

## Themes, thoughts, and theories on strategic planning for Hul'qumi'num language revitalization

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This paper discusses some of the current activities and goals for teaching and speaking Hul'qumi'num and how they relate to stages of language revitalization. Our findings show that community members have concrete ideas, which directly support academic models of language revitalization. We hope through the development and implementation of a strategic plan for language revitalization, which follows these recommendations, significant progress will be made in the long term maintenance of Hul'qumi'num.

### 1 Introduction

There are currently a number of activities underway to teach Hul'qumi'num<sup>1</sup> and encourage its use. The Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group has undertaken a project to develop a long-term strategic plan for revitalizing Hul'qumi'num. This paper presents an interim report on the direction the project is taking and situates the research within broader theoretical models of language revitalization developed by Fishman (1991). One component of this study is to determine the types of language programs currently in use. The range of activities includes day care programs, elementary school instruction, family get-togethers, a number of college and university-level courses and programs, community-based programs, as well as church services. We will point out how the range and diversity of the Hul'qumi'num activities and short and long-term goals parallels various stages of language revitalization. Community members have discussed needing to coordinate language revitalization activities in terms highly congruent with the stages suggested by current language revitalization theory. Implementing these recommendations, informed by this theoretical perspective, is recommended as an important way to maintain language vitality through future generations.

We first present the basic method of research, followed by a brief overview of theoretical perspectives. To understand the current state of language revitalization, we present narratives from community members who have been working as language advisors and teachers and who are fluent speakers of Hul'qumi'num. The central theme in this community discourse is that the guidance we are receiving in envisioning long-term language

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<sup>1</sup> Hul'qumi'num is the term used for the group of Halkomelem dialects spoken on the eastern coastal region of Vancouver Island from the Malahat up to Nanoose Bay.

revitalization, resembles in striking ways, current theory about successful language revitalization efforts.

Before embarking further we would like to acknowledge the help, support and wisdom of the members of the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group Language Revitalization Committee: Arvid Charlie, Ron George, Florence James, Philomena Pagaduan, Ruby Peter, Mabel Mitchell, and Janet Moore. Their insight, knowledge, and dedication to the renewal of Hul'qumi'num is steadfast and inspiring. The value of their contributions here, as in their other work, cannot truly be counted. Huy tseep qu!

## **2 Method and theory**

Upon direction from the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group chiefs, a language advisory committee was formed consisting of seven fluent speakers of Hul'qumi'num, who are also actively involved in language teaching, cultural teaching, and policy making from various areas represented by the Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group (HTG).<sup>2</sup> Approximately every two weeks the committee and authors meet for two hours to discuss different themes for determining the goals of the community in terms of language renewal and current and past language teaching projects, activities and resources. These meetings are recorded and transcribed to document accurately the members' vision of language revitalization.

A second major component of the project is to compile and review all relevant literature on language revitalization, to determine what has been effective and to avoid any pitfalls that others have encountered. The literature compiled thus far ranges from theoretical to practical, books, articles, chapters, news stories, etc. We have compiled a lengthy annotated bibliography summarizing much of this research.

A widely cited source for strategic planning is Fishman's (1991) research on Reversing Language Shift (RLS). In this model, the heart of language shift lies in the disruption of language use between the generations. The key to RLS is to restore intergenerational communication. Rather briefly, Fishman likens the reduction of intergenerational communication in a community to an illness. Through a series of detailed studies of global RLS initiatives, he "attempts to diagnose [...] and to prescribe ameliorative and restorative efforts in a sociolinguistically informed way," (Fishman 1991: 1). The framework for such diagnoses involves the identification of a language on a graded typology of threatenedness, paralleling the 'Richter Scale', which measures intensity of earthquakes. The scale is referred to as GIDS (Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale). The higher the number is, the more severe the disruption of intergenerational communication. Stage 8 represents the most severe case, stage 1 is the best case situation. Because language permeates all of society, there can be components of language use that are at one stage, while others might be at another. As one might expect, there is greater opportunity

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<sup>2</sup> We are also grateful to the communities for their support: Chemainus First Nation, Cowichan Tribes, Halalt First Nation, Lake Cowichan First Nation, Lyackson First Nation, and Penelakut First Nation.

for RLS the lower on the GIDS scale. Once one has determined where on the scale a language lies, one can plan to reverse the situation.

