

***Secwepemctsin Narratives of Cultural Practices in  
Pregnancy, Birthing and Postpartum Care*** by

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B.A., Simon Fraser University, 2011

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## Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

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or

- b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University

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## **Abstract**

Research for *Cultural Practices: Narratives of Pregnancy, Birth and Postpartum Care* took place within Secwepemúlecw (the territory of the Secwépemc people). Through four narratives by Secwépemc Elders, cultural practices of pregnancy, birthing and postpartum care are examined through key findings and linguistic analysis. Elders discuss a time when expecting mothers gave birth in the home and used traditional medicines from the land to care for themselves and for their babies. Through these vivid narratives we are able to envision Secwépemc cultural practices and aim to put them into practice for the future generations.

**Keywords:** Secwepemctsín; Secwépemc; Pregnancy; Birth; Postpartum Care; Narratives

## **Dedication**

As a Secwépemc woman, mother, and language learner it was an honour to sit with the Elders and document their knowledge and stories. Kukwstsétselp to the Elders who graciously took time to contribute to this research. To my mentor, Mona; you helped me find my passion in Secwepemctsín the moment I walked into your classroom. This research was possible because of your help and your teachings. To my dad, my biggest supporter of education in the classroom and on the land. You have shown me how to balance a life of higher learning in the classroom and in Secwépemc ways of knowing. To my mom; you have provided such a strong example of what it means to be a mother. I have often said before that you are my greatest teacher of compassion. To the cultural knowledge holders, you have shown me a beautiful life of culture and ceremony. My children have been gifted so many sacred experiences in their lives because of your commitment to living a culturally strong life filled with ceremony and language. Finally, to my beautiful children; I thank you for all the sacrifices you unknowingly made for mommy to go to the “big school”. Thank you for waiting so patiently and with a loving embrace each time I returned. Thank you for being the biggest inspirations in my life. Thank you for the unconditional love and teaching me ever single day what it means to be a Secwépemc woman and raise Secwépemc children.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge everyone who made it possible to complete this research. To my professors, you have all given me the tools to confidently work at language revitalization in my community and in the Secwepémc Nation. To Marianne, your passion and drive for language revitalization is such an inspiration. Thank you for making this Master's cohort possible and always advocating for us. My journey in education would not have been possible without the support of my work supervisor and all the staff at Neqweyqwelsten School. Thank you for supporting me the whole way through. To Kyé7e (Ida Matthew), Aunty Ida William, Grandpa Bill, Grandpa Len, and anyone who have helped me in my language journey, you have built incredible foundation of Secwepemctsin that I will continue to build upon in your honour.

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## **Preface**

This research has a deep and meaningful connection with me as a Secwépemc mother. I am a mother of two children: a daughter, River (age 6) and a son, Iss-goo-naht-khi-too-pii (age 3). About a year before I became pregnant with my daughter, I experienced my first pregnancy. That pregnancy ended in a miscarriage and left me with an emptiness that I urgently wanted to fill, and I aimed to do so through a cultural approach. So, when I was blessed with another pregnancy, I made it a goal to incorporate as many cultural practices throughout the entire process. I turned to those in our circle we knew would be able to help my partner and I. Not only did we incorporate Secwépemc culture, but we drew from other cultural teachings as well; such as the Blackfoot culture because of the deep roots from my children's paternal and maternal grandparents. As young parents who were learning the language, we wanted to find a wholesome approach to pregnancy, birth, and postpartum care that included traditional ways of knowing that had been passed down for generations in the language. In my family, the knowledge transfer in the language stopped two generations ago and was replaced with English. I continue to strive to reclaim this knowledge system in honour of my parents, who were denied this knowledge system in the language; for my children, who will inherit this knowledge system; and finally, for myself, to help guide me as I raise two young Secwépemc children.

