K’wáa gyáaḵ’id Gáagaay hl kínsälang: Emerging Xaad Kil (Haida Language) use in a Preschool Setting

by

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Approval

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Abstract

The language nest immersion concept brings together young children, fluent speakers, and helpful parents with the goal of creating new speakers of an indigenous language. Students are immersed in a culturally responsive and linguistically rich environment where daily activities are carried out in the target indigenous language. This concept has been championed by the Maoris and the Hawaiians. There is much written on how language nests are formed and developed but nearly all of the studies do not include any information on the language nest children’s emergent production of the Indigenous language. In this study, I present data that shows the children’s emerging receptive and productive language skills at Xántsii Náay, a new Xaad kil (Haida language) nest in Hydaburg, Alaska. What is especially unique about this study is that there are no resident first language speakers of Xaad kil remaining in Hydaburg, which makes the language nest the leading vehicle for bringing the language back from the brink of extinction.

A primary objective of this study is to learn how 3-5-year-old children in an immersion setting begin to acquire an Indigenous language. In addition to my observations, the participants’ parents also reflect on the children’s use of Xaad kil in their home. I hope that this study can influence more Indigenous communities to track their children’s emerging brilliance while they emulate our ancestors.

Keywords: Haida language (Xaad Kil); Indigenous language revitalization; language nests
Dedication

Dii git'aläng an aa,

Hiilangaay isgyáan Daláay

Gudangáan hl tláats'gaadaa. Isiisan k’úug skúnaa tl’ da’áang.

For my children,

Hiilangaay Christian Robert and Daláay Lavie.

May you two always have a strong mind and a clean heart.
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge my wife Marita who relentlessly encourages excellence in my life. I would not have made half the distance without your love, encouragement, and influence. Thank you for always believing in me.

Thank you to Gulkìihlgad, Marianne Ignace for your constant support, resourceful advice, and gentle patience through the entire process. You have introduced me to a new world of perspectives in relation to our people and language.

I would also like to acknowledge the organizations of Tlingit and Haida Central Council and Sealaska Heritage Institute who have obediently supported those of us who have dedicated our lives to revitalizing and preserving our languages. Háw’aa for your financial and travel support. Additionally, háw’aa to the Rasmussen Foundation and Xaadas Kil Kuyáas Foundation (XKKF) for all their support in ensuring a bright future for the Haida Language.

To my First Nations Linguistics cohort, I could not have had a better time navigating through grad school with a better group of humorous people. I wish you all the best. I’d like to also acknowledge the largest cohort being the Haidas. This includes Ka’iljuus (Lisa Lang), Skíl Jáadee (Linda Schrack), Nang Jáadaa Gudangáay K’iiínganggang (Susie Edwardson), and K’únhl Xíl Háanaa (Emily Edenshaw-Chafin). Háw’aa for applying yourselves to such a significant endeavor. I look forward to your folks’contributions to our nation.

Lastly, I would like to recognize all the foundational work that was done by the Alaskan Haida Elders. To my chanàa Claude Morrison, who I continue to imitate in speech and integrity. Also, to the current ongoing work put forth by Delores Churchill and her sister Jane Adams. Háw’aa for being a cornerstone for the Haida language community. For all of Hydaburg’s precious treasures. Háw’aa for all your time and hard work in sharing your beautiful knowledge of our precious mother tongue. To Claude Morrison, Gladys Morrison, Anna Peele, Alma Cook, Erma Lawrence, Viola Burgess, Woodrow Morrison, Helen Sanderson, Chuck Natkong, and Julie Colburn.

You all have made a difference in my life. Gahl daláng an Hl kil ’láagang. “I thank you folks for that.”
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Preface

Díi chan gin kwáan díi sk'at'at'gán. Díi chan uu díig súudgiinii, Gám xiid t'aa an hl gudáng'anggang, sáa t'aa an hl gudánggang. Gin ts'udalaa dàng isdáa dawáan uu sáa Gan Hl gudánggang. Áhljii san damáan díig nn súudgan, Gin íi nang hlánggulaas dluu, 'láa an sángiits'aas dàng kíngs dluu, 'láag tl' tla'áaydang.

My grandfather taught me many things. He used to tell me, don't think low of people, think highly of them. Even the little things matter. Especially if you see someone who is struggling, be sure to give them assistance.

While visiting his cousin in our regional hub city, I overheard my son Hiilangaay ask, "How old are you going to be Mark?" Mark replied, "I am going to be five." Hiilangaay was quick to reply and say "Tléehl! Mark you are going to be tléehl. That's how we say it in Hydaburg!" Hiilangaay proudly proclaimed.

What Hiilangaay was learning at Xántsii Náay and at home has been associated with the community as a whole. It is my greatest hope that this generation and future generations will always associate our beautiful language with our scenic homeland. This page can be used for a Preface, Executive Summary, or introductory image. This is an optional page and can be deleted if not used.
Chapter 1.
Introduction

1.1. The Purpose of this Study

Indigenous groups like the Hawaiians and Maoris have implemented early immersion programs or language nests for their indigenous languages for more than twenty-five years. These were important steps toward language revitalization. Additionally, in North America, a small number of indigenous groups have more recently implemented language nest programs. Some of the nations that have launched a successful immersion school include the Okanagan (N. Chambers:2014) and the Secwepemc or Shuswap nation (K.Michel:2012). These studies give information on how language nests are formed and developed but do not include any information on the language nest children’s emergent production of the indigenous language. In this study, I will record and analyze data that shows the children’s language receptive and productive skills in a new Xaad kil (Haida language) nest in Hydaburg Alaska. What is especially unique about this study is that there are no resident first language speakers of Xaad kil remaining in Hydaburg, which makes the language nest the leading vehicle for bringing the language back from the brink of extinction. The purpose of my study is to record and analyze the receptive and productive speech of a group of fifteen 3-5-year-old children at Xántsii Náay, a Haida Language Immersion Preschool in Hydaburg, Alaska during the period of December 2018-March 15, 2019. A primary objective of this study is to learn how 3-5-year-old children in an immersion setting begin to acquire an indigenous language. In addition, the study recorded data from participant’s parents that reflect on the children’s use of Xaad kil in their home.

My main research questions were:

How did we manage to get there? What initiatives led to the establishment of Xántsii Náay, and how did we set it up and how did we run it?

Over a 4-month period (January – April 2019), how did emergent language skills develop in a group of young children as they experience four hours per day in Xaad kil?
As observed by parents, how do children interpret and reflect on their exposure to words and phrases in XK?

Do children show increase in staying on task as they complete tasks in the language?

1.2. How this came to be: My Path to Xaad Kil


My grandmother was the late Gladys Morrison (Tláagwaat'awaa). My grandfather was Claude Morrison (Kúng Skíis). My mother is Joylin Young (T'áatsdaang). My father is Timothy Young. My adoptive mother is Linda Schrack (Skíl Jáadee) who welcomed me into her clan before I was married to Ilskyalas (Marita Tolson) from the Sgaláns Eagle clan. That is why I am a Raven, my Haida name being K'uyáang. I belong to the Yahgw 'Laanaas clan and I am Alaskan Haida.

I spent my entire childhood growing up in the small community of Hydaburg, Alaska. Hydaburg is the southernmost community on Prince of Wales Island and is the largest community of Alaskan Haida people. My first exposure to Xaad kil was hearing terms of endearment from my fluent speaking grandparents who lived across the street. When I was in elementary school, my grandfather's niece, Viola Burgess, facilitated an ongoing language class. In it, my classmates were exposed to many words, short sentences, and the orthography. To a certain extent, we did well learning the names of everyday objects such as cutlery and traditional foods. I recall a few community events where our skills were on display. Viola would sit in front of us on a chair while we gave her our attention while sitting on the ground. She would hold a bag and take out an object out and ask "Gúus uu íijang?" (What is this?). Upon recognizing what she had, we would reply with something like "Gawiid uu íijang" (It is a bead). We didn't cover as much dialogue. Although I didn't learn how to converse in Xaad Kil, I think it was important to
be introduced to the Haida sounds at such an early age. Today as I look back, I know Viola did her best with us, but it appears that she was more of “silent speaker” or semi-speaker. She had been raised with her náanaa (grandmother) and understood it perfectly. She also took training at the University of Alaska, along with a cohort from Hydaburg elders that included Erma Lawrence, Clara Natkong, Chuck Natkong, and Nora and Robert Cogo to learn how to read and write the language. She just did not have the ability to produce language in the same way that her mother’s generation was able to.

Figure 1.1. My chanaa Claude Morrison

Hydaburg previously had an abundant number of elders who were fluent speakers of Xaad Kil. These elders were our pioneers, our knowledge bearers, our song and dance leaders, and they were the gateway to our culture and identity. However, while I was growing up in the 1990s, it became quite evident that we were losing that generation at an alarming rate. I feel so blessed to have grown up at the tail end of that generation. Although my ears were not tuned into it, I used to hear conversations between my grandparents and their siblings and friends. I can distinctly remember going with my grandfather to visit Náanaa Helen (Helen Sanderson) and reviewing the Xaad Kil
that I had learned that day. My exposure to the language dwindled when Viola retired when I was in 5th grade.

Although language learning was nearly absent from my adolescent and teenage life, my interest was sparked when I attended an SHI's (Sealaska Heritage Institute) Kusteeyi Institute weekend conference in 2002. At this event, I learned Xaad kil from Chuck Natkong and was exposed to other language revitalization efforts as well as the strategies that were being used, such as TPR (Total Physical Response). As a sophomore in high school this was exciting but not an important priority.

A few years later my dedication to the language would be reignited while attending the University of Alaska Fairbanks. One day, while I sat in a LING 101 course taught by Lawrence Kaplan, he introduced the class to the term "language isolate." This term referred to a language that had no "genetic" relation to any other language in the world. Basically, it was a language that stood by itself and therefore had originated by itself. Professor Kaplan then stated that my ancestral language, Xaad kil was considered an isolate. After this, I thought about the golden opportunity that I had to learn my language at home. My chanáa was relatively mobile and healthy. After speaking with Kathy Sikorski (Hishinla' Peter) and my then girlfriend (now wife) Marita Tolson, I decided to go home for a semester and absorb as much as I could from him. In reflection, I feel like I was too naive that first spring semester back. My heart was in the right spot, but I didn't have all the tools to make a significant impact in my learning. I tried but failed miserably that spring semester. Because I did not have clear obtainable goals, many other activities and obligations within village life consumed most of my time. If there was a good time to quit, then this could have been a prime time to do it.

I re-positioned myself for the next fall semester. I read Leanne Hinton's book, *How to keep your language alive* and armed myself with learning strategies that would help me utilize my time with my chanáa. Kathy agreed to facilitate an independent distance course called ANL 401 (Alaska Native Language). This course introduced me to the Mentor Apprentice Team approach to language learning. I had ten themed lessons to review with my chanáa. Each lesson had phrases and expressions concerning greetings, leave-taking, helping language, and the language around a set of everyday topics or themes. The topics were basic but detailed. They covered everything from introductions to feelings, to characteristics, and appearances. This structure gave
me a routine that provided me with much needed foundational knowledge of how to use Xaad kil in daily life. I would go through each suggested phrase with my chanáa and record it on a digital audio device and a camcorder. After our session, I would go upload the files and listen to them till I was capable of producing the exact language that I captured. This usually took me about one or two weeks of studying before I was confident in using the phrases out loud with my chanáa in normal conversations. For my final semester project, I was advised to create a booklet that summarized all my learning with no English writing in it. After completing this simple project, I felt as if I earned my sense of accomplishment.

Figure 1.2. My Mentor-Apprentice Booklet

The next semester I created all my goals and then proceeded to fulfill each one. At this time, my chanáa was approaching 97 years old, and was more frail. I had to be creative in order to facilitate an environment that was conducive to meaningful conversation. Some of my strategies included bringing in a box of cultural props (for example: carving tools), taking a drive around town, and looking through old pictures. When I wasn't actively using Xaad kil to converse about focused topics I would ask my chanáa to share funny or interesting stories with me. He had been a fisherman his entire
life and had interacted with many people in those years. He wasn’t very knowledgeable when it came to traditional Haida myths, but he was excellent at recalling comical anecdotes about family members, crew members, and fascinating people from Hydaburg. In order to better comprehend his stories, I would ask him to tell me in Haida, and then translate it the best he could into English. Other times, I would take out children’s books to translate page by page. These books would become very useful in the future.

I was fortunate to have other language activities happening around the community during this time. SHI hired a sociolinguist by the name of Jordan Lachler. Jordan was an amazing teacher who held community classes in Hydaburg, Juneau, and Ketchikan. His team included Linda Schrack and Cherilyn Holter. For a few years he frequently visited Hydaburg to conduct classes and elders’ meetings. For all his dedication, Jordan was adopted into the Yahgw ’Láanaas clan and was given the name Yáahl K’ánggwdangaa meaning "kind raven." The elders really enjoyed his company and respected his gentle leadership. I was fortunate enough to meet with him and be a part of those elders’ gatherings. The core group of elder attendees included my Chanáa (Claude Morrison), his brother Woodrow Morrison, Alma Cook, Anna Peele, Viola Burgess, and Chuck Natkong. In Ketchikan, Jordan developed a close working relationship with Erma Lawrence who was another fluent speaker. Together they produced the *Alaskan Haida Phrasebook* which has been a huge resource for every beginner to advanced learner of Xaad kil. As the elders passed away and as time went on, Jordan eventually transitioned out of the Haida language circles. I am truly thankful for his leadership and knowledge. His classes gave me my first in-depth look at Haida grammar. Between his courses and my chanáa’s informal mentoring, I had the best of both worlds as far as language instruction goes.