Fishman's scale is largely based on the Hebrew RLS model, which has been revived from a sleeping state to a national language. As such, Hinton (2001) points out that it may not be as useful for many indigenous languages, in which the language is in gradual decline and may not be a national language. Therefore, she modifies Fishman's scale to a series of stages one might undertake, to be more directly aimed at language revitalization of indigenous languages. She has added an additional first step on language assessment and planning. Other than that, the remaining 8 steps closely mirror Fishman's GIDS scale. The steps are presented in the following section, accompanied by quotes from our own research, which illustrate the direction and advice provided from the language advisory committee.<sup>3</sup>

### **3 Steps of language revitalization**

As mentioned above, Hinton has added an initial step on language assessment and planning. She is careful to note that the order of the steps may vary depending on the circumstances in the different communities. The following quote illustrates this point very clearly.

In fact, what often happens in language revitalization is that a few dedicated individuals begin activities at some later step, such as learning the language from elders (step 3) or teaching the language to their children at home (step 7), which then provides inspiration to the community as a whole, whereupon language planning might begin to take place. (Hinton 2001: 6)

This is precisely the situation, which led to the HTG project to develop a strategic plan. There are many activities at many different stages initiated by a variety of individuals and organizations.

FEMALE VOICE: [...] And I said development of some programs and for the young adults to be taught the language. I said that was the most important because there's so many of our young parents that don't even speak the language. That's what I said.

And she said, well, how about getting a group together to start a long-range program that will cover all the needs of the Native people, the six nations [in the treaty group].

The remainder of this section outlines the various ideas, suggestions, and goals of the language advisory committee.

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<sup>3</sup> Sometimes the quality of the recording makes it difficult to render an accurate transcription. Often there are portions that cannot be transcribed or are inaudible. Therefore, some narratives may not be word-for-word translations of the recorded text, and may be awkward to read. However, in all cases we feel confident that the quotes are accurate in spirit, if not in letter. We therefore ask that the quotes not be cited elsewhere.

### 3.1 Step 1

Step one involves a range of planning activities, as can be seen below.

- (1) Step 1. Language assessment and planning: Find out what the linguistic situation is in the community. How many speakers are there? What are their ages? What other resources are there available on the language? What are the attitudes of speakers and non-speakers toward language revitalization? What are realistic goals for language revitalization in this community? (Hinton 2001: 6)

A large-scale survey of the Hul'qumi'num communities, which is aimed at getting answers to these questions, has not been conducted. However, a great deal has been learned through these meetings. The preceding quote indicates that there are not many young adults who speak the language and there is general consensus that there are not enough speakers.

FEMALE VOICE: ...with the limited number of talking Hul'qumi'num people we don't...we have to have the numbers out there to be really strong. And I think with different nations combining their efforts that's the only way that we are going to be able to get the language strong again. But you also have to have the pride of our people before. Why aren't they thirsty for this knowledge? How many years...how many years does the Hul'qumi'num be out there and to have...what...a hundred speaking people out of how many thousands of people from that is Nanaimo to Malahat, is it, these numbers?

FEMALE VOICE: [...] In Duncan we are...I can say we're rich with our Hul'qumi'num speakers. But in the same sense we are really at and close to the endangered part of our language because just [inaudible] the list we've only got about 27 fluent speakers...

In terms of the rate and cause of the language shift, it must have been relatively recently.

FEMALE VOICE: ...canoe races, soccer, soccer tournament. There use to be always a soccer tournament every Easter over in Kuper Island. We would go to the village there and there would be just a lot of people and they just spoke nothing but Hul'qumi'num. And that was the only language spoken all over on the islands. But now there's no need for the [inaudible] you know when they get together it's all English. There's no more Hul'qumi'num.

FEMALE VOICE: When do you remember when everybody spoke Hul'qumi'num? Was that [inaudible]?

FEMALE VOICE: Well when I got out of school like in 1954 it was all Hul'qumi'num.

In terms of a question from above – “What are the attitudes of speakers and non-speakers toward language revitalization?” – a desire to learn more has been expressed.

FEMALE VOICE: So that is a real poor figure for the amount of people that are speaking. Pitiful. And I think before even the efforts of the language, cultural teaching assistants and what not, we have to find out why aren't our people interested in building. It's sad for the amount of time that there have been classes that there is still not retaining any language. They are not using it. It's part of the culture, it is the culture the language and we don't have that.

After an assessment on the status of the language and goals of the community in terms of renewing it, comes determining where to begin.

### **3.2 Step 2**

Stage two is the most severe case of language shift – no speakers – and doesn't really apply for Hul'qumi'num, as there are speakers of the language. However it does apply to certain broad areas of the language such as specific classes of words or discursive patterns.<sup>4</sup>

- (2) Step 2. If the language has no speakers: Use available materials to reconstruct the language and develop language pedagogy. (Hinton 2001: 6)

Even so, there is the recognition that much knowledge has passed on with the passing of elders and there is a desire to make that knowledge accessible to the larger community.