# Chapter 1.

## Introduction

### 1.1. About the Project

This project took place within Secwepemcúlecw (see Figure 1) and involved two (2) of the seventeen (17) communities within the Nation. The purpose of this research was to document and learn information about Secwépemc cultural practices regarding pregnancy, the birthing process and postpartum care through narratives in Secwepemctsín (the language of the Secwépemc people). Four (4) Elders within the Secwépemc Nation contributed to the project: Mona Jules of Simpcw (originally from Skeetchestn), William Pete of Simpcw, Ronald Ignace from Skeetchestn and Bernadette (Garlene) Dodson (nee Jules) from Skeetchestn. I sought to provide a balance of perspectives and knowledge systems through both the female and male narratives. The research provides an avenue to recognize these Elders for their tremendous contributions in language revitalization as well as being knowledge carriers of Secwépemc cultural practice.

My hope is that this research will combine the two disciplines of health care and language into a work that is beneficial to Secwépemc families. The research is not only an example of language revitalization but is a document that will unfold traditional roles of Secwépemc family members. The demand for knowledge on this topic is increasingly high, with very little information in Secwepemctsín published in public domain. My hope is that this document will help families access this information, that they otherwise may not have access to. For example, families who no longer have fluent speakers in their family, or for those who do not have grandmothers, grandfathers, aunts, uncles, sisters or any family member who could offer guidance in such an important transition time for young families. By far the most important goal of this research, is to give new parents the tools and information to incorporate cultural practices and language for the baby at the earliest stage possible. So that the babies are welcomed into this world and into a Nation that is strong in language and culture.