Dedicating oneself to the revitalization and perpetuation of a highly endangered language like Xaad kil brings a flood of emotions. There is a sense of heightened urgency, along with the pressure to be accurate and represent yourself well when teaching and speaking. My chanáa had a few brushes with death that brought us closer together. I can recall him showing me his “good clothes” during the evenings when his heart felt irregular. I can recall him telling me in the hospital to “never give up on the Haida Language,” after passing blood. We said goodbye to one another on various occasions. I have tested his patience many times over during our lessons. What was
originally planned to be only a one semester language learning detour, turned into five years of intensive study. My chanáa was 95 years old when I first decided to come home and learn. He was 100 years old when I saw him take his last breaths after age and renal cancer eventually overtook him.

In reflection of my language learning experiences, I cannot help but to emphasize how much sacrifice is involved in order to make significant gains. In order to get a sufficient grasp on the language, I had to sacrifice a lot of my time, young life experiences, family trips, relationships, and at times, my peace of mind. While learning at home in Hydaburg, I was also maintaining a distance relationship with my fiancé Marita Tolson. My language learning kept me at home, which made having a long-distance relationship difficult on many occasions, although we persevered and were married in 2009.

After my chanáa passed away in the spring of 2010, I applied to Butler University in Indianapolis, Indiana for the purpose of finishing my bachelors. After I completed a degree in Secondary Education, I worked in a large urban junior high school for two years. During my time living in Indianapolis, Marita and I welcomed our first child. Our boy Hiilangaay (Thunder) was born on January 16, 2015. Hiilangaay had many health complications for the first year of his life. But Marita worked very hard to make sure he had all the early interventions in order to give him the best start possible. As good as life was for us in Indiana, our home region was heavily on our minds. As an educator, I was seeing about 180 different students every other day, I could not help but think about the difference that my talents could bring to my own people. So Marita and I decided to make our move back to Southeast Alaska.

I took up a job with KIC (Ketchikan Indian Community) as a Heritage Language Facilitator in Ketchikan, Alaska. Although this wasn't my home community, there is a sizable Haida population to work with at this regional hub. The job I accepted entailed teaching a language class at Ketchikan High School and teaching various community classes. While in Ketchikan, Marita and I welcomed our second child, Daláay (light rain) Lavie. It was during this time that I was given the opportunity to join a cohort graduate program in the Linguistics of a First Nations Language at Simon Fraser University. Our initial focus was on gaining a graduate certificate in First Nations Linguistics. At least seven different nations are represented in our cohort. I was excited that five of us
students represented Xaad kil. Our time in Vancouver has allowed us to spend time with a proficient speaking Haida elder by the name of Lawrence Bell, who is the last living male speaker from Massett on Haida Gwaii. While finishing up my graduate certificate, I was offered a position at Hydaburg City School district. The opportunity was to set up an early immersion program in my home community of Hydaburg, Alaska. I felt intimidated at first. I was already comfortable with my living situation and job in Ketchikan. I knew about immersion schools and I had discussed it with other leaders in the past. It seemed like a pipe dream, an option that could not be considered. I remember hearing one Haida language teacher say that it wasn’t even worth discussing because of all the parts that are needed to make it work. I consulted with Marianne Ignace, who thought it was a stellar time to do this, considering my unique skills in the language, and the fact that I had young children who could participate in the school and join me for the journey. After weighing my options, I decided that if I did not accept the offer, I would always ask myself, “What if?” What if your immersion school could make meaningful difference in the community? What if you were able to revitalize the language of your grandparents, and contribute to a significant shift in your community and nation? All these questions were ringing in my thoughts, so I made my decision and committed to spend five years in Hydaburg with my family, developing this immersion program.

1.3. The State of Xaad Kil in Alaska, on Haida Gwaii, and what Caused its Decline

As I found out when I took Ling 101 at the University of Alaska, Xaad Kil is considered a linguistic isolate – a language that has no living relatives,¹ which makes it all the more unique and irreplaceable. The homeland of Xaad Kil is Haida Gwaii, what we call Xaadláas Gwáayaay, an archipelago about 60 miles west of the northern British

¹ In the early 1920s, Linguist Edward Sapir lumped together Haida, Tlingit and the Dene (Athapaskan) languages as part of the Na-Dene stock (Sapir 1921), although Michael Krauss and others later cast doubt on this. With research of Eyak as the “missing link” between Tlingit and Athapaskan showing a connection between these two, the connection to Haida is still in doubt, although Enrico (1996) tentatively pointed to connections between Tlingit, Eyak and Haida, although he was unsure whether the cognates he listed point to genetic relations or borrowings.
Columbia coast, and separated from Southeast Alaska by some 40 miles of rugged sea. Once populated by several thousand Haida who likely spoke numerous dialects, two main dialects remain in Haida Gwaii after villages amalgamated at Massett and Skidegate in the late 1800s following a terrible population loss of almost 90% (Duff 1964, MacDonald 1983, Boelscher 1989): the Massett speech variety or dialect, and the Skidegate variety or dialect. With the mountains of Prince of Wales Island and Dall Island in Southeast Alaska visible from northern Haida Gwaii on a clear day, our ancestors migrated to Southeast Alaska more than 200 years ago, although Haida travel across Dixon Entrance likely occurred for many centuries before this (Moss 2008).

The state of the Haida Language is both dismal yet promising:

In Hydaburg, we have no fluent speaking elders, nor do we have any dormant or “semi-speakers” also called “silent speakers ” (find ref.) the last one, Chuck Natkong Sr., having passed away in Summer 2018, although one elderly speaker in her nineties, Ḵwíiaay Ḵwaans, Phyllis Almquist, lives in Ketchikan, and another, Julie Coburn, lives in Anchorage. Although Hydaburg does not have any elders to draw knowledge from, we have several younger people who have spent time learning the language. Some youth have taken Haida lessons at our Hydaburg School, although none of them speaks beyond the high novice level.

1.4. Causes of the Decline in Hydaburg

For a hundred years, beginning as early as the 1880s and continuing to the 1980s in some parts of Alaska, children and youth were sent to boarding schools in different parts of Alaska such as Wrangell Institute, Sheldon Jackson, Mt. Edgecumbe, and even schools in the Lower 48. Their use of the Indigenous language was strongly discouraged, even more, children were often shamed and punished for using their Indigenous languages. This included children from Hydaburg through those decades, especially during the 1930s to 70s.

One anonymous student who attended Wrangell institute remembered,
And the thing that I remember most about Wrangell, to this day, is they used to pull everybody from the boy's dorm, I don't know whatever happened with the girls' dorms, but every night for one year there, every night, well not every night, but whenever they caught somebody, they'd bring the whole dorm down there, and they'd have the two biggest boys in the dorm, and they would give them razor straps, you know the kind you sharpen razors with, and if a Native boy, now that's all that was in Wrangell Institute at the time, if they spoke their own language, they got swatted 10 times by two of the biggest boys in school. The reason they used the big boys is because after they got whipped, they couldn't go and jump on top of the guy that whipped them because they were usually the biggest and toughest guys in school. So, they would use the biggest boys in school for speaking one word in their language. Even to this day, I can't maintain or hold my own language (Hirschberg and Sharp 2005: 11).

As Hirschberg and Sharp report, survivors of Alaskan boarding schools mentioned their loss of identity, loss of culture, and loss of language (Hirschberg and Sharp 2005: 20-21.)

Reflecting on his school experiences at Sheldon Jackson, another Indian Boarding School in Sitka, Alaska, my chanáa said that speaking Haida or any other language beside English was strictly forbidden. He made light of strategies that teachers used to keep the children in check. My chanáa's younger brother Wesley was designated as a spy to go about his day on the playground or in the schoolhouse and listen for anyone to speak Haida. One day he heard Harvey Alexander (Kindukaa) speaking Haida to another student. After hearing this, he promptly got his school teacher's attention. He yelled "Kindukaa talk Haida!" [Kindukaa talked Haida!] As it turned out, my chanáa's brother Wesley got punished for using Harvey's Indigenous name. This type of psychological division is only one example that was used to stop the spread of communication in the Haida language. Several adults of my mother's generation conveyed that they were intentionally spared from learning or hearing the language. When Haida was being spoken in the home amongst friends, children were “shoed away” as if the language would hurt them in some manner. A silent speaker from Hydaburg had previously shared with me that her fluent speaking parents would talk to her in Haida but forbade her from answering them in Haida. The motivations for discouragement or shoeing away appear to be religious and educationally motivated. To a large extent, educators and religious leaders who viewed native language as a handicap had a notable impact in the transmission of language to future generations. A
few decades back, one of Hydaburg’s prominent knowledge keepers, Chanáa Louie Kitkoon gave an explanation of why his generation did not pass on the culture and language to younger generations. He said, “knowing what he knows now, he never would have given up the Haida language because they were promised that our Native children would be able to become, lawyers and doctors if we learned to speak English.” He said it wasn’t true. In reflection, he expressed that it took him seven years to learn English. Two years longer than they thought it would take to teach him. He was a little boy who attended the Sheldon Jackson training academy in Sitka. He was in school with Tlingit boys and no other Haida’s when he started school. In my perspective, I find it ironic that it took him so long to learn English but Xaad kil is proving to be notoriously difficult for learners to gain a firm grasp on. Another elder conveyed to me that while they were growing up, the preacher and his wife would go door to door to discourage parents from using Xaad Kil in the home with their children. One lady who pretended not to understand the directions given by the preacher, used the language with her children anyway and now her children remain some of the last strong speakers today.

The situation on Haida Gwaii is not much better. Within just over a decade between 2005 and 2015, and given the fact that most of the fluent speakers were in their late eighties and nineties, Old Massett lost most of its speakers, including those who were actively teaching a group of younger learners through mentor-apprentice learning, community language classes, and immersion camps, and also recorded a large amount of language data with Marianne Ignace, Rhonda Bell and learners from Massett: Chiniis (grandfathers) Stephen Brown, Claude Jones, and Willie Russ, Náaniis (grandmothers) Adelia Adams, Ethel Jones, Gertie White, Dorothy Bell and Mary Swanson. Only two elder speakers, Primrose Adams and Nina Williams, both in their mid-nineties and no longer able to work with learners, remain in Massett, although four additional speakers (Lawrence Bell, Victoria Edgars, Delores Churchill and Jane Adams) live in Vancouver, Prince Rupert, Ketchikan and the Seattle area, respectively. However, despite the passing of this group of elders, interest in, and activities of learning Xaad Kil are carrying on, as Jasḵwaan (Amanda Bedard) from Massett wrote to me:

Although most first speakers of Xaad Kil are no longer with us here in our community of Gaw Tiłagee, there is a community of learners taking part in many different Xaad Kil learning initiatives. There is also an adult beginner course offered through SFU language proficiency program, and I am teaching that at the Chief
Matthews School library Thursday evenings, and we have one full weekend a month with Marianne teaching with me. We have a thriving island-wide Mentor Apprentice program, with 12 apprentices in Northern Haida Gwaii learning from an advanced learner and silent speaker team. We have a partial language nest program running out of the Old Massett Health Centre for a few hours a week, (we need to build on this), and a very strong Xaad Kil program at Chief Matthews School, led by K’aayhlt’aa Xahl, Rhonda Bell, Guudee Naan, Marilyn Collison, and their apprentice, K’uuk Sk’uujuwaas, Darlene White. At Tahayghen Elementary School, I currently teach the language, and Maureen Brown teaches at the high school (Jasḵwaan [Amanda Bedard, Personal Communication 2018).

The situation in Skidegate is slightly better than in Massett: According to Denver Cross, who works at the Skidegate Haida Immersion Program (SHIP), there are about 9 fluent speakers, all elderly, and all in their 70s to 90s. In the past decade, though, several of the most fluent elderly speakers have passed away: Chief Niis Wes (Ernie Wilson), Gaahlaay (Watson Price), Git Kun (John Williams), Nang King.aay’uwans (James Young), and GidGansda (Percy Brown) left this world (Steedman and Collison 2011). The remaining fluent speakers continue to work together at the Skidegate Haida Immersion Program (SHIP),\(^2\) recording their language knowledge (SHIP 2017). Several “semi-speakers” also attend the SHIP Program on a regular basis, as do some learners. Like the Massett learners, adult learners from Skidegate are currently doing Mentor-Apprentice learning. Xaayda Kil is taught at the on-reserve preschool, and public school, Sk’adaGa Náay, and at the local high-school in nearby Queen Charlotte City.