MALE VOICE: So I've said this time and time again, and I'll say it again. We need to read that confidential stuff because maybe 99% of it doesn't have to be confidential, extract any information that needs to be confidential, and then use this information for education. I could say, all the old elders that I've talked to recently in the past 10 years have all said: don't let this information gather dust like the rest of our information that we shared. Goes into the office of whoever collects it, goes on a shelf and it stays there.

There is often overlap between steps, as one leads into another.

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<sup>4</sup> Fishman's corresponding stage differs slightly (elderly speakers who are isolated and do not speak to each other) but only seems to apply to a portion of the Hul'qumi'num speakers.

### 3.3 Step 3

- (3) Step 3. If the language has only elderly speakers: Document the language of the elderly speakers. (This may also take place at the same time as other steps.) (Hinton 2001: 6)

MALE VOICE: The other one that I think about too that falls into that is when we talk about materials we need the information, so, you know, they hold the information, the elders hold the information in our communities. And there's a lot of that information that we need to compile in order to have these lesson plans in place. And so, you know, because so many of them still carry the knowledge that they, you know.

Documentation takes many forms: visual, audio, written, and multi-media.

MALE VOICE: Yeah. So I'd like to -- my hope is to have the pictures, videos and possibly slides. Slides is getting kind of obsolete with this, what do you call it, computer [inaudible] or something?

FEMALE VOICE: ... If you haven't already made it could be easy to put in the computer. If you have the funds, which I don't have, [inaudible] all of these materials, it could take time, put it in and whatever you want to do with it. Make a dictionary or make your little published materials for the schools. You would have it ready. That is only my suggestions. [inaudible].

MALE VOICE: I'm also working on just talking words that are not in the dictionary. And I have probably more pages than this of words that are not in the dictionary. Some of them are just word for word like (HUL'QUMI'NUM LANGUAGE SPOKEN), Hul'qumi'num and some of them are phrases. So Chuck Seymour does the...put them on the computer for me, for us and hopefully that be able to just...to anybody that wants to make [inaudible]. [...] Cause a lot of these words are never used anymore by anyone. The elders know I'm interested in bringing back those things that aren't used anymore.

FEMALE VOICE: Yes, about how to do things, so [inaudible]. [inaudible] important things that we have to [inaudible]. This kind of project would be really [inaudible] in terms of documenting the language and developing [inaudible] culture and stuff [inaudible] how much work [inaudible]. I'm thinking 36 hours a tape, 200 tapes. So just copying them of course and then making sure that there's video copies of [inaudible].

Linguists have also been involved in documentation.

FEMALE VOICE: Over the years I've been doing sentences for Tom [Hukari, a linguist], so he's got a lot of material on making up sentences for

each word and tape recording them. So there are tape recorded things. There's a lot of material that we've worked on before.[...]: Well, from '73 to what. Over the 30 years.

The following illustrate that there is a strong desire for more detailed analysis and documentation to be done by speakers and community members.

FEMALE VOICE: I'd like to see some more people take linguistic courses for the, what do you call it, [inaudible].

FEMALE VOICE: Yeah, to train people to be linguists.

FEMALE VOICE: Yes. Yes, because we're teaching at the writing system, but taking linguistic courses I think that's very important. I know it's worthwhile to have, for people to know to be able to understand what linguists they support [inaudible]. I think that's very important.

Hinton points out that documentation is an ongoing activity, and that many of the steps can occur in different orders, depending on the community.

### **3.4 Step 4**

- (4) Step 4. Develop a second-language learning program for adults [...]. These professional-age and parent-age adult second-language learners will be important leaders in later steps. (Hinton 2001: 6)

This need was pointed out initially as an impetus for the current project and is echoed by the following.

FEMALE VOICE: It's really hard on young people. They are just in their 30s and 40s and they still don't know the language. These are the people we have to teach to now, not later, because they are the ones that are starting the language. And there hasn't been any adult classes because there has been no funding for that education. Young people have been asking to have classes and there hasn't been any.

FEMALE VOICE: Yeah, I think that's important because she [inaudible] with what she said about the teachers because that's the most important for the future. It's not only for the present but for the future, too, to have teachers trained and have them know how to make programs as well as learning the language. So it goes into short then to the long range too. Because we need teachers now, that are the ones that are speaking now, to teach the ones that are going to be teaching in the future; and this will be young people that will have to take training.

FEMALE VOICE: [...] We are very, very lacking in teachers so what can we do without teachers. [...] That time is going to have to be sacrificed to

get teachers out, and unless you've got -- we've got the Hul'qumi'num but we've also got to have them go to school for their linguistics.