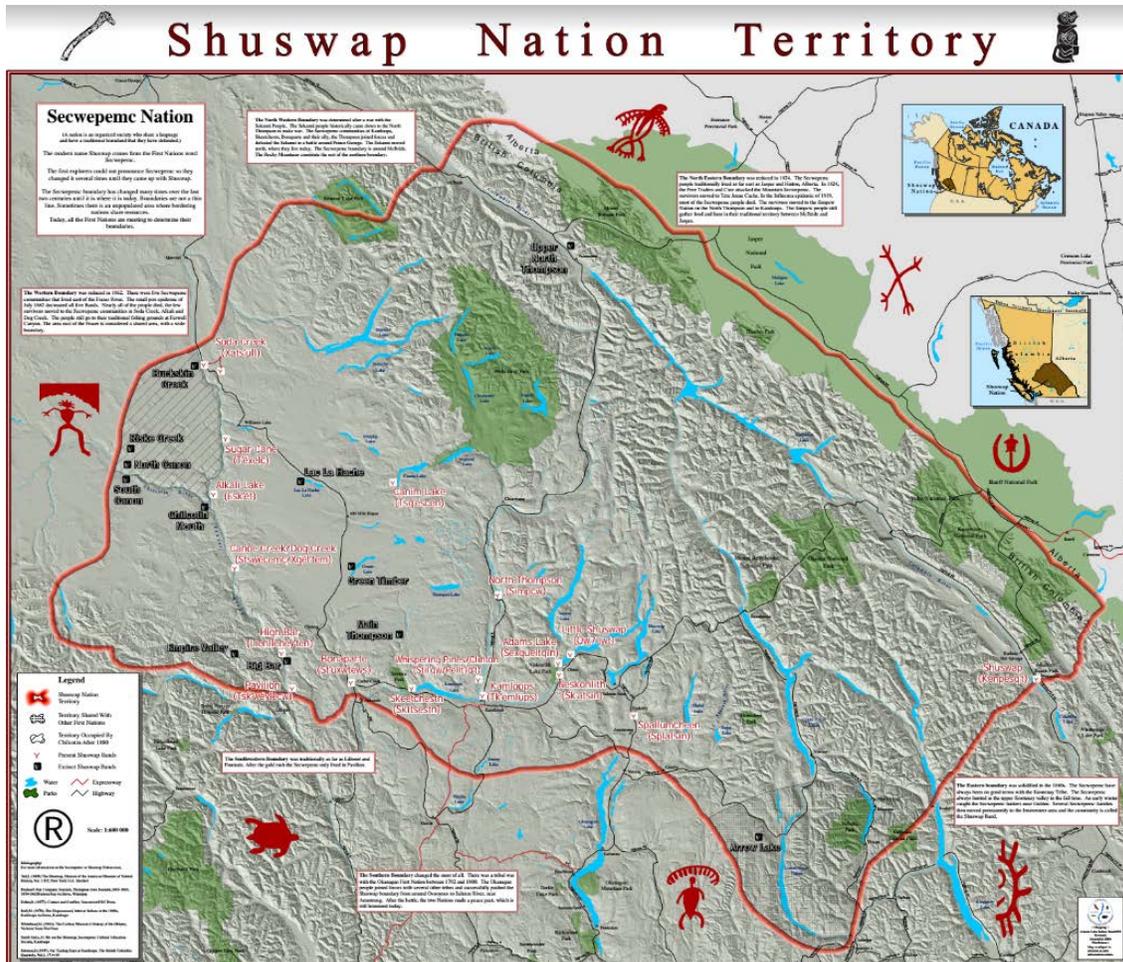


Figure 1 Secwépemc Map

Source: Adams Lake Indian Band, Natural Resources, GIS Department

## 1.2. Research Methodology

Being Secwépemc myself, as well as knowing the Elders prior to conducting the research, challenges as well as benefits unfolded throughout the process. What usually took a visit and a cup of tea now required a formality that neither of us were accustomed to when working with one another. The process still involved a visit with each Elder prior to recording the narratives. Narratives were gathered by conducting one-on-one interviews with four (4) Elders. I approached Elders who I already had a connection with, either through family, community, or work in the field of language revitalization. As the primary researcher and Secwépemc Nation member, I was able to approach the Elders in person and present with the study detail of the research project. Each Elder was given at least a full twenty-four hours to think about their story and what they wanted to share

in the interview. The interviews were conducted at a place where the Elder deemed fit. The Elders told their story in Secwepemctsin while I audio recorded with a hand held device and wrote down notes that were either a quick summary of what I could understand in their interview, or words that I heard often and needed to look up the meaning later. Following each interview, I uploaded the audio recorded onto my laptop and opened the file in a program called Audacity Pro. From there, typed out the narratives into Conversation Analysis (CA) transcription<sup>1</sup>. Once that step was complete, I met again with each Elder separately to review the transcriptions. We sat down together and replayed the audio file of the interview line by line. Each Elder then helped me translate from Secwepemctsin to English. Also, after each interview, I audio recorded a reflection of my thoughts on my experience, realizations, and what I had learned. Each narrative can be found in Chapter 3. Following each of the narratives will be key findings, as well as a linguistic analysis.

### **1.3. My Connection**

I am Secwépemc from the community Simpcw First Nation. I am also a mother and a learner of the language, with the goal of providing my children their birthright to their language. I truly began to understand the importance of Secwépemc culture and language once I was gifted the responsibility of sharing it with my children. My journey of learning Secwepemctsin and becoming a mother has brought incredible richness and purpose to my life. This is my story.

As a child, my parents made the decision to place me in Neqweyqwelsten School, a local community school within Simpcw First Nation. I attended Neqweyqwelsten School from kindergarten to the end of grade five. At that time, Simpcw had a healthy population of Elders that spoke Secwepemctsin, so the school was able to incorporate an in-house Elders' program. The Elders rotated language blocks and we as students began our language learning journey. It was our parents dream to connect their children to the birthright of language that they were denied. The Simpcw Elders developed our ear for the language at an early age. They taught us the intricate sounds

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<sup>1</sup> Transcriptions are adjusted with minor writing conventions by Mona Jules that differ slightly from Kuipers Dictionary