Boarding schools as educational and socializing institutions had proven to be a powerful force that discouraged the language use amongst fluent speaking Haida children. When boarding schools stopped operating, even though the Haida language has been taught in schools, it has not produced the same foundation of fluency that

\(^2\) SHIP was started in the 1990s to bring elders-fluent speakers and learners together in an immersion setting to practise the language, with GwaGanad (Diane Brown) as the main facilitator, in addition to Luu ḭaahlandaay (Kevin Borserio). While SHIP as a teaching facility eventually declined due to funding, the Skidegate community has been able to continue it as a centre for recording the language from the fluent speakers (see SHIP Glossary), and as a way to bring together the elders-fluent speakers, semi-speakers and learners.
previous students came to school with. As well intentioned as programs in Hydaburg, Massett, and Skidegate school districts have been, they have not produced speakers of the language who can spontaneously communicate. Among reasons of this are not enough exposure to Xaad kil in the community and school, by in large, no sequenced curriculum (with the exception of Chief Matthew’s school), and the current generation of teachers have limited fluency with the language. Other factors include modern distractions like social media, smart devices, and video games. All of which include no exposure to Xaad kil.
Chapter 2. Literature Review – Haida Language Documentation, Early Second Language Acquisition and Language Nests

2.1. Documentation of ɬaad Kil-ɬaaydaa Kil

As Michael Krauss has said of the massive Haida dictionary written by John Enrico, “Though this dictionary cannot by itself keep Haida alive as a spoken language, we can all now breathe a sigh of relief and gratitude to John Enrico that he has provided Haida with the best record that any Native American language can have for future generations” (Krauss in Enrico 2005: vii). Due to the work of linguists, especially John Enrico, who worked with elders-speakers in Massett and Skidegate, and briefly with speakers in Hydaburg, for more than two decades, ɬaad Kil is considered a well-documented language, at least from a linguistic perspective. There is a monumental, two-volume, 3-dialect dictionary (Enrico 2005), and a two-volume Haida Syntax (Enrico 2003), at least from a linguistic perspective, although the materials developed by Enrico are not particularly user-friendly. In addition, there is the amazing and important work on Haida oral histories and stories that John Swanton carried out in 1900-1901 (Swanton 1905a, 1905b, 1908, 1911, 1903). There was the work of missionaries in the late 1800s that produced grammars, word-lists and translation of prayers, parts of the bible (Harrison 2009, 2012, Keen 1903). For the Alaskan dialect specifically, The University of Alaska Fairbanks has created a large virtual archive of Haida resources and has uploaded thousands of pages of manuscript sources (www.uaf.edu/anla/collections/search/). In addition, there are the more basic resources like the Alaskan Dictionary by Jordan Lachler (2010) and the phrasebook by Erma Lawrence, also edited by J. Lachler (2010).

Although these resources are treasured for their documentational integrity and thorough examination of ɬaad kil, they pale in comparison to learning from an actual elder. We live in a social world where we naturally want to make human connection about things that matter most to us. For language warriors to further their language comprehension and production, the solution is to consult a screen and do a search. Less and less opportunities are available to contact people. Some of our most thorough documented sources have limited use and are not user friendly. Some do not explain the semantics of words and phrases, but only give ballpark English equivalents. Such
barriers can be discouraging when trying to learn and teach our language with confidence. However, no longer having elders to turn to in order to consult about coining new words, causes us to become united and depend on the expertise of each other.

The irony of the boarding school era is that educators preached the idea that bilingualism was bad and that unilingualism was the only way that children should be educated. Nowadays, popular media emphasizes the importance of children learning languages early in life. The “critical period” is cited as the time before 12 years of age where students need to acquire their language in order to gain a native like accent. Although some recent research suggests that the critical period extents to the age of 17 or 18. Researchers agree however, that it is difficult for older learners to pick up a native like accent of any second language. There are two implications here for Xántsii Náay and other early learning language nests: their existence is based on early second language acquisition. But there are also implications of the teachers who are all beyond the critical stage to gain that native like accent and fluency.

2.2. Indigenous Language Revitalization Experiences Elsewhere and What they Teach us:

Many different strategies and countless hours have been put forth toward revitalizing Indigenous languages around the world. We can learn from their successes and challenges, and most of all, take inspiration from them. Below, I summarize some of the literature on Indigenous language nests, their challenges and successes. As Okura recently estimated,

In New Zealand there are currently approximately 200 kōhanga reo. There are also Māori language nests outside of the kōhanga reo organization. There are 13 language nests in Hawai‘i and 11 in Finland. British Columbia has at least 12 languages nests which are funded by the FPCC, and perhaps a few others which are not funded by the FPCC. There are several language nests in the U.S., Norway, and Russia. Those language nests in Mexico, Japan, and Taiwan that were known are not currently operating. There are likely several others of which we have not heard. My estimate is that there are approximately 300-350 language nests in the world, in the sense of a language immersion daycare/preschool for an endangered indigenous language with the intent of revitalizing the language, with children up to 4 years old (who “graduate” when they turn 5 years old). If
the definition is broadened to mean any daycare that happens to be in an indigenous endangered language. If the definition is broadened to mean any daycare that happens to be in an indigenous endangered language without overt intent to revitalize the language, then the number would likely be much higher (Okura 2017: 156).

Based on interviews at several language nests in Hawaii, New Zealand, Finland (Sami) and Mohawk territory (Canada), Okura lists several factors that are important to a nest’s success: These include parental involvement, having visited and experienced a successful language nest elsewhere. Other important conditions for a successful language nest include

- the amount of exposure that language nests provide needs to be high (20+ hours per week)
- it is an asset if children’s exposure at the language nest is accompanied by exposure in the home
- it is crucial that the input involves immersion in the target Indigenous language as opposed to input largely or partially in English
- There are real financial costs that need to be met (Okura’s consultants listed $100,000 US as a reasonable figure).

**Maori**

The trailblazer in the Indigenous language revitalization movement were and are the Maori people in Aotearoa (New Zealand). While until the 1940s Maori was used across generations as the main home language, the situation profoundly changed by the early 1980s. While there was a flourishing period of Maori literacy in the 1830s to 1860s, the 1867 Native Schools Act meant that the Maori language was virtually outlawed in schools (King 2001: 120), and it led to English replacing Maori “as the language of power” (ibid.). Although until the 1970s Maori was still the language in the home and community among the estimated 45,000 Maori, this changed after World War II due to increased urbanization, which separated younger generations from the Maori-speaking elders, continuing English-only education, and the influence of television (Benton 1991). During this time, there was also a shift in language ideology, with many parents being led to believe that children should acquire only English to get jobs and improve their
social standing in New Zealand *Pakeha* (white) society. By the late 1970s, Maori leaders and language activists realized that the future of their language was in jeopardy: they realized that most competent speakers were over 50 years old. Following a period of Maori language training among adults, this led in the early 1980s to the establishment of Te kohanga Reo ("language nests") as family (whanau)-led places of Maori language use through immersion-based communication with young (0-6 year old) children, as taught and directed by respected elders and adults. Te Kohanga Reos were established in marae (traditional Maori community meeting places), in converted homes and other buildings. Te Kohanga Reo thus became safe spaces that re-created language transmission from the older generation to the children and grandchildren generation. The Te Kohanga Reo principle was also based on the idea that language proficiency and bilingualism is most easily acquired by young children.

There was a rapid expansion of Kohanga Reo during the 1980s, reaching 767 nests, but learning centers but later decreasing. Te Kohanga Reos integrated Maori customs “such as keeping cleaning items for kitchen and toilet facilities separate, not sitting on tables, and so on” (King 2001:123). They also integrate ways of building cultural identity through emphasizing the concept of whanau (family), formal ways of greeting, As children grew up to the primary school age, the Maori established Kura Kaupapa Maori – Maori immersion primary schools, and eventually schools that use immersion through grade 12, and even through university.

As King (2001:123) explained, "The principal aim of Kohanga Reo is to raise Maori children as speakers Maori children as speakers of Maori in a whanau environment which will "affirm Maori culture." This takes the commitment of parents (expectations to learn and use), help make decisions, and support their children.

**Hawaiian**

Among the most successful ongoing movements has been the revitalization of the Hawaiian language. To combat language shift and prevent the Hawaiian language from the brink of extinction, the Hawaiians stood firm and united in their effort to revitalize their culture and language through formal education. They used legislation to gain
support, recognition, and accreditation for their education perpetuation of the Hawaiian language. Although the founders used the Hawaiian language as a medium to teach college courses at first, they became inspired by the establishment of a Maori "Language Nest" (Kohanga Reo) in New Zealand. In honor of their linguistic cousin, the Hawaiians created an organization called 'Aha Punana Leo (Language nest).

The 'Aha Punana Leo would serve as a protected stronghold of Hawaiian language and culture. A place where the transmission of language could be passed on between preschool children and trained fluent teachers. Wilson and Kamana explain in *Mai Loko Mai O Ka 'I'ini: Proceeding from a Dream*, "The original concept of the Punana Leo language nest was to recreate an environment where Hawaiian language and culture were conveyed and developed in much the same way that they were in the home in earlier generations" (2001). The 'Aha Punana Leo first focused on expanding the education of their native speakers and then build their base with children and dedicated families.

The movement started with only seven families but grew exponentially since the first language nest opened in the early 1980s. With the nest came expansion of support systems to uphold the language. This included language and culture courses for families, Hawaiian language teacher training, as well as curriculum development for primary, secondary, and college level schooling. High academic achievement is an objective but not the main focus of the organization. Rather, it is explained that "The success of the 'Aha Punana Leo has been the development, organization, and strengthening of what it terms honua---environments where only Hawaiian is used and the Hawaiian mauli (life force) is fostered. These honua presently include schools, offices, personal relationships, and homes" (Wilson & Kamana 2001).

For their vision, the Hawaiians choose "E Ola Ka 'Olele Hawai'i"(The Hawaiian Language shall Live). They also stand steadfast behind their mission to revitalize the Hawaiian language as a living language in Hawai'i and beyond. Their example has been admired from many language advocates in the indigenous world. To have established Hawaiian medium schools from a preschool level up to graduate school is an incredible accomplishment. Not only is their success exceptional, they spread out their influence by sharing their knowledge and approaches with those who are interested. I have attended two conferences where the Hawaiians were the keynote presenters. Each speaking
engagement seemed more profound than the next. Many questions from curious attendants were asked and practical answers were always given. One simple yet profound answer was given to a question about how do I start teaching my children our language? The answer was simply given, "Talk to them confidently as if they understand every word you are saying."

Modelled on the Maori and Hawaiian language nests, Indigenous language “nests” or preschools have been established by a number of Indigenous groups, such as the Blackfeet, Mohawk (Okura 2017), Sencoten, Seneca, Cherokee, Secwepemc (Michel 2009), Tahltan and Okanagan communities (Chambers 2014). The British Columbia First Peoples’ Cultural Council (www.fppc.ca) provides a guide and resources for Indigenous language nests.

2.3. Literature on early childhood L2 Learning

There is a common belief that the earlier a second language is acquired, the more fluent a child will be in it. And yet when we examine the scientific foundation that this belief is based on, we find that it is not as strong as we could imagine. In a paper entitled, "Three misconceptions about age and L2 learning", Marinova-Todd argues against the fact that there is a critical (or sensitive) period for second language acquisition beyond which the language will not be acquired adequately:

It has been stated that native-like levels can be attained through acquiring a second language at a young age because of the use of implicit language-learning mechanisms. But these mechanisms require massive exposure to the language, the level of exposure that children learning their mother tongue have (De Keyser, 2000). If schools do not provide this level of exposure, young children may be deprived of this natural advantage. However, older children, more cognitively mature, benefit from explicit language-learning mechanisms which do not require a high level of exposure (Marinova-Todd 20xx :178)

As other research has shown (see Archibald and O’Grady (2015) young children, are not particularly fast and efficient at picking up a second language. What produces success in L1 acquisition is the sheer amount of exposure children have in infancy and young childhood, amounting to 20,000 hours of exposure (Ignace 2016).

In an often cited article, Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle (1978) found that when they studied the learning of Dutch by speakers of English in different age groups, including 3-
5 year olds and 12-15 year olds, the older learners did better than younger learners. Studies since older immersion learners did better than younger immersion learners, with older learners more efficient at learning a language, although Archibald and O’Grady state that learners who start at a later age will have a more difficult time achieving native-like pronunciation.

Current research thus suggests that older learners have the potential to learn a second language to a very high level of competency and that introducing a second language to very young learners cannot be justified on grounds of biological readiness to learn languages alone (https://www.parents.com).

Despite research findings, there has been a trend among parents in North American society to embrace and support early bilingualism. Parents magazine (https://www.parents.com - retrieved April 7, 2019) recently reported:

“Join the bilingual bandwagon”: When Louise Sanders adopted her daughter, Camille, from Panama, she thought it was important to teach her about her heritage. So just before Camille turned 3, Louise enrolled her in a Spanish-language school in their Tucson, Arizona, community. Now, at 3 1/2, Camille loves to sing Spanish songs, and sometimes she even answers questions more quickly when her teachers ask her in Spanish rather than in English.

"Kids this age are developing language skills rapidly, and they quickly absorb whatever they hear," says Erika Levy, Ph.D., assistant professor of speech and language pathology at Columbia University Teachers College, in New York City. "They can learn to understand new words in two different languages at an incredibly fast rate." And you don't need to enroll your child in formal language classes to hear her repeat words and songs in a new tongue -- just listen in when she's watching television shows like Dora the Explorer, Go, Diego, Go! and Sesame Street, which teach basic Spanish words to the preschool set. Lots of parents are also supplementing this elementary knowledge with bilingual books, toys, and CDs.

