.

In the case of the ‘*Ōlelo Hawai’i*’, at the beginning of 1846, it was the dominant language of Hawai’i and “the Hawaiian legislature declared that all laws enacted were to be published in both Hawaiian and English” (Nahoa Lucas 2000: 3). However, in 1859 a new law established the English version as the one to “be held binding”. Although the English version was the controlling one, laws continued to be published in both Hawaiian and English until 1943, when “the practice of publishing laws in Hawaiian was abolished by statute” (Nahoa Lucas 2000: 4). There were several attempts towards re-establishing the language rights for the ‘*Ōlelo Hawai’i*’ and also introducing the language into the all-English curriculum; yet it was not until the constitutional convention proceedings held in 1978, where English and Hawaiian became both official languages of Hawai’i (Nahoa Lucas 2000: 15).

It is also essential to create an institution or commission that works as an advocate for the language and can also monitor the language revitalization efforts. In the case of the Māori, with the *1987 Language Act*, the Māori Language Commission *Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Māori* (meaning ‘the rope binding together the Māori language’) was established. Its first efforts were focused on lower language education programs; they started producing new curriculum and vocabulary for the immersion education programs, such as math and science terms; they also developed a week-long *Kura reo* (language schools) targeting specially

teachers and broadcast media people, so they could develop their language skills and enhance their work skills. In 2004, the *Te Panekiretanga o Te Reo Māori* Institute of Excellence in the Māori language was established and started organizing intense weekend live-in seminars once a month (King 2018: 599).

In the case of the Hawaiian, the *Kōmikē Hua'ōlelo* (Hawaiian Lexicon Committee) currently assists with the curriculum production and promote the spread of the official new terms. Having a language expert group can be useful to help develop new materials or update existing ones, including language curriculum, so teachers can be freed up from that task and stay focused on teaching and capacity building activities (Cowell 2012: 172-175).

Language revitalization processes also need an external network of support from organizations that are independent from the state apparatus and that focus on language and culture revitalization. As Grin and Vaillancourt (1998: 168) explain, “in cases where the State itself is already committed to language revitalization, such organisations provide a useful bridge with civil society and endow language policy with a force of conviction that purely official bodies typically fail to guarantee”. In addition, other stakeholders as language centres and, especially, schools and teachers also play an important role in the language revitalization processes (Al-Munawwarah 2019: 251). Academic support is crucial too, as long as processes don't depend on it and leadership remains on the community (Cowell 2012: 172-175).

Reflecting on other experiences show us that language revitalization is possible and that, if direction and strategies are culturally appropriate and under the control of the communities (Al-Munawwarah 2019: 254) by directly representing their perspectives and needs (Pihama et al. 2004: 13), processes are more likely to succeed.

7.3 Application of the learnings: advancing Yunešit'in language revitalization

According to the methodology and ethics of this work (cf. 4.1; 4.2), this research ought to seek mutual benefits for both the 'researcher' and the community (CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC 2010: 110-132); therefore, the research process, outcomes and resulting publication are expected to be of a practical use to the community (FATSIL 2014: 16). Consequently, in addition to the academic contribution, outcomes from my research may also be beneficial for the purposes of Yunešit'in community development, particularly, by enhancing the ongoing language revitalization efforts. In this case, I suggest a section of the findings presented above (cf. 7.1) may be used as part of the development of the 2021 Tšilhqot'in Language

Revitalization Plan. That document will be an updated of the 2016 Language Plan developed by Yunešit'in Language Committee (cf. 3.3.2.1), based on the review of the projects implemented to the date and the current needs regarding language revitalization in the community.

In order to identify the outcomes that may be suitable for that purpose, I used the list of codes resulting from the thematical analysis of the data (Appendix 22). Firstly, I identified community members' insights that were new and, then, selected the strategies of the 2016 Language Revitalization Plan in relation to those (Appendix 24). The specific results that I suggest may be incorporated onto 2021 Language Revitalization Plan and the strategies that those could contribute to are the following:

- a) Codes corresponding to the themes from *Topic 2 Tšilhqot'in language use in Yunešit'in* (cf. 5.2) about strategies that can be utilized to encourage the use of the language and the places where the language should be promoted (cf. 5.2.8) may address the Big Picture *Goal E. Develop Language Governance for sustainable language revitalization* under the following strategies:
 - E2. Promote the use of the language;
 - E4. Language planning and ongoing evaluation of the language projects; and
 - E7. Develop Language policies.

The new community insights are related to the idea of collectiveness, where community members are sought to take own responsibility and youth is encouraged to take on leadership; community unity from a respectful attitude towards dialect differences is also promoted. The new perspectives also cover strategies for promoting the use language 'everywhere' in the community, especially at the Health and Administration Centre, by balancing the use of *Nenqayni Ch'ih* and English making it 'a normal thing' with the incorporation of greetings and answering machine messages in the language. According to the community member's insights, office staff could be encouraged by a reward system based on a progressively increase of the language fluency and the level of effort in using the language at work. Insights regarding language planning and policy are also included, such as the idea of facilitating communication and experience exchange with other communities working on language revitalization, as well as the discussion on literacy and Tšilhqot'in being traditionally an oral language, dialect diversity and the possibility of developing a standard language.

b) Codes corresponding to the themes from *Topic 4 T̄silhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies in Yunešit'in* (cf. 6.2) about how the language can be taught/learned (cf. 6.2.3) and the specific places where this should happen (cf. 6.2.4) may address the *Big Picture Goal A. Increase the number of speakers* under the following strategies:

- A1. Develop a Language Nest;
- A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs;
- A3. Develop a Head Start Program;
- A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities;
- A5. Develop language immersion programs for youth and adults; and
- A6. Develop language programs for pregnant women;

In addition, the insights may as well address the *Big Picture Goal C. Bridging the language gap between generations* under the following strategy:

- C4. Master-Apprentice Program

New perspectives related to the enhancement of the language teaching strategies cover ideas such as bringing the language to everyday activities and 'transforming the school' by focusing on language learning out of the classroom and on the land, performing active learning by going out on nature walks where the language teachers and others speakers point out things to the children to notice while describing them in the language. Also, at the same time that basic content as the alphabet and body parts is covered, new themes could be introduced: i.e. cultural protocols and traditional values; self-introductions and lineage; and knowledge about traditional parenting and rites. This can be done through the use of several techniques such as art, pictures, drawing, puppet shows, puzzles, toys and reading. Likewise, according to the community members, programs should always promote T̄silhqot'in pride among the students and involve different speakers, while also welcoming non-T̄silhqot'in people in the language revitalization process.

c) Codes corresponding to the themes from *Topic 5 T̄silhqot'in language resources in Yunešit'in* (cf. 6.3) about the community vision of a repository of language resources (cf. 6.3.3), the existing language resources (cf. 6.3.1), the development of new materials (cf. 6.3.2) and word coining (cf. 5.2.4) may address the *Big Picture Goal B. Document the language and secure language resources* under the following strategies:

- B1. Establish an archival system to preserve language resources;

- B2. Develop a sharing system where all T̄silhqot'in feel comfortable to pick up resources;
- B3. Gather and examine existing language resources, inventory and evaluation;
- B4. Create new language resources; and
- B5. Review language curriculum and language instruction and evaluation methods.

Regarding the archive of language resources, new insights state that each community should have their own repository; the potential place identified in Yunešit'in was the Health and Administration Centre. Through the perspectives, a system for public use of the language materials for the whole Nation, as well as a T̄silhqot'in museum in a strategic place were also described. About the development of new resources, community members added that they should support schools, programs and teachers. Art materials as well as linguistic and language revitalization resources can also be created and already existing English materials can be translated. Multiple copies should be produced for community members' use and a safe non-accessed copy should be kept in the repository. New curriculum promoting an increase time of exposure and covering different learning needs and learners' interests should be developed, as well as new vocabulary to fit the modern lifestyle by coining words that meet communication needs, but maintain the T̄silhqot'in essence at the same time.

An Executive Summary of this research, including my suggestion for the application of the research outcomes described above, will be presented to the community after the filing of this dissertation and the decision for its consideration and ultimate implementation will remain with Yunešit'in Government and the Language Committee.

7.4 Summary

I have dedicated this second-to-last chapter to the discussion of the research outcomes, also in perspective with the Maori and Hawaiian experiences, and a possible application thereof. Firstly, I have presented an interpretation of the results by answering the research questions and also validating the hypotheses stated for the RQ1 about the community needs regarding the T̄silhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies and language resources towards T̄silhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in. From the results, we

have learned that in order to increase the number of speakers and community members' language fluency, it is necessary to develop and implement culturally-oriented materials (H4) and language immersion programs (H1) that support intergenerational transmission (H2) and language teaching/learning on the land (H3). A description of the current language knowledge and usage in the community has also been retrieved (RQ2) as well as an overview of the current and historical reasons for the reduced number of speakers in the community (RQ3) and the importance of reviving the language (RQ4). Secondly, I have briefly reviewed some of the aspects of the Māori and Hawaiian language revitalization cases in relation to the outcomes of this research. From their experiences, we have learned that, in order to obtain successful results, language revitalization needs to be understood within a broader cultural revitalization process and engage collective efforts with intergenerational language transmission and language immersion teaching as key strategies. Finally, I have presented a suggestion for the practical application of the results; new insights emerging from the coding of the knowledge may be useful to advance the development of 2021 Yuneŝit'in Language Revitalization Plan.

In the next and final chapter, I will present the overall conclusions of this work and provide some recommendations for future related research.

Chapter 8. Conclusions and final remarks

We have arrived at the final part of this work and there only remains to review the conclusions drawn from this study, its utmost significance in relation to the revitalization of the Indigenous languages, the limitations of this study and some final thoughts.

8.1 Overall research conclusions

The outcomes of this research support the wider work on the key ‘ingredients’ for successful language revitalization (Walsh 2010) and the essential areas that need to be addressed for reclaiming endangered Indigenous languages (UNESCO 2003). This work has been framed within the complex language diversity of British Columbia and the efforts to bring the languages back to some level of use within the communities after a period of reduction in usage (Hinton 2011: 291). By the means of reviewing the classification of the language and the linguistic relationships established between them, their current vitality and other sociolinguistic aspects (c.f. 2.2), as well as the federal and provincial language legislation (cf. 2.1), I have provided a better understanding of the reality that Indigenous languages face in this province. They all differ on the number of speakers, usage and available teaching resources and documenting infrastructures (cf. 2.2); however, all of them are considered endangered (Ignace 2015: 9), since the number of speakers is going down dramatically, most of the existing speakers are over 65 years old, and the intergenerational language transmission has been interrupted, as children don’t learn the language from their parents and grandparents anymore. The main reasons for that are related to the trauma caused by Canada’s colonial past and the historical attempts of assimilation of the Indigenous peoples and cultures (cf. 2.2.1).

As I have argued earlier in this work (cf. 2.1), historically, Indigenous peoples’ language rights haven’t been respected in Canada, and since the 1867 Confederation, English and French have been recognized as the only “founding languages” of Canada (Ignace 2015: 16). Indigenous languages were not mentioned in the first enacted legislation, represented by the *1867 British North America Act* and the subsequent *1876 Indian Act* nor the first *Canada’s Official Languages Act*, enacted in 1969, where they were considered “an essential part of the patrimony of all Canadians” (Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1967; Ball and McIvor 2013: 24). As for more recent federal legislation, Indigenous language rights were first specified in 2015 in the *S-212*

Act, An Act for the advancement of the aboriginal languages of Canada, as well as in the recent *Bill C-91, An Act Respecting Indigenous Languages*, enacted in 2019 to respond to Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls; nevertheless, no official status has been provided to them. Regarding the provincial governments, recognition, laws and policies vary among areas, and Indigenous languages are recognized as official only in Nunavut, Yukon and Northwest Territories. In the case of B.C., although languages don't hold official status, other steps towards language recognition have been taken in the last few decades in this province (cf. 2.4). According to the *1997 B.C. School Act*, all indigenous students should have the opportunity to learn their languages; however, those courses are not considered core subjects at the schools (except for in the few Indigenous schools that offer language immersion programs in this province); the time dedicated for the learning of those languages is limited (FPCC 2014b) and the main goal of the programs is mostly creating awareness, but not actual acquisition.

Nevertheless, Indigenous communities in B.C., who highly value their languages and understand the importance of reclaiming and maintaining them as part of a wider process of retrieving their identity and culture (cf. 2.3), have been working towards it in the last few decades. Since its creation in 1990, the B.C.'s FPCC has been set to advance the revitalization of the languages and help distribute funding towards the development of language projects, among other tasks.

The T̓silhqot̓'in Nation is one of those communities working on the reviving of their language, *Nenqayni Ch'ih* (cf. 3.1.1). This Dene language (cf. 3.2.2) presents the highest vitality in the province (FPCC 2018h: 2; cf. 3.2.3) and several revitalization efforts have taken part to the date (cf. 3.2.1); however, further language growth and maintenance work is required. That has been the intention of the Yunešit̓'in community in the last few years, specially upon the development of the 2016 T̓silhqot̓'in Language Revitalization Plan and the implementation of several language projects (cf. 3.3.2).

Within that context, this research utterly meets the previously identified objectives and, by answering the research questions and validating the hypotheses developed for the work (Appendix 23), creates a valuable discussion on Yunešit̓'in perspectives (cf. 7.1), in relation to the reasons for the language loss in the community and the current language knowledge and usage, the importance of holding on to the language and the teaching/learning strategies and resources currently needed towards recovering its full use in the community. Additionally, and in an attempt to look at the results under a broader light within the language revitalization field around the world, I have also brought

Yunešit'in insights into perspective in relation to some of the aspects of the Māori and Hawaiian experiences (cf. 7.2), as they are considered reference cases internationally for their successful language and culture revitalization experience and also share a similar history of colonization and current sociolinguistic situation caused thereby. In what follows, we will review the conclusions of this study.

1. According to the perspectives drawn from the conversations with Yunešit'in community members, the Tšilhqot'in knowledge and usage in the community varies depending on the generation (cf. 5.1; 5.2). Community members older than 45 years old are Tšilhqot'in fluent speakers. They acquired the language as children doing cultural activities at home and on the land with their families and still speak it regularly, slightly different from the Māori reality, where fluent speakers are aged over 65 years (Te Huia 2015: 611). Yunešit'in members in their 30s are semi-speakers who learned the language at home from their families and at school from their language teachers; they may use the language mostly to communicate with the Elders. Community members under 30 years old learned some of the language at home with their families but mainly at school; they present a basic level of Tšilhqot'in, which means they cannot speak it fluently, but somewhat understand it. Younger generations are learning the language, mostly at the school or from their grandparents, and rarely speak it outside the language programs.

2. Yunešit'in community members use *Nenqayni ch'ih* to communicate with family, Elders, children and animals, and also for praying. Traditional Tšilhqot'in place names are still used and babies are often given a Tšilhqot'in name. According to the participants, it also is common to hear fluent community members joking and teasing each other in the language or when they want to prevent non-speakers from understanding what they are saying. Speakers use the language mostly in their homes and the family environment, but it can also be heard in community public spaces, events, community gatherings and 'in town' (meaning Williams Lake, B.C.), in contrast with the Māori, where the *marae* (gathering place), the church and now the schools are the main domains of the use of the language (King 2018: 596). Community members may sometimes mix English in the conversation, but it is mostly used to refer to high numbers, ages or 'new' or post-contact concepts or objects; according to some, English is also the language of preference when they react with anger and frustration.

3. Regarding the challenges that speakers find for using the language (cf. 5.2.4), community members mainly mentioned the trauma caused by the consequences of colonialism and ongoing racism. The lack of motivation and fear to make mistakes or the

shortage of T̄silhqot'in vocabulary for "new" concepts were also commented as challenges. In addition, the change of lifestyle and the geographical dispersion of speakers may hinder the use of the languages, as well as the fact that many community members do not have their basic needs covered, which may not help make language revitalization a priority.

4. Nowadays English prevails as the dominant language in the community and, according to Yunešit'in members, strategies to promote the use of T̄silhqot'in should be applied. It is necessary that community members take back their own responsibility to speak the language, but language policies also need to be developed to safeguard their efforts and promote the use of the language by strengthening the environments in which the language must be spoken (Yamamoto 1998); the development of those policies should always include the input of speakers to make sure they are designed under the community needs (UNESCO 2003: 5).

5. Community perspectives gathered within this research also reviewed the reasons for the T̄silhqot'in language loss in Yunešit'in (cf. 5.2.6). Community members agree to the fact that the intergenerational trauma caused by colonization (which occurred the late 1800s in this region of B.C.), assimilation practices, such as the residential school system (which operated from 1891-1981 in this area) and racist attitudes has affected the relationship the community members currently hold with the language. Although that idea may have been argued in other studies as the main cause for the language and cultural loss in Canada (cf. 2.2.1), it is important to highlight that Yunešit'in members also identify those events as the key reasons of the current state of decline of *Nenqayni ch'ih*. That is also the case for other peoples around the world, like the Māori, where the systemic colonial strategies implemented in the 17th century with the objective of exercising social control (Simon 1990; Simon 1998a) and 'civilizing' Māori people in order to facilitate a process of Christianity (Pihama et al. 2004: 29) together with the European immigration, damaged their culture and language to the point that English became the main language (King 2018: 293). Similarly to that people with the *pakeha* (non-Māori) schooling structures (Simon 1990; Simon 1998a and 1998b), Yunešit'in members also blame the contemporary education model, together with the foster family care system, as hindering factors of the T̄silhqot'in identity and, consequently, community member's attitudes towards the language and the self-esteem loss, which may often appear in the form of substance abuse. In addition, the change of lifestyle and the loss of traditional medicine knowledge in the

community hinder the accessibility to the language, and, hence, the language acquisition and use as well.

6. Nevertheless, Yunešit'in community members believe that it is important to recover the usage of the Tšilhqot'in language in their community, as the number of fluent speakers is limited, so learning and using the language is still necessary in order to be passed down to future generations. Besides, some Elders may not speak and/or understand English, so the language is actually needed for daily communication and its learning and usage are seen as a way of showing respect to them. According to participants, it is easier for them to express feelings in Tšilhqot'in since their language helps express their own reality. They also 'feel happier' when speaking *Nenqayni Ch'ih* and believe that the use of the language is connected to the health and wellbeing of the community. By speaking the language, they feel connected with their family and ancestors, and using the language is contemplated as a part of their spirituality and ceremony; they feel honored to speak it and believe that it is their link to their creation, since 'it has always been in them': when they speak the language, they 'speak the truth from their spirit'. One can think that may also be the reason for why some Māori learners' main motivation is not to revitalize the language itself, but the idea that the language will 'revitalize them' instead (King 2018: 608).

7. For the Yunešit'in, the language makes them feel free and empowered as people; it is closely tied to the land and the culture and represents an essential part of their Tšilhqot'in identity; likewise, the Māori see the language as their link with the physical world and the Earth (Morrison 1999) and gives them the feeling of belonging to a social group, to their people (McIntosh 2005). Moreover, the Yunešit'in feel they are entitled to speak their language and, as we have seen earlier in this work (cf. 2.3), that is, in fact, considered a human right by the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008) and a linguistic right by the UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Linguistic Rights (1998).

8. Yunešit'in members believe that, in the case that they stopped using the language and didn't pass it onto the next generations, their culture would disappear and be lost forever and, with it, they would lose their responsibility to themselves as people and to the land. However, even though the future of the Tšilhqot'in language still seems uncertain to Yunešit'in community members, most of the people that participated in this study felt positive and optimistic about restoring the use of the Tšilhqot'in language in the community.

9. Regarding language revitalization strategies (cf. 6.2), we learned from the analysis of the themes that Yunešit'in community members believe that it is necessary to develop and implement language immersion programs in order to increase the number of speakers and level of language fluency. They consider that the language teaching methods currently in use are obsolete and should be replaced by language immersion strategies; some also regarded the Total Physical Response (TRP) approach as appropriate for teaching certain aspects of the language (i.e. commands). Those methods have been proved adequate and successful for teaching Indigenous languages, as both the Māori and Hawaiian have obtained outstanding results from their immersion schools and preschool programs (Pihama et al. 2004: 34; Smith 1986: 258). Yunešit'in members also believe that, although Tšilhqot'in is used mainly as an oral language, in addition to students' conversational skills, language teaching should also aim to improve their reading and writing competences together with their listening and body language reading skills. To seek sustainability for those programs, building up teaching capacity by training motivated teachers as speakers (Yamamoto 1998) as well as providing speakers with basic linguistic and pedagogical training is essential (UNESCO 2003: 5).

10. Community members believe that programs should target and give priority to the younger generations and consider it essential to foster the intergenerational transmission of the language in the home environment (Crystal 2000) in order to guarantee that the language is passed down to the future generations, as that represents a key factor of success and secures a healthy language vitality overtime time (Fishman 1991; UNESCO 2003: 6). Therefore, in their opinion, language strategies need to engage especially Elders, parents and youth, in order to secure the passing on the language in the family. By starting at a young age, even during pregnancy before children are born, parents are able to develop a relationship with their babies in the language, which may help address the intergenerational language gap that currently exists, due to the intergenerational trauma and emotional barriers emerged from it. Therefore, language programs should also involve the students' families, and provide parents with the opportunity to learn the language in order to be able to support their children's learning process. That idea is also a key aspect in the Māori and Hawaiian processes, as both groups understand the importance of the intergenerational transmission of the language and see it as a crucial factor in order to secure the survival of the language; hence, their programs focus on nurturing the important role of the parents and grandparents in the development of the children's language skills (Waldon 2004). Yunešit'in members also consider the mentor-

apprentice approach as an appropriate language learning strategy for securing transmission, as it is based on intergenerational one-on-one language learning where Elders mentor the younger generations, who in turn may become mentors for the youth.