of the language and how the sounds flow together so beautifully. They taught us stories, songs, basketry, moccasin making, information about food and medicinal plants – our culture was intertwined within Secwepemctsin. At the end of grade five, I was told by my parents that I would be moved down to the public school in Barriere (the closest settler town) along with the other children my age from Simpcw. We attended Barriere Elementary school, a school that only offered French as a second language. I remember the astounding feeling that came with sitting in a French classroom for the first time; the feeling of discomfort, confusion and indifference. I listened to my peers one by one say their names and how old they were in French. It sounded like unemotional, memorized utterances that I could not connect to. Although the teacher did not seem ill-intentioned, when it was my turn to speak those lines, the teacher did not ease me into the process. Nor did the teacher come to my aid. It was made clear that I was meant to repeat the pattern spoken by my peers, and nothing else. The experience was so foreign from how the Elders in Simpcw had taught. That was the beginning of the ten year disconnect in my language learning journey. It wasn't until my third year of university that I found my way back to Secwepemctsin. It immediately found my love for the language again and pursued a First Nations Language Proficiency Certificate in Secwepemctsin, which led into a Bachelor of Arts with a joint major in First Nations Studies and Linguistics. I have since then, continued to further my knowledge in Secwepemctsin and teach what I know at the same school I grew up in, Neqweyqwelsten School. My language journey has connected me to the traditions, the culture and the land. It has provided me a deep connection to who I am as a Secwépehc Woman.

I have always known that I wanted to pass down the language and culture to my children. It was a main consideration when my partner and I decided to start our family. My first pregnancy heartbreakingly resulted in miscarriage at the beginning of my second trimester. The cultural knowledge holders in our lives stepped forward to help us with our grief and loss through ceremony. Our first act as parents was to help our little one carry on her journey to the spirit world. We did so in the comfort and healing place of the *sq'ilye* (sweat lodge), a ceremony built in the representation of the mother's womb. It was a devastating yet powerful experience that will stay with me forever.

My second pregnancy gifted us with a beautiful and healthy baby girl. Language and culture were influential in the birth and care of our daughter. We sought advice on when to tell family and friends the happy news; on the foods I should be eating; on the

do's and don'ts of pregnancy. We spoke with Elders, grandparents, parents, pipe carriers, and knowledge holders – not all were Secwépemc, but had a strong connection to us as a couple. We listened intently and incorporated the knowledge that felt right for us and for our baby. Our daughter was born at the Royal Inland Hospital in Kamloops (although we had planned to birth her at our home in Simpcw, circumstances prevented us from doing so). Instead of using an obstetrician, we decided to enter the care of a midwife. She took care of baby and I from four months into pregnancy to six weeks after birth. The first significant cultural practice we incorporated, was having Secwepemctsin and the Blackfoot language be the first languages our baby heard when entering this world. It was made clear that English was not to be spoken in the room until we greeted our baby in our respective languages. That was our daughters first step toward being a language learner and knowledge carrier. Although I did not have the means to raise my child in complete immersion, I still wanted to ensure Secwepemctsin was a language that my family would work toward speaking fluently. We requested to save the placenta to bury it in my homeland, Simpcwúlecw (the territory of the Simpcw people). This was a tradition passed on to us by my children's paternal grandmother who is Blackfoot. She taught us that in the Blackfoot way, our daughter was meant to receive a blanket for every important stage of her life: birth, puberty, motherhood, and grandparenthood. She spoke of the placenta being the first blanket in the womb. Along with the placenta, we buried our daughters *qu7* (navel) in the earth under a cedar tree on my family property. This was knowledge I had obtained through Secwépemc Elders, as well as read in Teit (1909). We also decided not to allow pictures taken of our daughter until after the fourth day. This was a practice that my partner followed in ceremony. It was on the fourth day that we had a welcoming ceremony where she was given her Secwepemcéske (Secwépemc name). Once she was given her Secwepemcéske and that name was spoken into this world by her relatives, we then allowed for her picture to be taken. At that same ceremony, she was blessed with water from the Simpcwétkwe (the river passing through Simpcw), a homage to both her Secwépemc and english names. At two weeks old, we wrapped our daughter in a towel and took her into the s'qílye. There she would re-introduced to darkness and heat in the comfort of her parents and grandparents arms and learn that the s'qílye is a safe place. Throughout the entire process, family and friends were not only supportive, but curious and cooperative. It sparked an interest in community members and families within Secwepemcúlecw.