Why are so many families jumping on the bilingual bandwagon? "In our increasingly global world, parents realize that their kids will benefit from knowing more than one language," says Nancy Rhodes, director of foreign-language education at the Center for Applied Linguistics, in Washington, D.C. "There's definitely been a grassroots push for more bilingual education in preschools." Exposing your child to a second language will help him learn about other cultures. Research has shown that bilinguals tend to be more creative thinkers than those who speak one language, and one study suggests that their brain functions may stay sharper as they age.

Here's how to get your little linguist to begin learning.”
The magazine editors’ advice is to “start now” (with 2-3-year olds), “create a casual learning environment”, “teach a word at a time” and “have reasonable expectations”. They also advocate the “one parent one language” approach (see also Hinton and Hale 2001 for a discussion), and to “expect minor mix-ups”, that is, code-switching (ibid.).

O’Grady (2017) highlights the importance of adequate input in revitalization programs in order for intergenerational transmission to truly occur, in the sense that children become fluent speakers of the language. He also warns of rapid language loss in young children once they are removed from a language immersion situation and placed in a different language context. O’Grady (cited in Okura 2017:82) gives the example of a young child who learned Korean in an immersion setting but was then placed in a monolingual English setting and lost her ability to communicate in Korean after only nine weeks. O’Grady, however, also shows that this early language knowledge goes dormant but can be revived, and children who were once exposed to an immersion setting will have better pronunciation than those who never had this exposure. Lai and Ignace’s 1998 study of Marianne and Ron Ignace’s daughter Sulyen’s acquisition of Secwepemctsin (Shuswap), while not based on acquisition in a language nest but acquisition in the home, is one of the few studies that measured Indigenous language acquisition. They report on code-switching and code-mixing, but also on substantial use of communication in an Indigenous language by a five-year old, all of which are similar to observations I made of my son Hiilangaay (Chapter 4).

Okura (2017) provides an excellent summary of the connection between language acquisition research and language nests. Overall, Okura notes that “Most of the literature on language revitalization generally does not connect it to language acquisition method and theory.” She also cites six principles of successful early language learning developed by Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff (2012:25-31 – cited in Okura 2017:87):

1. Children learn the words that they hear most;
2. Interactive and responsive rather than passive contexts favor language learning: Social interaction matters;
3. Children learn words for things and events that interest them;
4. Children learn words best in meaningful contexts;

5. Vocabulary learning and grammatical development are reciprocal processes;

6. Keep it positive (Hirsh-Pasek & Golinkoff 2012:25-31);

These are good pieces of advice myself and my assistants need to remind ourselves of. While the literature on the “critical period” for second language acquisition tells us that early language acquisition is not a “magic bullet” but requires time, Okura’s (2017) data from assessments in language nests show that children are acquiring words, grammar and pronunciation, although not immediately but after more than a year in a nest. Okura’s chapters on methods that have been practiced elsewhere in language nests (Hawaii, Maori, Sami, Mohawk) for measuring children’s receptive (comprehension) and active (speaking) production of speech in language nests, measured through picture task activities, also gives valuable guidance for future follow up to my project.
Chapter 3.  Xàntsìi Náay

Four years before Xántsìi Náay came into existence, the Hydaburg City School District Board expressed their support for language and culture to be in the school. They wanted Haida art and culture to be an intrical part of all the students' education. As this idea came into fruition, various teachers were hired from the community to teach art, language, and dance. Although classes were provided for K-12, they were short lived. Maintaining staff proved to be a difficult task for the district. The superintendent, Bart Mwarey, was in charge of carrying out the wishes of the school board. Although preschool was a target, it wasn't yet the primary focus. Bart had already known that they were more receptive to learning another language at an early age. So, he started targeting grants that would support an immersion preschool that would feature the Haida language. Between a bilingual grant and a STEPS grant, the opportunity was created to hire a head teacher that would facilitate a preschool and hire support staff. While I was in Ketchikan, I was approached via phone calls to think about whether this was something that I was interested in. After consulting with family and mentors, I decided to commit to opening a preschool. There had already been a Pre-K learning program in place, but I would have to mold it into something that was culturally responsive, and language based.

I was very up front with Bart about needing support if I was going to take on this endeavor. I knew that I needed to learn from successful models that continue to perpetuate their vision and philosophy of immersion-based education. Fortunately, Bart was very encouraging about touring and learning from the experiences of the Hawaiian immersion schools. Having gone to school in Hawaii, Bart recognized how they reclaimed their cultural ways. This included starting canoe clubs, interjecting Hawaiian in their daily conversations, doing their dances, and preserving sacred sites with ceremony. Bart noticed that the more protocol that was followed and ceremony that was conducted at a site, the more sacred and respected that area became to all visitors and locals. These observations helped shape the vision that Bart wanted to see implemented at the Hydaburg immersion school. In his perspective, there needs to be a symbolic association in the preschool on what it means to be Haida. It needs to be a sacred place. A place where people respect the artifacts of the culture, the Haida laws, and the protocols. Protocols need to be practiced.
While still working for KIC, but committed to this immersion vision, I had the opportunity to travel with a language team of Xaad kil speaking elders and learners to a conference in Fairbanks, AK. Luckily the conference featured four founders of the Hawaiian Language movement. Luckily, our group was able to talk with Keke and Pila Wilson about what direction we should take given our time frame. One incredible piece of advice that they gave us included facilitating the preschool offsite of the main elementary grounds. They explained to us that we needed a building where the immersion school could take on its own identity. This way a defined protected place for the language would be more apparent.

As I made the transition home, Marita and I focused our efforts on renovating the old boys and girls club into a vibrant environment that would be conducive to learning. This took a lot of hours of painting, cleaning out old items, ordering materials, and assembling furniture. We also needed to hire staff. This task was carried out by Ben Glover who is the principal of the Hydaburg City School District. I was able to assist in this task but not have the final say in who the best candidates were. As it panned out, I would have three support staff and two intensive aides. My support staff included Stasha Sanderson, Lisa Lang, and Marita Tolson. Between about 2005-2006, I had previously worked with Stasha learning from the fluent speaking elder's group in town. Stasha had even taken classes with Jordan Lachler to further develop her knowledge of XK. Now that she had a baby son, she has been very interested in learning and teaching XK to her children. Lisa Lang has been involved in Haida language endeavors for several years. She is the acting director of XKKF (Xaadas Kil Kuyáas Foundation), a nonprofit that seeks to promote, preserve, and perpetuate the Haida cultural legacy. She has helped sponsor numerous Haida language classes and opportunities. Marita Tolson has spent numerous hours with my grandfather and I while I was first trying to get a basic grasp on the language. In addition, she has participated in many of the short summer courses during Hydaburg's annual Culture camp. The other support staff included Angela Frank and Andrea Peele who came on as intensive aides that provided one on one support for students that qualified. Angela grew up with a fluent speaking grandmother. She heard the language but had very little knowledge of it. Andrea has a passion for learning and has taken steps to learn XK independently through Sealaska Heritage programs. She has even facilitated a XK camp for the Hydaburg youth. This assembled team was fantastic although their language skills were limited. Nobody had
nearly the amount of exposure that I did. No support staff or intensive aide had a similar experience of spending hundreds of hours intentional learning from a fluent speaking grandfather. Using a ACTFL chart, I would say that all the staff would find themselves in the novice low to novice mid territory of Xaad kil comprehension and production. This would be a difficult feat to pull off, considering we had no elders in town to learn from. It would be up to me to provide enough instruction, resources, and comprehensible input to the preschoolers and staff in order to maintain an immersion environment.

With my staff hired and unsure about what we were about to face, we planned our vision quest to the Hawaiian Immersion School on the Big Island of Hawaiian. Along with our professor Marianne Ignace and her Doctoral student Kelli Finney, we would embark on a trip to see one of the most successful indigenous language revitalization effort in the world. Our tour would take us to the Áha Punana Leo (language nest), the Hawaiian medium elementary and secondary schools, and the University where Hawaiian was used as a medium to learn about linguistic structures.

We met some dynamic staff and language advocates as we navigated the immersion educational experience over our three-day visit. Our guide was a lady named Namaka Rawlins. Namaka was an incredible tour guide for us. She explained to us that "Our language (Hawaiian) is for all. Street names, baby names, ...language is for everyone who calls Hawai'i home." We were provided plenty of insight the first day. One pearl of advice was a recommendation to have a clear mission statement. Above all, the Hawaiians rallied behind their own which read "E OLA KA 'OLELE HAWAI'I" translated as The Hawaiian Language Shall Live. After this, they asked us to consider questions that would help establish the manner in which our preschool was structured. Some of the questions were, “what are your household protocols?” “What is important for children to learn?” “What environment could I create to raise and grow a child within the language?” “How should the adult and child be behaving together?” “How should the child be disciplined?” Once we make decisions, we can set expectations for our students.

I was able to identify as least three other key points on that first day. The first key point was being urgently proactive. We were told that we needed to consider that the quality of work we were doing would determine the life or death of our culture and language. We needed to remind ourselves of the value of our language and be cognizant that we are here only for a relatively short time. What could we do to ensure
that it is carried on beyond our lifetime? The second bit of advice was to take care of what you have so it could be carried into the future. Treasure any language and insight from your elders. Focus on individual strengths and use it to help in whatever way you can. Be positive about your abilities and your educational journey. The third key point dealt with forgiving. We were told that negative things are inevitably going to happen, and we should prepare and talk about it. We needed to recognize that everyone brings different strengths and are valuable in one way or another. This was in reference to our core group.

On our second day we spoken extensively with one Hawaiian advocate named Keke, who encouraged us to think three generations ahead. She said that you absolutely cannot have schools without teachers. We should be recruiting and inspiring others. Highly qualified teachers should be celebrated and encouraged. Although teachers need to be prepared very differently than traditional teachers. Teachers in an immersion school will have a difficult time if they cannot articulate, understand, or write the language. Keke really stressed that each person involved needed to know that they were a part of something large.

On the third day, my entire group had a debrief with the Hawaiian language leaders. This was an opportunity for our group to explain our current state and structure so we could get practical advice and solutions. After all, I would be the only proficient speaker working with a support team with limited language functionality. The couple who is credited with helping start the entire Hawaiian language revitalization effort, Pila Wilson and Kauanoe Kamana, were very helpful for our team. They explained to us that our biggest challenges would include keeping in the language, teaching the aides the language, and staying true to our philosophical vision. Keeping in the language would include keeping things very scripted. This would mean repeating scripted questions, chatter using scripted phrases, and being brave enough to make mistakes be better one’s learning. Teaching staff and parents the language would mean focusing on slow and small growth rather than ambitious growth. Other concerns that we expressed was how to get families involved. The Hawaiians explained that the families are the strength and the work. They do not separate them from the work that needs to be done in order to imbed the culture and language within the students. Also, burnout was a concern that we had. They explained that inspiration comes from being rewarded. They hoped that we could see some of the fruits of labor before too long.
Each member had significant and important advice to give us. One thing they all had mentioned at one time or another was the importance of keeping the younger students inside the classroom. At our meetings, Marita and I brought our one-year old daughter and Stasha Sanderson brought her baby son. Continual references were made to us to "focus on these ones." They asked us to think about things to do in the summertime to keep them absorbing and interacting in the language.

We observed the teaching environments very closely in time we spent around the campuses. The Hawaiians created an environment that was very reflective of their culture and worldview. There was a place outside to hang up shoes. Upon arriving at school, the student would recite his or her introduction and say that he is ready to learn. Students worked outside in a garden and due to traditional beliefs, would stay completely silent when eating lunch. This begged the question about what the Haida perspective would be. They asked me to "create the home that my grandfather grew up in." This made me think about how would could make a practical go at this and be successful at it. Whatever we did, we were advised to keep language above everything else. No matter how tedious things become, ask yourself, where else would I want to invest my time than in my own sense of self?

After our thought-provoking and inspirational trip to the Hawaiian schools, we were able to further our school planning by gaining onsite assistance from Marianne Ignace and Kelli Finney. Over a three-day period, we discussed best practices for language nests. We also reviewed the Xaad Kil Nursery-Kindergarten curriculum (2007) that Marianne Ignace and Rhonda Bell had created for Chief Matthews School in Massett with now-deceased elders Stephen Brown, Claude Jones, Nina Williams, Mary Swanson and Gertie White. Created for an early learning program of 4-to-5-year-old children in Massett. Although the Massett variation (dialect) is slightly different from ours, the routines ("teacher talk", crafts, clean-up, and communicative content involving a number of everyday themes) was easy to adapt to Alaskan Haida speech and was helpful for a new program like ours. This gave my staff an opportunity to practice their language skills and gave Marianne an opportunity to model certain activities like using Yáahl, the puppet. During our time together, we also drafted a mission and vision statement. Our mission is as follows.
Vision:

Our work is to ensure that the Haida language will live forever, because it is our connection to our ancestors, our land, our people and our way of living as Xaadas. Just as the roots of all Haida people are intertwined like the roots of trees, we stand in awe about the amazing wisdom that Xaad Kil represents, and Xántsii náay will plant the seed of the respect for, and knowledge of Xaad kil in our children and future generations.

In reflection of our vision, I was excited to live out and reflect this philosophy of thought and intention. Between the staff that were present, under Marianne's guidance, we were able to produce this battle cry to stand firm on. After our vision was set in place, we contemplated our mission. How could we express all that we intended to do in a simple manner? Usually mission statements are short. Most have less than twenty words. For the time being, our mission statement will be seventy words in length.