11. Community perspectives also corroborated that language teaching strategies should promote the learning of the language on the land. Yunešit'in people, who consider themselves caretakers of the land, hold a strong connection with it (cf. 3.1.3) and also see their language closely tied to it. They realize Elders and fluent speakers learned their language from their families while living on the land; therefore, they believe language programs should be based on active learning, hands-on and cultural activities outdoors in order to strengthen the traditional relationship to the land; that is also the case for the Māori and the Hawaiian, who believe that is a core aspect of language teaching (Waldon 2004). In the case of Yunešit'in, community members think it would be necessary to secure more time for language learning and review school requirements in order to facilitate teachers to conduct cultural activities outside the classroom.

12. Yunešit'in community members believe that language teaching programs and resources should be culturally-oriented and support language learning while simultaneously providing traditional knowledge. In the Māori and Hawaiian cases, for example, rituals hold an important place in language teaching, as they understand ceremonies are directly related to the process of acquiring the traditional knowledge (Mead 2003: 307). Their immersion programs are developed under their traditional philosophies and respect the cultural protocols and beliefs, but they also provide the necessary means for living in the language in the current modern society (Wilson and Kawai'ae'a 2007: 38–39); their language revitalization strategies address aspects of the modern society, and use tools like technology, and broadcasting media, as T.V., radio and internet to promote oracy (Walsh 2010), but always without losing the 'essence of the culture' (Rewi and Rewi 2015: 138). Likewise, according to the Yunešit'in, as the community lifestyle changes, the language learning strategies would also need to adapt to the new settings and environments. Yet, language programs should still meet students' needs and interests and include cultural knowledge and traditional ways of teaching, like storytelling, art, and visual and audio techniques, that help enhance the language learning experience in a cultural way.

13. Community members involved in this study also believe that existing language materials need to be compiled, organized and updated. Nowadays, there exist a variety of language materials in the community, such as dictionaries, wordlists, recordings of songs

and traditional law and stories, language teaching curriculum, children's story books, as well as religious materials; other online resources, such as the FPCC's First Voices web-based language learning tool, have also been created. According to the inventory conducted at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul, a total 186 materials are located at the school and are aimed for language teaching. The majority of the resources are paper-format and targeted to children, although some of them are developed for all ages and a few are specifically for language teachers. Most of them are written in Tšilhqot'in, with only limited content in English (i.e. author and illustrator on cover, copyright blurb, introduction); some are monolingual in Tšilhqot'in or bilingual in Tšilhqot'in and English; few are monolingual in English or with some Tšilhqot'in words (i.e. curriculum, teaching materials); and some contain no words (i.e. flashcards with pictures of community members). Almost half of the resources were developed by Tšilhqot'in authors, and there are some developed in collaboration with other Indigenous communities, or entirely by other Indigenous communities. The rest were produced by Non-Indigenous authors (i.e. children's story books), but they were translated into Tšilhqot'in by community members. The inventory includes children's story books, mainly English-written stories by non-Indigenous authors and translated into Tšilhqot'in; educational materials for children, most of them developed by Tšilhqot'in authors and written mostly in Tšilhqot'in; materials focused on cultural activities, mostly developed by community members and in Tšilhqot'in; language teaching resources published in English by other Indigenous communities and Education institutions; resources on Tšilhqot'in language curriculum, written in English with some phrases in Tšilhqot'in; pamphlets with religious content translated from English into Tšilhqot'in; monolingual Tšilhqot'in wordlists; and a variety of coloring sheets with words in Tšilhqot'in. In addition to those included in the inventory, according to participants, there also exists a significant amount of resources in private homes (i.e. recordings of songs, prayers, traditional stories); however, they are not aimed for public use and its sharing is often limited to family members, due to the sensitive nature of the materials. Therefore, community members think that new culturally-sensitive language resources should be developed too. Elders and fluent speakers need to be recorded as well, especially on *dadaben* 'traditional medicines', Tšilhqot'in prayers, stories and traditional places.

14. The Yunešit'in believe that resources need to be secured in time and, for that, a repository of language and cultural resources ought to be created, together with policies for accessing, using and sharing language and cultural materials. In fact, for sustainability

of the language revitalization process, it is necessary to have a sizeable amount of existing language resources and documentation, also gathered from universities or libraries (Walsh 2010: 28), as well as an ongoing digitizing and updating work and the production of new language materials (Grinevald 2007) easy to use (Yamamoto 1998) and covering current needs by maintaining a good balance between oracy and literacy (Walsh 2010: 30); that will also require an ongoing development of community members' literacy and documentation skills (UNESCO 2003: 5).

15. Likewise, in order to support the aforementioned language revitalization efforts and in addition to building expertise and capacity, Yunešit'in members think it is important to secure funding especially dedicated to implement language projects. However, as it was also commented by some, although securing certain amount of funding is necessary, it may not be one of the primary 'ingredients' for success (Walsh 2010: 30), as a program with plenty of funding might not get the expected outcomes, if it doesn't have highly motivated speakers and a capable team to run it.

16. To finish, the Yunešit'in community understands the revitalization of *Nenqayni ch'ih* within a larger process of reviving their culture; as Walsh (2010: 28) explains, languages are grounded in broader cultural contexts, and that deep connection between language-culture makes the language become just one more part of the cultural revitalization process. This community also believes that process constitutes a shared responsibility, which needs to be taken at every level, from the individual to the family, community and Nation; therefore, strategies should seek collectiveness by promoting the unity of the efforts and the engagement of the speech community as a whole (Yamamoto 1998); all members need to commit to the collective endeavour (Walsh 2010: 30) in order to guarantee successful outcomes, as it occurs in the Māori and the Hawaiian experiences (Grin and Vaillancourt 1998: 168; Cowell 2012: 172-175; King 2018: 598). In addition, Yunešit'in members regard as beneficial having a regional network of support from other communities going through the same process (Walsh 2010: 31), not just to learn from each other but also to celebrate their successes and encourage one another through the sharing of the experiences. The development of expertise and infrastructures that directly support the revitalization efforts, such as community groups that are dedicated to the language and provide guidance in developing language policies, coin new terminology and produce curriculum and language resources also become essential (King 2018: 599); likewise, external supporting institutions, universities, language centres and other organisms (Walsh 2010: 29; Al-Munawwarah 2019: 251) are helpful, if clear expectations

and collaborative agreements (Rice 2009) which are based on local considerations and conditions are developed (Ash et al. 2001), ensuring the main aspects of the process are led by the community (Walsh 2010:28).

8.2 Significance of the research

Considering that Indigenous languages around world are in danger of disappearance, it is crucial to continue conducting research work that makes significant contribution to the language revitalization field. As I explained above (7.2) and although language revitalization experiences hold a unique nature as it is also common in other societal change processes, the outcomes of this case study on *Nenqayni ch'ih* add understanding to some aspects of the revitalization of other Indigenous languages around the world and provide reference for other communities, as well as for scholars that wish to pursue similar work. Likewise, as this research honors storytelling as the traditional Indigenous way of passing the knowledge (King 2010), it also contributes to the collective story and mutually constructed reality created out of the lived experiences of the members of the Indigenous communities (Bishop 1996), in order to describe the worldwide phenomenon of the disappearance and recovery of the Indigenous languages.

In addition, this study also builds upon and adds to the language work on *Nenqayni Ch'ih* conducted by community language experts (Myers 1979; Smith 2011; Myers n.d.;;) and other linguists (Krauss 1975; Latimer 1978; Cook 1978; King 1979; Cook 1983, 1987, 1989, 1993, 2005; Hargus and Rice 2005; Cook 2013) and it remains unique at the same time, since the research presents outcomes about the status of the language in the community and possible revitalization strategies mostly based on and retrieved directly from community perspectives. As the revival of a language ultimately depends on the actions of its speakers (Martí et al. 2005: 25), this research places Yunešit'in members on a privileged position to assess the status of their own language and discuss reasons and consequences of the language loss as well as strategies that could be taken for its revitalization. That approach makes this work innovative and sets a precedent for future research projects conducted in the Tšilhqot'in community. The avant-garde methodology and elaborated ethical framework applied in this research also represent a valuable addition to the language and cultural revitalization field. This work will be undoubtedly useful to those who seek to explore collaborative and participatory research approaches as well as respectful and culturally-sensitive methodologies based on Indigenous ways of

sharing and gathering the knowledge (FATSIL 2014:20), where relation, connectedness and collectiveness set the basis of the research (Kovach 2005: 30-31; Rice 2005; Tuhiwai Smith 1999). Under this approach, collaboratively storytelling (Bishop 1996) also becomes a key aspect of the work in order to obtain valid outcomes; participants are considered stakeholders of the research (Flores Farfán 2014: 9) and community knowledge gained from life experiences is acknowledged as a legit resource (FATSIL 2014: 9). This research represents an example of all that and seeks to contribute to the currently growing number of community-based studies that are being developed *with* the communities and under their own paradigms and processes, responding to the well-known slogan: *nothing about us, without us* (Bridges 2017).

Finally, along with the academic contribution and according to the ethics adopted in this work (CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC 2010: 110-132), the research results also have the expected practical application (cf. 7.3). In this case, the research outcomes may be applied to enhance Yunešit'in language revitalization efforts, since part of the findings that emerged from the thematic analysis of the community perspectives may be used within the development of the 2021 Yunešit'in Language Revitalization Plan. I analysed the community insights gathered within this study in relation to the 2016 Yunešit'in Language Revitalization Plan, selected the new ones and identified the big picture goals and strategies each of them may address. The perspectives that I suggest can be applied to the new 2021 Language Revitalization Plan are the following: the themes included in *Topic 2 Tšilhqot'in language use in Yunešit'in* (cf. 5.2) addressing strategies that can be employed to encourage the use of the language and the places where the language should be promoted (cf. 5.2.8) may be included in the *Big Picture Goal E. Develop Language Governance for sustainable language revitalization*, under the strategies E2. Promote the use of the language, E4. Language planning and ongoing evaluation of the language projects and E7. Develop Language policies; the themes from *Topic 4 Tšilhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies in Yunešit'in* (cf. 6.2) about how the language can be taught/learned (cf. 6.2.3) and the specific places where this should happen (cf. 6.2.4) may address the *Big Picture Goal A. Increase the number of speakers* under the strategies A1. Develop a Language Nest, A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs, A3. Develop a Head Start Program, A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities, A5. Develop language immersion programs for youth and adults and A6. Develop language programs for pregnant women, as well as the *Big Picture Goal C. Bridging the language gap between generations* under the strategy C4. Master-Apprentice Program;

and, finally, the themes from Topic 5 T̄silhqot'in language resources in Yunešit'in (cf. 6.3) about the community vision of a repository of language resources (cf. 6.3.3), the existing language resources (cf. 6.3.1), and the development of new materials (cf. 6.3.2) and word coining (cf. 5.2.4) may be incorporated on to the *Big Picture Goal B. Document the language and secure language resources* under the strategies B1. Establish an archival system to preserve language resources, B2. Develop a sharing system where all T̄silhqot'in feel comfortable to pick up resources, B3. Gather and examine existing language resources / inventory and evaluation, B4. Create new language resources; and B5. Review language curriculum and language instruction and evaluation methods.

As mentioned above (cf. 7.3), the outcomes emerged from this study and the suggested incorporation on to the 2021 Yunešit'in Language Revitalization Plan will be provided to the Yunešit'in Language Committee upon completion of this dissertation and its implementation will be subject to their consideration.

8.3 Research limitations

As any research study, this work may also have some potential limitations that I would like to point out as an opportunity to enhance potential future research. Below, I describe which limitations may exist, why they could not be overcome within this study and how they may have impacted the results.

First, regarding the sampling and analysis, I acknowledge funding and time constraints as a potential limitation factor for the outcomes of this research (King 2010). Having more time and resources, a larger sampling and analysis could have been conducted. Another research limitation regarding the sampling lies on the prevalence of the female gender among the participants. A total of 59 people were involved in the study; from those, 42 identified as female and 17 as male; therefore, the higher participation of women may have affected results by representing a more female perspective. However, as community members explained, women are the ones who have traditionally held the education roles in the community and, for that reason, the sampling was considered representative for the scope of this study.

Regarding the methodology approach, although this work is based on respectful and culturally sensitive methods for gathering and analyzing the knowledge, I am aware that the revitalization of the language may be a sensitive topic for Yunešit'in community members. The language is attached to complex emotions emerging from past unpleasant

experiences and, therefore, some community members may have difficulties to fully express their perspectives, which may have affected the results of this study; yet this limitation can be anticipated in any research where the topic of study is potentially related to traumatic experiences.

With respect to the process of data handling, I understand that, due to the nature of a doctoral study, stories cannot stand on their own and results need to be interpreted (Lavallée 2009: 35). For this work, although I consulted regularly with community members involved in the research, I was the only one that mainly took part in the process of coding the data and interpreting the themes. That decision may have allowed consistency in the method but also limited the different perspectives on the coding (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006:91); for that reason and to minimize the effect in the results, I provided several drafts with the list of codes and themes emerging from the thematic analysis to Yunešit'in Language Committee, participants and other community members for their feedback in several moments during the research process. For future studies, the process of coding and interpreting could involve several individuals, as panel of experts and/or other community members, in order to guarantee that the interpretation of the results is validated by more than one perspective (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006: 91).

Besides, being a research based mainly in qualitative data and due to my personal relationship with the community, I am aware that there may be a potential risk for my bias to shape the interpretation of the results (Brown and Strega 2005: 277); however, as explained before (cf. 4.1; 4.2), connectedness and collectiveness are key foundation concepts under the so-called Indigenous research approaches (Tuhiwai-Smith 1999; Kovach 2005: 30-31), where the researcher is expected to conduct relationship-based work (King 2010: 281) and become part of the research setting (Mayan 2009: 80); hence, subjectivity has been acknowledged and honored (Kovach 2005: 28) according to the methodology approach adopted for this work.

Finally, I also understand I have brought my particular worldview as a non-Tsilhqot'in/Basque person to this work; even if I expressly dedicated time to immerse myself in the community, meet the people, learn *Nenqayni ch'ih* and become familiar with the culture, my 'conceptual luggage' may still have affected the research process, the interpretation and, ultimately, the outcomes of this work (Creswell 2013; Brown and Strega 2005: 277; Kovach 2005: 28).

8.4 Recommendations for further research and final thoughts

The questions and achievements, as well as other potential implications of the work that have arisen during the process of this study (Potts and Brown 2005: 275), lead me to present some recommendations for further research and some final remarks.

Regarding the study of the T̓silhqot̓in language, it is necessary to conduct more work based on community perspectives. Similar research could be done in other communities for comparison; even though the six T̓silhqot̓in communities speak the same language with some dialectal differences (cf. 3.1), they differ on infrastructures and resources available and, thus, community members may present partly different insights on language revitalization strategies. Besides, implementing a similar study at the nation level could also be beneficial in order to gain a broader understanding of the perspectives of the T̓silhqot̓in language community as a whole. Outcomes could lead further work on Nation language policy and planning for supporting community efforts towards T̓silhqot̓in language revitalization in the communities.

Besides, the study of the revitalization experience of the T̓silhqot̓in in relation to other Indigenous languages in B.C, Canada and other parts of the world, as for example the Māori or the Hawaiian (cf. 7.2), as well as other minorized languages such as Basque, could present compelling results. However, being language revitalization part of larger processes of cultural revitalization (Wilson and Kamanā 2009), every experience is almost exclusive to each language community; therefore, strategies have to be developed under each community's paradigms and worldviews, if we want them to succeed (Pihama et al. 2004: 13; Rewi and Rewi 2015: 150; Al-Munawwarah 2019: 254). Yet the observation and analysis of the similarities and differences with other experiences may significantly contribute to the understanding of the issue in the community under study.

As a final reflection and bearing in mind the never-ending and constant changing nature of the languages and socio-linguistic reality of the language communities (King 2018: 608), there continues to be an inarguable need of reevaluation and reconsideration of the paths of the language revitalization work. It is well demonstrated by now that languages constitute an essential part of the identity of the peoples and they keep the connection with the culture, the land and the past generations; therefore, language revitalization processes respond to a socio-cultural need, not to a “technical, pedagogical or even a linguistic one”; “it is not about just learning and knowing a language, but using it and *living in it*” (Wilson and Kamanā 2009). As Cowell (2012: 187) argues, for a

successful language revitalization process, it is essential the “re-engineering of [the] cultural ecology” and “language ecology”, (Haugen 1972) understood as “the human adaptations to social and physical environments” that are always in flux, also around language and culture, so critical masses of young speakers are created and they begin to raise their children in the language, getting the language to become the mother tongue of the community again and securing the use of the language in time. Successful language revitalization processes may also require a social adjustment at other levels in order to heal the existing trauma by confronting and dismantling the negative discourse about the language and the culture, “often directly related to the socioeconomic pressure of a dominant speech community” (UNESCO 2003: 4), so as the stakeholders can regain their pride and feel free to speak and learn their language and culture (Fettes 1997).

Likewise, language revitalization processes need core community activists and leaders, but it is also essential that they are supported by a “critical-mass of committed secondary participants”. Efforts need to attract the younger generations, as even though Elders should maintain a very important role, youth should become the main driving force of the process as they embody the future of the community (Cowell 2012: 191). It is also recommended that, due to the multidisciplinary nature of the language revitalization work, processes involve specialists from diverse fields (education, linguistics, sociology, political science, broadcasting and marketing, among others), who can assess the amount of resources needed and the development of policies that work for each field. Constant input from the language users and new learners is crucial as well, as they are the basis of the process, the start and end of the strategies developed. Policy makers need to systematically integrate the perspectives in the language planning vision “as a form of public policy” and the process needs to be constantly evaluated and shaped to and by the oncoming needs (Grin and Vaillancourt 1998: 174).

Although some might feel that taking action and ‘just doing it’ is the way (Reyhner 2003), developing community language planning and policies is important to address the specific gaps and needs and include the diverse perspectives. Rewi and Rewi (2015: 142) recommend detailed language planning, where strategies and actions are designed and implemented separately to target different groups in isolation so every need can be met, as opposed to a generic plan that combines ‘maintenance’ and ‘growth’. For the ‘growth’ strategies, it needs to be ensured that language revitalization becomes a collective goal and the stakeholders feel listened and maintain “an optimum level of autonomy whereby none of the parties feels controlled or disempowered” (Rewi and Rewi 2015: 150). The

responsibility of ‘maintenance’ belongs to the people who is working on revitalizing the language but formal education systems need to contribute too as education for children is still compulsory. School can make a great support tool and play an important role in maintaining, revitalizing or rebuilding the languages (Shah and Brezinger 2018), as long as the language teaching strategies go along with the community’s “lifestyle, language and culture” (Pihama et al. 2004: 34); however, language acquisition shouldn’t be fully entrusted to the institutions and the language education strategies shouldn’t be designed from the learning goals established by the them (Johnson 1997). Educational institutions are not the first place where the culture should be taught (McKay 1996) and strategies that promote family and individual language maintenance through informal education should to be preferred (Shah and Brezinger 2018), as well as other supporting actions, related to language visibility and securing time and spaces where the language is the priority (Grin and Vaillancourt 1998: 175-178).

Finally, language revitalization experiences are proved to be more successful when emerging from the people themselves (Pihama et al. 2004: 13), are a community-driven, bottom-up kind of movement (Grenoble and Whaley 2009: 20), are based on their own resources and infrastructures in essence and stay under the management of the communities (Fithri 2018: 254). Most peoples argue “for self-determination, especially in determining processes and practices intended to better [their] existence” (Rewi and Rewi 2015: 150) and “want to be actors in a process that is theirs, not someone else’s”, which constitute a universal right (UNESCO 2003: 4). Controlling those processes also provides them with a macro-view of the situation and make them conscious of the decision to, in this case, attempt to maintain or revitalize the language; it becomes their own endeavour, which together with a high motivation of the speakers and the strong support of the community makes it more likely to achieve successful results.

For all the above, may this research work constitute another step towards the collective, urgent and important work that is reclaiming and maintaining all the world’s languages and cultures.

References

- Absolon, K. and Willett, C. 2005. "Putting ourselves forward: Location in Aboriginal Research". In Brown, L. and Strega, S. (eds.) *Research as Resistance Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 97-126.
- Aguilera, D. and LeCompte, M. D. 2007. "Resiliency in Native languages: The tale of three Native American Communities' experiences with language immersion", *Journal of American Indian Education*, 46(3), 11-36.
- Al-Munawwarah, S. F. 2019. "An Overview of Indigenous Language Programs in Australian and New Zealand", *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 254. Paris: Atlantis Press. DOI: 10.2991/conaplin-18.2019.264
- Alphonse, B. 1983. *Chilcotin texts* (unpublished).
- Amorrortu, E. Barreña, A., Idiazabal, I., Izaguirre, E., Ortega, P. eta Uranga, B. 2004. *World Languages Review Synthesis*. Bilbo: Unesco Etxea.
- Anderson, E. 2017. "Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science". In Zalta, E. N. (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Spring 2020 Edition* [online]. Available at: <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2017/entries/feminism-epistemology>
- Archibald, J., Roy, S., Harmel, S., Jesney, K., Dewey, E., Moisik, S. and Lessard, P. 2006. *A review of the literature on second language learning*. Calgary: University of Calgary.
- Arka, I. W. 2013. "Language management and minority language maintenance in (eastern) Indonesia: strategic issue", *Language Documentation and Conservation Journal*, 7, 74-105.
- Ash, A., Fermino, J. and Hale, K. 2000. "Diversity in local language maintenance and restoration: a reason for optimism". In Hinton, L. and Hale, K. (eds.) *The Greenbook of language revitalization in practices*. San Diego: Academic Press, 19-35.
- Assembly of First Nations (AFN). n.d. *First Nations Ethics Guide on Research and Aboriginal Traditional knowledge*. Available at: http://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/fn_ethics_guide_on_research_and_atk.pdf
- Babbie, E. 2004. *The Practice of Social Research*. Toronto: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Baker, M. C. 2001. *The atoms of language*. New York: Basic Books.