FEMALE VOICE: Can't we make that a goal, to have Hul'qumi'num teachers just do a one-year program for now, being as they're just teaching Hul'qumi'num? Could be it's not a realistic one but it could be if we make it that.

There is also a need to educate adults using traditional teaching styles.

MALE VOICE: The mentor, again I would go back a long time ago it was easy. We didn't call it mentorship but that was just part of growing up. You went with somebody, sometimes, not all the time, some of it was -- like for me, when I was small before I went to school, my [Hul'qumi'num spoken] told me things that I had to go implement them in my later life; some of it in my youth, some of it in my later years. So there's certain levels, as cousin was saying, of different levels of learning.

FEMALE VOICE: I guess before that happens there should be a class for the teachers, for the elders too. It's a real necessary factor that the ones teaching are going to be all on the same wavelength if you must say. It's...you have to have other means of teaching. And some people just...they're just going read, read, read. And you have to be able to present your classes and at least have it [inaudible] that you want to stay there. You know you are going to be bored and [inaudible] if it is going to be blah, blah, blah. So there has to be a class for teachers.

To address this lack of adult speakers, some recent initiatives have been taken.

FEMALE VOICE: there is one that is...they are just looking at...looking into organizing now down here at the Chemainus First Nation College. We think that it will start this spring.

We are looking at an eight month course. Mm-hmm. So it will be similar to what I took with [inaudible]. Mm-hmm.

FEMALE VOICE: Are there teacher training courses. There's a number of different programs that are all over the province right now to [inaudible] language teachers. So that's part of the plan would be for [inaudible] and see what [inaudible] could add. There is one in Nanaimo and one at [inaudible]. But there is such a shortage of language teachers now that's how come Chemainus First Nation is putting on one at the College. [inaudible]. All that three years and for eight months, so we are going to get some language teachers into the schools and [inaudible].

FEMALE VOICE: ... I think we just go into the language and get as many teachers as we can that are interested in teaching. Because teachers can be taught, young people can be taught to teach just everyday sayings, very, like from kindergarten to Grade 2, all in that area, and they can become teachers of the elementary school and kindergarten, nurseries and things like that. But the ones that are advanced, it has to be really people that are fluent in the language. They have to be fluent to be able to teach higher grades, like the junior secondary and the highschool. And they have to be able to write the language and develop their material, if it has to be developed.

In the section above, it was hinted that teaching should be culturally relevant and appropriate because of the strong connection between culture and language. This refinement of the type of teaching and training of adults leads into the next step.

### **3.5 Step 5**

- (5) Step 5. Redevelop or enhance cultural practices that support and encourage use of the endangered language at home and in public by first- and second-language speakers. (Hinton 2001: 6)

FEMALE VOICE: I think what's most important isn't how to keep the language going, it's how to get it in the homes somehow. That seems to be the biggest problem no matter where you go, because you can teach the children in the day care or in the schools, but when they go home it's not - they don't get nothing at home because the parents don't use the Indian language. So we're trying to get the parents to use what language they do know at home because that seems to be the problem.

There are ideas about combining the language with a range of teachings and skills regarding traditional knowledge.

FEMALE VOICE: Cause even harvesting is a training in itself, and there's a lot of Hul'qumi'num that happens. You just don't go out for a walk, you know, everything's explained from when it's there, why it's there, how it's there, and how long it will be before the next. So those kinds of things are -- it's not just point A to point B. There's a lot of little things in between those points.

MALE VOICE: [...]. You know, I guess the old way of [inaudible] was no flash cards, but field trips, or in the case of what you were talking about, work areas, where there's be a clam bake or a meeting or whatever. So bring some of the students there and it would be good for that. In respect of our field trips, that's where the other teachers [check tape] coming back. The older people that can teach that are not able to get out.

MALE VOICE: Well, of both. Both, yeah. And under short-term, training for teachers and creating First Nations curriculum material. Along with that there needs to be some kind of funding for gathering material or to make material, whether it be pictures or videos. Making material, one could be actually getting the material out there in the woods; another could be actually fixing something. I'm not going to talk about sweaters or baskets. But spear or getting it or something, an actual harvest of material, making the web, making the dip net, and the use of the dip net. It seems like easy to go and dip net but it's an art in itself. One person can destroy a dip net in half an hour or less, one that doesn't know how to use it.

MALE VOICE: I really agree with my shyeth [phonetic]. I remember one time they were giving a workshop on spear-making, and so, you know, the pole was provided, the rods were provided, the points were provided, all the string was provided. And all I needed to do was to be there and then just learn how to tie. And I thought, we're not really doing any justice to them, you know, and going out there and having that prayer for that fir tree, you know, praying to that tree that it's giving up its life so that I can give life or nourishment to our people, in with the art and the skill of spearing. You know, the shaving it down, making the one end heavier than the other end, so all those kinds of things that weren't really in place.