Mission

Our Mission is to create paths to the intergenerational transmission of Xaad Kil by supporting adults in their learning and use of our language so they can teach our children, and by instilling Xaad Kil in younger generations in a nourishing and healthy environment that respects Haida culture and values. Our mission is inspired by Indigenous immersion programs elsewhere that show the success of early immersion and intensive language use.

If I were pressed to condense our mission statement, I would state that Xántsii Náay's mission is "Establishing and perpetuating paths for the intergenerational transmission of Xaad Kil." Regardless of the length, I was ecstatic to be able to share the vision and mission with the parents. While Marianne was present, we called for a community meeting to present the fruits of our labor. I discussed what we had seen in Hawaii and how we would translate it into the Haida worldview. Parents and community members seemed curious and excited. They had a calm confidence in us that I myself did not quite possess. It has been years since we had a functioning head start program. We also had a Parents as Teachers (PAT) program as well. Both early learning endeavors fizzled out due to low attendance and a lack of parental involvement. Our community, and most importantly the parents, were excited for such a program to take root in Hydaburg.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description$</th>
<th>Ben</th>
<th>Lisa</th>
<th>Marita</th>
<th>Stasha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Arrival</td>
<td>We greet each other using greeting protocol*. Students arrive, take off coats and shoes, and hang up their backpacks. (children can choose a book and sit quietly until all students arrive)</td>
<td>Greeting</td>
<td>Help students with books</td>
<td>Help students with shoes and backpacks</td>
<td>Help students with books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:15</td>
<td>Morning Meeting Circle</td>
<td>Morning Meeting Circle time includes a - A prayer (hold hands) - Greeting the Day Song - Calendar Time, - A welcome from Yaafl (our puppet) - Greetings Songs</td>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Assist with students</td>
<td>Prepare Snack</td>
<td>Assist with students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30</td>
<td>Hand Washing</td>
<td>Children are encouraged to use the bathroom and Wash hands</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Table Monitor</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Girls Bathroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:35</td>
<td>Snack Time</td>
<td>Students eat and wait for friends to finish eating.</td>
<td>Sit and Eat with students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:45</td>
<td>Nääng Nääy &amp; Gyåhlaang Nääy</td>
<td>Encourage healthy play with one another</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Small Group Activities (10 minutes each)</td>
<td>New Language Lesson/Book Reading Academic table to practice writing, letters &amp; numbers Sand table</td>
<td>Lead Lesson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>Physical Activity (15 minutes each)</td>
<td>Rocking Boats and Slide Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>Craft Time (15 minutes each)</td>
<td>Daily Craft that is relevant to the season or holiday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>Circle Up Music and Movement</td>
<td>Circle up, Little Bird Song, Body Parts Song, Fish Roasting Song, Bow and Arrow Song, Ahuu</td>
<td>Lead Dance Instruction</td>
<td>Lead Song Instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:20</td>
<td>Hand Washing</td>
<td>Children use the bathroom and wash hands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>Lunch Time</td>
<td>Pray Students are served while Robert Davidson Serving Song is sung eat and then wait to be excused. When they are excused they can play in Nääng Nääy.</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Table Monitor</td>
<td>Food Prep</td>
<td>Girls Bathroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:50</td>
<td>Nääng Nääy (Household) &amp; Gyåhlaang Nääy (Story House)</td>
<td>Encourage healthy play with one another</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>Xaad Kil Games</td>
<td>Yaahl, Yaahl, Gapiild Fish and Net Jump Ropes and Counting DLP Games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lead Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:15</td>
<td>Small Group Activities</td>
<td>Puzzle Table alternated with play doe creation Gyåhlaang Nääy (Story House) Singing with rattles and drums</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:45</td>
<td>Prep for Dismissal</td>
<td>Departure Song</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:55</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>Students put on their backpacks and shoes and wait for their caregivers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1. Xántsii Náay Daily Schedule
The creation of the Xântsii Nâay schedule was strategically made to reflect best practices among the age group. Every activity only has a time cap of 10 to 15 minutes. This is to cater to the children’s short attention span. We start out every day as a whole group. I’ll introduce our instructional focus and try to set the tone for the rest of the day. Small groups are separated into stations at least twice a day. At times, in the afternoon, we will do special tasks such as crack herring row, go on a walk, pick berries, or plant seeds. These types of activities are weather and resource permitting. Our schedule gives ample opportunity for our students to explore a variety of areas and therefore, be exposed to a variety of language use. The staff’s limited language production does hurt our overall goal of providing a language rich environment. Although, this is a problem that can be solved with dedication and time spent learning together with our many resources.

Figure 3.1. Morning Circle up
Figure 3.2. Processing K’áaw (herring eggs)

Figure 3.3 After Xil kagan (Hudson Bay tea)
Figure 3.4. Story time

Figure 3.5. Dance time
Figure 3.6 Drum time

Figure 3.7. Hiilangaay leads
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Pseudonyms</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Gáayuu Ts'ahwálldaangaa</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Chín</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Yáahl</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Wáahuu K'ust'anáay</td>
<td>5.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Ts'íit'aa</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Kwaanáa</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Híilangaay</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Stl'akám</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>K'ut'ún</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Gasang</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Táan</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Xúuj</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Nagats'íi</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>K'áad</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Xa</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Núu</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Tadl</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Húugaa</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>Hlk'yáan K'ust'áan</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>Wiid</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2 Names of Children, Gender and Ages
Chapter 4. My Data and Data Analysis: The Children’s Emergent Language Use

As I wrote in my introduction, in addition to providing a narrative about how Xantsii Naay came into existence, my additional objective with this research was to address the question of what kind of language the Xantsii Naay Children are able to produce after four months of daily exposure to the language, and what are their parents and caregivers reporting about their children’s emerging use of Xaad Kil.

The information in this chapter consists of three types of data:

1) My own reflections on my son Hiilangaay’s acquisition of Xaad Kil since he was an infant, and on how participation in Xantsii Naay has impacted his development of skills in the language

2) Parental comments about their children’s attitudes toward attending Xantsii Naay, and their comments on their children’s use of Xaad Kil

3) Recordings of segments of whole group and small group activities at Xantsii Naay that show a) to what degree they use Xaad Kil and English as they respond, react and communicate, b) the Xaad Kil that the children are producing, and c) how they respond to myself giving them prompts, questions, and directions in Xaad Kil.

4.1. Self-Reflexive Insights: My Son Hiilangaay’s Learning Journey

Different from the other children at Xantsii Naay, my son Hiilangaay, born in 2015, has heard Haida since he was an infant. I noticed that this has caused him to really concentrate when Haida is being spoken to him. He tends to concentrate and stare in one direction when he hears it.
With my wife Marita and I, and his grandparents, he uses áan(g) [yes], ³ and gá’aanuu [no], rather than “yes” and “no”. At times, when he asked a pressing yes-no question, he asks it and then gives you the two ñaad Kil options.

After I learned Stephen Greymornings’s Accelerated Second Language Acquisition (ASLA) method in a workshop in the fall of 2016, I modeled it with Hiilangaay. At the time, he was 20 months old. He was easily able to identify all the animals I presented to him. Afterwards, he would refer to any dog as xa. I often encouraged him to use a possessive with xa by saying “gyáagan xáay [my dog]. Although it puzzled him, and he preferred “my xaa”. Even today, he does his share of code switching (see Lai and Ignace 1998 for similar code-switching of Marianne Ignace’s children).

When it comes to greetings: while in Ketchikan and during the first summer in Hydaburg Hiilangaay was reluctant to make small talk in Haida. Elders and language learners would ask him, “Sán uu dáng Giidang?” [how are you?]. His response was always a playful cough, hinting he was sick. After attending Xántsii Náay, he changed his tone. He now usually responds with “Díi ‘laa áwyaagang, sán uu dángs Giidang? [I am great, how are you doing?]?

When was still in his very early stage of speech development, Marita and I taught Hiilangaay to “Laa gwii hl [name] skúntl’aa” [blow him/her a kiss]. It only took a few times of modeling before he was able to associate the command or prompt with the departure gesture.

He also uses a few different departure phrases with his family. His favorite is “háws dáng Hl kíngaang! [I 'll see you again!]. When he uses it with my parents and they don’t immediately respond, he will coach them into how to respond back. He will say, “díi gwii hl sdíihl” [come back and see me].

³ At 3 years 6 months, Hiilangaay, whose name means “thunder,” does not pronounce the ñaad Kil ng sound, but produces áan instead of áang. He pronounces his own name something like “Hii’anaay.”
4.2. Parental Feedback about their Children’s Use of Xaad Kil

One aspect of my research focused on the informal observations of the caregivers about the Xaad kil use, if any, of the Xántsii Náay students, and what were their perceptions and impressions of their children attending Xántsii Náay. As a parent of 4-year-old who attends the preschool, I noticed that many lessons, dialogues, and meaningful experiences are reflected at home in my son Hiilangaay’s comments about things he learned, and his reflections on them. These are part of the observations I discuss below. I wanted to get an idea from other parents, though, of what the other children were producing at home. Were they making a difference within their households? Was carrying the language outside our doors too heavy of a burden on them? After all, there are no fluent speaking households from which to nurture any conversation. I asked a few questions to some of the caregivers and received some interesting feedback. Five parents specifically provided such feedback, based on four questions I asked them. Here are their responses with my commentary.

1. What Haida words and phrases has your child used since attending XN?

As reported by a parent, one student likes to identify the sizes of objects in Haida. Although sometimes the adjective placement correlates with English grammar more than Xaad kil. For example: Ts’úujuu chiin instead of chiin ts’úujuus. “My baby likes to talk about food. He’ll tell his chanáa ‘Táawaay Ġiihlgigang’ (the food is ready!) after every meal is prepared in his home.”

Another student enjoys identifying all his body parts. His caregiver is fascinated by his ability to speak off the cuff with Xántsii Náay staff around town. “I continually ask him to tell me things in Haida. I’ll ask him, ‘How do you say this in Haida?’ If he knows it, he’ll share.”

An older student likes to mix Haida in with English when she plays at home. Her mom said she even likes to playfully tease her family members using the language. She also likes to count in Xaad kil. “My daughter adds and subtracts using the language. Even so,
she will correct, teach, and interpret what she knows to us (parents) and to her siblings.” Ge’é and gáa’anuu (both variations of “no”) are popular.

According to her mom, she corrects, teaches and interprets Haida for her parents and siblings.

-At a grandmother’s home, as reported, another student likes to use common greetings and expressing gratitude in Xaad kil. He likes to greet us with “jáa!” (hey there). He also says háw’aa whenever the opportunity is appropriate.

The responses to this question indicate that many parents are proud of their children and want to encourage their use of the language. It is noteworthy that only a few children actually have somebody to converse with at all, given that there are no fluent first language speakers left. Much of the language use tends to be one sided conversation with the young child volunteering expressions and utterances. We thus see a complete role reversal in transmission of the Xaad kil! Traditionally, a child would be socialized and raised in an environment where the language was spoken by all immediate family. More recently, in my experience, it was only my chanáa who provided a language rich environment. Now we see grandchildren and children becoming the language ambassadors and teachers in their own homes. The children are teaching their náanlang, chanláng, and yáalang. Although the language that is being produced is not substantial, it is remarkable that students are confident enough to share their knowledge of a language that they only recently came into contact with.

2. Have they interpreted/explained any words for you?

-“Every day after school he explains to his dad about what he learned that day. He’ll share with him the action that is associated with each word he learned, to better explain it.”

-“He sings all the songs and identifies and teaches me what he learned at school.” The words vary from naming body parts, to food, to the weather.

-“She’ll break down her dialogue with us. If she cannot remember, then she will go to ask her older brother who is taking Haida language as a high school elective.”
-“He likes teaching me words. I only wish that I knew more.”

-I asked my son Hiilangaay what “háwsdluwaan” [glossed in the Alaskan Haida dictionary as “that’s enough”, “quit it”, “stop”] meant. He thought to himself and replied, “When you want something to quit, that’s háwsdluwaan.”

One important aspect of frequent language use is the intentional encouragement to do so. All of the parents that I talked to were actively supporting the language use in the home. They affirmed their children’s knowledge and actively gave them confidence to express it. Each parent or grandparent showed interest in their child’s learning. One area that I regret not pursuing is having classes for parents and caregivers. Next year I will need to put together a language class that correlates with our curriculum.

3. Do you have any stories you’d like to share about their experiences going to school?

-“One day he [my son] seen a classmate across the street. He tried to get his attention by yelling, Sán uu dàng Glidang?” [how are you doing?]

-“Both of my children love attending school. They become angry when they get sick and aren’t able to attend.”

The above student’s immediate instinct when seeing a classmate outside of school was to utilize Xaad kil. If we can continue to teach high quality language to the students and to their caregivers, we can make it common place for language to be spoken in any environment where two or more learners are available to have dialogue. Perhaps this could be the very first steps at normalizing the use of Xaad kil in the community again, coming from our children.

4. Do you have any other lasting impressions on their developing language?

- “My child’s desire to learn has motivated our entire household to learn the language. We encourage our child too. My child’s dad is always asking him to “teach me new
words.” We are using the resources and we are trying not to say things in English that we know how to say in Haida.”