- Ball, J. 2011. *Enhancing learning of children from diverse language backgrounds: Mother tongue-based bilingual or multilingual education in early childhood and early primary school years*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Ball, J. and McIvor, O. 2013. “Canada’s big chill: Indigenous languages in education”. In Benson C. and Kosonen K. (eds.) *Language Issues in Comparative Education: Inclusive teaching and learning in non-dominant languages and cultures*. Boston: Sense Publishers, 19-38.
- Barnhardt, R. (ed.) *Workshop Papers from the 1996 World Indigenous People’s Conference: Education*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska.
- Barreña, A., Amorrortu, E., Ortega, A. et al. 2007. “Does the number of speakers of a language determine its fate?”, *International Journal of Sociology of the Language*, 186, 125-139.
- Barriga, H. R. 2015. “Las Hipótesis de Investigación Cuantitativas y Cualitativas en las Ciencias Sociales”, *FENopina*, 79 [online].
- Barrington, J. and Beaglehole, T. H. 1974. *Maori Schools In a Changing Society: An Historical Review*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Battiste, M. 2000. “Maintaining Indigenous identity, language, and culture in modern society”. In Battiste, M. (ed.) *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 192-208.
- Benet-Martinez, V., Leu, J., Lee, F., and Morris, M. 2002. “Negotiating biculturalism: Cultural frame switching in biculturals with oppositional versus compatible cultural identities”, *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology*, 33, 492-516.
- Bernard, H. R. 1994. *Research methods in anthropology: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.
- Bessarab, D. and Ng’andu, B. 2010. Yarning About Yarning as a Legitimate Method in Indigenous Research. *International Journal of Critical Indigenous Studies*, 3(1), 37-50.
- Bhattacharyya, J. 2012. *Knowing Našlhiny (Horse), Understanding the Land: Free-Roaming Horses in Culture and Ecology of the Brittany Triangle and Nemiah Valley*. University of Waterloo PhD dissertation.
- Bhattacharyya, J. 2013. *Cultural and Social-Ecological Significance of the Region Surrounding Teztan Biny (Fish Lake) to the Xení Gwet’in and other Tsilhqot’in Nations: Relevant to environmental impacts of the proposed “New Prosperity” mine*. Victoria: University of Victoria.

- Bhattacharyya, J. and Larson, B. M. H. 2014. "The Need for Indigenous Voices in Discourse about Introduced Species: Insights from Controversy over Wild Horses." *Environmental Values*, 23(6), 663-684.
- Bhattacharyya, J. and Murphy, S.D. 2015. "Assessing the Role of Free-Roaming Horses in a Social-Ecological System", *Environmental Management*, 56(2), 433-46.
- Bialystok, E. 1991. *Language Processing in Bilingual children*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bialystok, E., Moreno, S., Hermanto, N. 2011. "Linguistic and metalinguistic outcomes of intense immersion education: how bilingual?" *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 15(2), 131-145.
- Bialystok, E., Schweizer, T.A., Ware, J., Fischer, C. E. and Craik, F. I. M. 2010. "Bilingualism as a contributor to cognitive reserve: Evidence from brain atrophy in Alzheimer's disease", *SciVerse ScienceDirect*, 48, 991-996.
- Bielenberg, B. 1999. "Indigenous Language Codification: Cultural Effects". In Reyhner, J., Cantoni, G., St. Clair, R. N. and Yazzie, E. P. (eds.) *Revitalizing Indigenous Languages: Papers presented at the Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium*. Louisville: Northern Arizona University.
- Bill C-91, An Act respecting Indigenous languages (Chapter 23. First Reading. February 5, 2019)*. Canada. Available at: <https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/C-91/royal-assent>
- Bishop, R. 1996. "Collaborative Storytelling: Meeting Indigenous People's desires for Self-determination in Research". In Barnhardt, R. (ed.) *Workshop Papers from the 1996 World Indigenous People's Conference: Education*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska, 31-59.
- Bishop, R. and Glynn, T. 1998. "The Development of Kaupapa Maori Education Initiatives in Aotearoa, New Zealand", *Education Canada*, 38(2), 50-56.
- Bowen, G. A. 2009. "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method", *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27-40.
- Bowling, A. 2002. *Research methods in health – Investigating health and health services*. Berkshire: Open University Press.
- Boyatzis, R. E. 1998. *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development*. Sage: Cleveland.
- Brenzinger, M. and Heinrich, P. 2013. "The return of Hawaiian: language networks of the revival movement", *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 14(2), 1-17.

- Bridges, D. 2017. *Philosophy and Educational Research*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- British North America Act* [1867 c. 3 (Regnal. 30_and_31_Vict)]. United Kingdom. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/30-31/3/contents>
- Brown, L. and Strega, S. 2005. *Research As Resistance Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars.
- Campoy Aranda T. J. and Gómez Araújo, E. G. 2015. “Técnicas e instrumentos cualitativos de recogida de datos”. In Pantoja, A. (ed.) *Manual básico para la realización de tesinas, tesis y trabajos de investigación*. Madrid: EOS, 273-300.
- Canada's Official Languages Act* [1969, R.S.C, CHAPTER 0-2]. Canada. Available at: <https://www.uottawa.ca/clmc/official-languages-act-1969>
- Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) 2014. *Decision Statement on New Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine Project British Columbia*. Ontario: Government of Canada.
- Canadian Heritage Languages Institute Act*. [S.C. 1991, c. 7]. Canada. Available at: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-17.6/index.html>
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). 2010. *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. Ottawa: Government of Canada.
- Canadian Multiculturalism Act*. [R.S.C., 1985, c. 24 (4th Supp.)]. Canada. Available at: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/actcs/c-18.7/page-1.html>
- Cantoni, G. 1996. *Stabilizing Indigenous languages*. Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University.
- Cassell, C. and Symon, G. (eds.) 2004. *Essential guide to qualitative methods in organizational research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Charmaz, K. 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*. London: Sage Publications.
- Chrisp, S. 2005. “Māori intergenerational language transmission”, *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 172, 149-181.
- Christian, W. M., Pearce, M. E., Jongbloed, K. A., Richardson, C. G., Henderson, E. W., Pooyak, S. D., and Oviedo-Joekes, E. 2018. “The Cedar Project: Resilience in the face of HIV vulnerability within a cohort study involving young Indigenous people who use drugs in three Canadian cities”, *BMC Public Health*, 5 [online].

- Available at:
<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-015-2417-7>
- Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. 1996. *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies*. London: Sage Publications.
- Consolidation of Official Languages Act* [S.Nu. 2008,c.10]. Nunavut. Available at:
https://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/2015-07-28-official_language_act-conssnu2008c10_0.pdf
- Constitution Act. Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* [1982]. Canada. Available at:
<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/Const/page-15.html>
- Cook, E. D. 2013. *A Tsilhqút'in Grammar*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Cook, E. D. 1978. "Flattening and rounding in Chilcotin velars". In Efrat, B. (ed.) *The Victoria Conference on Northwestern Languages*. Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 15-32.
- Cook, E. D. 1983. "Chilcotin flattening", *Canadian Journal of Linguistics*, 28, 123-132.
- Cook, E. D. 1987. "An autosegmental analysis of Chilcotin flattening." In Bosh, A. et al. *Papers from the 23rd annual regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society. Part Two: Parasession on autosegmental and Metrical Phonology*. Chicago: Chicago Linguistic Society, 51-65.
- Cook, E. D. 1989. "Chilcotin tone and verb paradigms". In Cook, E. D. and Rice, K.D (eds.) *Athapaskan Linguistics: Current Perspectives on a Language Family*. New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 145-198.
- Cook, E. D. 1993. "Chilcotin flattening and autosegmental phonology", *Lingua*, 91, 149-174.
- Cook, E. D. 2005. *A linguistic introduction to Tsilhqút'in (Chilcotin)* (unpublished).
- Cook, E. D. and Flynn, D. 2008. *Aboriginal Languages of Canada*. Toronto: Pearson Longman.
- Costley, C., Elliott, G. C. and Gibbs, P. 2010. *Doing Work Based Research: Approaches to Enquiry for Insider-Researchers*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Cowell, A. 2012. "The Hawaiian model of language revitalization: Problems of extension to mainland native America", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 218, 167-193.
- Craig, C. 1992. "A constitutional response to language endangerment: the case of Nicaragua", *Language*, 68(1), 17-24.
- Creswell, J. W. 2013. *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

- Crystal, D. 1997. *English as a global language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. 2000. *Language death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Daly, J., Kellehear, A. and Gliksman, M. 1997. *The public health researcher: A methodological approach*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Daniels, D. and Amrhein, H. 2010. *Culture Camps for Language Learning. An Immersion Handbook*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Cultural Council.
- De Walt, K. M. and De Walt, B. R. 1998. "Participant observation". In Bernard, H. R. (ed.) *Handbook of methods in cultural anthropology*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 259-300.
- Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*. [1997. 3 SCR 1010] Supreme Court of Canada. Available at: <https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/1569/index.do>
- Dickson-Swift, V., James, L. J. and Liamputtong. 2008. *Undertaking Sensitive Research in the Health and Social Sciences. Managing Boundaries, Emotions and Risks*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dorian, N. C. 1977. "The problem of the semi-speaker in language death", *Linguistics*, 15(191), 23-32.
- Dorian, N. C. 1980. "Language shift in community and individual: The phenomenon of the laggard semi-speaker", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 1980(25), 85-94.
- DuBois, J. W., Schuetz-Coburn, S., Cumming, S. and Paolino, D. 1993. "Outline of discourse transcription". In Edwards, J. A. and Lampert, M. D. (eds.) *Talking data: Transcription and coding in discourse research*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 45-87.
- Duff, W. 1951. *The Indian History of British Columbia. The Impact of the White Man*. Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum.
- Dunlop, B., Gessner, S., Herbert, T., Parker, A., and Wadsworth, A. 2018. *Report on the status of B.C. First Nations languages* (3rd ed.). Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- Eberhard, D. M., Simons, G. F. and Fennig, C. D. 2021. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World. 24th Edition*. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Available at: <http://www.ethnologue.com>

- Etmanski, C., Hall, B. L. and Dawson, T. (eds.) 2014. *Learning and Teaching Community-Based Research. Linking Pedagogy to Practice*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Federal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation (FATSIL) 2014. *Guide to Community Protocols for Indigenous Language Projects*. Australia: Graphic Art.
- Fennig, C D., Simons, G. F. and Leweis, M. P. 2014. *Ethnologue. 17th Edition*. Dallas: SIL International.
- Fereday, J. and Muir-Cochrane, E. 2006. “Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development”, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5, 80-92.
- Fettes, M. 1997. “Stabilizing what? An ecological approach to language renewal”. In Reyhner, J. (ed.) *Teaching Indigenous languages*. Flagstaff: Center for Excellence in Education, 301-18.
- Finlay, J., Nagy, A. and Gray-McKay, C. 2013. “Searching Together: A Model for Community-Driven Research in Remote First Nations”. In White, J. P., Peters, J. Beavon, D. and Dinsdale, P. (eds.) *Aboriginal Policy Research Series: Voting, Governance, and Research Methodology*, 10. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 259-268.
- First Nations Education Committee (FNESC) 2009. *Curriculum and Resources for First Nation Language Programs in B.C. First Nations Schools*. Vancouver: First Nations Education Committee.
- First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC). 1994. *First Peoples’ Language Map of B.C. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples’ Cultural Council*. Available at: <http://maps.fphlcc.ca/>
- First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC). 2006. *Handbook of B.C.’s Master Apprentice Language Program*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples’ Cultural Council.
- First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC). 2010a. *Fact Sheet of Report on the Status of B.C. First Nation Languages*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples’ Cultural Council.
- First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC). 2010b. *Report on the Status of B.C. First Nation Languages*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples’ Cultural Council.
- First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC). 2012. *B.C.’s Master-Apprentice Language Program Handbook*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples’ Cultural Council.
- First Peoples’ Cultural Council (FPCC). 2013. *A Guide to Language Policy and Planning for B.C. First Nations Communities*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples’ Cultural Council.

- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2014a. *Language Nest Handbook for First Nation Communities*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2014b. *Report on the Status of B.C. First Nation Languages*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2015. *Proceedings of the Cultural Protocols and the Arts Forum* (Penticton, March 3-4, 2014) Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2018a. *Language Diversity in B.C. Fact Series 1*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2018b. *Language Dialects. Fact Series 2*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2018c. *Writing Systems. Fact Series 3*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2018d. *New Words & Language Adaptations. Fact Series 4*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2018e. *Language Immersion. Fact Series 5*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2018f. *Language in the Home. Fact Series 9*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2018g. *Language and Health. Fact Series 10*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2018h. *Report on the Status of B.C. First Nation Languages*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC). 2019. *A presentation to the Standing Committee on Canadian Heritage on Bill C-91, an Act respecting Indigenous languages* (unpublished).
- First Peoples' Heritage Language and Culture Act* [RSBC 1996] Chapter 147. British Columbia. Available at: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96147_01
- First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council (FPHLCC). 2010. *Report on the Status of B.C. First Nation Languages*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.

- First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council (FPHLCC). 2014. *Language and Culture Immersion Programs. Handbook*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- Fishman, J. 1991. *Reversing the language shift*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Fishman, J. 1996. "Maintaining Languages: What works? What doesn't?". In Cantoni, G. *Stabilizing Indigenous languages*. Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University, 165-175.
- Fishman, J. 1999. *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fishman, J. 2001. *Can Threatened Languages Be Saved? Reversing Language Shift – Revisited: A 21st Century Perspective*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Flores Farfán, J. A. 2014. "La Revitalización Lingüística y Cultural. Ejemplos de México". In Medina Melgarejo, P. (ed.) *Interculturalidad Activa: Vamos a Aprender Maya*. Mexico D.F.: CIESAS-Lingua Pax, 213-228.
- Forsyth, A. 2010. "Acknowledging Settler Responsibility", *Undergraduate Transitional Justice Review*, 1(3) 3, 228-244.
- Fortescue, M. 2017. "What are the Limits of Polysynthesis?". In Fortescue, M., Mithun, M. and Evans, N. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 115-134.
- Fortescue, M., Mithun, M. and Evans, N. (eds.) 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fox, N. J. 2004. *Qualitative Data Analysis HAR6010* (Taught unit from MSc in Health and Social Care Research). Sheffield: University of Sheffield.
- Francis, N. and Reyhner, J. A. 2002. *Language and Literacy Teaching for Indigenous Education: A Bilingual Approach*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Freire, P. 1997. *Pedagogía de la autonomía*. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI.
- Gass, S. M. 1994. *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*. New York: Routledge.
- Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. 1967. *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Gloyne, P. 2014. "Te Panekiretanga o te Reo". In Higgins, R., Rewi, P. and Olsen-Reeder, V. (eds.) *The value of the Māori language: Te hua o te reo Māori*. Wellington: Huia, 305-318.

- Graveline, F. J. 2000. "Circle as Methodology: Enacting an Aboriginal Paradigm", *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 200(13), 4, 361-367.
- Green, J. and Thorogood, N. 2004. *Qualitative Methods for Health Research*. London: Sage.
- Grenoble, L. A. and Whaley, L. J. (eds.) 1998. *Endangered Languages: Language Loss and Community Response*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Grenoble, L. A. and Whaley, L. J. 2009. *Saving Languages: An Introduction to Language Revitalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Greymorning, S. 1997. "Going Beyond Words: The Arapaho Immersion Program". In Reyhner, J. (ed.) *Teaching Indigenous Languages*. Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University, 22-30.
- Grin, F. and Vaillancourt, F. 1998. *Language Revitalisation Policy: An Analytical Survey. Theoretical Framework, Policy Experience and Application to Te Reo Maori*. New Zealand Treasury Working Paper 98/06. New Zealand: New Zealand Government.
- Grinevald, C. 2007. "Linguistic fieldwork among speakers of endangered languages". In Miyaoka O., Sakiyama, O. and Krauss, M.E. (eds) *The vanishing languages of the Pacific rim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 35-76.
- Hagege, C. 2009. *On the Death and Life of Languages*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Hamp E., Howren, R., King, Q., Lowery, B. M. and Walker, R. 1979. *Contributions to Canadian Linguistics*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.
- Hargus, S. and Rice, K. (eds.) 2005. *Athabaskan Prosody*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Harrison, B. R. 1997. "Language Integration: Results of an Intergenerational Analysis", *Statistical Journal of the United Nations ECE*, 14, 289-303.
- Harrison, D. 2007a. *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Haugen, E. 1972. *The Ecology of the Language*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Heath, H. and Cowley, S. 2004. "Developing a grounded theory approach: a comparison of Glaser and Strauss", *International Journal of Nursing Studies* 41, 141-150.
- Henry, J., Dunbar, T., Arnott, A., Scrimgeour, M. and Murakami-Gold, L. 2004. *Indigenous Research Reform Agenda. A Review of Literature*. Canberra: Cooperative Research Centre for Aboriginal & Topical Health.

- Hermes, M. 2007. "Moving toward the language: reflections on teaching in an immersion school", *Journal of American Indian Education*, 46, 54-71.
- Higgins, P. Rewi and Olsen-Reeder, V. (eds.) 2014. *The value of the Māori language: Te hua o te reo Māori*. Wellington: Huia.
- Hinton, L. 2011. "Revitalization of Endangered Languages". In Austin, K. and Sallabank, J. (eds.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Endangered Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 291-311.
- Hinton, L. 2013. *Bringing Our Languages Home: Language Revitalization for Families*. Berkeley: Heyday Books.
- Hobson, J., Lowe, K., Poetsch, S. and Walsh, M. (eds.) 2010. *Re-awakening languages. Theory and practice in the revitalisation of Australia's Indigenous languages*. Sydney: Sidney University Press.
- Hong, Y., Benet-Martinez, V., Chiu, C. and Morris, M. W. 2003. "Boundaries of cultural influence: Construct activation as a mechanism for cultural differences in social perception", *Journal of Cross-cultural Psychology*, 34(4), 453-464.
- Ignace, M. 2015. *British Columbia Kindergarten: 12 First Nations Languages Curriculum Building Guide*. Vancouver: FNEESC.
- Indian Act* [1876. R.S.C., 1985, c. I-5]. Canada. Available at: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/i-5/>
- Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC, former AADNC) n.d. *Common Terminology*. Available at: <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1358879361384/1358879407462>
- Inuit Language Protection Act* [S.Nu. 2008,c.17]. Nunavut. Available at: <https://www.canlii.org/en/nu/laws/stat/snu-2008-c-17/latest/snu-2008-c-17.html?resultIndex=1>
- Jernudd, B. 1973. "Language planning as a type of language treatment". In Rubin, J.Y. and Shuy, R. (eds.) *Language planning: Current Issues and Research*. Washington: Georgetown University Press, 11-23.
- Johnson, K. 1997. *Language Teaching and Skill Learning*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Kaplan, R. B. and Baldauf, R. B. 1997. *Language Planning from Practice to Theory*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Kawai'ae'a, K. C., Housman, A. K. and Alencastre, M. 2007. "Pu'a i ka 'Olelo, Ola ka 'Ohana: Three Generations of Hawaiian Language Revitalization", *Hulili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being*, 4(1), 183-237.

- Kawulich, B. B. 2005. "Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method", *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 6(2), 43.
- King, J. 2010. "Sisters in Spirit Research Framework: Reflecting on Methodology and Process", *Aboriginal Policy Research*, 10, 269-285.
- King, J. 2018. "Māori. Revitalization of an Endangered Language". In Rehg, K. L. and Campbell, L. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Endangered Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190610029.013.28.
- King, Q. 1979. "Chilcotin phonology and vocabulary". In Hamp E., Howren, R., King, Q., Lowery, B. M., Walker, R. (eds.) *Contributions to Canadian Linguistics*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 41-66.
- Köppe, R. and Meisel, J. M. 1995. "Codeswitching in bilingual first language acquisition". In Milroy, L. and Muysken, P. (eds.) *One speaker — two languages: Cross-disciplinary perspectives on code-switching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 276-301.
- Kovach, M. 2005. "Emerging from the margins: Indigenous methodologies". In Brown, L. and Strega, S. (eds.) *Research As Resistance Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 19-36.
- Kovach, M. 2010. "Conversational Method in Indigenous Research", *First Peoples Child & Family review*, 5(1), 19-36.
- Kraus, M. 1975. *Chilcotin phonology: a descriptive and historical report with recommendations for a Chilcotin orthography* (unpublished).
- Krauss, M. 1998. "The condition of native North American languages: The need for realistic assessment and action", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 132, 9-21.
- Krauss, M. E. 1997. "The Indigenous Languages of the North: A Report on their Present State". In Shoji, H. and Janhunen, J. (eds.) *Northern Minority Languages: Problems of Survival*. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 1-34.
- Krauss, M. E. 2005. "Athabaskan tone". In Hargus, S. and Rice, K (eds.) *Athabaskan Prosody*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 55-136.
- Krauss, M. E. 2007. "Native languages of Alaska". In Miyaoko, O., Sakiyama, O., Krauss, M. E. (eds.) *The Vanishing Voices of the Pacific Rim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 406-417.