With the birth of our son, we continued to incorporate the cultural practices that we had learned. Secwepemctsin and Blackfoot were the first languages spoken to him upon his arrival. His *qu7* and placenta were kept and buried in Simpcwúlecw. The first picture was taken only after the fourth day of his life, and after he received his name. However, instead of the blessing being done with water, our son was blessed with red earth from his maternal grandfather's community, Stuxwtéws (Bonaparte) (see Figure 1). The major difference between the birth of our daughter and the birth of our son, was that our son was born in our home in Simpcw. I birthed him crouched against my dresser in my bedroom with my midwife coaching me over the phone (she was still en route from Kamloops). Four hours from the first contraction, my son was birthed into the guiding hands of his father and túme (maternal aunt) Angie. It was the first homebirth in Simpcw in over forty years. An outpour of stories about homebirths and midwives shed new light on birthing practices within our community. It was an important step in normalizing homebirth and putting a knowledge system back into practice. That was the beginning of my interest in midwifery care and sparked the question: what were the cultural practices of the Secwépemc people for pregnancy, birth, and postpartum care?

#### **1.4. Health of Secwepemctsin**

The Report on the Status of B.C First Nations Languages (2018) reported that fifteen (15) out of the seventeen (17) Secwépemc communities responded to the First Peoples' Cultural Council for the report. The overall population of the Secwépemc Nation is about ten thousand (10,000) strong. Out of the fifteen (15) communities there were a reported one hundred and eighty-seven (187) fluent Secwepemctsin speakers. That number declined from the one hundred and ninety-seven (197) fluent speakers reported in 2014. However, there are factors to consider when reading this report, one being that many communities have a non-standardized definition of a fluent speaker, therefore many will be generous in including speakers they consider fluent in Secwepemctsin.

In the community I am from, Simpcw (SFN), we have four (4) fluent speakers remaining, all of which are upward of eighty (80) years old. Our current membership of Simpcw as of September 2018 is seven hundred and twenty-seven (727) ([www.simpcw.com](http://www.simpcw.com)). Two hundred and sixteen (216) of which live on reserve. The status of Secwepemctsin in Simpcw is highly critical, with the number of fluent speakers at a staggering 0.0055%.

Although the statistics concerning the health of Secwepemctsin in Simpcw and across the Secwépemc Nation are quite alarming, there are some positive developments to focus on. For example, the number of language learners is on the rise, with the Secwépemc Nation population of language learners at 11% (Report on the Status of B.C First Nations Languages, 2018). Also, there are eight (8) community schools currently in operation with various levels of language programming: Neqweyqwelsten School (Simpcw), Soxoxomic School (Eskét), Eliza Archie (Canim Lake), Skélep School of Excellence (Tkemlúps), Neskonlish Education Centre (Neskonlith), Little Chiefs Primary School (Téxelc), Shihya School (Splatsín) and Chief Atahm School (Cstélen/Sexqeltqín)

## 1.5. Birthing Practices Over Time

The change of birthing practices has been influenced by various factors. One factor being that midwifery care in British Columbia has only been legalized and publicly funded since 1998 (Stoll, 2014). In Chapter 4, you can find that the narratives show that Secwépemc mothers gave birth at home with the help of women within the community. Hospital births have only become common in the last forty years or so. As of 2017, there are 290 self-employed Registered Midwives in British Columbia, who attended 22.4% of births in the province ([www.canadianmidwives.org](http://www.canadianmidwives.org)). That is approximately 12% more than the Canadian national average. The discussion paper on the Canadian Association of Midwives website states that there are currently eleven (11) midwifery practices dedicated to providing care to Aboriginal communities. The Canadian Institute for Health Information further stated that although for centuries most births took place at home, the recent experience of Canada has been for families to chose the care of an obstetrician. “Twenty years ago, women often stayed in hospital for close to five days with an uncomplicated birth, and even longer if there were complications. Today, healthy mothers and their infants are typically discharged 24 to 48 hours after delivery” (Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2004). Since many Canadian Provinces have legislated midwifery care, the number of practicing midwives has spiked 330%, growing from ninety-six (96) midwives country wide, to four hundred and thirteen (413) (Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2004). The population in rural communities especially have benefited from this positive change. Although there is a rise in midwifery care in British Columbia, the province still does not have a birthing centre which leaves families

to decide if the birth will happen at home or in the local hospital (The Landscape of Midwifery Care for Aboriginal Communities in Canada, 2016). If the birth plan is to deliver at home and the family lives in a rural community (which is where most First Nations reserves are located), then the challenge becomes finding a registered midwife who is willing to travel to a remote community.