- “When he is home, he is schooling us.” The child becomes the teacher.

- The comment that follows is from a parent who is not from Hydaburg, but who has lived and worked professionally in various Indigenous communities in Alaska: “It’s a family tradition of ours to acculturate in whatever location we end up. My kids are encouraged to accept and understand the language here.”

-“He loves it. He is so excited to go to school, I never seen a kid so excited to go to school. He is excited and proud, although I think we still need to normalize the use of Haida. Sometimes he gets bashful when we encourage him to recite what he knows”

Xântsii Náay is making a significant difference in the lives of its students. That difference is having a ripple effect on those that care for and love the students that attend the school. The school is instilling a pride in the identity of the Hydaburg Haida people. This identity is expressed by showing interest in speaking and learning more about Xaad Kil. Many barriers stand between learning the language, but the students are unaware of those barriers. They just use what they learn at school. If we are going to make a significant difference in the language shift of our community, we have to believe in our ability to learn and produce our language. One example of this is using Haida words with confidence. My son named his dog “Dláayeehl.” [“become calm” - he often heard me saying dlaayeehl as I talked about the weather, motioning calmness. The reason he chose that name, as he explained, was that the puppy was really timid and quiet for the first few weeks after we got him, and not at all “hyper” like other puppies. My father-in-law asked him if he could name his puppy something easier to say. Needless to say, my 18-month-old daughter was able to pronounce the puppy’s name with near accuracy that same week.

Hiilangaay’s comment on the meaning of hâwsdluuwaan, on how the use of Xaad Kil is connected to living in Hydaburg (see Preface), and the name he chose for his puppy, all represent what linguists would term “metalinguistic awareness” at an emerging state. Metalinguistic awareness is “the ability of a person to reflect on and consciously ponder about oral and written language and how it is used” (www.speechlanguage-resources.com/metalinguistics). Hiilangaay’s reflections on the
meaning of words not only show his spontaneous use of Xaad Kil utterances, but also give evidence of his emerging consciousness of, and reflection on meaning, translation, and the connection of Hydaburg to our ancestral language. Chambers (2014) provided similar comments on what amounts to her son Devon’s metalinguistic awareness as he attended a preschool language nest in Vernon. Hiiilangaay and other children thus reflecting on the meaning and use of words shows a budding metalinguistic awareness - awareness of language and the ability to manipulate it. In recent years, research by speech pathologists, psychologists and educators has shown that it acts as what Ebbers (2010) [https://www.cdl.org/.../metalinguistic-awareness] defined as a “cognitive dynamo” that is beneficial not only to language acquisition, but also to later reading and writing ability. Bialystok 1978) has identified greater metacognitive awareness as a positive benefit of early bilingualism.

4.3. Xántsii Náay in Action: How we produce Xaad Kil

One piece of advice that I absolutely internalized was Keiki stating with confidence during our session in Hilo was that “you should talk to them as if they understand.” After all, this is what we subconsciously do in English when we talk with children. I aim for the simple, the obvious, something with context clues.

I like to ask my support staff questions, so they can model responses. I also use them to gage comprehension at times. If they cannot follow, then I need to break down what I am saying to simple parts. I find it easier to start out asking questions to the whole group and then ask them to individual students.

If the student that I am speaking to does not pay attention, then I’ll say his-her name so they can focus. I will then model a response or reiterate what a classmate has said. It is beneficial to use gestures, sound effects [as in the session below where I play animal sounds or voices from my iPhone], and images as well when carrying on conversations,

I have an undeclared rule that everyone participates, no matter what their ability is. If I try unsuccessfully to get a response about a question that I ask, then I simply say, “Giisd uu ‘laag tlaad hlangaasaang? [who can help him-her?]. This is when my higher ability and usually older students step in and tell their classmate the answer. I don’t let
them tell me. I let them tell their classmates. I say, “Gáa’anuu, dámaan Gán díi únsiidang. ‘Láa gwii hl ánsdlaa, ‘láa aa hl súuda’ [No, I know it, look to him and tell him].

Afterwards I have the student tell me the answer that he-she had just learned from his classmate. Afterwards I will thank the volunteer for the help provided. This is a skill I learned teaching junior high school that transfers well to the preschool setting. To reinforce this, we also implemented a k’áayhlt’aa xahl [shining star] set of reinforcements, where children who help out get rewards charted out on the wall.

Figure 4.1. Giving out reward stars
At times I forget who I am working with. I sometimes have to remind myself to have fun and be silly. Language is a good thing, but they also need to know that you care for them and want only the best for their development. One thing that I continually need to be cognizant of is catering to the advanced students. I can get carried away with only having group dialogue with 3 of the 12 students in the room. Sometimes I don’t want to break that flow when we are reviewing material. The teaching profession definitely calls for reflection and constant improvement.

4.4. Description and Analysis of our Xántsii Naay Recording Sessions

As I described in my Methodology section (Chapter 3 above), I was able to gain insights into the Xántsii Naay children’s interactions in the language, production of speech and receptive speech behavior during a set of recordings made at Xántsii Naay as follows:

- An initial short recording of the children showing dancing and singing was made during a public elder’s luncheon in November 2018.
- With the help of Gulk̲iihlgad (Marianne Ignace) we recorded 21 segments varying in length from 1 to 14 on February 7 and 8, 2019. These show the children in normal interaction at Xántsii Naay, engaged in a variety of activities that are part of the normal schedule.
- A follow-up session with two children was recorded on February 9, 2019, which in addition to the smartphone recording also included an audio-recording of language produced by two of the children made with a high-quality Yeti microphone.
- An additional three recordings were made during a follow-up session on April 4, 2019, which consisted of three video clips.

Below are partial transcripts and descriptions of these sessions that include my own Xaad Kil communication with the children, either the whole group of 10-15, or during smaller group sessions (e.g. reading) of 4-5 children. In addition, they provide transcriptions in Xaad Kil orthography of the students’ responses, and/or my qualitative commentary on how they react to questions, prompts and other kinds of “comprehensible input” (Krashen).
4.5. The Recordings and what they Show:

4.4. The Recordings and what they Show:

Xántsii Náay Recordings – February 7, 8 and 9 and April 4, 2019

Feb. 7, 2019 - These are 21 segments that range in length from 1 minute to about 14 minutes.

Filmed by my supervisor, Dr. Marianne Ignace, they show myself (K’uyáang) interacting with the Xántsii Náay children in a variety of settings according to the morning schedule. We also included brief segments that show two of the caregivers/trainees (Ka’iljuus and SGáan Jáad) interacting with the children

Feb. 8, 2019 – 11 segments, ranging from 2 minutes to 15 minutes.

Feb. 9, 2019 – 3 segments of ca. 15 min. duration each with Hiilangaay and Stl’akam(video- and audio-recorded), doing play-dough activity, and a reading activity.

April 4, 2019 – 3 segments of 10-minute duration video-recorded by smartphone by Joy Young.

Feb. 7, 2019

IMG_2705.MOV - Duration: 4:26

Setting: Small meeting room, whole group. Puppets on a stand.

K. asks: Gíisd uu _____ (name of animal) sdahláang? – who wants the ________?

Children (individually) say “me”
Gínas-g uu daláng sdahlaang?

K. demonstrates puppet talk with Yáahl: Sán uu dáng Qíidang, helpers also model.

Sán uu dáng kya’áang? What is your name?

Children individually echo, “Sán uu dang Qíidang?”

Some say names of their puppet animal.

**Comments:**

In this segment, I try to use each of the puppet names in multiple forms. I use a lot of repetition so the students can hear how the language is used in unbroken conversation. I also conversate with the students using yes or now questions as well as giving them either/or questions. At the beginning, as I speak to the students, they can clearly understand what I am doing and saying. While using the puppets as props they indicate their comprehension by raising their hands when I present their preferred animal puppet.

In this video clip, Jaxson responds to my dialogue. He is able to properly greet me and use departure language, but he stumbles when I ask him Gáalgwaá dáng gw k’ad ’láagaa? (Did you sleep well last night?) Afterwards I had to model a response for him. Although he responded with ja áaya! (I really don't know).

**IMG_2706.MOV** Duration: 9:02

K’uyáang reminds children in XK to sit quietly.

Introduces k’áayhlt’aa xahl (bright stars).

In English, explains if children are respectful to other people you get star.

Dáng k’áayhlt’aa tla’únahl dáng da’áas dluu
Children respond with thumbs up. Some say “Áang.”

Next, a lesson on clothes:

Gúus uu áa íijang? [What is this?], taking his own coat out of a container.

Several children say: k’udáats’ [coat]

Gíisdgyaa k’udáats’aay íijang? [whose coat is this]

Several children spontaneously respond: “Gáagaa K’uyáang” (Uncle K’uyáang)

He cups ears to prompt another response. Answer again: Gáagaa K’uyáang.

K’a’iljuus adds “gyaa”. K. repeats “Gáagaa K’uyáang gyaa k’udáats’aay íijang (using possessive – it is Uncle K’uyáang’s coat)

“ Gyáagan k’udáats’aay Gii áa hl kats’aang.”

K. pulls out another coat: Gyáagan k’udáats’aay gw is?

Asks “Xawgaay gyaa gw is? [is it Xawgaay’s?]? Gáa’anuu [no]. Táan gyaa gw is?

Children spontaneously repeat “Gáa’anuu” (no)


K: Xaat’áa ’lásii..

Táan: Gáagaa K’uyáang

Xa: Gáagaa K’uyáang

K’uyáang: Gúus uu aa íijang?

Some children point.
K. repeats: Aa uu k’udáats’ íijang. (pointing to his coat).

Gúus uu aa íijang? (pointing to his shoe he is holding)

Táan points at K.’s feet and at the shoe

A couple of children say “shoe”

K: Sán uu “shoe” Xaad kihl kya’áang? (what do you call shoe in Haida?)

No response.

K: (in softer voice) Daláng ts’a k’iisgadan. [You folks are stuck.]

A couple of kids: shoes!

K. repeats: Sán uu “shoe” Xaad kihl kya’aang?

Sang ‘wáadluwaan íl’gyaa k’yuwáay ii daláng kats’aas dluu, sán uu sḵ’adadaa ‘la’áaylang daláng súudganggang?

(Every day when you come in the door, what does the teachers keep saying to you?)

Ka’iljuus(turning to Táan) “sta’gaay”

Children: st’agaay, some use st’asgagaay

K. aang, st’asgagaay waaduu st’asgaaay [yes, st’asgagaay or st’asgaay]. Gyaagan st’asgaay uu íijang. Gyáagan st’asgaay …. 

Daláng aa Hl kyáananageeg díi gudánggang! (I want to ask you something. Pulls a smaller shoe from the box). Xaat’áa ‘láasii, Giisdgyaay áajii st’asgáay íijang [whose shoe is this?] 

Xúuj: mine!

K: (to Xúuj): Dáng gyaa gw is?

(Xúuj nods).

K: Díi gingáan hl súudaa: gyáagan aa (say it like this: it’s mine).
Xúuj repeats (softly): Gyáagan aa [it’s mine].

K: Áang. Gyáagan aa. Xúuj gyaa st’asgáay uu íijang. Dámaan uu kýadsgad ’láa áwyaagang, Xúuj! (you watch really well!)

Xúuj goes out, putting his shoe back to the cubby. K. pulls another shoe, a small pink one, from the box.

K: Giisdgysaá áajii st’asgáay íijang? [Whose shoe is this?]

Several children: Jáadaa’s.

K: Áang. Jáadaa? Áang, Jáadaa gyaa uu íijang, hang gwaa?

Gam áatl’an Jáadaa, gam áatl’an Daláay is’anggang [the little girl, Daláay is not here].

K: Xaaat’áa ’láasii, gam áajii st’asgáay is’ánggang, st’ask’agaa kýáajaa uu íijang.

[dear people, these here are not shoes, they are boots].

Wiid: Gyáagan aa!


Ḵa’iljuus: Húu ’láagang, Wiid. (Wiid exits).

K: Xaaat’áa ’láasii, daláng aa Hl kyáanangeeg dii gudánggang (holds up a knit hat with ears)

Xá: Hiilangaay

K: Gam Hiilangaay gyaa is’ánggang. Gúus uu aa íijang [it’s not Hiilangaay’s. What is this?] – pointing to the hat.

Child: Yáahl.

K: Áang Yáahlgyaa uu íijang. Dáa yahk’iyáagang (yes, it’s Yáahl’s. You are right).

Xaaat’áa ’láasii, gúusuu áa íijang? [dear people, what is this?] – points to hat again.

St’asgagaa gw is? – shows pink shoe.
Xúuj: gáa’anuu.

K: Gáa’anuu! K’udáats’ gw is?

Several children: Gáa’anuu.

K: Gúús uu aa íijang? Daláng gw ts’a k’ísigidan.

Wiid: I don’t even know (in English).

K: Dajáng. Dajáng

Nagats’ii, Wiid repeat: Dajáng!

K: Díi gingáan hl súu: Dajáng.

Nagats’ii, Wiid and a couple of others: Dajáng.

(Xa wanders off to window, K. reminds him to sit in XK, Xa returns to his seat on the floor.)

K: Dajáng (a couple children repeat: dajáng)

K: Gam gyáagan dajáng is’ánggang. Gam Xúujgyaa dajáng is’ánggang (holding it by Xúuj)

Gíisdgyaa dajangáay íijang?