- Kunkel, T. I. 2008. *Creating Sustainable Economic Development Within Two B.C. First Nations Communities: A Rights-Based Approach*. Prince George: University of Northern British Columbia.
- Kunkel, T. I. 2014. *Aboriginal values, sacred landscapes, and resource development in the Cariboo Chilcotin Region of B.C.* University of British Columbia PhD dissertation.
- Lalonde, C. E. 2005. "Identity formation and cultural resilience in Aboriginal communities". In Flynn, R.J., Dudding, P. and Barber, J. G. (eds.) *Promoting resilient development in young people receiving care: International perspectives on theory, research, practice and policy*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 52-71.
- Latimer, R. M. 1978. *A study of Chilcotin phonology*. University of Calgary MA thesis.
- Lavallée, L. F. 2009. "Practical Application of an Indigenous Research Framework and Two Qualitative Indigenous Research Methods: Sharing Circles and Anishnaabe Symbol-Based Reflection", *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 21-40.
- LeCompte, M. D. and Preissle, J. 2003. *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research*. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Lincoln, Y. S. and González, E. M. 2008. "The Search for Emerging Decolonizing Methodologies in Qualitative Research: Further Strategies for Liberatory and Democratic Inquiry", *Qualitative Inquiry* 14(5), 784-805.
- Lincoln, Y. S. and Guba, E. G. 2000. "Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging Confluences". In Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (eds.) *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 163-188.
- Lutz, J. S. 2008. *Makúk: a new history of Aboriginal-white relations*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Lutz, J. S., and Neis, B. 2008. *Making and Moving Knowledge: Interdisciplinary and Community-based Research in a World on the Edge*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Maffi, L. 2001. *On biocultural diversity: Linking language, knowledge and the environment*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Manterola Garate, I. and Berastegi Sancho, N. 2011. *Hizkuntzak gutxituen erronkak*. Bilbo: Udako Euskal Herriko Unibertsitatea.
- Marshall, C. and Rossman, G. B. 1999. *Designing qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Marshall, M. N. 1996. "Sampling for qualitative research", *Family Practice* 13, 522-525.

- Martí, F., Ortega, P., Amorrortu, E., Barreña, A., Idiazabal, I., Juaristi, P., Junyent, C. and Uranga, B. 2005. *Hizkuntzen mundua. Munduko hizkuntzei buruzko txostena*. Bilbo: UPV/EHU.
- Mason, J. 2002. *Qualitative Researching*. London: Sage Publications.
- May, S., Hill, R. and Tiakiwai, S. 2006. *Bilingual education in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Key findings from bilingual/immersion education: Indicators of good practice. A summary of a research report*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Mayan M. J. 2009. *Essentials on Qualitative Inquiry*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Inc.
- Maynor, H., Cooper, S. and Shown Harjo, S. (n.d.). *Native Language Preservation. A Reference Guide for Establishing Archives and Repositories. American Indian Higher Education Consortium*. Washington: Department of Health and Human services of the USA.
- McIntosh, T. 2005. "Māori identities: Fixed, fluid, forced". In Liu, J. H., McCreanor, T., McIntosh, T. and Teaiwa T. (eds.) *New Zealand identities departures and destinations*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 38-51.
- McIvor, O. 2006. *Language Nest Programs in B.C. Early childhood immersion programs in two First Nations Communities. Practical questions answered and guidelines offered*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council.
- McIvor, O. 2009. "Strategies for Indigenous language revitalization and maintenance", *Encyclopedia of language and literacy development*, 1-12. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/10813890/Strategies_for_Indigenous_language_revitalization_and_maintenance
- McIvor, O., Napoleon, A. and Dickie, K. M. 2009. "Language and Culture as Protective Factors for At-Risk Communities", *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, 5(1), 6-25.
- McKay, G. 1996. *The land still speaks: review of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language maintenance and development needs and activities*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.
- McNiff, S. 1998. *Art-based research*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Mead, H. 2003. *Tikanga Maori: Living by Maori Values*. Wellington: Huia Publishers.
- Meisel, J. M. 2004. "The bilingual child". In Bhatia, T.K. and Ritchie, W.C. (eds.) *The handbook of bilingualism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 91-113.
- Mejía Navarrete, J. 2000. "El muestreo en la investigación cualitativa", *Investigaciones sociales*, 4(5), 165-180.

- Mellott, C. R. 2010. *Contemporary Perspectives on the Practical, Ethical, and Ritual Aspects of the Tsinlhqút'ín Sún'tíny (Claytonia lanceolata) Harvest on Tsinuzch'ed, British Columbia*. University of Victoria MA thesis.
- Michel, K. 2009. *First Nations Language Essentials*. Vancouver: First Nations Schools Association.
- Miller, T., Birch, M., Mauthner, M. and Jessop, J. (eds.) 2012. *Ethics in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publishing.
- Milloy, J. S. 1999. *"A national crime": The Canadian government and the residential*. Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press.
- Ministry of Education. 2015. *Aboriginal Worldviews and Perspectives in the Classroom. Moving Forward*. Victoria: Ministry of Education.
- Mithun, M. 1999. *The languages of Native North America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Miyaoka, O., Sakiyama, O. and Krauss, M. E. (eds.) 2007. *The Vanishing Languages of the Pacific Rim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Moreno Fernández, F. 1998. *Principios de sociolingüística y sociología del lenguaje*. Barcelona: Ariel.
- Morrison, A. 1999. *Space for Maori in Tertiary Institutions: Exploring Two Sites at the University of Auckland*. Auckland: University of Auckland.
- Morrison, S. and Vaioleti, T. 2011. "Ako: A traditional learning concept for Māori and Pacific youth and its relationship to lifelong learning", *Bildung und Erziehung*, 64(4), 395-407.
- Morse, J. M. 1991. "Approaches to qualitative-quantitative methodological triangulation", *Nursing Research*, 40, 120-123.
- Myers, M. 1979. *Nenqayni ch'ih ?ech'eyaltig*. Williams Lake: Chilcotin Language Curriculum Committee.
- Myers, W. 1994. *Deni Ghanidats'egughilex Bigwedetaghanl?anx* 'Learning about the law'. Anaham: Nenqayni Deni Yajelhtig Law Centre.
- Myers, W. 1998. *Traditional Value Gathering. Information Booklet*. Williams Lake: Tsilhqot'in Nation.
- Myers, W. n.d. *Chilcotin lexical database* (unpublished).
- N.W.T. *Official Languages Act*. [RSNWT 1988,c.O-1]. Northwest Territories. Available at: <https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/official-languages/official-languages.a.pdf>

- Nabigon, H., Hagey, R., Webster, S., and MacKay, R. 1999. "The learning circle as a research method: The trickster and windigo in research", *Native Social Work Journal*, 2(1), 113–137.
- Nahoa Lucas, P. F. 2000. "E Ola Mau Kākou I Ka 'Ōlelo Makuahine: Hawaiian Language Policy and the Courts", *The Hawaiian Journal of History*, 34, 1-28.
- National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) / Assembly of First Nations (AFN). 1972. *Indian Control of Indian Education*. Ottawa: Assembly of First Nations.
- Nepe, T. M. 1991. *Te Toi Huarewa Tipuna: Kaupapa Maori, an Educational Intervention System*. Auckland: The University of Auckland.
- Nettle, D. and Romaine, S. 2000. *Vanishing Voices: The Extinction of the World's Languages*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Norris, M. J. 2007. "Aboriginal Languages in Canada: Emerging Trends and Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition", *Canadian Social Trends*, 11(008), 19-27.
- O'Regan, H. 2014. "Kia matike, kia mataara: Te huanui o kotahi mano kāika". In Higgins, R., Rewi, P. and Olsen-Reeder, V. (eds.) *The value of the Māori language: Te hua o te reo Māori*. Wellington: Huia, 109-122.
- Olsen-Reeder, V., and Higgins, R. 2012. "Te Kōhanga Reo and Te Ataarangi. Preliminary findings into the community value of the Māori language". In Ngā Pae o Te Māramatanga (ed.) *International Indigenous Development Research Conference Proceedings*. Auckland: Ngā Pae o Te Māramatanga, 143-150.
- Osorio, J. K. 2010. "Hawaiian issues". In Craig Howes and Jon Osorio (eds.) *The value of Hawaii: knowing the past, shaping the future*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 15-21.
- Oster, R. T., Grier, A., Lightning, R., Mayan, M. J. and Toth, E. 2014. "Cultural continuity, traditional Indigenous language, and diabetes in Alberta First Nations: a mixed methods study", *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 13(92), 1-11.
- Ovide, E. 2008. "Las TIC y las culturas minoritarias en un mundo global", *Teoría de la educación. Educacion y Cultura en la Sociedad de la Comunicación*, 9(2), 95-113.
- Parish, R., Coupé, R. and Loyd, D. 1996. *Plants of Southern British Columbia and the Inland Northwest*. Vancouver: Lone Pine publishing.
- Park, P. 1993. "What is participatory research? A theoretical and methodological perspective". In Park P., Brydon-Miller, M., Hall, B. and Jackson, T. (eds.) *Voices of change: Participatory research in the United States and Canada*. Westport: Bergin and Garvey, 1-20.

- Parker, A., Gessner, S. and Michel, K. A. 2014. *Language Nest Handbook for First Nation Communities*. Brentwood Bay: First Peoples' Cultural Council.
- Patton, M. Q. 2002. *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Patton, M. Q. and Cochran M. 2002. *A Guide to Using Qualitative Research Methodology*. London: Médecins Sans Frontiers.
- Payne, T. E. 1997. *Describing morphosyntax: A guide for field linguists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pere, R. 1999. "Te Reo Rangatira me Ona Tikanga", *Maori Education Commission Newsletter*, 2, 3-10.
- Pérez Báez, G., Vogel, R. and Okura, E. 2018. "Comparative analysis in Language Revitalization Practices: Addressing the Challenge". In Kenneth L. Rehg, K. L. and Campbell, L. (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Endangered Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 466-489.
- Pihama, L., Smith, K., Taki, M. and Lee, J. 2004. *A Literature Review on Kaupapa Maori and Maori Pedagogy*. Auckland: International Research Institute for Maori and Indigenous Education.
- Potts, K. and Brown, L. 2005. "Becoming an anti-oppressive researcher". In Brown, L. A. and Strega, S. (eds.) *Research As Resistance Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 255-286.
- Purdie, N., Frigo, T., Ozolins, C., Noblett, G. Thieberger, N. and Shar, J. 2008. *Indigenous languages Programs in Australian Schools: A way Forward*. Camberwell: Australian Council for Education Research.
- Pye, C. 1992. "Language Loss in the Chilcotin", *International Journal of the Sociology of the language*, 93(1), 75-86.
- Rata, E. 2007. "Maori language survival and New Zealand education". In Schuster, K. and Witkosky, D. (eds.) *Language of the land: policy, politics, identity*. Charlotte: Information Age Publishing, 79-95.
- Reed, M. and Peters, E. J. 2004. "Using an Ecological Metaphor to Build Adaptive Resilient Research Practices", *An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies (ACME)*, 3(1), 18-40.
- Rewi, T. and Rewi, P. 2015. "The ZePA Model of Māori Language Revitalization: Key Considerations for Empowering Indigenous Language Educators, Students, and Communities". In Reyhner, J., Martin, J., Lockard, L. and Sakiestewa Gilbert, W.

- (eds.) *Honoring our Elders: Culturally appropriate approaches for teaching Indigenous students*. Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University, 136-53.
- Reyhner, J. 1999a. *Revitalizing Indigenous languages*. Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University.
- Reyhner, J. 1999b. *Introduction: Some basics of Indigenous language revitalization*. In *Revitalizing Indigenous languages*. Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University.
- Reyhner, J. 2003. "Native Language Immersion". In Reyhner, J., Trujillo, O. V., Carrasco, R. L. and Lockard, L. (eds.) *Nurturing Native Languages*. Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University, 1-6.
- Rice, K. 2009. "Must there be two solitudes? Language activists and linguists working".
- Rice, K. 2010. "The Linguist's Responsibilities to the Community of Speakers". In Grenoble, L. A. and Furbee, N. L. (eds.) *Language Documentation: Practice and Values*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 25-36.
- Rice, K. 2017. "Phraseology and Polysynthesis". In Fortescue, M., Mithun, M. and Evans, N. (eds.) *The Oxford handbook of Polysynthesis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 203-214.
- Romaine, S. 2002. "The impact of language policy on endangered languages". *International Journal on Multicultural Societies*, 4(2), 194-212.
- Romaine, S. 2015. "The Global Extinction of Languages and Its Consequences for Cultural Diversity". In Marten, H. F., Rieblér, M., Saarikivi, J. and Toivanen, R. (eds.) *Cultural and Linguistic Minorities in the Russian Federation and the European Union*. New York: Springer, 31-46.
- Ross, R. S. M. and Haig-Brown, H. 2010. *Comments on the project. CEAA Panel Submission*. Available at: <http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/documents/35332/35332E.pdf> [retrieved on February 10th, 2016].
- Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). 1996. *Gathering strength: Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services.
- Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1967. *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*. Ottawa: Government of Canada.
- S-212 Act, *An Act for the advancement of the aboriginal languages of Canada*. Canada. Available at: <https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/bill/S-212/first-reading/page-42>

- Saldaña, J. 2013. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Schensul, S. L., Schensul, J. J. and Le Compte, M. D. 1999. *Essential ethnographic methods: observations, interviews, and questionnaires*. Maryland: AltaMira Press.
- School Act* [RSBC 1996] Chapter 412. British Columbia. Available at: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96412_00
- Shah, S. and Brezinger, M. 2018. “The Role of Teaching in Language Revival and Revitalization Movements”, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 38, 201-208.
- Shaw, P. A. 2001. “Language and identity, language and the land”, *B.C. Studies*, 131, 39-55.
- Silva-Corvalán, C. 2001. *Sociolingüística y pragmática del español*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.
- Simeone, T. and Library of Parliament. 2004. *Indigenous traditional knowledge and intellectual property rights*. Ottawa: Canada Parliamentary Research Branch.
- Simon, J. 1990. *European Style Schooling for Māori: First Century*. University of Auckland PhD dissertation.
- Simon, J. 1998a. *Nga Kura Maori: The Native Schools System 1867-1969*. Auckland: Auckland University Press.
- Simon, J. 1998b. “Anthropology, ‘Native Schooling’ and Maori: the Politics of ‘Cultural Adaptation’ Policies”, *Oceania*, 69(1), 61-78.
- Simons, G.F. and Fennig, C. D. (eds.) 2017. *Ethnologue: Languages of the world. 20th Edition*. Dallas: SIL International.
- Sinclair, R. P. 2003. “Indigenous Research in social work: the challenge of operationalizing worldview”, *Native Social Work Journal. Articulation Aboriginal Paradigms: Implications for Aboriginal Social Work Practice*, 5, 139-177.
- Sinclair, R. P. 2007. “Identity lost and found: Lessons from the sixties scoop”, *First Peoples Child & Family Review*, 3(1), 65-82.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. 2000. *Linguistic genocide in education – Or worldwide diversity and human*. New York: Routledge.
- Smillie-Adjarkwa, C. 2009. “Aboriginal Alcohol Addiction in Ontario, Canada: A Look at the History and Current Healing Methods That Are Working In Breaking the Cycle of Abuse”, *Indigenous Policy Journal*, 20(3), 1-9.
- Smith, L. R. 2008. *Suwh-t’eghedudinh: the Tsinlhqut’in Niminh Spiritual Path*. University of Victoria MA thesis.

- Smith, L. R. 2011. *Beghad Jigwedetaghe?anx. A Yunešit'in and Xeni Gwet'in Project*. Hanceville: Yunešit'in First Nation.
- Smith, L. R. 2013a. *NABAŠ. CEAA Panel Submission*. Available at: <http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/documents/p63928/93512E.pdf>
- Smith, L. R. 2013b. *Panel Presentation. CEAA Panel Submission*. Available at: <http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/documents/41957/41957E.pdf> [retrieved on February, 10, 2016].
- Smith, L. R. n.d. *Nenqayni Laws of Respect. The ways of our Esghaydam 'Ancestors'*. Williams Lake: Tšilhqot'in National Government.
- Smith, L. T. 1986 "Is 'Taha Maori' in Schools the Answer to Maori School Failure?". In Smith, G. H. (ed.) *Nga Kete Waananga: Maori Perspectives of Taha Maori*. Auckland: Auckland College of Education, 1-13.
- Statistics Canada 2017. *2016 Census in Brief. The Aboriginal languages of First Nations people, Métis and Inuit*. Ottawa: Government of Canada.
- Strand, K., Cutforth, N., Stoecker, R., Marullo, S. and Donohue, P. 2003. *Community-Based Research in Higher Education: Principles and Practices*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Street, B. 1993. "Introduction: The new literacy studies". In Street, B. V. (ed.), *Cross-cultural approaches to literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-21.
- Sturtevant, W. C. and Goddard, I. 1983. *Handbook of North American Indians: Southwest. Volume 10*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution.
- Swansky, S. 2013. *The Great Darkening*. Burnaby: Dragon Heart Entreprises.
- Swansky, T. 2012. *The True Story of Canada's "War" of Extermination on the Pacific plus The Tšilhqot'in and other First Nations Resistance*. Burnaby: Dragon Heart Entreprises.
- Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures. 2005. *Towards a new beginning. A Foundational Report for a Strategy to Revitalize First Nation, Inuit and Métis Languages and Cultures*, Ottawa: Aboriginal Languages Directorate.
- Tauli, V. 1968. *Introduction to a theory of language planning*. Chicago: Uppsala Universitet.
- Te Huia, A. 2015. "Exploring goals and motivations of Māori heritage language learners. Studies", *Second Language Learning and Teaching Department of English Studies*, 5(4), 609-635.

- The Aboriginal Languages Recognition Act*. [C.C.S.M. c. A1.5]. Manitoba. Available at:
<http://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/a001-5e.php>
- The Province of British Columbia and the T̓silhqot'in Nation. 2016. *Letter of Understanding*. Available at:
http://www.tsilhqotin.ca/Portals/0/PDFs/LOU_Tsilhqotin_bc.pdf
- The Province of British Columbia and the T̓silhqot'in Nation. 2016. *Nenqay Deni Accord (The People's Accord)*. Available at:
http://www.tsilhqotin.ca/PDFs/Nenqay_Deni_Accord.pdf
- The T̓silhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia* [2012]. Supreme Court of Canada. British Columbia Court of Appeal.
- The T̓silhqot'in Nation v. British Columbia*. [2014] 2 SCR 257. Canada.
- The T̓silhqot'in Nation, Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada and Her Majesty the Queen in right of British Columbia. 2019. *Gwets'en Nilt'i Pathway Agreement*. Available at:
http://www.tsilhqotin.ca/Portals/0/PDFs/Press%20Releases/2019_Gwets%27enNilt%27iPathwayAgreement.pdf
- The T̓silhqot'in Nation, Her Majesty the Queen in right of Canada. 2017. *Letter of Understanding*. Available at:
http://www.tsilhqotin.ca/Portals/0/PDFs/Press%20Releases/2017_01_27_Tsilhqotin_Canada_LOU.pdf
- Thomas, D. R. 2006. "A General Inductive Approach for Qualitative Data Analysis", *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246.
- Thomas, R. A. Qwul'sih'yah'maht 2005. "Honouring the oral traditions of my ancestors through storytelling". In Brown, L. and Strega, S. (eds.) *Research as Resistance Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 237-254.
- Thompson Rivers University (TRU) 2001. *Research Ethics Committee – Human Subjects*. Kamloops: Thompson Rivers University.
- Together". In Reyhner, J. and Lockard, L. (eds.) *Indigenous language revitalization: encouragement, guidance & lessons learned*. Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University, 37-59.
- Tompkins, J., and Orr, A. M. 2011. *Best practices and challenges in Mi'kmaq and Maliseet/Wolastoqi language immersion programs*. Dartmouth: Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat.

- Tovar, T. and Hidalgo E, P. 2009. *Métodos y Técnicas de Investigación en Gerencia Social*. Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú.
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015a. *Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015b. *Calls to Action*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.
- Tsilhqot'in Language Group and Kunkel, T. I. 2012. *Tsilhqot'in culture: Sadanzx, Yedanx, K'andzin – the ancient, the past and the present*. Williams Lake: Tsilhqot'in National Government.
- Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG). 1998. *General Assembly of the Chilcotin Nation. A declaration of Sovereignty*. Williams Lake: TNG.
- Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG). 2015. *Language Needs Assessment 2015/2016*. Williams Lake: TNG.
- Tsilhqot'in Stewardship Department. 2007. *Tsilhqot'in Nation strategy: Towards sector strategies to address the impact of Mountain Pine Beetle*. Williams Lake: TNG.
- Tsumagari, T., M. Kurebito and F. Endo. 2007. "Siberia: Tungusic and Palaeosiberian". In Miyaoka, O., Sakiyama, O. and Krauss, M. E. (eds.) *The Vanishing Languages of the Pacific Rim*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 387-405.
- Tuck, E. and Yang, K.W. 2014. "R-Words: Refusing Research". In Paris, D. and Winn, M. T. (eds.) *Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with youth and Communities*. Thousand Oakes: Sage Publications.
- Tuhiwai Smith, L. 1999. *Decolonizing methodologies, research and Indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books.
- Turner, N. 2013. *Teztan Biny and Surrounding Area of British Columbia as a Cultural Keystone Place for the s̓. CEAA Panel Submission*.
- Turner, N. J., Deur, D. and Mellott, C. R. 2011. "Up On the Mountain: Ethnobotanical Importance of Montane Sites In Pacific Coastal North America", *Journal of Ethnobiology*, 31(1), 4-43.
- UNESCO 1998. *Universal Declaration on Linguistic Rights*. Paris: UNESCO. Available at: https://culturalrights.net/descargas/drets_culturals389.pdf
- UNESCO 2003. *Language Vitality and Endangerment*. Paris: UNESCO.