I know what it's like to forge points, 'cause I done that, you know, and that's a lot of work, and so they don't -- it's something more than that when you make something that it means so much more to you, that you're going to look after it for as long as you can, eh, and it's going to mean more to you. And so I think -- I really believe in the resources being a part of that, right from its start, you know, to this, whatever this end product it's going to be.

In fact, there are a great many ideas that combine the language with cultural knowledge. The following are a few more.

FEMALE VOICE: [regarding high-school students]... We've got mountains here so [inaudible] and some of our people, their pride, their self esteem might...they'll go off into the mountains. And that's going to be their [inaudible] they'll be able to be somebody there. In the schools they're...they really are ashamed to even learn their language. We've got six [...] schools in Duncan and a lot of the teachers have come and said it's our own people that are ashamed to come and sit in with them, with the Hul'qumi'num class that day. So there is an in cry of our people. So we have to find what can be done to develop that pride in going up in the woods might be one area where they are going to be.

MALE VOICE: I guess the other one too that I could kinda look into is that...I'm not sure if it's in [inaudible] has a mentorship program. Yeah. And so I see that...I see that working with one commitment from these students to working [inaudible] with someone that's involved with the big house or

someone involved with harvest and medicines and that and sort of that connection to the environment. Someone almost that could be with all of the sea pools and that. You know that connection, that mentorship.

And then I heard you know really after a two year program like that is that it's so highly successful that they say that they come out as fluent speaker. But if it's a commitment from the elders and it's a commitment from the students but it is governed by a body people that are ensuring that it carries on, that they are following through with it.

MALE VOICE: In thinking about wellness and talking to all this, I'm thinking about sort of leaning [inaudible] I see the [inaudible] I don't think it's often just there in front of the band office in the program. I think that you can really - is getting well for things like the bingo, getting well with Shaker Church, getting well, you know, people just getting educated. But there seems to be a lot of other places that [inaudible] programs that have them. So I'm trying to connect that back to the language. I'm thinking, well, other places than just in the schools that you can link that, getting the wellness and the language together and trying to build them in. Is it too hard to bring the language into these other places that - where there's so good or some positive [inaudible].

One recurring goal has been for everyone to gain fluency in the longhouse.

FEMALE VOICE: This has been asked for -- by the long houses, eh? When we go to the long house you see children, see young people -- I say children because these children are 30, 40 years old, and they're hitting each other saying, what's that person saying? What's that public speaker saying? And they're in their forties, 45 years old. Okay, these are the ones where we want to see the language, that they be speaking their own language and understanding what is being said. Everywhere that we've gone to, all the long houses, even to the American side, and they ask the same question: what's being said on the floor? What are they saying? They look for somebody that speaks the language and say, what is being said. That's where we want -- we want to see the language, we want to see the people understand that they can speak the language. And that's a long-term

FEMALE VOICE: A basic of the things, announcements in the long house can be developed. All the things that happen, whether it's naming, whether it's announcements of honouring somebody. And that can all be written down, and the young people can learn from that by listening to -- you can see all the young people having those little radio things that they're carrying around and they're here to [inaudible].

FEMALE VOICE: Maybe there should be a [inaudible] talking about what Mabel was saying there, that a lot of little people don't understand, and the work that goes on in the longhouse, there should be a program for that so they can understand. Like, they call into the kitchen or they ask them to come

forward, and there's a lot of things that can be put into a book just for the longhouse [inaudible], what goes on there. It doesn't have to be, it doesn't have to go into the explanation of anything, it's just sentences that come out in the longhouse, words that -

FEMALE VOICE: People do go around at the longhouse and they invite people to go to another place, and they're always inviting - there's two or three groups that go around, and they go around the whole longhouse and they invite people to go to another place, maybe in the USA, and they say the date and ask, invite the people to be there on that certain date. That goes on all the time. But that's in English, but maybe some day they'll all speak Indian. It'll be understood in Indian. If a book comes out something like that, then that would help a lot of people, a lot of the young people. And even some tapes, tapes to go with it because it wouldn't be such a thick book, it would be a very small one. It would be a bit bigger than this.

FEMALE VOICE: What I've been wanting to do over the years, in the kitchen of the long house -- and I never, because of my health I haven't been able to do it, is go into the kitchen part and have language sessions with the ones that are in there. All these Cowichan, Clem Clem, the ones in Chemainus Bay, in the kitchen part where they announce things, every time there's a meal, every time there's something going on there, initiation or what, they have a table and all the young people speak. They share their teachings to each other.