## **1.6. Midwifery Care**

The National Aboriginal Council of Midwives (NACM) presents a summary of Aboriginal Midwifery in Canada in a discussion paper (2016) found on their website ([www.canadianmidwives.org](http://www.canadianmidwives.org)). The number of public birthing centres (accessible by all Canadians) are as follows: Alberta (2-not funded), Manitoba (1), Ontario (3), Quebec (13), and Nunavut (1). In British Columbia, out of two hundred and forty-four registered (244) midwives, eleven (11) are members of the NACM. In the discussion paper, they highlight three case studies from across Canada. The first is the Kenhte:ke Midwives based in Ontario that have been in operation since 2012. Their team consists of one Aboriginal midwife, a retired pediatric nurse, a certified lactation consultant, and an apprenticing midwife. Members of their team can travel up to six hours to provide care to the surrounding Mohawk communities. A unique aspect of the Kenhte:ke Midwives is that their model of care or jurisdiction to provide care is not limited by provincial or federal system. This is made possible through the support of a Mohawk Council Resolution. The second case study in focus is the Hay River Health and Social Services Authority Midwifery Program in the Northwest Territories. There, two midwives are employed at established a Memorandum of Understanding to accommodate the busy schedule of midwifery care into their employee status. The third case study highlighted is the Seabird Island Band Midwifery Services which was established in 2014. This program is one of the first of its kind to have a midwife working directly for the First Nation. The paper states that the hired midwife submits her provincial billings to the Band who then compensates her, as well as tops up her wage. She partners with community care workers to provide quality care to the families.

These three models present unique structures and innovative practices to provide midwifery care to Aboriginal families. It is my hope that Secwépemc expecting mothers have access to culturally relevant midwifery care with registered midwives with guidance from Elders and knowledge holders.

## Chapter 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Interior Salish Resources

There are few published resources on the topic of research for the Secwépemc and other interior Salish nations (Syilx, Nlakapmux, and Stat'imc) that include their respective languages.

In the Secwépemc Nation, the Secwépemc Cultural Education Society created a Parent-Child Handbook in 2011. The handbook was categorized into thirteen sections, some of the categories included: baby basket, terms of endearment, and nursing. Each category included words and basic phrases in Secwepemctsin as well as an audio recording.

A video called *Augusta* by Anne Wheeler and the National Film Board (1976) features a woman by the name of Augusta Evans who comes from the Xatsúll community of the Secwépemc Nation. She shares her experience of birthing her children at home. Through tough circumstances, Augusta was the living example of a hard working Secwépemc mother. She spoke of how she prepared for birth and how she became a birth helper for the women in the area.

Ethnographer James Teit also provided information on the related research topic (in English) in his work *The Shuswap* (1909). He wrote that expecting mothers and fathers were not allowed to sleep long as the mother was expected to maintain a steady pace of light work throughout the day. She had to walk often, but ensured she did not become too tired. Teit lists many restrictions for a pregnant woman including: no running or jumping, no looking or passing by a bear, and no eating fresh flesh of bird, mammal or fish (with the exception of Salmon). An important note was that babies were delivered with the help of a midwife. Midwives were highly skilled and knowledgeable. Teit mentions that after the umbilical cord is cut with a knife, *spétsen* (Indian Hemp) was used to tie off the naval string. The piece of naval string on the outside of the tie, that then later detaches was sewn in a pouch and was then either attached to the head of the baby cradle, or worn around the neck. However, Teit goes on to say that this tradition was “evidently borrowed from eastern tribes” (Teit 1909, p. 584). Teit also mentions that

the newborn was bathed in warm water shortly after being born, then once a day in lukewarm water until the child reached walking stage. There was no mention of any medicines infused or added to the water. When it came to the placenta, Teit states that the Secwépemc people always hung this in a tree. The women were given a drink made of *punllp* (Rocky Mountain juniper). Although, some women drank *kétse7éllp* (Devils Club) instead. After the baby was born, a birch bark baby cradle known as *xqwillińt* in Secwepemctsin was used as the main carrier (see Figure 2). The rim of the *xqwillińt* was reinforced with a hoop of willow and is designed with a raised hoop across the head of the cradle.