- United Nations (UN). 2008. *Declaration on the Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples (UNDRIP)*. Geneva: United Nations General Assembly.
- Vajda, E. J. 2017 “Pattern of innovation and Retention in Templatic Polysynthesis”. In Fortescue, M., Mithun, M. and Evans, N. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 363-391.
- Van Manen, M. 2001a. “Transdisciplinary and the New Production of Knowledge”. In *Qualitative Health Research*, 11(6), 850-852.
- Van Manen, M. 2001b. *Researching live experience: Human Science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. London: Althouse.
- Waitangi Tribunal. 1986. *Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Te Reo Māori claim (WAI 11)*. Wellington: The New Zealand Government.
- Waldon, J. 2004. “Oranga Kaumātua: Perceptions of health in older Māori people”, *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, 23, 167-180.
- Walmart, B., 2013. “Reclaiming First Nations Research: The Keewaytinook Okimakanak Research Institute”. In: Jerry P. White, Peters, J., Beavon, D. and Dinsdale, P. (eds.) *Aboriginal Policy Research Series: Voting, Governance, and Research Methodology*. Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 217-225.
- Walsh, M. 2001. “A Case of Language Revitalisation in ‘Settled’ Australia”, *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 2(3), 251-258.
- Walsh, M. 2010. “Why language revitalization sometimes works”. In Hobson, J. Lowe, K. Poetsch, S. and Walsh, M. *Re-awakening languages. Theory and practice in the revitalisation of Australia’s Indigenous languages*. Sydney: Sidney University Press, 22-36.
- Warner, S. N. 2001. “The movement to revitalize Hawaiian language and culture”. In Hinton, L. and Hale, A. (eds.) *The green book of language revitalization in practice*. San Diego: Academic Press, 133-144.
- Warschauer, M. 1998. “Technology and Indigenous language revitalization: Analyzing the experience of Hawai’i”, *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 55(1), 140-161.
- Warschauer, M. and Donaghy, K. 1997. “Leoki: A powerful voice of Hawaiian language revitalization”, *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 10(4), 349-362.
- Watson, A. and Huntington, O. H. 2008. “They’re here – I can feel them: the epistemic spaces of Indigenous and Western Knowledges”, *Social & Cultural Geography*, 9(3), 257-280.

- Wilson, W. and Kamana, K. 2006. "For the interest of Hawaiians themselves: Reclaiming the benefits of Hawaiian-medium education", *HULILI*, 3(1), 153-181.
- Wilson, W. H. and Kamanā, K. 2009. "Indigenous youth bilingualism from a Hawaiian activist perspective", *Journal of Language, Identity and Education*, 8, 369-375.
- Wilson, W. H. and Kawai'ae'a, K. 2007. "I kumu, i lala 'Let there be sources, let there be branches': teacher education in the College of Hawaiian Language", *Journal of American Indian Education*, 46, 39-53.
- Wilson, W.H. 2012. "Violations of NALA and the testing boycott at Nawahiokalani'opu'u School", *Journal of American Indian Education: The Native American Languages Act of 1990/1992 Retrospect and Prospects*, 51(3), 30-45.
- Xeni Gwet'in First Nation. *Nenduwih Jid Guzitin Declaration*. Nemiah Valley: Xenigwet'in First Nation.
- Yamamoto, A. 1998. "Linguists and endangered language communities: issues and approaches". In Matsumura, K. (ed.) *Studies in endangered languages. International Clearing House for Endangered Languages, Linguistic Studies Vol. 1*. Tokyo: Hituji Syobo, 231-52.
- Younging, G. 2018. *Elements of Indigenous style: A guide for writing by and about Indigenous people*. Edmonton: Brush Education.
- Yukon Languages Act* [2016 Chapter3]. Yukon. Available at: http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/languages_c.pdf
- Yunešit'in First Nation, Xenigwet'in First Nation and Dasiqox Tribal Park Planning Team. 2017 (updated on 2018). *Nexwagwežan: Community Vision and Management Goals for Dasiqox Tribal Park*. Hanceville/Nemiah Valley: Yunesit'in and Xenigwet'in First Nations.
- Yunešit'in First Nations Government. 2014. *Nenqayni Ch'ih yalhtig – We speak Nenqayni Ch'ih: a Yunešit'in Project* (unpublished).
- Zúñiga, F. 2019. "Polysynthesis: A review", *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 13(4), e12326.

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Linguistic diversity of Indigenous languages in B.C.	26
Figure 2.2 First Peoples' Language Map of B.C.	27
Figure 2.3 Number of speakers of Indigenous languages in B.C.	30
Figure 2.4 Number of speakers by group age in 2018 in B.C.	31
Figure 2.5 Systems of support for Indigenous language acquisition and maintenance..	49
Figure 3.1 T̓silhqot̓in <i>Nen</i> (land)	67
Figure 3.2 Declared T̓silhqot̓in Lands.....	71
Figure 3.3 Dasiqox Tribal Park Map	74
Figure 3.4 T̓silhqot̓in months of the year	79
Figure 3.5 Speakers of Tlingit and Na-Dené languages in Canada.....	83
Figure 3.6 T̓silhqot̓in consonants	88
Figure 3.7 T̓silhqot̓in vowels.....	88
Figure 3.8 Number of T̓silhqot̓in speakers and levels of fluency by community	110
Figure 3.9 2018 Yunešit̓in Language Needs Assessment	117
Figure 5.1 Classification of language materials by type	366
Figure 5.2 Classification of language materials by language	368
Figure 5.3 Classification of language materials by author's origin.....	369
Figure 5.4 Classification of language materials by target group.....	370

List of Tables

Table 4.1 Participating community members' groups and subgroups	156
Table 4.2 Participating community members' language fluency	157
Table 5.1 Classification of language materials by type.....	366
Table 5.2 Classification of language materials by language	367
Table 5.3 Classification of language materials by author's origin	369
Table 5.4 Classification of language materials by target	370

Appendices

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: 2018 Yunešit'in Language Needs Assessment.....	459
Appendix 2: Tšilhqot'in Language Revitalization Vision Statement.....	462
Appendix 3: 2016 Tšilhqot'in Language Revitalization Plan	463
Appendix 4: Community priorities on language revitalization strategies	467
Appendix 5: Research proposal	468
Appendix 6: Yunešit'in Government authorizations.....	472
Appendix 7: Research protocol	474
Appendix 8: Field notes template.....	477
Appendix 9: Research poster.....	478
Appendix 10: Participant's details form.....	479
Appendix 11: Informed consent form	480
Appendix 12: Conversation protocol.....	483
Appendix 13: Conversation guide	486
Appendix 14: Summary of conversations	489
Appendix 15: Sharing session proposal	491
Appendix 16: Sharing circle permission form.....	493
Appendix 17: Informed consent form for meeting minutes	494
Appendix 18: Template for the inventory of language resources	495
Appendix 19: Letter of intent for language materials.....	496
Appendix 20: Informed consent form for language materials.....	498
Appendix 21. Units of analysis	499
Appendix 22: List of topics, categories and codes	506
Appendix 23: Research outline	514
Appendix 24: Application of the research outcomes.....	515

APPENDIX 1: 2018 YUNESIT'IN LANGUAGE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Yunesit'in Language Needs Assessment (LNA)

<p>LNA Status</p> <p>LNA ID: 6367 Submitted: Submitted Status: Pending</p>	<p>Language and Dialect Information</p> <p>Language: Tsilhqot'in Community(-ies) this project will be serving: Yunesit'in Community NOT listed: *</p>
<p>Applicant Information</p> <p>Contact person for this LNA: Rosalie Montgomery Job Title: Education Coordinator Organization/First Nation/Government: Yunesit'in Gouvernement Phone: 250-394-4041 Fax: 250-394-4051 Email: rmontgomery@yunesitin.ca</p>	<p>Opportunities and Challenges</p> <p>Opportunities: Challenges:</p>
<p>Application Year & Type</p> <p>Assessment Year: 2018/2019 Funding Application Type: BC Language Initiative (BCLI)</p>	
<p>General Info</p> <p>Community: Yunesit'in Referring Language Needs Assessment: LNA6367 - Yunesit'in Gouvernement</p> <p>Community Population</p> <p>Population On Reserve: 274 Population Off-reserve: 195 Population Total: 469 Population source: Indian Registry System Population source date: 2016</p>	

Fluency

Combined Fluent Speakers: 96
 Combined Semi-Fluent Speakers: 147

Fluent and Semi Speakers											
Age range	0-4	5-14	15-19	20-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Total
Fluent on-reserve:	0	0	0	1	5	24	21	13	5	1	70
Semi on-reserve:	0	0	28	12	55	6	1	0	0	0	102
Total On-Reserve Speakers:											172
Fluent off-reserve:	0	0	0	0	2	15	7	0	2	0	26
Semi off-reserve:	0	0	3	3	30	9	0	0	0	0	45
Total Off-Reserve Speakers:											71
Combined Fluent Speakers:											96
Combined Semi-Fluent Speakers:											147

Language Learners											
Age range	0-4	5-14	15-19	20-24	25-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Total
Learning on-reserve:	21	42	49	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	134
Learning off-reserve:	23	24	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	49
Total Language Learners:											183

Non-Speakers	
Non-speakers On-Reserve	Non-speakers Off-Reserve
102	124

School-age Programs

Do you have a First Nations operated school?: Yes

Early Childhood Education Programs

Head Start

Do you have a Head Start program?: No

Other Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Do you have another ECE program?: No

Language Nest

Do you have a Language Nest Program?: No

Adult Classes

Do you have adult language classes in your community?: No

Curriculum and Resource Assessment

Resources

Language recordings/oral history archived (multi-media): ✓

Finalized writing system: ✓

Curriculum Materials developed: ✓

Multi-Media

Access to a cultural or language centre: ✗

Access to the Internet: ✗

Access to FirstVoices Archive: ✓

Do you have any Language Resources in this community? (Books, CDs, Videos etc.): ✓

Language Revitalization – 2016 Vision Statement

Our language – Nenqayni Ch'ih – is how we connect with each other and our special relationship to the land. It is the foundation of who we are, our identity, our ancestors, and our link to creation.

Every Tsilhqot'in – every generation from unborn child to Elder – is responsible for maintaining their connection to the people, earth and ancestors. It is the responsibility of the individual, family, community and nation to accept the responsibility of bringing the language to life.

The Tsilhqot'in are persistent in overcoming the challenges of cultural disruption caused by the past and ongoing process of colonization. The residential school experience and the after affects have altered the natural patterns of the family dynamic. Enlivening the culture is a process of healing the grief, resentment, loss and despair.

As Tsilhqot'in, nurturing the language back to collective fluency must be supported and reinforced. We therefore support safe spaces of learning, accepting any approach that suits the many different learning styles. Learning will take many forms, including the use of new technology.

Our collective approach to successfully revitalizing the language is multifaceted. Language is, as culture, in constant flux and we must be open to creating new words to express ourselves.

Collectively, we will connect the people to the land that nurtures us.

We will embrace every generation as responsible for transmitting the language to future generations.

We will delegate roles between the individual, family, community, administration and nation. We will embrace the culture as a means of healing and building strength.

We will create spaces of learning so that people are not afraid or intimidated to learn.

And, as strong willed and spiritual people, we will continue to support each other in cultural regeneration.

APPENDIX 3: 2016 T̄silhqot'IN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION PLAN

2016 T̄silhqot'In Language Revitalization Plan				
Big Picture Goal (Why)	Our Specific Outcome / Strategy (What)	Target group (To whom)	Participants / Stakeholders (Who)	Actions (Specific activities)
A. Increase the number of speakers	A1. Develop a Language Nest	Children	ECE Programs & Staff Fluent speakers School Health Department	Organize storytelling activities – engage Elders Organize Mini Culture camps – multiple activities (evenings, weekly) Develop intensive summer immersion programs – hands-on projects, learning history through acting, traditional games, songs, traditional medicines and food preparation. Themes: deer, moose, salmon... and related hands-on activities Organize fieldtrips to sacred sites Engage parents for volunteering Prepare activities for community gatherings –children can share their language skills (write invitations, songs, plays, traditional dances, language games) Modeling behavior and develop communication skills so children are mindful of body language - what are animals and other people telling us
	A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs		ECE Programs & Staff Fluent speakers School Health Department	
	A3. Develop a Head Start Program		ECE Programs & Staff Fluent speakers School Health Department	
	A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities		Elders Language Teachers Fluent Speakers Health Department	
	A5. Develop language immersion programs for youth and adults	Youth Adults	Elders Language Teachers Fluent Speakers Youth Health Department	
	A6. Develop language programs for pregnant women	Pregnant women	Elders Fluent Speakers Health Department	
B. Document the language and secure resources	B1. Establish an archival system to preserve language resources	Community	Language Committee	Create a physical place in the community to preserve language resources using existing places (library, school, youth centre, Elders centre)

	B2. Develop a public sharing system where all Tsilhqot'in feel comfortable to pick up resources	Community	Language Committee	Develop a system for public use of the resources Make multiple copies for the communities
	B2. Gather and examine existing language resources / inventory and evaluation	Community	Language Coordinator	Identify primary resources that all communities should have Support schools and teachers with resources –sharing between institutions and individuals Examine resources and identify materials that can be used or update Gather traditional knowledge –hunting rules for winter and summer Mapping of significant sites –be aware of sacred places exposure
	B3. Create new language resources	Community	Elders Language Teachers Fluent speakers	Recording and transcribing Elders and fluent speakers Create books, posters, flash cards, phrasebooks, visual dictionaries and How-to booklets for cultural activities Use technology –Audiobooks, Videos, Apps, DVDs, animation, cartoons Develop an inventory of traditional place names Record storytelling and songs Develop new vocabulary to fit modern communication needs Collecting stories of how we were raised Develop Traditional Law at Nation Level
	B4. Review language curriculum and language instruction and evaluation methods	Language Teachers	Elders Language Teachers	Review curriculum for sequence learning progression –critique change Develop multiple approaches and staged progression on levels of understanding and writing – high level-low level (age-appropriate and proficiency based language curriculum) Introduce new vocabulary– math, science Identify “survival words” – basic grammar structures and vocabulary Use songs/music for repetition Methods of teaching: classroom, different environments, cultural activities, engage Elders, TPR method, themes of seasons
C. Bridging the language gap between generations	C1. Organize cultural camps	Family	Elders Children Language Teachers Fluent Speakers Youth	Establish frequency –yearly, seasonally Secure funding Recruit volunteers – put up a list for people to sign up
	C2. Create immersion programs for families	Family	Elders Language Teachers Fluent Speakers Youth	Develop language programs in a home-like setting –everyday day language: greetings, instructions, descriptions, directions, buying, selling, eating, cooking , naming objects and places, shopping list Promote speaking the language at home –label names of objects and places at home

				Combine school curriculum with family activities Share resources and materials for families to use at home Develop hands-on activities so kids can learn from their grandparents (i.e. learn how to make their own tools)
	C3. Engage Elders in the language and culture programs	Youth	Elders Youth Language teachers	Recordings and transcribing conversations Storytelling and songs Invite Elders to school –traditional activities (cutting fish, meat, making tools), conversation between Elders and students can participate Visit Elders at home Learning the prayers
	C4. Master-Apprentice Program	Youth	Community	Encourage family members to participate in this program
D. Build language teaching capacity and teaching capacity in the language	D1. Develop language teaching programs	Community	Language Coordinator	Develop immersion language teaching programs for both language teachers and fluent speakers with no teaching degree Develop agreements with colleges and universities to develop language teaching certificate and language revitalization certificate programs
	D2. Language Teachers Development Programs	Teachers	Language Coordinator School	Organize meetings for language teachers to share experiences, teaching strategies, materials and resources Training for non-first nations teachers in cultural safety Deliver speech therapy courses for teachers –ensure the children’s speech development is adaptable to the Tsilhqot’in sounds Deliver cultural safety training for teachers
E. Develop Language Governance for sustainable language revitalization	E1. Create a language committee	Community	Elders Language Teachers Fluent Speakers Parents Youth	Define language competency skills and learner’s outcomes necessary for different levels Develop language planning and ongoing evaluation of language projects
	E2. Promote use of the language	Community	Language Committee Language Coordinator	Recruit volunteers – put up a list for people to sign up for volunteering In Admin Office, Health Centre, School –signage, basic conversation, computer fonts and keyboards Language events –language week, monthly language day Raise awareness on language revitalization –Newsletters, social media Games –language scavenger hunts Community “Language Awards” –acknowledge language advocates Promote the use of the language in the work environment (School, Admin Office, Health Centre)–offer incentives by reward system to employees who progressively increase language fluency and use the language at work

				Yearly T̓silhqot̓'in Language and Culture Symposium Encourage youth to speak in public settings Identify place names and sacred sites and encourage fieldtrips
E3. Secure funding	Community	Language Coordinator		FPCC NIB Trust Fund Fundraising events for language projects
E4. Language planning and ongoing evaluation of the language projects	Community	Language Committee		Implement plan and evaluate regularly Asses regularly status of the language Ongoing research on language revitalization strategies Develop a monitoring and evaluation protocol of the language programs and projects Conduct surveys, questionnaires or community assessments, and preparing short- or long-term plans or strategies
E5. Develop a Language Coordinator position	Community	Government		Implement language plan Apply for funding Coordinate and monitor language projects
E6. Create a cultural centre or place of knowledge as a safe place to speak the language	Community	Government		Create a Youth Centre Share knowledge and resources
E7. Develop Language policies	Community	Government		Develop best practices and policies for use of the language in the community Develop research protocol and copyright policy

APPENDIX 4: COMMUNITY PRIORITIES ON LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION STRATEGIES

Big Picture Goal (Why)	Our Specific Outcome / Strategy (What)	Priority			TOTAL
		Yunešit'in	Tl'esqox	Xeni Gwet'in	
A. Increase the number of speakers	A1. Create a language nest	3	1	7	11
	A2. Early Childhood Education				
	A3. Head Start Program				
	A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities	4	1	1	6
	A5. Language immersion programs for youth and adults	6	2	6	14
B. Document the language and secure language resources	B1. Establish an archival system to preserve language resources	1	0	1	2
	B2. Gather and examine existing language resources / inventory and evaluation	1	0	0	1
	B3. Create new language resources	3	2	4	9
	B4. Review language curriculum and language instruction and evaluation methods				
C. Bridging the language gap between generations	C1. Organize cultural camps	6	1	6	13
	C2. Create immersion programs for families	0	0	4	4
	C3. Engage elders in the language programs	3	3	6	12
	C5. Master-Apprentice Program	0	0	0	0
D. Build language teaching capacity	D1. Develop language teaching training programs	2	1	3	6
	D2. Develop Language Teachers Development Programs	1	2	2	5
E. Develop Language Governance for sustainable language revitalization	E1. Create a language committee	1	0	0	1
	E2. Promote use of the language	4	2	3	9
	E3. Secure funding	0	0	0	0
	E4. Research and language planning	0	0	0	0
	E5. Create a Language Coordinator position	0	0	2	2
	E6. Create a cultural centre / place of knowledge / safe place to speak the language	3	0	6	9
	E7. Ongoing evaluation of the language projects	1	0	0	1

APPENDIX 5: RESEARCH PROPOSAL

April 19, 2016

Yunesit'in Chief & Council
[address]

Re: Statement of interest in a collaborative research project on T̓silhqot'in Language Revitalization in Yunešit'in

Dear Yunesit'in Chief and Council,

I am writing to you to state my interest in conducting a collaborative research project on T̓silhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in in coordination with the language projects that are currently being carried out in the community. The project would study previous T̓silhqot'in language revitalization efforts and results and identify the current community needs and priorities on language teaching strategies and language resources towards language revitalization in the community. The results would become part of the PhD dissertation titled *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunešit'in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the T̓silhqot'in language* run by PhD Candidate Paula Laita from the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU as part of the requirements to obtain the PhD in Basque Studies and Linguistics.

In addition to my academic interest to this proposal, I also have a strong emotional attachment to it. I see parallels between my own people, Basque, and the struggle to promote and protect indigenous peoples' language and culture here in Canada, which makes me feel culturally sensitive and highly interested in them. That is the reason why I would be delighted to have the opportunity to contribute beneficial research to support T̓silhqot'in language revitalization. I strongly believe that the language comprises the spirit of a people and expresses its particular way of seeing the world. Language is therefore the key to cultural identity and transmission and that is why it has to be preserved.

Attached is a project proposal for your review. Please note that this is just a draft and that, if your community is interested, we can continue refining the research project more clearly as we work together over the upcoming months. I would like to emphasize my commitment to listen to the community in designing the project, identifying what deliverables your community want from the project and from me, and how best this project can support your priorities while still completing my research. I also have the intention of developing a formal research protocol or memorandum of understanding to establish a basic research framework and clarify expectations between Yunešit'in Government and myself, in order to minimize the risks to the community.

I would really appreciate if I could get an initial confirmation of community interest in the project. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. If it is convenient, we could make an appointment for a meeting to discuss any other details you wish. I can be contacted at [personal contact information].