There are also many Hul'qumi'num activities at the Shaker Church.

FEMALE VOICE: It's [inaudible] and really the older language [inaudible]. And not very much English. When I went there it seems to be all the prayers are all in Hul'qumi'num. There's no English whatsoever. But if they speak, if there's a non-speaker then it will be in English. But the Hul'qumi'num is very loud [inaudible]

FEMALE VOICE: This one isn't home-based but it's church-based. [inaudible] is teaching his songs. So on Thursday nights we will start -- start there. That's why I was wondering about tapes for [inaudible] might be able to open [inaudible] need to what might be out there so we could make some more tapes [inaudible] go way back, and find something for Thursday to have a copy. So we've put the word out to Saanich. And I was just over at the Native College and I put the word out there, what kind of songs, what kind of [inaudible] culture [inaudible] we need taping of [inaudible].

Funerals have also been mentioned as strong places for the language.

FEMALE VOICE: When there's a funeral in [inaudible] they use a lot of Hul'qumi'num language. A lot of the people have to [inaudible] funerals.

[Inaudible] they're coming there with the Native language to talk to the bereaved family, all the things that [inaudible] ought to do.

### 3.6 Step 6

The next step is to dedicate programming to children, who have a natural capacity for language acquisition.

- (6) Step 6. Develop intensive second-language programs for children, preferably with a component in the schools. When possible, use the endangered language as the language of instruction. (Hinton 2001: 6)

It is clear that there are a number of projects to teach Hul'qumi'num to young children both in the school system and in community-based programs.

FEMALE VOICE: So all this is so natural around our area and they're picking up the language very quickly. Because we have the daycare part is for newborns to four year olds. And then we have the kindergartens being bussed down every afternoon. So I spend all that time with the kindergartens in the afternoon. And we go for walks down the beach and we talk Hul'qumi'num all that time. And the teacher that comes down with them on the bus from North Oyster school she took up language with the evening classes for two years before she accepted this job. So she knows quite a bit about Hul'qumi'num too.

FEMALE VOICE: I find that that's how they really know the language is through songs. Because I sing a lot of songs at the daycare. Sometimes I just make them up as I go. I change the names from Jack and Jill to Mary and John.

FEMALE VOICE: That's how come I think the daycare is the ideal place to be. You know because we give the kids breakfast. Some of them are there like 7:30 in the morning. We have them right till 3:30. Then they are hearing the language all day long. That's the ideal place for the children to be learning the language.

MALE VOICE: These children are, I'm guessing, three years and five years. They're [inaudible]. Then one of the things we need to do, we talked about childcare, which I take is the real young ones, pre-kindergarten. But one of the things we need to do, we should be looking at, is those everyday caretakers, or whatever they call them, teachers, is increase their Hul'qumi'num skills where they can share their knowledge with these babies. That's the best place to learn Hul'qumi'num, is when they're very young.

MALE VOICE: Here's something interesting. I'll say this part first and then it's the next part that's interesting. Only until recently did I start thinking in English, meaning if I spoke in it I was thinking in Hul'qumi'num and then having to translate while I'm talking to English. This is the interesting part here, is that I've heard some of the CTAs [cultural teaching assistants] and others say, I'm starting to learn, I'm starting to learn to think in Hul'qumi'num.

So some of the CTAs have said that. They're the opposite, they're having to translate [inaudible].

FEMALE VOICE: Yeah, [inaudible] and have that as the resource place, you know, would be nice. Sto:lo Nation has something similar to that, I think, with a [inaudible] and you go around and you've got the room and you've got, the last part they've got a fish drawn right on the floor in the – [...] Kids love that. I mean, they lay inside the fish and they measure themselves [inaudible] and all those kinds of things are -- they can relate to. They live by [inaudible] most of our First Nations people.

MALE VOICE: Yes, I do take different schools out for a walk, and classes. It's really the older youths, probably Grades 6, 7 and up. But there'd be no problem in taking younger ones out. And this is where [HUL'QUMI'NUM LANGUAGE SPOKEN] is coming in, unofficially I think he's taking my place helping them with the language and all the things that go with it, [HUL'QUMI'NUM LANGUAGE SPOKEN], the whole works, in hopes that he'll share this knowledge, the wisdom of the elders.

A recurring theme and struggle is to have more time dedicated to teaching Hul'qumi'num.

FEMALE VOICE: They have French a credited course and they have Spanish a credited course, so that would be a long-term goal to have Hul'qumi'num a credited course. And whatever red tape or loopholes you have to go through to get to that, that's what's probably holds back the Hul'qumi'num as being -- maybe that would make a difference.