Figure 2 *Xqwillińt* (birch bark baby cradle) with baby Clara. Basket made by Delores Purdaby  
Photo credit: Jessica Baker

A Handbook called *Nlaka'pamux Women* written by Erin Coghlan (2007) outlines traditional pregnancy and birthing practices for the Nlaka'pamux people. Some of which include foods and medicines, dreams and omens, birthing places and care of the placenta. Although the book included a glossary of terms, the language is written phonetically and does not include the proper writing system.

Another Interior Salish resource is a book called *We Get Our Living Like Milk From the Land* written by Delphine Derickson and edited by Dr. Jeannette Armstrong.

Again, this resource is not focused on providing a language material but does reveal important cultural practices of the Syilx (Okanagan) people. The book states that “each person [then] has a right, even when unborn, to family, to teachings and to security and love” (Derickson 15). This teaching stood out for me because it aligns with one of the goals of this research, which is to provide the new babies with a family that has a strong connection to language and Secwépemc culture.

## 2.2. Other Sources

Catherine Dworak wrote her Master's thesis on the same topic called *Song of the Newborn* (2009). The project was situated on Gitxsan territory and incorporated both cultural practices and language. Dworak states that the project “contributes to the cycle of storytelling, research, and education for future generations” (4). Her thesis presents a list of words and phrases, as well as a list of sentences related to perinatal care. Along with the information on perinatal care, booklets with transcriptions and audio CD's were produced but only available to the contributing Elders and members of their family.

Another source is *Gaaw Kaaygang Gyaahlangee – Massett Birth Stories* produced by the Haida Child and Family Services Society and Old Massett Haida Health Centre (2014). One of the goals of the booklet is to provide comfort and inspiration as [future generations of mothers] embark on the transition into parenting.” Lucy Bell starts off the booklet with a story called “Born from the Supernatural”. Following that is a series of birth stories and experiences of Haida mothers. The booklet concludes with a section of “baby talk” which is a list of phrases first in English then followed by the Xaad Kil (language of the Haida people) translation.

## Chapter 3. Narratives

### 3.1. Mona Jules<sup>2</sup>

- 1) Yi7éne stqlútmentem re Secwépemc le q7es te qelmúcw l(e)<sup>3</sup> sw7ecs.  
*This is what is said about the Secwépemc people, about their activities long ago.*
- 2) Nkyé7e sléxéyectsems ell nkí7ce. Nkyé7e Sulyen Ignace ell nkí7ce Melanie Ignace.  
*The information my grandmother and my mother gave me. Sulyen Ignace is my grandmother and Malanie Ignace is my mother.*
- 3) Le q7eses le qwménkes k nuxwnúxwenxw. Ta7 me7 s7estqeypmíns k stérni.  
*When women got pregnant, they weren't supposed to be frightened by anything.*
- 4) E estqeypmíns k pepí7se me7 qwíwelc re skwimémelt tek me7 tsílem te pepí7se.  
*Should they be frightened by a snake, the baby would crawl like a snake.*
- 5) E estqiypmíns k stérni tucw me7 xílem ri7 skwimémlet.  
*If they were frightened by something, the child would do likewise.*
- 6) Ta7 k sxwexwístém re nuxwnúxwenxw wes e néses nek qwtseq tek qelmúcw.  
*They didn't like the woman to go to where deceased people would be.*
- 7) Ta7 me7 snésmens, ta7 me7 skekíket.s e w7écwes, ell tsukw es tknémens re skúyes te tsctém, te stscéms.  
*She wouldn't go there, she wouldn't go nearby, so that the baby she is carrying would be protected.*
- 8) Le q7es te qelmúcw, tsútes e pell skúyes ta7 kem snes te cke7péllcw,  
*The people long ago, when they were going to have a baby they never went to the hospital,*
- 9) m-w7ec tucw n(e) tsítcws re yews e sketscúst.s e skult.s re skúyes,  
*they just stayed home to have their babies,*