Sechanalhyagh,

Paula Laita

**TŚILHQOT'IN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION
RESEARCH PROJECT 2016-2017
YUNEŚIT'IN**

1. Research Project Synopsis

In coordination with the language projects that are currently being carried out in Yuneśit'in, this research project will study previous Tśilhqot'in language revitalization efforts carried out in the community and identify current community needs and priorities on language teaching strategies and language resources towards language revitalization in the community. The results will be part of the PhD dissertation *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yuneśit'in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the Tśilhqot'in language* run by PhD Candidate Paula Laita from the University of Basque Country UPV/EHU as part of the requirements to obtain the PhD Degree in Basque Studies and Linguistics.

2. Objectives

The main objectives of the research project will be the following:

- Review previous Tśilhqot'in language revitalization efforts already made in the community and analyse results
- Review Tśilhqot'in language teaching strategies and identify needs and priorities towards language revitalization
- Locate and review available Tśilhqot'in language resources and identify needs and priorities

3. Methodology

The project will follow a qualitative research approach by collecting perspectives from community members based on their personal experiences, feelings, perceptions and interpretations regarding the needs and priorities on language teaching strategies and language resources. For that purpose, the following methods may be used:

- Personal interviews
- Group interviews / focus groups
- Review of documentation (language materials, curriculum, meeting minutes...)

These activities may be held at a time and place of the participants' convenience and personal consent forms stating procedures, risks, benefits and participation requirements must be signed prior participation to provide full understanding of the project requirements and expectations to participants. Collected data will be audio recorded and stored for further interpretation.

4. Participants

It will be a participatory community-based research where all groups, institutions and members of the community may contribute with their valuable knowledge and perspectives to maximize results. Following community criteria, all families and generations (Elders, parents, youth and children) must be represented. Also, Language Committee members and

Language Teachers and Educators who are currently working or have done language work in the past may be involved. Direction will be sought from Chief and Council for identifying participants.

5. Ethics

The research ethic framework that will be applied in this project will be the following: Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*, December 2010, available at: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf. As it can be read in Chapter 9 *Research involving the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Peoples of Canada*, page 106, this work “accords respect to Aboriginal peoples’ knowledge systems by ensuring that the various and distinct worlds views [...] are represented in planning and decision making, from the earliest stages of conception and design of projects through to the analysis and dissemination of results. It affirms respect for community customs and codes of research practice to better ensure balance in the relationship between researchers and participants, and a mutual benefit in researcher-community relations”. As it states in the same chapter (p. 109), three main principles that express the core of ethical value of respect for human dignity will be applied: Respect for Persons, Concern for Welfare and Justice.

Some other provisions specific to Aboriginal research contexts will be also applied. They are also described in Chapter 9 (p. 110-132) of the same document. Some of the topics covered are the following:

- nature and extent of community engagement
- engagement with community authorities and leaders, organizations and other groups
- respect for community customs and codes of practice
- previous research ethics review
- research agreements designed jointly by the researcher and the community
- collaborative research
- mutual benefits in research
- building research capacity in the community
- recognition of the role of Elders and other knowledge holders
- privacy and confidentiality
- interpretation and dissemination of the results
- intellectual property related to research and use of information

Please refer to the document for more information.

The research project will also have to pass an ethics review conducted by the Ethics Committee of the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU. The Final Report will be provided to Chief and Council.

6. Expected timeline

The expected time for the project will be up to 1 year (or until results are satisfactory) starting in May 2016 or as soon the community states their interest in conducting the project and a research agreement is designed and signed by both parts.

The main steps to carry out the research project will be the following:

1. Provide Authorization Letter from Chief and Council and other institutions (i.e. Yunesit'in ?Esgul) that might be involved in the project (sample document will be provided)
2. Design and sign the research agreement by both parts
3. Collect data (personal interviews, group interviews/focus groups, review of documentation)
5. Process data
6. Share results

7. Benefits to the community

By conducting the research project, the community will get the following benefits:

- Building research expertise
- An inventory and review of existing language resources and materials
- A review on previous language revitalization efforts in the community and a compilation of community members' perspectives on current needs on language teaching strategies and language resources.
- A proposal of alternative strategies based on the community perspectives and the study of other language revitalization experiences, Basque people's experience among others, that might be used in the future for designing and implementing strategies of the strategic language plan.
- All the data and materials obtained (recordings, videos, pictures, data, documents) will remain and become property of the community. The project will meet legal standards and the community will be able to use the data obtained for future funding opportunities, publications or related language projects.

8. Requirements from the community

- Provide Authorization Letter from Chief and Council and other institutions (i.e. Yunesit'in ?Esgul) that might be involved in the project (sample document will be provided)
- Name a contact person for the research project
- Access and introduction to the community groups and institutions
- Commitment to the project respecting timelines and providing feedback

APPENDIX 6: YUNEŠIT'IN GOVERNMENT AUTHORIZATIONS

Yunešit'in Government

[address]

[contact details]

AUTHORIZATION

We, the members of the Council of the Yunešit'in Government, authorize Researcher, Paula Laita, from the Department of Basque Studies and Linguistics at the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, to conduct the collaborative research entitled *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunešit'in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the Tšilhqot'in Language* at Yunešit'in.

The Council of Yunešit'in acknowledges that it has reviewed the research protocol presented by the Researcher, as well as the associated risks to the community, and understands that community members' perspectives regarding the needs on language teaching strategies and language resources towards language revitalization in the community will be collected by conducting personal interviews/group interviews, focus groups and/or documentation review. These activities may be held at a time and place of the participants and Researcher's convenience and informed consent forms stating procedures, risks, benefits and conditions of participation will be signed prior participation to provide full understanding of the project requirements to participants.

We, the undersigned members of the Council of the Yunešit'in Government, hereby authorize the research project to proceed and approves that the research project may be implemented at Yunešit'in upon approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Yunešit'in Government and Paula Laita, Researcher of University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU will also be sign in order to state the relationship between the parts and expectations of this research.

Williams Lake, July 14, 2016

Yunešit'in Government

Date/Place

Chief Russell Myers Ross

Printed name

Signature

Councillor Gabe Pukacz

Printed name

Signature

Councillor Jessica Setah

Printed name

Signature

Yunešit'in Government

[address]

[contact details]

AUTHORIZATION

I, Rosalie Montgomery, the Education Coordinator of Yunešit'in Community, authorize Researcher, Paula Laita, from the Linguistics and Basque Studies Department at the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, to conduct the collaborative research entitled *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunešit'in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the Tšilhqot'in Language* at Yunešit'in ?Esgul.

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the protocol presented by the researcher, as well as the associated risks to the school staff, teachers and students, and understands that participants' perspectives regarding the needs on language teaching strategies and language resources towards language revitalization in the community will be collected by conducting personal or group interviews, focus groups and/or documentation review. These activities may be held at the school at a time and place of the participants and researcher's convenience and informed consent forms stating procedures, risks, benefits and conditions of participation will be signed prior participation to provide full understanding of the project to participants. If participants are under 18, informed consent will be signed by their parents/guardians.

I hereby authorize the research to proceed and approve that it may be implemented at Yunesit'in ?Esgul upon prior approval by Yunešit'in Government.

Yunešit'in, July 13, 2016

Date/Place

Printed name

Signature

Rosalie Montgomery, Yunešit'in Education Coordinator

Memorandum of Understanding

between

Yunešit'in Government

and

Paula Laita, University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is established to outline the relationship between Yunešit'in Government (YG) and Paula Laita, PhD Student at the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU (hereinafter “the Researcher”).

1. Background

The YG, a community of the Tšilhqot'in Nation, have worked, past and present, to preserve and live the language – Nenqayni Chi. The latest initiative, 2015/2016, includes the development of a Language Plan for three Tšilhqot'in communities. Paula Laita has worked directly with YG in building the Language Plan and intends on continuing her work with YG in developing a Research Project for her dissertation, with the intent of completing her PhD in Basque Studies and Linguistics. Both parties recognize the benefit of continuing this effort of Language Revitalization and the benefit of research in linguistics and sociolinguistics.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this MOU is to outline the relationship and intention of collaborative work in Language Revitalization. The parties acknowledge that the specific goals, objectives and deliverables or final product will be developed jointly.

3. Duration

The MOU, and subsequent research project, will last from June 1, 2016, to September 31, 2017.

4. General Intentions and Area of Focus

YG and Paula Laita will work together to advance the objectives of the Yunešit'in community: a. Review previous Tšilhqot'in language revitalization efforts made in the community and analyze the results. b. Review Tšilhqot'in language teaching strategies and identify needs and priorities towards language revitalization. c. Locate and review available Tšilhqot'in language resources and identify needs and priorities. d. Work with YG leadership and staff to clearly define the methodology.

5. Benefits to the Yunešit'in Community

Yunešit'in Community will get the following benefits:

1. Building research expertise
2. An inventory and review of existing language resources and materials
3. A review on previous language revitalization efforts in the community and a compilation of community members' perspectives on current needs on language teaching strategies and language resources.

4. A proposal of alternative strategies based on the community perspectives and the study of other language revitalization experiences, Basque people's experience among others, which might be used in the future for designing and implementing strategies of the strategic language plan.

5. All the data and materials obtained during the project (recordings, videos, pictures, data, documents) will remain and become property of the community. The project will meet legal standards and the community will be able to use the data obtained for future funding opportunities, publications or related language projects.

6. General Organization and Schedule

There will be an official contact person to oversee the research from the Yunešit'in Government governing body. Chief Russell Myers Ross will be the contact unless specified alternatively at a regular monthly Council meeting. There will also be an Elder contact person to provide advice as the research commences. The main contact will be Selina Myers, and be aided by the communities' Language Committee or specific focus group. The MOU is intended to begin the work, organize, arrange timelines, grants and access to resources and people. It is expected that a formal research design, once complete, will be endorsed by a quorum of Council so that both parties understand and commit to the expectations and timelines.

7. Funding

This MOU does not commit funds. Where appropriate, YG and Paula Laita will jointly write proposals or seek financial support.

8. Research Expectations

Ethics

The research ethic framework applied in this project will be the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (December 2010) developed by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

As it can be read in Chapter 9, titled "Research involving the First Nation, Métis and Inuit Peoples of Canada", this research project accords "respect to Aboriginal peoples' knowledge systems by ensuring that the various and distinct worlds views [...] are represented in planning and decision making, from the earliest stages of conception and design of projects through to the analysis and dissemination of results. It affirms respect for community customs and codes of research practice to better ensure balance in the relationship between researchers and participants, and a mutual benefit in researcher-community relations" (p. 106).

An ethics review will be conducted by the Ethics Committee of the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU and the Final Report will be provided to YG Chief and Council.

Methods

Community members' perspectives regarding needs and priorities on language teaching strategies and language resources towards language revitalization in the community will be collected by conducting individual/group interviews and/or focus groups and documentation review. These activities may preferably be conducted at the Yunešit'in Administration Office or Yunešit'in ?Esgul, or at other location chosen by the participants, that is considered appropriate for the purpose of the activity.

Informed consent forms stating procedures, risks, benefits and conditions of participation must be signed prior participation to provide full understanding of the project requirements to participants. Participants may be able to consult, modify, delete or withdraw their consent to use their information for the research at any time.

Confidentiality

Personal data provided for this research project will be confidential and it will be protected under the law and only be accessed by YG and the research team. Personal data will be stored both at YG for long-term preservation and the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU for five years only for the purpose of the study of the T̄silhqot'in language revitalization experience as part of the PhD dissertation "First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunēsit'in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the T̄silhqot'in language". After that period of time, collected personal data will be destroyed.

Intellectual Property

Data obtained from the project (recordings, videos, pictures, deliverables) will remain and become intellectual property of the Yunēsit'in community. Participants may receive individual copies of the results from their participation (i.e. transcriptions, audio recordings) and may contact the Researcher to obtain the general results, respecting participants' confidentiality and right to privacy.

9. Conflict Resolution

In the event that any dispute relating to this MOU cannot be resolved by settlement between the parties, the parties shall attempt to resolve all disputes through informal means. This may include mediation, arbitration, or any other procedures upon which the parties agree.

10. Modification

This MOU may be amended in a writing signed by a duly representative of each of the parties hereto.

11. Termination

Either party may terminate this MOU for convenience, at any time, upon 60 days advance written notice of termination to the other party. The parties agree that, in the event of termination, the parties may discuss the necessity to comply with its responsibilities in effect at the time of termination and if possible, make efforts to complete such activities or projects.

Russell Myers Ross – Yunēsit'in Chief

Jessica Setah-Alphonse – Yunēsit'in Councillor

Gabe Pukacz – Yunēsit'in Councillor

Selina Myers – T̄silhqot'in Language Teacher

Paula Laita – PhD Candidate, the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU

APPENDIX 8: FIELD NOTES TEMPLATE

FIELD NOTES	
Field note #	
Date and time <i>(when)</i>	
Place <i>(where)</i>	
Participants <i>(who)</i>	
What is happening and how participants interact <i>(what and how)</i>	

LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION PROJECT

**Gathering and sharing community perspectives
on Nenqayni Ch'ih revitalization in Yunešit'in**

October – December 2016

A collaborative research project by Yunešit'in Government

and

Paula Laita, PhD Student of the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU

Please contact Paula Laita for more information [*personal contact information*]

APPENDIX 10: PARTICIPANT'S DETAILS FORM

Participant's Details				
Full Name				
Nick Name				
Phone		E-mail		
Education				
Employment				
Date of Birth		Place of Birth		Gender
Spouse		Children		
Father			Mother	
Tsilhqot'in Language				
Other Languages				
ADDITIONAL NOTES:				

APPENDIX 11: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent

Please read this document carefully and thoroughly and ask any questions you may have before signing.

Consent to participate in the collaborative research project on T̄silhqot̄in Language Revitalization run by Yunēsit̄in Government and PhD Student Paula Laita, University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU. The results will be part of the dissertation titled *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunēsit̄in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the T̄silhqot̄in language* submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements to obtain a PhD Degree in Basque Studies and Linguistics.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this research project is to explore community needs on T̄silhqot̄in language revitalization in Yunēsit̄in by gathering and sharing community perspectives on language revitalization and language education strategies and resources.

TERM: June 1st, 2016 - September 31st, 2017

PROCEDURE: You will be asked to participate in a conversation and/or a sharing circle. These activities will be conducted at an appropriate time and place, preferably at the Community Library or Yunēsit̄in ʔEsgul, or at another location chosen by you, that is considered appropriate for the purpose of the activities. The conversations can normally take between 30 min and 1 hour, but you may extend it as long as you want and you are free to stop at any time. You can choose to discuss any aspect of your interest and you may refuse to answer any questions. Your insights and perceptions will be recorded by using an audio recorder. You may participate in one conversation and be contacted again for further inquiries.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: If you become uncomfortable during the activity, you are free to stop or take a break and discontinue at any time without any penalty. With your permission, your insights and perceptions may be used by Yunēsit̄in Government for future language projects and will be part of the PhD dissertation *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunēsit̄in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the T̄silhqot̄in language*. Photos/videos may be used only by Yunēsit̄in Government for creating a video/booklet as a result of this collaborative project (all participants may receive a copy). If you need more information, please do not hesitate to contact Paula Laita (see contact information below).

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION: *Please read and check off the following boxes:*

- I understand that I will volunteer in this project and will not obtain any honorarium/reward for my participation provided by the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU. Yunēsit̄in Government may provide honorarium for participation.
- I understand that I am voluntarily participating in this project and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time without any penalty by contacting Paula Laita. If this is the case, I will have the right to choose if my information obtained to that moment is either preserved or destroyed.
- I understand that once this project is finished, I can contact Paula Laita to obtain the results, respecting participants' confidentiality and right to privacy.
- I understand that once the recording of the conversation has been approved by me, a copy will be given to me and I agree that the chosen archives will retain my original interview for the next 5 years and will not be opened to the public under any circumstances. After this period of time, my personal data will be destroyed.
- I understand that the information provided by me will be coded for this project and will remain confidential and protected under the law and only accessed by Yunēsit̄in Government and the project team. I agree that my personal data will be stored both at Yunēsit̄in Government for long-term preservation and the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, for five years only for the purposes of the study on the T̄silhqot̄in language revitalization experience as part of the above-mentioned PhD dissertation. After this period of time, it will be destroyed.

- I understand I have the right to consult, modify, delete or withdraw my consent to use my information for this research by contacting the LOPD Security Manager at the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, Rector's Office, Barrio Sarriena s/n E- 48940 Leioa – Bizkaia, Spain. REF: "INB-REVITALIZACIÓN LINGÜÍSTICA - TSIHLQOT'IN. No. 2080310018-INB0072"
- I give my permission to Yunešit'in Government to use my photos/videos taken during this project for future language projects and for creating a video clip/booklet on Community Perspectives on Tšilhqot'in Language Revitalization in Yunešit'in as a result of this project. I understand I will receive a copy of the material.

The procedure has been explained to me and I freely and voluntarily agree to participate in this collaborative research project. I have carefully read the above and understand this agreement. I will receive a copy of this Informed Consent form for my records.

PARTICIPANT:

NAME (please print)	
DATE AND BIRTHPLACE	
PARENT/GUARDIAN'S NAME (If participant is under 18)	
PARENT/GUARDIAN'S DATE AND BIRTHPLACE (If participant is under 18)	
POSTAL ADDRESS	
PHONE NUMBER	
EMAIL ADDRESS	
SIGNATURE PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE (If participant is under 18)	
DATE	

CONSENT OBTAINED BY:

NAME (please print)	
SIGNATURE	
DATE	

CONTACT INFORMATION:
Paula Laita, PhD Student
[personal contact information]

University of the Basque Country,
 UPV/EHU
 Barrio Sarriena, s/n E-48940 Leioa,
 Bizkaia, Basque Country



T̄SILHQOT'IN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT 2016-2017

1. Project Synopsis: This is a collaborative research project run by Yunešit'in Government and PhD Student Paula Laita, University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU. In coordination with the language projects that are currently being carried out in Yunešit'in, this research project will explore previous T̄silhqot'in language revitalization efforts developed in the community and identify current community needs on language teaching strategies and language resources towards the language revitalization. The results will be part of the PhD dissertation *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunešit'in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the T̄silhqot'in language* submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements to obtain a PhD Degree in Basque Studies and Linguistics.

2. Objectives:

- Review previous T̄silhqot'in language revitalization efforts made in the community and analyze results.
- Locate and review available T̄silhqot'in language resources and identify needs and priorities
- Review T̄silhqot'in language teaching strategies and identify needs and priorities towards language revitalization

3. Term: June 1st, 2016 - September 31st, 2017

4. Methodology: The project will follow a qualitative research approach by gathering and sharing perspectives from community members based on their personal experiences, feelings, perceptions and interpretations regarding the needs and priorities on language teaching strategies and language resources. For that purpose, the following methods may be used:

- Conversations (individual/group interviews)
- Sharing Circles (focus groups)
- Review of documentation (language materials, curriculum, meeting minutes...)

Informed consent forms stating procedures, risks, benefits and participation requirements must be filled and signed prior participation to provide full understanding of the project requirements and expectations to participants. If participants are under 18, the informed consent form must be filled and signed by their parents/guardians.

5. Location: These activities will be conducted at an appropriate time and place, preferably at the Community Library or Yunešit'in ?Esgul, or at another location chosen by the participant, that is considered appropriate for the purpose of the activity.

6. Participants: It is a participatory community-based research and all groups, institutions and members of the community may voluntarily contribute with their valuable knowledge and perspectives to maximize results. Following community criteria, all families and generations (Elders, parents, youth and children) are to be represented. Language Committee members, linguists, language teachers and educators and other language experts may be involved.

7. Ethics: The research project has passed an ethics review conducted by the Ethics Committee of the University of the Basque Country UV/EHU and the final report has been reviewed and approved by Yunešit'in Chief and Council.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Paula Laita, PhD Student
[personal contact information]

University of the Basque Country
UPV/EHU
Barrio Sarriena, s/n E-48940 Leioa,
Bizkaia, Basque Country



CONVERSATION PROTOCOL

1. Introduction

Participants will introduce themselves and a description of the project will be provided.

2. Informed Consent and personal data

Participants will review and sign the Informed Consent and personal data documents.

3. Conversation:

Before starting, the audio recorder will be turned on and the following will be stated:

- Full name of participants
- Date
- Location
- Verbal consent to participate in the project and permission to record the conversation and use the recording for the purposes stated in the signed consent form

Introduction blurb:

Participant A: This is _____ (full name) and _____ (full name). Today is _____ (date), and we are at _____ (location). We are gathering community perspectives on T̄silhqot'in language revitalization strategies regarding teaching and learning/acquiring the language and language resources as part of the T̄silhqot'in language revitalization efforts in Yunešit'in. As discussed earlier, before starting the conversation participants need to state their verbal consent regarding their voluntary participation in this project and in the conversation that we are having today. Do you give your consent?

Participant B: Yes.

Participant A: As stated in the consent form, participants need to give their verbal consent to record the interview and use the recording for the purposes stated in the signed consent form. Do you give your consent?

Participant B: Yes.

Participant A: Sechanalyagh (thank you).

2. Conversation guide

The participants will proceed with the conversation using the following guide. It will be a semi-structured conversation and the following open questions may be used only for the purpose of guiding the conversation.