A couple of children: Yáahl!

K: Yáahl gyaa! ’láa áwyaagang! Áa uu íijang, Yáahl! [Yáahl’s. Very good. Here it is, Yáahl]

K: Ánas hánsan? Adaahl Simon käaydan, dajáng…. áaji dajáng ’ll da’aa gyáan. iik’waan gam ’laagyaaw is’ánggan. Gíisdyaa, gísddgyaa áajii dajángaay íijang? [ This one too. Yesterday Simon left. He had this hat. Although it wasn’t his hat. Whose hat is this?]

Children, Xúuj: that’s Simon’s

Children: no
K: Wahaa! Hin 'l súudgyaan

Child: Mine!


Child: Gyaa

K: gan

Child: gan

K: gyáagan aaa.

Child: Gyáagan aa!

(children becoming a bit restless, crowding closer to K.

Child: This is my hat. (puts it on)

K: Háw’aa. Dáa gw Çiíhlgii? Xaat’áa ’táasii, Gúus uu weéd dalang isdáang kasaang? (makes hand movement like washing hands)

Wiid, in English: I know you never…. (everyone laughs)

Gan dáng únsads dluu stl’áang hl asíig isdáa (if you know, put your hands up)

Wáayaad kwáan st’igálgan, ahljiíhl uu….ahljiíhl uu

stl’áang t’aláng dlánsaang.

Nagats’ii, Wiid (finish sentence, K. makes hand-washing movement): …Stl’áang t’aláng dlánsaang

K (repeats): Stl’áang t’aláng dlánsaang

Xáwgaay, Wiid: Wáa salíid táawaay ts’udaláa tl’áng táasaang [ afterwards, we are going to have snack].

K: Háay, díi dlaa hl isdáal’uu
(overall, the boys stayed remarkably engaged during this 10-minute activity!)

**Commentary:**

The children present here, especially the older ones, readily reply with the noun words for clothes when prompted by me. They are still working on the possessives (gyáagan =mine, X gyaa= so and so’s but when prompted will repeat them. In a couple of instances, when asked whose item it is, they identify it in the 3rd person, for example: Gaagaay K’uyåang, Jaadaas – adding the English 3rd person -s.

IMG_2709.MOV

(3 boys Yáahl, Xúuj and X̱a in chairs, K’uyåang reads.

K’udaats’ Guhlahl, K’un Guhlahl.

The children repeat the Xyaa! At the end of each sentence

Then K. reads the book about “Yuck food” and good food.

**Comments:**

The children in this segment are some of the youngest children at Xúuj Náay. Compared with the boys in clip IMG_2740.MOV below, the boys are fidgety, and volunteer fewer responses in Xaad Kil.. They do, however, interact with me, and in a couple of instances repeat a word that I say.

When pointing to the foods in the book, they use the English words (hot sauce, earwax).
This short clip shows the children – in this case all boys - interacting with the lead teacher (K’uyáang) in a 15 min. “gym” session. K’uyáang prompts them using the phrases:

Xašḵáaju hlaa [catch it!]

Díi aa hl da k’áat’aa [pass or throw it to me]

Sku sk’áajaaw ball [Ball!]

**Comment:**

As they carry out the actions of passing and throwing the ball to one another and to me, the children continually repeat, “sku skáajaa.”

K’uyáang gives instructions:

Deep breathing-relaxing.

Count to 10 stretching, prompting children in Xaad kil:

“Touch your toes”

Children count in chorus to 10

K. asks “Gíisd uu kat’úugang? (who is thirsty?), several raise their hands.

Ka’iljuus leads some children to get a drink.

Haida Dancing:

K’uyáang (with remaining 5 children and Yahltáats’ii) prompts children in XK to an activity:
“Get a chair and put chair next to me”

Táan ƙ’uhl ƙ’awaang” – [sit by Táan]

Instructions for singing the Dinner Song and practicing for a luncheon to take place Valentine’s Day with elders.

K’uyáang leads the song, demonstrates with the boys the dance movements for Haida dancing.

Gives instructions to sing loud and and clear (k’ajúu áwyaa)

X̱a is first to step forward to sing the song, walking around.

Next Xúuj – acts shy. K’uyáang steps close and and supports X. who gets up and then dances, lifting his arms in Haida style, while running.

Chiin – immediately steps forward and dances a round.

Xáwgaay ditto

Wiid – sings the first line of the song then steps up and dances a round.

K. prompts “K’áad isgyáan Gáagaa Yahltáats’ii” GY steps forward with K’áad and they dance a round.

Táan who briefly steps forward.

Prompts Yáahl, who does not react, K asks who will help Yáahl, Táan sings the first line.

K’uyáang prompts everyone singing one more time. All children get up and hop around, some lifting their elbows in Haida style dancing.

IMG 3943.MOV

This segment involves the children doing a Haida song and dancing.

K’uyáang sings and drums a gambling song. The children do hand movements.
There is some level of attention span, but not a whole lot.

Then the group sings the iihlants'gaay (boys-men’s) song. Boys walks, dance, prance around the perimeter of the mat, the older ones making Haida men’s dance movements with elbows up.

When prompted by name by K’uyáang “Huu gw daláng Çiihlgii?” they all 3 respond “áang”.

Then follows the jáadgaay (girls-women’s) dance: the three girls, Stl'akáam, Kwaanáa and walk around the mat in girl’s dancing fashion with elbows to hips.

IMG 2124.MOV

K’uyáang in front, in small whole group room in back. 5 children on their stomachs facing him. Yahltáats’ii, an adult helper, is to the left


Gin tíigaa..

lît’ gyaa…. [points]

Children: chiín

K: chiínaay iijang. Íiit’gyaa [points]..

Ch.: Xáay (dog)

K: Íiit’gyaa xáay uu iijang.

Íiit’gyaa [prompts and points to cat]
Ch: düus…– [Stl’akam, K’áad (?) Hiilangaay and K’áad reply in chorus. All but one child is responding and interacting.

K: finishes…duujaay uu íijang.

K: Íít’gyaa [shows and prompts] skawáay íijang

Ch. Dúus.

K: ‘láa gyaa ḋawáay[K. motions egg-shape] íijang

K’ustanáay íijang. Háw’aa.

[ children step forward to point to animal in picture of book]

[K. prompts children to sit in their spots – are these animal skins?]


Gíijgwaa daláng dii tlaadsaang! [this one, too, dear people. Red hat, green hat]

Ch. Interrupts: ???

K: Dajáng ḋuhlahl, dajáng sGíínáawgaa [blue hat, green hat]

Children echo “dajáng ḋuhlahl, dajáng sGíínáawgaa.

**Comments:**

By now several of them are finishing, on prompt, and are able to say short descriptive sentences that connect an object with a colour, when prompted with a picture [note: in Kh the noun goes first, then the verb that describes its quality, different from English]. Some of the children use some of the colour words, although they are still working on identifying the Xaad kil color terms by name.
K’uyáang and four boys in the reading room:

Xawgaay, Núu, Wiid, Xa each on their own small chair.

K. sits on floor, has several children’s books.

K: Áajii kugiñaay dii.. [to Nagats’ii who has picked up a bell that K. keeps on the floor to show that an activity is finished]: kak’adáangwaay diig hi isdéa! [Nagats’ii gives him the bell]

Q: Can I read a story?

K: dámaan dáng dláajuus dluu, áang! [if you behave well, yes]

K: Xaat’áa ‘láasii, sangáay gúusuwees y’aláng ta sk’at’áa’angkasaang. [I am going to teach you weather words. – holding up a set of laminated drawings that show kinds of weather]

K: Sán uu áajii sangáay Gìidang? [holding up card of rain]

Núu: Gwa’áaw [rain. Xa says something in English, “I grab it, Núu leans forward on chair, focused on cards. Nagats’ii fidgets in chair.

K: Sán uu áajii [emphasizes áajii] sangáay Gìidang? [holding up card of rain, Nagats’ii briefly looks at card]

Nagats’ii: yáanaa [yáanangaa = cloud]

K: háwsan… hl isdgudáng? [again, try it again]
Xáwgaay: yáanangaa… [self-corrects, makes gesture like “heat”] xayaa! [sunny]

Xa [repeats Núu’s gesture] and Jonah: Xayáa!

K: [shows card for “cold”] Sán uu áajii sangáay Ġíidang?

Núu (before K. finishes the sentence): tadáaa!

Xa, Núu and Wiid: tadáa!

K: Sán uu áajii sangáay Ġíidang?

Nagats’ii, Núu: Yáanaa [cloudy sky]

K: Nagats’ii isgyáan Núu, häw’aa!

[K lifts another card]

Nagats’ii: kajúu [uses k]

Núu: dajuu [uses d]

Nagats’ii and Núu together: dajúu [sounds like a d]

K: tajúu, häw’aa! [windy, thank you!]

Nagats’ii [in English]: someone roll my sleeve up?

K to Nagats’ii: Gáagaa Yahttáats’ii ga tlaad hlangaa [Uncle Yahttáats’ii will help - Nagats’ii leaves his seat].

K: Sán uu áajii sangáay Ġíidang, Xaat’áa ‘láasii [holds picture of “snow” but it is also kind of foggy in the picture]

Núu: yáanaa

Wiid [English – moves closer, points to card]: snow, snow, snow!

K: Sán uu “snow” Xaad kihl kya’áang?

Wiid: Santa!
Núu [English]: everybody shop? over Christmas

K: daláng ts’a k’iiisgiidang? [You folks are stuck] T’a, t’a’aa...

Nagats’ii [still standing off to the side with Yahltáats’ii who is fixing his sleeve]: t’a’áaw.

K: Áang, ’láa áwyaaang, Nagats’ii! [yes, very good, Nagats’ii!]

[children say more English, not clear. Nagats’ii whistles]

Háw’aa Xaat’áa ‘lääsi. lii’ an dáng liidadada hlangaa [directed at Nagats’ii, who whistles]

Núu: [English] That one, that one [pointing to a book]

K: Nagats’ii? [K points to a book, Nagats’ii nods]

K: ’laaagang. Kugiin kwáan tl’áang da’áang [there are lots of books]. Gínaas-g uu kugiinaay daláng guláagang. [Nagats’ii points to “Yuck” book]

K: Áang, güus hánsan áa [which other one? - selects one of the SHIP books]

K: Xaat’áa ‘lääsi, wéed dii hlúu kugiin daláng liidadasaang, Núu damáan diig tlaadsaang

[dear people, now we are going to read the “my body” book. Núu wil help me, prompting G.]

[Turns to Xa] damáan hl dlajúu! [behave yourself, re-arranges his chair].

’wáa sallid iitl’ an… áajii kugiín Nagats’ii, iitl’ an Nagats’ii liidadasaang. Húu gw daláng Gíihlgii [and then this book, Nagats’ii is going to read us this book. Are you ready?]

K: Díi [points to whole body] ....

Nagats’ii: díi no...

K: díi [points to head, shows picture of person’s head in book]

Núu: táts! [uses a t sound]
K: díi ḵaj [models speech] uu iijang. [this is my head]

K: díi... [picture of woman showing open mouth]

Wiid: kun, kun, kun [nose]

K: ḵats, kún ḵahl.... [prompts and points: head, nose, ..]

Nagats’ii: ḵahlili! [mouth]

K: ḵahlili, díi ḵahlili uu iijang.

K: díi... [shows picture of child pointing to chin]

Nagats’ii: xiyay, xwiyaay

K: hlkáay, díi hlkáay uu iijang. Díi ... [shows picture of child holding belly]

Nagats’ii: [punches his belly] kiits! (plain, not glottalized k)

K: k’ij, díi k’ij uu iijang. Díi ... [points to person with hand in book]

Nagats’ii, Ẋa and Núu: stláay

K: ... stláay uu iijang, hâw’aa Ẋa! Díi [picture with leg]

Nagats’ii, others echo: k’ulúu!

Nagats’ii: Núu! [who is touching his leg with his feet]

K: Gam ak’ún hl ‘wáa’ang, Núu [admonishes Núu Don’t do that]

Yahltáats’ii: háwsluwaan [that is enough, stop it. K. moves N’s chair to face him], ɬáagang. Núu, gam dáamaan dâng dlajúu’anggs dluu, gam díi guláa’anggang [N, if you don’t behave, I won’t be happy]. Díi [points to picture showing ‘head’]

Núu: gats [meaning Ɂaj, g instead of k pronounced]

K: díi Ɂang uu iijang [my face]. Díi [picture of nose]

Núu and Ẋawgaay: kún!
K: Dii kún uu iijang!

K: Dáng sgíl uu íijang [it’s your belly button - pronoun switches from “my” to “you”].

Dáng k’ulúú ḵaj..[your knee], Dáng xi k’usíi [your elbow]

Xa]áwgaay [lies on chair, in English]: I’m really tired!

K: Dáng x̱angaagang! [you look like it!. Dang hlúu [your body], díi …

Xáwgaay: xängii

K: Dii xängii uu íijang! [these are my eyes]

K: díi …. [points to arm]

Núu: xyáay!

háw’aa, díi xyáay. Xaad kil daláng gúusuus dluu díi guláa áwyagang!

[thank you, my arm. I like when you folks speak Haida].

K: Dii… [picture of two hands].