While there currently are no programs for some age groups, the desire to develop further Hul'qumi'num programs extends to teen-aged students. It is also recognized that teaching to this age should be connected to teaching other important life skills and cultural knowledge.

FEMALE VOICE: This is important with our young people, eh? Because they -- if they do that -- I think the high-school students are more easy to teach than the junior secondaries, because they have interest in their own language. So the high-schools, there's a different program that goes into for the high-school and the -- which we never got into, was teaching, teaching the program we had. But a development would have to be made that goes into the council. It would be about the tribe, all the things that are done, learning the -- learning to become a councilor and the responsibility of councilors and chiefs and things like that.

FEMALE VOICE: So, you know, you've got the role model there, you've got somebody that you could talk to that knows these things. Then with that, maybe that would eliminate -- I think further back it had about training the babes and the pregnant women. Maybe that would eliminate having -- I don't

know if this word would be right to use on the whole for young ladies and young men when they're changing to become young ladies and young men, the girls and the boys. Maybe were the elders on staff, maybe that would eliminate that. But even that is so critical with our people, how you are when you become a young lady and a young man.

Too many of our people are just scattered with their minds, it's not focused on being responsible people. They're not focusing on direction they can take because they haven't done those things that need to be done when they're of that age. But that starts back from –

The connection between language and cultural knowledge and skills is also recognized as an important key to reaching and connecting with teens.

FEMALE VOICE: With the teachings Auntie Ruby was talking about, the depth of the teaching is lost when it's spoken in English. It doesn't -- the parallel isn't the same when the teaching is put down in Hul'qumi'num it's way up, then when it's posed to English the depth of that is really, really lost.

FEMALE VOICE: [...] If there was such a home where they would have elders as the teachers there, they could bring them out into the woods and have them harvesting some of these things that we need to. Because there's been such a loss, even with a lot of our medicinal stuff out there, that that needs to be saved or -- I don't know what word to use. But, you know, because of all the logging and stuff we've lost a lot of the medicinal herbs and roots and whatnot. So if somehow that could be planted again with these young people that are in change of life, they could be there for a six-week period or whatever and they could be learning these things. So I don't know.

### **3.7 Step 7**

A key step to regaining intergenerational communication is to have the language spoken at home.

- (7) Step 7. Use the language at home as the primary language of communication, so that it becomes the first language of young children. Develop classes and support groups for parents to assist them in the transition. (Hinton 2001: 6)

FEMALE VOICE: I think the language we've got at home...used at home more than, you know, we have to try and take care of kids and teach them, as young as they are, the Indian words that they can, you know, grasp and start to understand you. I think if you are around people that speak Indian language they will...they grasp it. You don't have to teach your children like a baby how to speak. They learn from listening to others. You know he's speaking Indian all of the time, every time, you know, no English words they grasp it.

I think from a very young age is the time to start training them to learn how to speak at home. That's where I teach. [inaudible] class where things

really imagine 9 to 5 with [inaudible] and at that time they pointed out that a four year old you know [inaudible] by ages, by the time they are eight or ten they raised. They are just a sponge and they're just speaking all of the words that are there.

FEMALE VOICE: I have the home programs in the summertime. I saw their plan from April to August, and they didn't have materials also at the time. Like [inaudible] and then I feel like [inaudible] bring them up and show them the plants, flowers that they had planted in the spring, trees, naming them, down to the beach. [inaudible] ages. I don't do it any more but [inaudible] from April [inaudible] August. That bird [inaudible].

FEMALE VOICE: [inaudible] granddaughter, she's only about...she looks about seven. She can write, she watches her dad. Like she's scared to climb up in the program [inaudible] computers of the writing systems and she can write it just from watching her grandfather, which is [inaudible]. So they are really advancing really quickly. So [inaudible] they're applying them. Learning fast.

Ideas or diagnoses for why the language might not be spoken at home and some remedies to the situation have also been shared at the meetings.

FEMALE VOICE: [...] Can you imagine them with Hul'qumi'num. It's zero seconds minus. So I think until families start restructuring or...then maybe there might be some...then of course you'll get your self esteem back, your pride. Until that, we will get to be [inaudible] I don't know that [inaudible] wants to be they will have pride in their Hul'qumi'num. Now that they don't have that within their own families.

One vision is that fluency for children can be a key to reversing language shift in the home.

FEMALE VOICE: My parents learned how to speak English through us coming home from school. That is how they learnt how to speak English because they never went to school. They learned English through us and that's what I think that's going to happen here. I think all the parents are going to learn Hul'qumi'num from the children.