INTERVIEW GUIDE	
Topic	Possible Questions
Language attitudes	<p>Can you speak T̂silhqot'in?</p> <p>Do you understand the language?</p> <p>How did you learn your language?</p> <p>Do you speak it regularly? When and with whom?</p> <p>Is it important for you to know your language? Why?</p> <p>How do you feel when speaking in T̂silhqot'in?</p> <p>How are language and culture related?</p> <p>When and where should it be spoken?</p> <p>How would you like to see your language in the next ten years?</p>
Use of the language in the community	<p>Who speaks the language in the community?</p> <p>Where and when do you hear it?</p> <p>Where and where do you speak it?</p> <p>What are the reasons of the current language situation?</p>
Revitalizing the language	<p>Should we keep working on keeping the language alive? Why?</p> <p>Is it possible to bring it back to full use in the community?</p> <p>What are the consequences of losing our language?</p> <p>What are the priorities in the community regarding the language?</p> <p>What challenges might we find? And what solutions?</p> <p>If you had unlimited funding and resources, what would you do to bring the language back to the community?</p>
Learning/acquiring and teaching the language	<p>Would you like to speak/learn/practice your language? How and where would be the best option for you?</p> <p>Is T̂silhqot'in easy or difficult to learn? Why?</p> <p>What methods can be used for learning/acquiring and teaching the language? What would work best for you? And for other community groups (children, youth, parents, families...)?</p> <p>Where should the language be learned (home, school, outside the school...)?</p> <p>What community group should have priority for providing language learning opportunities (children, youth, parents, families...)?</p> <p>Would you participate (as a student/teacher) in language programs organized in the community?</p> <p>What type of materials could be useful for language teaching (books, flashcards, multimedia...)?</p>

Promoting the use of the language	<p>Where should the language be promoted (home, workplace, band office, school, community events, traditional ceremonies and gatherings)?</p> <p>How can the language be promoted? What strategies would be more effective?</p>
Language resources	<p>What language materials exist in the community?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General language resources (books, dictionaries, grammars, wordlists) - Linguistic or anthropological resources (documents created by researchers) - Cultural resources (for example, songs, artwork, cultural artifacts) <p>What other language materials should be developed?</p> <p>Do you have any language materials that you would like to share?</p> <p>If there were a repository of language resources (i.e. library, archive), would you borrow language materials?</p> <p>Where would be a good place to store T̂silhqot̂in language materials for public use (each T̂silhqot̂in community, a centralized place for all T̂silhqot̂in communities...)?</p>

APPENDIX 13: CONVERSATION GUIDE

CONVERSATION GUIDE (Tsilhqot'in translation by Maria Myers)	
Tsilhqot'in	English
Language attitudes	
Hunlht'i jid nenqayni ch'ih yanlhtig jigwedaghinl'in?	How did you learn your language?
Nendin nenqayni ch'ih yanlhtish? Nendan belh yanlhtish?	Do you speak it regularly? When and with whom?
Nenqayni ch'ih yanlhtig ?iyed gwedežinlhti an? Hunlht'aqa?	Is it important for you to speak your language? Why?
Hunlht'i jid xedidindh hanent'insh nenqayni ch'ih yanlhtig?	How do you feel when speaking in Tsilhqot'in?
Nenqayni ch'ih deni ninlin belh nenqayni ch'ih yanlhtig hunlht'i jid ?elhigult'ih?	How are language and culture related?
Nents'in belh nendin nenqayni ch'ih yats'etalhtig?	When and where should it be spoken?
Hunlht'I jid gwadanižed, nenqayni ch'ih yats'elhtig ?elhch'ažnan xi gwenižed gu?en?	How would you like to see your language in the next ten years?
Use of the language in the community	
Nenjan qwentowh, nendan nenqayni ch'ih yalhtig ungh?	Who speaks the language in the community?
Nents'in belh nedin nenqayni ch'ih yats'elhtig gužilhts'insh?	Where and when can you hear it?
Nents'in belh nendin nenqayni ch'ih yanlhtish?	Where and where can you speak it?
Nenqayni ch'ih yats'elhtig ?igwedetišdiny. Hunlht'aqa gagujagh ungh?	What are the reasons of the current language situation?

Revitalizing the language	
Shunk'ah gwechugh sinsh nenqayni ch'ih yats'elhtig xanagughet'alh qa?ataghet'inlh an? Hunlht'aqa?	Should we keep working on keeping the language alive? Why?
Nenjan qwentowh deni gatš'in yajelhtig nataclax yenižen?	Is it possible to bring it back to full use in the community?
Nenqayni ch'ih yaltig jidaghidiny hink'ed hugwetalht'ilh?	What are the consequences of losing our language?
Nendid tšid ch'ed ?anataghet'in nenqayni ch'ih yaltig jiidetežidiny hink'ed?	What are the priorities in the community regarding the language?
Nendid gwagwetalnalh hink'an hunlt'i jid se?anataghelyilh?	What challenges might we find? And what solutions?
Seniya hilyuž belh nendidah gatš'i ?agwel?iny xwela hetl'id hink'ed hunlht'i jid ch'ih yaltig ninagwetaghet'alh?	If you had unlimited funding and resources, what would you do to bring the language back to the community?
Learning/acquiring and teaching the language	
Gagunlhnaž ?inlin nenqayni ch'ih yaghunlhtig gužint'in? Hunlht'i jid hinkan nents'in gagunt'ih nigwetaghet'alh?	Would you like to speak your language more? How and where can we make this happen?
Nenqayni ch'ih yats'elhtig gwagwelnah jid k'es gwagwel?iny jid jits'egwel?insh an? Hunlht'aqa?	Is Tšilhqot'in easy or difficult to learn? Why?
Huts'elt'in jid nenqayni ch'ih nints'egwedetalh?anx k'es hunlht'i jid nenqayni ch'ih yanlhtig nataghendlax yenižen? Nin nendowh nase?agunt'in? Gwets'en ?eguh: ?esqax, tidiqi jinlin hink'an diyenžqi ch'idajenayinlh, deni-ban hink'an deni-ta jinlin	What methods can be used for learning/acquiring and teaching the language? What would work best for you? And for other community groups (children, youth, parents, families...)?
Nents'in nenqayni ch'ih jits'egwedetal?anx (deni-qungh, ?esgul, ya?anxw)?	Where should the language be learned (home, school, outside the school...)?

Nendan deni nenqayni ch'ih ?igwedetalh?anx? (deni-t'agultin, ?esqax, ?esqax ch'idajenayinlh, deni-dešniqi, deni-deniqi)?	What community group should have priority for providing language learning/speaking opportunities (Elders, children, youth, parents, families...)?
Denilh ?ataghent'inlh yenižen a, (deni-?igwedelh?anx taghenlilh)?	Would you participate as a “teacher” in language and culture programs organized in the community?
Nendid ts'enz ?its'egwedetal?anx? (Destl'es, tetšig henlin bech'ed ?inlhithah ch'idadisjez, ya?anxw nadeni ts'eli, computer	What type of materials could be useful for language learning (books, flashcards, outside the classroom, multimedia...)?
Promoting the use of the language	
Nents'in su nenqayni ch'ih ?its'egwedetal?anx? Deni qungh, ?anats'et'in gweghex, Band Office, ?esgul, ?elhtex ts'edilh, deni-nench'ed, qiyex, ?eqa?ats'et'in gweghex	Where should the use of the language be promoted (home, workplace, band office, school, community events, traditional gatherings, ceremonies...)?
Hunlht'i jid nenqayni ch'ih yats'elhtig gwets'en nentaghelt'i? Hunlht'i jid ch'ih yaltig lha jid ?idetežaghedinh?	How can the language be promoted? What strategies would be better?
Language resources	
Destl'es bech'ed jits'egwedel?anx nendid ?ataghedlilh?	What other language materials should be developed?
Destl'es ch'ed yanlhtig hent'in ?elhtex xats'edinh ?eguh? Destl'es lhan gunlin hink'ed gant'i qungh nanilah bech'eyataghelhtig?	Do you have any language materials that you would like to share? If there were a repository of language resources (i.e. library, archive), would you borrow language materials?
Nents'in destl'es hutagheten? Qwentowh, nenqayni gha ?agunt'ih qungh	Where would be a good place to store Tšilhqot'in language materials for public use (each Tšilhqot'in community, a centralized place for all Tšilhqot'in communities...)?

APPENDIX 14: SUMMARY OF CONVERSATIONS

CONVERSATIONS					
P#	NAME	GROUP	CO#	DATE/PLACE	LANGUAGE
1	Saina	Language expert	1	Nov 7, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	Tšilhqot'in
2	Filly	Language expert			
3	LM	Elder			
4	Braids	Elder	2	Nov 7, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	Tšilhqot'in
5	Dothy	Elder			
6	Juna	Elder			
7	Rissa	Youth	3	Nov 7, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	English
8	Tay (Paula)	Youth			
9	Maggie	Elder	4	Nov 7, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	English
10	Nun	Elder			
11	MQ (Paula)	Elder			
12	Roper	Admin Staff	5	Nov 9, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	English
13	Matilda (Paula)	Admin Staff			
14	BW	Elder	6	Nov 9, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	English
15	Lily the Pink (Paula)	Elder			
16	Dani	Parent	7	Nov 10, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	English
17	Britt	Parent			
18	Datsan (Paula)	Parent			
19	Charlie Brown	Parent	8	Nov 10, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	English
20	MJB (Paula)	Elder			
21	Kalikala (Paula)	Parent	9	Nov 10, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	English
22	Nundi (Paula)	Language expert	10	Nov 14, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	Tšilhqot'in English
23	Blondie	Elder	11 12	Nov 16, 2016 Yunešit'in (library)	Tšilhqot'in
24	Maureen	Elder			
25	Peter (Paula)	Elder +			
26	Etsu	Elder +	13	Nov 16, 2016 Yunešit'in (home)	Tšilhqot'in
	MJB (Paula)	Elder			
27	Omi (Paula)	Youth	14	Nov 16, 2016 Yunešit'in (Band Office)	English
28	Theresa	Elder	15	Nov 30, 2016 Williams Lake (Home)	English Tšilhqot'in
29	Gex	Parent			
30	?Elagi (Paula)	Parent			

31	Jo (Paula)	Youth	16	Dec 5, 2016 Williams Lake (SINC)	English
32	Chelʔig (Paula)	Parent	17	Dec 7, 2016 Yunešit'in (Band Office)	English
33	Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh (Paula)	Youth	18	Dec 7, 2016 Yunešit'in (Band Office)	English
	Theresa (Paula)	Language expert	19	Dec 8, 2106 Williams Lake (Home)	English
34	<i>Pauline ghinli</i>	Elder +	20	Feb 20, 2017	Tšilhqot'in
	Theresa	Language expert	21	Williams Lake (Home)	
35	Chickadee (Paula)	Leadership	22	Mar 3, 2017 Williams Lake (Home)	English
36	Nists'i (Paula)	Leadership	23	Mar 4, 2017 Williams Lake (Home)	English

Proposal: Land and Language Sharing Session at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul

Activity:

Sharing circle with students from Yunešit'in ʔEsgul and researchers Bhiamie Williamson, University of Victoria, and Paula Laita, University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, discussing their motivations for learning their native languages and cultures and the importance of being attached to their traditional lands and waters.

Rationale:

Bhiamie Williamson, University of Victoria

As part of Bhiamie Williamson's Community Governance Project, he is required to complete a 'Capstone Project'. This project is aimed at engaging the community that he is working in and with, in a non-academic and creative capacity. The aims of this project is to facilitate a 'two-way' learning experience between Bhiamie Williamson and the Yunešit'in community.

Paula Laita, University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU

Yunešit'in Government and Paula Laita, are currently running a collaborative research project for gathering and sharing community perspectives on the Tšilhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in. For that, conversations and sharing circles between community members and Paula Laita are being held. This sharing session at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul will provide an opportunity for the students to share their motivation and insights in learning their Tšilhqot'in language and culture, so the younger generations are also represented in this community project.

Participants:

Bhiamie Williamson, University of Victoria

Paula Laita, University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, and Language Specialist at Yunešit'in Government

Celestine Brigham, Tšilhqot'in Language Teacher

Duane Hink, Yunešit'in Youth

JoAnne Setah, Yunešit'in Youth

Primary and intermediate students

Timeline:

Proposal – November 2nd, 2016

Send out permission slips – November 14th-17th, 2016

Activity – Thursday November 24th, 2016 (during primary and intermediate language classes) Coordinate with Celestine Brigham, Language Teacher.

Outcome:

The sharing circle is an opportunity for students to share their feelings and thoughts on learning their language and remaining connected to their homelands. This will be complemented by a visual aid (collage/painting/drawing: students and researchers

drawing a physical description of how they feel about their land and language). This visual aid will aim to show where the researchers are coming from (Basque Country and Euahlayi Nation) and connect participants to a cross-cultural dialogue on cultural resurgence. Paula and Bhiamie will both begin by drawing/painting how they feel about learning their languages and being connected to their homelands after which students will also be given the same opportunity. This painting/drawing will be given to Yunesit'in School as well as the resources (paints, canvas, brushes etc.)

Budget:

The cost of the materials for the art work will be covered by Bhiamie Williamson and Paula Laita (Language Project funds). Following completion of the project, any remaining resources will be donated to Yunesit'in ?Esgul.

APPENDIX 16: SHARING CIRCLE PERMISSION FORM

Yunešit'in ʔEsgul

Box 176 Hanceville, B.C. V0L 1K0 Phone (250) 394 4217 Fax (250) 394 4478

Permission Form

Primary and intermediate students will be participating in a “Sharing Circle activity” at the language class session on Thursday November 24, 2016.

This activity will be organized by Bhiamie Williamson (Euahlayi Nation, Australia) and Paula Laita (Basque Country, Spain) to discuss the motivations for learning our language and culture and the importance of being attached to our traditional lands and waters. This activity will be complemented by a collective art project that will displayed at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul.

The student’s perspectives may be part of Bhiamie Williamson’s Community Governance Project at the University of Victoria and the collaborative language research run by Yunešit'in Government and Paula Laita, University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, for gathering and sharing community perspectives on Tšilhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in. Please ask at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul if you would like to contact Bhiamie Williamson and/or Paula Laita for more information about this activity.

Thank You.

Detach and return the permission slip to the Yunešit'in ʔEsgul by: ASAP.

Sharing Circle activity

Yes, I give permission for my child _____ to participate in the ‘Sharing circle activity’ on Thursday, November, 24 2016. _____ Parents Signature	No, I do not give permission for my child _____ to participate in the ‘Sharing circle activity’ on Thursday, November, 24 2016. _____ Parents Signature
Yes, I give permission to take photos/videos of my child _____ in this activity and use them for the purposes of the projects mentioned above. _____ Parents Signature	No, I do not give permission to take photos/videos of my child _____ in this activity and use them for the purposes of the projects mentioned above. _____ Parents Signature

APPENDIX 17: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR MEETING MINUTES

Informed Consent – Meeting minutes

Please read this document carefully and thoroughly and ask any questions you may have before signing.

- I give my permission to Yunešit'in Government and PhD Student Paula Laita, University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU to use the information provided by me and contained in the meeting minutes (FPCC Language Revitalization Planning Program 2015-2016 and FNESEC First Nations Language Teacher Professional Development 2016) for the collaborative research on Tšilhqot'in Language revitalization in Yunešit'in. The results will be part of the dissertation titled *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunešit'in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the Tšilhqot'in language* submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements to obtain the PhD Degree in Basque Studies and Linguistics.

PARTICIPANT:

NAME (please print)	
DATE AND BIRTHPLACE	
PARENT/GUARDIAN'S NAME (If participant is under 18)	
PARENT/GUARDIAN'S DATE AND BIRTHPLACE (If participant is under 18)	
POSTAL ADDRESS	
PHONE NUMBER	
EMAIL ADDRESS	
SIGNATURE Or PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE (If participant is under 18)	
DATE	

CONSENT OBTAINED BY:

NAME (please print)	
SIGNATURE	
DATE	

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Paula Laita, PhD Student
[personal contact information]

University of the Basque Country
UPV/EHU
Barrio Sarriena, s/n E-48940
Leioa, Bizkaia, Basque Country



APPENDIX 18: TEMPLATE FOR THE INVENTORY OF LANGUAGE RESOURCES

**Inventory of Language Resources
TEMPLATE**

LR#	Title	Author	Produced by	Date	Pages (#)	Format	Language	Type of resource	Location	Copies (#) & Location	Description	Comments & Picture

APPENDIX 19: LETTER OF INTENT FOR LANGUAGE MATERIALS

Denisiqi Services Society
240B North Mackenzie Avenue
Williams Lake, B.C. V2G 1N6

Re: Permission for including T̄silhqot'in language materials in a language research

May 1, 2017

Dear Nancy,

Please accept this letter as a request for your permission to include some of the T̄silhqot'in materials published by Denisiqi Services Society within a language revitalization project.

Yunešit'in Government and Paula Laita, PhD student of the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, are running a collaborative research project on T̄silhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in. In coordination with other language revitalization efforts, this project explores previous T̄silhqot'in language projects developed in the community and identifies current community needs on language teaching strategies and language resources towards T̄silhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in. The results will be part of the dissertation *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunešit'in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the T̄silhqot'in language* submitted by Paula Laita in partial fulfillment of the requirements to obtain a PhD Degree in Basque Studies and Linguistics.

As part of this work, an inventory of T̄silhqot'in language materials has been carried out at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul in order to locate available language materials and identify the current needs in that regard. The following materials published by Denisiqi Services Society in 1992 have been found at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul:

- Nuw̄ish Ts'elhgen - Drying Soopallalie. Denisiqi Destl'es ʔinlhi
- Mus-žez̄ ʔanats'eli - Tanning Moose Hide Denisiqi Destl'es Nanq̄ih
- Deldon ʔAnats'eli - Drum Making. Denisiqi Destl'es Tay
- Džax Tlagh ʔAt'elax - Making Tree Pitch Medicine. Denisiqi Destl'es Diny
- ʔEtšen Ts'elhgen - Driying Meat. Denisiqi Destl'es ʔesgunla
- Beteqash Ts'eltil'uh - Making a Net Denisiqi Destl'es ʔElhch'antay
- Beteqash ʔAts'elax - Making a Dip Net. Denisiqi Destl'es Ch'ilhghilh Ganilt'ih
- Lhaghambinlh ʔats'elax - Making a Gill Net. Denisiqi Destl'es K'ashʔlnilt'ih
- Ets'edelghež - Picking Cambium. Denisiqi Destl'es ʔElhch'agwenentanih
- Seneš Hutdsilh
- Ts'enz lhan hest'in. Gwatish dzin-di ts'enz ʔelha ʔeyuy banaxedesyax gunest'in.
- Nenchagh Nentsutsel
- Denebanž Denemelh
- Nexweghex Hugut'in Nilʔin?
- K'an dzin yaʔanxw hugulht'ih?
- ʔEsgul

- Dzin-di Nulh Qanestah.
- Nenden ?Etsu ?an. ?Etsu gwechugh ?anat'in hat'ish. Ha?elhjins te?at'in
- Selasts'ed, Selagha Selaniz Selasged Selachugh
- Nendid Sela ?an
- Nulh
- Nižt'an Hubah
- ?Aba detadalh
- Lhiz sechaz

With your permission, those materials would become part of the inventory and subsequent study. They would not be reproduced by any means and only a brief description (ie. title, author, year, number of pages, cover) would be use as reference.

If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Thank you in advance for considering this request and supporting this project.

Sincerely,

Chief Russell Myers Ross
 Yunešit'in Government
[personal contact information]

Paula Laita, PhD Student
 University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU
[personal contact information]

APPENDIX 20: INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR LANGUAGE MATERIALS

Informed Consent – T̄silhqot'in language materials

Please read this document carefully and thoroughly and ask any questions you may have before signing.

- I give my permission to Yunešit'in Government and PhD Student Paula Laita, University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU, to include the language materials produced by me in the inventory carried out at Yunešit'in ʔEsgul within the collaborative research on T̄silhqot'in language revitalization in Yunešit'in. I understand the project results will be part of the dissertation titled *First Nations Language Revitalization in British Columbia: Yunešit'in Strategies for Nenqayni Ch'ih or the T̄silhqot'in language* submitted by Paula Laita in partial fulfillment of the requirements to obtain the PhD Degree in Basque Studies and Linguistics.
- I understand the T̄silhqot'in language materials will not be reproduced by any means and only a brief description (i.e. title, author, year, number of pages, cover) would be use as reference.