Núu: stláay

K: Xa – díi…

Xa: stláay

K: áa uu díi stláay [points to hand, then fingers], áa uu díi….

Núu: fingers!

K: Sán uu “fingers” Xaad kíhl kya’áang? [ what are fingers called in Haida?] Stl…

Nagats’ii: Stla ᵴängii!

K: Dii stlaḵängii, háw’aa! Dáng …[picture of ears]

Nagats’ii: gyúu!
K: Dàng gyúu. Díi k’ulúu kaj [knee], dii [picture of toes]…

Díi st’a ḷangii uu íijang. Háw’aa áa uu tláan Giiidang.

K: Wéed Nagats’ii iitl’an ’liidadaasaang.

[this is the “Yuck” book. Nagats’ii now “reads” or tells the sentence that goes with each page in the book]

Spaghetti k’ujgad ’láagang

Crayons gam k’ujgad ’láa’ánggang

Blueberries

Suup uu k’ujgad ’láagang

Χawgaay shows about 20 pictures in the book, usually uses the subject in English (chocolate sauce, spaghetti, hot sauce, blueberries, pie etc.

Uses chiin (fish),

He uses uu focus marker after the subject.

Correctly in all sentences uses the negative suffix ’ang with gam.

**Comments:**

- The kids speak to me in English, but I continually answer in Haida.

They replace our k sound with d or k sound. Often time they need a little hint to help stay on task. Some of our most difficult sounds are softened but comprehensible when they use it in speech. This includes the following sounds (G, k, and k’).
Xawgaay does a splendid job at reading the images of the book. He comes across soap and forgets how to say it. He then asks me “Stláang dlan hlaa?” meaning wash your hands. I then help him with the word stláang dláanw meaning soap. Books like this provide the kids a great tool to learn basic functions of the language like how to make a positive and negative sentence.

IMG_2739.MOV

Stl’aḵam, Hiilangaay and Xúuj

The segment starts with K. putting out books on the floor, which triggers a conversation between Hiilangaay and Xúuj (in English) about puppies,

K. answers in XK, tells Hiilangaay they’re going to get a puppy. Xúuj says he will get a cat, a stuffy cat (English)

K. [with weather pictures]: Sán uu áajii sangáay iiijang? [what kind of weather is this?]

Xúuj: tadáa, the other two say it immediately: tadá [cold]

’laa áwyagang!

K: Sán uu áajii sangáay iiijang:

Xúuj and Hiilangaay: xayáa (sunny)

Sán uu áajii sangáay…

Xúuj, Hiilangaay and Stl’aḵam(together): yáananaa! [Xúuj and Hiil. change ng sound into n]

K. [tells Hiilangaay] dáng náan áa uu iiijang [your grandmother is over there – Hiilangaay runs to hug her]

K: ’láa áwyagang

Stl’aḵam: That’s your grandma [English].
K: Áang. Ilskyalas aw 'Il iijang [she is Ilsgyalas (Marita’s) mother – To Hiilangaay]
K’:awáa [sit down – H. sits down]

K: Sán uu áajii sangáay iijang? [what kind of weather is this?]

Hiilangaay: Xayáa

Stl’aḵam: Xayáa

K: Waháa! [indicating this is incorrect]

Hiilangaay: tsajuu (uses ts instead of ta)

Stl’aḵam: tajuu

K: tajúu, háw’aa

K: Sán uu áajii sangáay iijang? [what kind of weather is this?]

Stl’aḵam: gwa’áaw [rain]

K: Sán uu áajii sangáay iijang? Ánas hánsan? [again - shows picture of snow but it also shows fog]

Xúuj: Yáanangaa [fog] – Stl’aḵam repeats: Yáanangee

Stl’aḵam: (a)’áaw

K: t’a’áaw! Háw’aa!

Xúuj: ta’áaw

K: T’a’áaw, háw’aa, ernelsáa ́láasii!

K: (puts out books on the floor)

Hiilang: the puppy one! (Eng.)

K: Ginasg uu dáng sdahlaang [which one do you want?]
Hiilang: points to one of the books. Then Stl'aḵam points to one of the books after the question is repeated.

K: 'láagang! Stl'aḵam, Hiilangaay isgyáan Xúuj: [describes topics of books in X]

íít' gyaa …

Hiilangaay and Xúuj… Chiinaay uu íijang

K: íít' gyaa …. 

Hiilangaay: Xaay [dog]

íít'gyaa

Gíisdluu Xáay tl' da’áang? HIĜunahl gwaa? [how many dogs do they have? 3?]

Stl'aḵam: Gáa’anuu, sdáng!

K: Aang, Xa sdáng tl’ da’áang! [yes, they have 2 dogs]

K: íít'gyaa…. [our….]

Hiilangaay: dúus! [cat]

K: Íítl’ gyaa dúujaay uu íijang [this is our cat]

Gíisd hánsan dúus da’áang?

Xúuj lifts his hand?

Dáa gw dúus da’áa?

Xúuj: dúus

K: [to Stl’aḵam]: dáa gw dúus da’áa?

Stl’aḵam: Charli.
K: Áang, Charli hín uu 'll kya’áang [yes, his name is Charli]

Hiilangaay: Mr. Kittycat.

K: Dàa gw dúus da’áa?

Hiilangaay: my chanaa

K: Hiilangaay chan dúus da’áang.

Xúuj: I’m going to my chinna’s too!

K: Hiilangaay chan uu dúus da’áang. [Hiilangaay’s grandfather has a cat]

Sán uu dáng chan-gyaa dúus kya’áang. What is your grandfather’s cat called?

H: Mr Kittycat

K: litl’gyaa skáawaay ijang. Dàa gw skáaw da’áa? [these are our chickens. Do you have a chicken?]

Hiilangaay: Áang [nods]

Áang. Hiilangaay aa dáng stáwjawaas dluu, skáaw dang dlagáang hlangaasaang [if you visit Hiilangaay you might hold a chicken]

Hiilangaay: If you come to my house.

K: Áang. Hiilangaaygyaa náay aa 'll is.

[talk H. and X of choking chickens if you pack them by the neck, in Engl. Xúuj: you won’t see them again. I don’t want to die].

K: repeats this in XK. Háay. Gam nang tl’aa k’ut’álgay gudáang’anggang.

Aa uu kêw ijang. Giisdluu kêw tl’ da’áang? [how many eggs do they have?] Repeats. Stánsang gwaa?

Hiilang: That many (Eng.) stánsang. [motions with fingers]
K: xyaa! [Hiiilangaay motions “3”]

K: Sán uu 3 ḋaad kihl kya’áang? [what do you call 3 in Haida]

Stl’aḵam: HlG̱uunahl! [three].

Comments:

This clip shows a number of interactions:

The children actively engage in an English conversation about puppies that is triggered by a book about puppies displayed on the floor.

It takes a couple of attempts to stir the conversation back to XK.

In several instances the children show that they understand prompts in ḋaad Kil that are not accompanied by much scaffolding of gesture: when they pick up a book after being prompted, when Hiiilangaay goes to see his Naan. When prompted for number of dogs and number of cats, they identify that the question is about quantity. Two is answered correctly, three takes a couple of attempts.

They show knowledge of several animal terms (xaa, ḋḵaaw, dúus) when they respond by naming the animal I prompt for.

IMG_2775.MOV

Playdough activity with Hiiilangaay and Stl’aḵam(9 Feb. 2019)

[making body parts from different colours of playdough. K. gives instructions and models doing it]

Stl’aḵam: I’m making kits
Hiilangaay: I'm making arms.

K: Sán uu "arms" ɂaad kihl kya’áang?

Hiilangaay: I forgot.

K: Stl’ałam, ’láag hl tlaad! [Aanaa, help him]

A: Xyáay.

H: xyáay. [nods]

[after Hiilangaay finishes his model human]

K: Giisíd uu dáng tlaahlaang? [who did you make?]

Hiilangaay: chanáal [grandfather]

K: Chanáa? [Hiilangaay nods] ooh, gam awáng gw dáng tlaahl’aangaa? [you didn’t make your mother?]


Hiilangaay: [gives thumbs-up signal]

K: Díi chan….

Hiilangaay: ..áwyaaan(g) – missing the ’láa [good, but using AUX áwyaa- very

K: Díi chan ’láa…. H: awyaagan.

To Stl’ałam: Sán uu dáng aw… díi aw…

Stl’ałam: ’láagang. [she is fine]
**Comments:**

While overall, the playdough activity did not at first yield much speech production despite my prompting in XK, the two children stayed on task for the duration of the full 13 min. activity.

The replies showed some code-mixing (Aanaa: I’m making ki:ts).

Both children were able to reply to some questions about whom they were making, and both replied to the question about how the person they were making was doing.

The activity with the clothing and color book did not yield much naming of colors by Híilangaay and Stl’aḵam.

However, as I kept talking to them giving prompts, they both started to go to different parts of the room, spontaneously bringing me objects that were of the same color that I just showed in the picture book. When prompted afterwards, both children attempt to pronounce “st’ask’agáa sQináawgaa” “st’ask’agáa Guhlahl” and several others. Conclusion: The children are still working on actively being able to produce the XK terms for particular colors but can identify specific colors by bringing objects of a color term just named.
Chapter 5. Conclusions: Strengths and Challenges of Xántsii Náay Language Use

After reviewing all of the clips, several strengths can be identified with the use of Xaad kil at Xántsii Náay. One accomplishment is that I have been able to maintain an immersion environment in all of recordings taken. This is proving that even with one speaker, an immersion environment can be maintained no matter what the odds are. I admit that sometimes I do indeed have to whisper English to a child that is in disarray. By and large, I uphold Xaad kil use from 8:45-1:05pm every work day. This isn’t easy. In fact, it would be much easier to maintain a bilingual environment. Although if this were to happen, English would overtake Xaad kil in most interactions and dialogue. Having a protected space for a protected time.

Another observation is that the children evidently show comprehension in a few different ways. They reply quite well to prompts, commands, yes/no questions, and sequenced orders. They respond accurately when gestures and body language are utilized. It is especially helpful when I volunteer an older child to model what a conversation or dialogue with me before I ask the same of another. Granted, the students of any age do not often reply to me with complete sentences. They reply more often with single words or expressions. Another evident observation is that all the students actively think about and reflect on the language that is used at Xántsii Náay. The older students are usually the stronger learners and are able to reply quicker with more production of language. The younger students need a little more processing time and are more inclined to reply with a body action or gesture. There is a number of segments where some of the children (especially Xawgaay, Xántsii, Aanaa, Ahyakak) volunteer Haida terms (weather, animals, clothes) when I read them a book. Thus, there is some speech production going on. Predictably, there is code-mixing going on.

In the clips, some children get restless. Although with a bit of prompting, correcting and intervention they by and large manage to stay on task for the 10-minute segments of activities. Over the last six months or so, they have made a lot of progress. In the beginning, many students were not use to a structured environment. Once we were able to maintain a routine, implement discipline, and incentivize with a rewards chart, they became more focused. It also helps to have interesting topics and lessons to teach them in order to maintain their undivided attention for 10-15 minutes. In some of
the recordings, the students are very close to me and are anxious to participate. This inclination to engage in the lesson shows a lot of promise.

There are many challenges that still need to be overcome. One of the challenges is the fact that all of the children’s L1 is definitely English. Thus, they often start to spontaneously think of something that triggers comments and conversation in English between them, and in addressing me the teacher. They obviously want to communicate what they see, feel, and think about. My strategy in trying to combat this often to repeat in Xaad Kil what the child just said. This is difficult at times, because the child shows that they understand the Xaad Kil, and they respond to it in English (e.g. when Hiilangaay and Xíntsii spontaneously had their conversation about a puppy, and when K. read the Kagan Jaad (Mouse Woman0 story to Hiilangaay and Aanaa (IMG_2777.MOV). This is a difficult matter with no clear solution. In reflection of her own experiences, Professor Marianne Ignace said, "with my own children, I used the strategy to repeat in the Indigenous language (Secwepemctsin, in this case), what my child, or sometimes two or three of them, had just communicated to me in English in replying in English to a question, or in mixed code. In retrospect, one of the greatest challenges we face as parents, caregivers and teachers in using the Indigenous language with children who are already dominant in English, is to "play deaf" or ignore English. This is obviously a challenge for the teacher or adult user of the Indigenous language when communicating with children in a language nest setting." This is the case with all but two of the children attending Xíntsii Náay. The kids that are under two are the only ones who are nonverbal and are not dominant in English. This causes me to think back about how the Hawaiians emphasized keeping the babies in the preschool and making sure that they are hearing the language being spoken every day. They wanted us to focus our energy in them. They said they would be your strongest speakers.

By and large, I can conclude that the Xíntsii Náay children’s pronunciation is still in progress. It appears that it is going to take longer for them to produce more fluid conversations and spontaneous use of the language in everyday interactions. It seemed quite enticing when I read that the Hawaiians were able to get their children speaking within 3-4 months of exposure. It is worth flagging that the Hawaiian language has an easier road when it comes to enunciating the sounds. The Hawaiian language has 4 vowels and 12 consonants. In comparison, Xaad kil has 7 vowels and 33 consonants. Some of the Xaad kil sounds were evidently difficult for the students to produce, such as
the uvular consonant sounds, and glottalized sounds. If we believe in research results from early L2 language acquisition, with time, they will be able to do this.
References


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