MALE VOICE: Just one further to the children coming home and teaching their parents and uncles and aunts how to speak Hul'qumi'num. There's another thing. The kids that come to visit my mom's place, children from all over come to my mom's, both my nephews, and my brothers and their gang, and a lot of them go home and they sort of teach their family on how to eat Indian food. [Inaudible].

### 3.8 Step 8

In addition to having the language spoken at home, having it spoken in the broader community is a significant step in reversing language shift.

- (8) Step 8. Expand the use of the indigenous language into broader local domains, including community government, media, local commerce, and so on. (Hinton 2001: 6)

The domains above have been mentioned as a goal for increased language usage.

FEMALE VOICE: [inaudible] Another area that needs tending to is the workers at all the complexes [inaudible]. People, they should be answering the phones [inaudible]. They should have people in there. I don't know how...you know it's going to take the managers of all of these places to start enforcing that. If that's not done, why are we telling our kids to learn when the adults aren't even doing anything. So a lot of these areas have all Natives in there and you don't ever hear... I hate that anyway.

FEMALE VOICE: I think if there was enough money that there should be a video done. Like, it was so kind of interesting [inaudible] nature walk through - like, it had different themes for every little thing. Like that poem. And then the whole video game in Hul'qumi'num, and then like could read at the bottom; how some child has like English on the bottom. I think that could be one way. Just different themes, [inaudible].

FEMALE VOICE: But we need to make the managers know the value of Hul'qumi'num and of the culture. And how do you do that when a person hasn't lived the culture. [...] So how do you undo the wrong, if "undo the wrong" be the term I use. So unless the managers and chief and council know the seriousness of it, we can't really -- until they help us move along, we're not going to move unless they're aware of that.

In terms of level of commitment to language use, official recognition of the language is seen as a factor in reversing language shift.

MALE VOICE: So the other part I really wanted to touch up on is, you know, many times we talk about the programs and the resources and that for schooling, but we really need to hit our community. You know, that's where we need the motivation, you know, is to wake up our people. You know, we have so much interest in a general meeting, they talk about, you know, bang, bang, they're knocking on the table and everything, we need language and all of that. And so when the time comes, those people aren't there, you know. So we need something there to really wake them up, to motivate them. So that could be a short-term or a long-term [inaudible].

And the other one that we really wanted is to, you know, just this community alone has been here for so many generations that we should be telling the city here, you know, we're having First Nations Hul'qumi'num language and so it should be a whole part of the community, this whole Cowichan Valley. And so we need to have all of our leadership, you know, in with that, eh, into getting that moving.

And I like that idea about all the tribes coming together and then having one declaration. I think that should be just a big enough place to be able to go to that and looking at all the chiefs and the councils and all of the communities that this is our vision, this is our law. And it's going to be law for everyone in these communities. And it could be done, you know, in our traditional way that this is what they're going to be doing and we're standing by it, and we want everybody else to stand by that too. Amen.

### **3.9 Step 9**

Again the overlap between stages is evident. The final step involves usage at an even larger societal scale.

- (9) Step 9. Where possible, expand the language domains outside to promote the language as one of wider communication, regional or national government and so on [...]. (Hinton 2001: 6)

Notice that the goal of regional level usage of Hul'qumi'num is discussed at the end of the preceding narrative. This calls into question issues of identity and nationhood. If the term "national" in step 9 is interpreted in a euro-centric perspective, the chances are remote that any indigenous language of British Columbia will attain step 9. The greatest linguistic diversity in Canada is found in British Columbia, which is home to half the number of languages in the country, belonging to 7 distinct language families. However, if the term "national" is interpreted as it is with treaty negotiations, then the attainment of step 9 is a clear goal, which can be attained in the long term. The current treaty negotiations position Hul'qumi'num speaking people in a 'nation-to-nation' relationship with the state. Language has been identified as an important topic for negotiation in the Agreement-and-Principle of the Treaty Group. It is hoped that the status and importance of Hul'qumi'num will be recognized and affirmed through these treaty negotiations, forming an important part of the future nationhood of the Hul'qumi'num.

## **4. Summary**

A great deal of work has been done by many dedicated individuals to create many diverse Hul'qumi'num-speaking activities. One can now see how Fishman's (1991) proposal works: language shift can be reversed with more activities at advanced stages. However, one can also see that there are many plans yet to be implemented. We hope that all the Hul'qumi'num activities thrive and all plans are implemented. We close with the following.

FEMALE VOICE: But too many times it's happened that we've had these things put down on paper and nothing is ever done. Too many times there's been surveys going out and nothing has come of it. And people just get in distress about how do you make this go on and be -- and realize the fruits of this meeting.

### **References**

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