AUTHOR:

NAME (please print)	
DATE AND BIRTHPLACE	
POSTAL ADDRESS	
PHONE NUMBER	
EMAIL ADDRESS	
SIGNATURE	
DATE	

CONSENT OBTAINED BY:

NAME (please print)	
SIGNATURE	
DATE	

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Paula Laita, PhD Student
[Personal contact
information]

University of the Basque Country
UPV/EHU
Barrio Sarriena, s/n E-48940
Leioa, Bizkaia, Basque Country



APPENDIX 21. UNITS OF ANALYSIS

SOURCE	PROJECT	CODE	DURATION	DATE	PLACE	PARTICIPANTS	TYPE
Conversation	Research	CO #1	0:40:49	11/07/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Saina, LM, Filly	Audio
		CO #2	0:52:51	11/07/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Braids, Dothy, Juna	Transcript
		CO #3	0:28:30	11/07/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Rissa, Tay	Translation
		CO #4	0:54:57	11/09/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Maggie, Nun, MQ	
		CO #5	0:28:14	11/09/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Roper, Matilda	
		CO #6	0:32:57	11/09/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	BW, Lily "the Pink"	
		CO #7	0:30:21	11/10/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Dani, Britt, Datsan	
		CO #8	0:35:57	11/10/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Charlie Brown, MJ	
		CO #9	0:34:28	11/10/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Kalikala	
		CO #10	1:35:30	11/14/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Nundi	
		CO #11	0:08:32	11/16/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Blondy, Maureen	
		CO #12	0:54:02	11/16/2016	Yunešit'in (Library)	Blondy, Maureen, Peter	
		CO #13	0:11:40	11/16/2016	Yunešit'in (home)	?Etsu, MJB	
		CO #14	0:19:56	11/16/2016	Yunešit'in (Office)	Omi	
		CO #15	0:50:10	11/30/2016	Williams Lake (Home)	Theresa, ?Elagi, Gex	
		CO #16	0:37:35	12/05/2016	Williams Lake (SINC)	Jo	
		CO #17	0:53:27	12/08/2016	Yunešit'in (Office)	Chel?ig	
		CO #18	1:05:28	02/20/2016	Yunešit'in (Office)	Nunitsiny Dene Quen Tad'alh	
		CO #19	0:54:53	02/20/2016	Williams Lake (Home)	Theresa	
		CO #20	0:46:47	03/03/2016	Williams Lake (Home)	Theresa, Pauline	
		CO #21	0:18:32	03/04/2016	Williams Lake (Home)	Theresa, Pauline	
		CO #22	0:52:37	12/07/2016	Williams Lake (Home)	Chickadee	
		CO #23	0:55:08	12/07/2016	Williams Lake (Home)	Nists'i	

Sharing Circle	Research	SC #1	N/A	11/24/2016	Yunešit'in ʔEsgul	Yunešit'in Youth (K-Grade 6)	Notes
Feedback on Results	Research	FR #1	N/A	N/A	N/A	Community members	Notes
SOURCE	PROJECT	CODE	DATE	TITLE			TYPE
Documents	FNESC - First Nations Language Teachers Professional Development 2015-2016	FNLTPD #1	01/22/2016	Meeting Yunešit'in ʔEsgul #1			Audio Transcript
		FNLTPD #2	04/19/2016	Meeting Yunešit'in ʔEsgul #2			Audio Minutes
		FNLTPD #3	03/11/2016	Meeting Yunešit'in ʔEsgul #3			Audio Minutes
	FPCC - Language Revitalization Planning Program 2015-2016	LRPP #1	12/01/2015	Community Mobilization Meeting			Minutes
		LRPP #2a	12/15/2015	Pre-meeting Tl'esqox			
		LRPP #2b	02/04/2016	Meeting Tl'esqox			
		LRPP #3	03/04/2016	Meeting Xeni Gwet'in			
	FPCC - Language Revitalization Planning Program (LRPP)	LRPP #4	03/23/2016	Meeting Yunešit'in			Documents
		LRPP doc#1	03/23/2016	Community Priorities			
		LRPP doc#2	03/30/2016	Language Plan			
LRPP doc#3		03/29/2016	Vision Statement				
LRPP doc#4		03/31/2016	Repository of Language Resources				
LRPP doc#5	04/04/2016	Terms of Reference					

Inventory of Language Resources	Research	15 books Indigenous related themes and stories 200 flash cards 30 laminated scrapped posters - Tsilhqot'in Nation 30 pictures of community members 1 2 3 Nulh hunilt'a ninlh?in? ?Aba belh našibin ?Aba Chu Sid ?Aba detadalh ?asdinsh Belh Nulh and the fox ?Asdinsh ?Asdinsh ?Asdinsh ?elhelh Ninats' ediqish ?Elht'ad Deni Nidlin ?Elh?i ?Elh?i šelin ?Ena'in gunit'in ?Ešdlus Deldel ?Esgul ?Eqax gha destl'es ghagwelyax - Destl'es nanqih ?Esqax gwedanajetedzosh ?Esqax Shen ?Esqi Dan šelin ?Ests'ez ?Etšen Ts'elhgen - Driying Meat ?Etsi Chu Sid ?Etsu ?elhenagwedišed ?eyuwih ?adagunt'ih ?inkwel beliz šet'ish ?Inkwel nadedah ?inlhes Xenesch'agh ?udughulti A Chilcotin Wordlist Baby's Book of Nature Beghad Jigwetetaghel?anx Beteqash Ts'eltl'uh - Making a Net Beteqash ?Ats'elax - Making a Dip Net Betšigha-Deltsugh Belh Ses Tay Busi-yaz Chan Hudelnish	Books Booklets
--	----------	--	-------------------

	<p>Chief Atahm School Secwepemc Immersion Program Chilcotin Curriculum Chilcotin Language Arts / Chilcotin Studies - Elementary, Secondary, Senior secondary Chilcotin Language Program overview Chilcotin Legend #2 Raven Brings Fire to People Chilcotin Legend #3 Raven and the Salmon Chilcotin Stories Chilcotin Wordlist Danch'iz ?Et'an Datsan Nadilh Deldon ?Anats'eli - Drum Making Denebanz Denemelh Deni Lha Gušni Deni ? Ellhch'ažnan Guneš Xadatlax Deni ?at'in gunit'in Denilh ?ast'in gunest'in Denisdah Dip netting with dad Dlun Bitidat'in Doctor Džax Tlagh ?At'elax - Making Tree Pitch Medicine Dzigen Deldel Dzin-di Nulh Qanestah. Elh?i Ts'eztiz esqx gha gwenig Ets'edelghež - Picking Cambium Etsu Belh ?at'in gunit'in Eyaz Huzest'in Ežež Ts'edilhtsux First Nation Language Essentials - Grade one. Draft Document First Nation Language Essentials - Kindergarten. Draft Document First Nation Language Essentials - Level Three Gex Bequngh Gex-yaz Ginea Pigs. Ninžad Belh Ninlhdi Gudish hink'an guyax Gulht'osh Guli</p>	
--	---	--

		<p> Gunlht'osh T'intah-Ništ'i Gwaxežintan Gwelanwh Jid Našlhny ?inatx'et'in Gwetl'es Hesdash ?eyed Home for a bunny How the Chipmunk got its stripes Hugunt'in an? Ideas for Curriculum development Jack Belh Jill K'an dzin ya?anxw hugulht'ih? Kud Deldel Kud-deldel Leonard Lhaghambinh ?ats'elax - Making a Gill Net Lhin lhan Lhin Lhet'es Lhiz sechaz Lhuy Lots of coloring sheet with a Tsilhqot'in word Making baby moccasins Mus-žež ?anats'eli - Tanning Moose Hide My first 500 words My Heart as Glad Naghejaž Naghubi Nagulytax Gunit'in Nagwelhtinsh Nagweshax Nasbih Našlhiny Našlhiny hult'in? Našlhiny xešdlan Našlhiny ?Inatasalh Našlhiny ?Inatasalh Nataghedzos Nenchagh Nentsutsel Nench'ed nulh lhan </p>	
--	--	--	--

		<p> Nenden ?Etsu ?an. ?Etsu gwechugh ?anat'in hat'ish. Ha?elhjins te?at'in Nendid Ch'ih Ch'idaltsin Nendid Sela ?an Nenqayni Ch'ih ?Ech'ede?ijez Nenqayni Ch'ih ?Eyalhtig Nenqayni Ch'ih ?Eyalhtig - Teacher's Guide Neschagh šilin Nexweghex Hugut'in Nil?in? Nižt'an Hubah No title Nulh Nulh Nulh benax gwedeldel Nulh Destl'es - Animal Book Nulh gha Christmas Nulh-Nadilh hult'in? Nulh-nadilh hult'in? Nulx xats'elhyax Nunest'in ?inlhes Nunest'in Nanesen Nunitsiny Nuwish Ts'elhgen - Drying Soopallalie Oodles of Noodles Prayers Qwentex ?uqich'id netaghelqwes Sadie beyeš-deni Sedešniqi Nughunlh?in Sek'i Selasts'ed, Selagha Selaniz Selasged Selachugh Seneš Hutdsilh Seqanintah Sequngh Sequngh Ses hult'in? Ses Hun lhan, hugut'in? Ses Hunest'in Ses-yax deni teseghan Shib-yaz Sid </p>	
--	--	---	--

	<p> Sid Chu Sechel Sidint'ah Simon belh Ts'esman Sizi Nilhts'i Naxadeghinlt'i Songs and prayer Super Terrific me Suxt'an Gwenaghindzay Taxgut'og Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching The Loon's necklace (no translation in Tsilhqot'in) The Queen Charlotte Islands reading series: a Teacher's Guide Tišel TPR - Level One A beginner's Language Program Using Total Physical Response Approach. Teacher's guide TPR - Level Two A Language Program Using Total Physical Response Approach. Teacher's guide Tsa Tšaguy Tšaguy Tšaguy Ts'enz lhan hest'in. Gwatish dzin-di ts'enz ?elha ?eyuy banaxedesyax gunest'in. Ts'esman Tši taqay nentilkilh Tsilhqot'in alphabet - flashcards Tš'insh Delzez Tšiqi Sizi Yenadas Nits'enilhtin Ts'iqih T'agultin ?Ests'ez Nentilhqed Ts'iyah Belh Nizt'an Word book with Huckle Cat and Lowly Worm Xelhyiz Tižli Yaqig (ball) Yatšen Gwenen Ya?anwh Hugunlht'ih Ya?anxw Nagwetashex Yeš Yunešit'in Qungh Yunesit'in ?Esgul Language Pro D Yunešit'in-tex ?enats'est'in Z-Z-Z-Z Naghutiz </p>	
--	---	--

TOPIC 1 – LANGUAGE KNOWLEDGE

1a. Language level – What language level do community members have:

- learning
- basic
- semi-fluent
- fluent

1b. How learned – How do participating community members learn their language:

- cultural activities
- daily activities
- born with it

1c. Where learned – Where do participating community members learn their language:

- From Elders
- Home: Great grandpa, Great grandma, Grandpa, Grandma, Mom, Dad, Uncle, Aunty
- On the land
- School
- Work

TOPIC# 2 – LANGUAGE USAGE

2a. Challenges – What challenges do community members identify for using the language:

- basic needs not covered yet
- different lifestyle
- trauma
- distractions
- fear of making mistakes
- finding motivation
- lack of habit
- lack of vocabulary
- no opportunities
- people are scattered
- racism
- strength of the English

2b. Consequences – What consequences do participating community members predict if the language is lost:

- disconnected to the land
- loss of culture
- loss of intergenerational communication
- loss of responsibility to ourselves
- never get it back

2c. Used for what – What do community members use the language for:

- as coded language
- for communication with Elders, family, children, animals
- using of English when mad
- for joking or teasing each other
- for traditional names or places

2d. Future of the language – Participating community members felt positive about the future of the language for the following reasons:

- children understand more than youth
- easy for young people
- grandparents teach their grandkids
- kids are interested
- kids have access to Elders
- more positive language attitudes
- new language programs
- new language resources and materials
- one of the community priorities
- parents take responsibility
- still lots of speakers
- things are changing
- youth getting involved

2e. Reasons for the low number of speakers – Why did community members stop speaking the language:

- alcohol and drugs
- better to speak English
- change of the lifestyle
- children taking from their families
- colonization
- education
- less speakers
- loss of traditional healers and medicines
- live out of the community
- people don't want to
- racism
- residential school
- school
- tablets, video games
- television
- trauma

2f. Language transmission – How does the language get transmitted:

- grandparents speak to their grandchildren
- parents don't speak to their children – parents need to take back responsibility

2g. Language speakers – Who speaks the language in the community:

- there are still Elders who are almost monolingual
- fluent speakers – 46 years old and up

- youth don't speak it
- children don't speak it

2h. Where is used – Where can the language be heard:

- Band Office
- gatherings
- home
- reserve
- school
- town

2i. Strategies for promoting the language – What can be done to encourage the use of the language:

- answering machine message
- balance with English
- develop language policies
- encourage and support people who speak it
- encourage parents
- greetings
- language events
- Language Governance
- office workers have to learn and use it
- open for communication with other cultures
- promote language at work
- provide specific time and space for speaking
- signage
- speak it
- take own responsibility
- technology – social media
- translation and interpreting

TOPIC 3 – VALUE OF THE LANGUAGE

3a. Importance – Why is it important to learn and speak the language:

- it is always in you
- ceremony and spirituality
- connected to health
- connection to family
- connection to your ancestors
- culture-language-land connection
- Elders don't know English
- express feelings
- express your reality
- for communication

- freedom
- happiness
- healing
- hold your honor
- Indigenous rights
- knowledge
- link to creation
- not many speakers
- people unity – empowerment
- show respect
- speak from your spirit - it is the truth
- to pass it on
- T̓silhqot'in identity
- we are losing it

3b. Where it should be spoken – In which places should the language be spoken?

- Band Office
- church
- events
- everywhere
- gatherings
- home
- on the land
- school
- university

TOPIC 4 – LANGUAGE TEACHING/LEARNING

4a. Challenges – What challenges did community members identify regarding teaching/learning the language:

- blood memory - emotional barriers
- bringing expertise
- build trust
- communication problems
- complexity of the language
- dialects
- discipline
- distractions
- fast pace
- frustration
- intergenerational gap
- lack of attention
- lack of funding
- lack of modern vocabulary
- lack of motivation
- lack of opportunities to learn
- lack of opportunities to speak
- lack of resources
- lack of time

- language changes
- learning disabilities
- loss of Elders
- loss of land and resources
- meeting curriculum from Ministry of Education
- non-traditional lifestyle
- members living out of the community
- old curriculum
- old teaching methods
- payment
- protection of the language
- racism
- school rules
- no space
- speech problems
- transportation

4b. Priorities – What priorities do community members identify regarding teaching/learning the language:

- children *highest number
- parents

4c. Strategies – What strategies do community members identify for teaching/learning the language:

- active learning
- alphabet
- animals
- art
- audio learning
- body language
- body parts
- camps
- collectiveness
- community engagement - everybody on board
- conversation
- cover different learning needs
- crafts
- cultural activities
- cultural protocol
- dedicate a space
- drawing
- embracing language diversity
- engaging Elders
- everyday activities
- fieldtrips - traditional sites
- First Nations history
- flash cards
- games

- getting youth involved
- grammar
- hands-on
- immersion
- include all the seasons
- include grandparents
- include non-Tsilhqot'in people
- increase time of exposure
- introductions
- involve different speakers
- Language Nest
- learn from other nations
- learner's interests
- lineage
- listen
- maintain the essence
- make it a normal thing
- Master-Apprentice
- nature walk
- need to start now
- one-on-one
- out of the classroom
- pictures
- place names
- planning
- plays
- pointing out things
- prayers
- promote pride
- promote unity of the community
- public speaking skills
- puppet show
- puzzles
- reading
- repetitions
- respectful
- rewards
- secure next generation of teachers
- sharing with other communities
- songs and music
- start at young age
- start even when pregnant
- stories
- support parent-child learning
- toys
- TPR
- traditional food
- traditional parenting
- traditional values

- traditional medicine
- training for teachers
- use of recordings
- videos

4d. Where could be learned – What places could the language be learned at:

- everywhere
- First Nations schools
- gatherings
- health programs
- home
- library
- on the land
- on the reserve
- school
- university
- work
- youth centre

TOPIC 5 – LANGUAGE RESOURCES

5a. Creating an archive – How do participating community members envision the archive for language resources:

- at the Band Office
- develop use policies
- engage Elders as knowledge keepers
- engage teachers
- for the whole Nation
- library in every community
- museum
- one for the Nation
- open access
- provide copies
- safe copy non accessed
- safe place
- school
- share between communities
- support programs

5b. Developing new materials – What language materials should be developed:

- animation stories
- apps
- art
- audio-books
- books
- charts
- computer resources
- curriculum
- dictionary

- DVDs
- easier materials
- flash cards
- language revitalization
- linguistics
- movies
- music
- place names
- posters
- recordings
- songs
- stories
- Traditional Law
- Translate books

5c. Gathering and reviewing existing resources – Where are materials located:

- T̄silhqot' in knowledge and materials in museums
- Update materials
- Locate existing materials

5d. Standardization of the language and coin new words – Should the language be standardized and new words created:

- Need of developing a standard language – help dialect conflict
- No need of developing a standard language – traditionally oral language

APPENDIX 23: RESEARCH OUTLINE

RESEARCH QUESTIONS (RQ)	OBJECTIVES (O)	HYPOTHESES (H) *Only for RQ1 and O1	VARIABLES *For Hs	UNITS OF ANALYSIS	INFORMATION SOURCES	DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES	INSTRUMENTS	DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE
<p>Main question: RQ1. What are the community needs regarding T̓silhqot̓in language teaching/learning strategies towards the T̓silhqot̓in language revitalization in Yunešit̓in?</p>	<p>Main objective: O1. Identify community needs regarding T̓silhqot̓in language teaching/learning strategies towards the T̓silhqot̓in language revitalization in Yunešit̓in</p>	<p>H1. It is necessary to develop and implement language immersion programs in order to increase the number of speakers and level of language fluency</p> <p>H2. It is necessary to develop language programs that support the intergenerational transmission</p>	<p>V1. Language teaching/learning techniques</p> <p>V2. Engagement of different generations and community groups in the language programs</p>	<p>Community perspectives (transcriptions, minutes, notes)</p> <p>Documents</p> <p>Language resources</p>	<p>Elders Parents Youth Language teachers/experts Band Office Staff Chief & Council</p> <p>Children</p> <p>Office</p> <p>School</p>	<p>Conversation</p> <p>Sharing circle</p> <p>Document analysis</p> <p>Inventory</p>	<p>Conversation Guide</p> <p>Art-based activities</p> <p>Document Review Guide</p> <p>Inventory template</p>	<p>Mixed method (mainly qualitative)</p> <p>Thematic Analysis: Coding Categorizing Theming</p>
<p>Secondary questions: RQ2. What is the Yunešit̓in community members' knowledge and usage of the T̓silhqot̓in language? RQ3. What are the reasons of the T̓silhqot̓in language loss in Yunešit̓in? RQ4. Why is it important to recover the usage of the language in Yunešit̓in?</p>	<p>Secondary objectives: O2. Analyze Yunešit̓in community members' T̓silhqot̓in language knowledge and usage. O3. Identify the reasons of the T̓silhqot̓in language loss. O4. Explore the importance of recovering the language.</p>	<p>H3. It is necessary to develop new strategies to teach/learn/acquire the language on the land</p> <p>H4. It is necessary to develop culturally oriented language programs and materials that support language teaching/learning while simultaneously acquiring traditional knowledge</p>	<p>V3. Strategies that promote language teaching/learning/acquiring on the land</p> <p>V4. Presence of cultural traditions in the language programs and resources</p>					

APPENDIX 24: APPLICATION OF THE RESEARCH OUTCOMES

APPLICATION OF THE RESEARCH OUTCOMES				
<i>Adding new perspectives to 2021 Yunešit'in Language Revitalization Plan</i>				
Thematical Analysis			2016 Tšilhqot'in Language Revitalization Plan	
Topic	Category	Codes (new ideas)	Strategy	Big Picture Goal
2. Tšilhqot'in language use in Yunešit'in	Strategies that may encourage the use of the language and places where it should be promoted (cf. 5.2.8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Answering machine message - Balance the use of <i>Nenqayni ch'ih</i> and English - Greetings - Learn from other nations - Office staff learns and uses the language - Take own responsibility - Take on leadership 	E2. Promote the use of the language E4. Language planning and ongoing evaluation of the language projects E7. Develop Language policies	E. Develop Language Governance for sustainable language revitalization
4. Tšilhqot'in language teaching/learning strategies in Yunešit'in (cf. 6.2)	How the language can be taught/learned (cf. 6.2.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active learning - Alphabet - Art - Body parts - Collectiveness - Cover different learning needs - Cultural protocol - Daily - Drawing - Embracing language diversity – dialects - Everyday activities - Include non-Tšilhqot'in people - Increase time of exposure - Introductions 	A1. Develop a Language Nest A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs A3. Develop a Head Start Program A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities A5. Develop language immersion programs for youth and adults A6. Develop language programs for pregnant women	A. Increase the number of speakers

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve different speakers - Learner's interest - Linage - Maintain the essence - Make it a normal thing - Nature walk - Out of the classroom - Pictures - Pointing out things - Promote motivation - Promote pride - Promote unity of the community - Puppet show - Puzzles - Reading - Respectful - Toys - Traditional parenting - Traditional values - Transform school 		
		- One-on-one	C4. Master-Apprentice Program	C. Bridging the language gap between generations
	Places where the language should be taught/learned (cf. 6.2.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Everywhere - On the land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A1. Develop a Language Nest A2. Develop Early Childhood Education Programs A3. Develop a Head Start Program A4. Organize after-school language immersion activities 	A. Increase the number of speakers

			A5. Develop language immersion programs for youth and adults	
5. T̓silhqot̓'in language resources in Yunešit̓'in (cf. 6.3)	Repository of language resources (cf. 6.3.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the Health and Admin Centre - One for the Nation - Make multiple copies for the communities - Museum - Safe copies non accessed - Support programs 	<p>B1. Establish an archival system to preserve language resources</p> <p>B2. Develop a sharing system where all T̓silhqot̓'in feel comfortable to pick up resources</p> <p>B3. Gather and examine existing language resources / inventory and evaluation</p> <p>B4. Create new language resources</p> <p>B5. Review language curriculum and language instruction and evaluation methods</p>	B. Document the language and secure language resources
	Existing resources (cf. 6.3.1)			
	Development of new materials (cf. 6.3.2),	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Art - Language revitalization - Linguistics - Translate English materials 	B4. Create new language resources	
	Word coining (cf. 5.2.4).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coin new words 		