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<sup>2</sup> Different Elders who write Secwepemctsín have slightly different spelling conventions. See 4.1.2 Challenges

<sup>3</sup> l(e) is written because the vowel is not pronounced by Jules

- 10) me7 yéqwilltem tek cw7it, me7 petetét.s k cw7it tek séwllkwe,  
*they make a big fire, then they boil plenty of water,*
- 11) řelri7 me7 sécwenses re skwimémlet.s...re skúyes.  
*from that, they bathe the baby...their child.*
- 12) Nerí7 me7 tskwil k cyenpéptens, stemstítemt.s, k sítsem ell yi7éne l(e) tsut e  
syucwt.s k skúyes, yiri7 m-tscentém ell.  
*Diapers, clothes and blankets would be kept ready there, and also, the woman there  
who is going to have a newborn baby, she is also tended to.*
- 13) M-tskwéctem te cw7it te qwéltsen ell nerí7 me7 mólctem ne spúltens.  
*They brought her lots of fir boughs and that would piled on her bed.*
- 14) Nerí7 cw7iit<sup>4</sup> me7 tsqum, ell nerí7 me7 tncítem tek sítsem,  
*Lots were piled there, and on that there would be a blanket,*
- 15) ell héqen speqkén nerí7 me7 tskwil ell yi7éne re petetét te séwllkwe,  
*and maybe a pan would be readied, and also the boiled water,*
- 16) me7 tšéwens k xetkwméke7, k xyum tek sekwmiń. Xwiyxwéyt tek sekwmiń,  
*scissors would be washed, a large knife, a sharp knife,*
- 17) Ell nerí7 me7 tskwil te tsetsíts.se7t tek string. Stémes-enke lu7 re stsemé7stem re  
string.  
*and a string is kept ready, I cant remember what string is called*
- 18) Yiri7 ni7 me7 tskwil ne seqút.s re xetkwméke7, k sekwmiń es níkt.s yi7éne  
skwimémlet tek qu7s.  
*And on the ready would be the scissors, and sitting beside the scissors would be the  
knife, to cut the umbilical cord.*
- 19) M-tskúltés m-yúcwtes re skwimémelt, yi7éne m-níkt.s te qu7s,  
*When the child is being born, they cut the umbilical cord,*

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<sup>4</sup> cw7it (“many”) is written as cw7iit to represent lengthening of the vowel. A speaker may lengthen the pronounciation of a word for emphasis.

- 20) yirí7 ell me7 tskelém e syucwt.s cwú7tsem yi7éne k stémi tek tsúlt te ewít.s re skúyes.  
*then they wait for something (afterbirth), whatever is being passed after the baby is out.*
- 21) Nerí7 xwexwéééyt<sup>5</sup> m-yéqwlctem.  
*All of that is burned for her.*
- 22) M-tncítem yi7éne n(e) tsyeqw, ell yi7éne pèxpéñk re skúkyes, me7 tseít.s te qu7s.  
*Things are placed in the fire, and when the baby's navel is healed, they keep the navel*
- 23) Ta7 me7 stseqmíct.s. Ec wew tek le7 telrí7 me7 klep te...<sup>6</sup> tek me7 pèxpéñ k te skwíméñlet.  
*They don't throw it away. When it is very dry, if falls off of the tummy...the baby's navel is healed.*
- 24) Yirí7 m-kwéctem te qu7s ell m-tyéwtsectem te swetmíñ.  
*The umbilical cord is taken and wrapped in buckskin.*
- 25) Nerí7 m-tncí7tem ell te melámen k stémi tek melámen éne héqen re kéwku, héqen re punllp speqpéqs, nerí7 stémi me7 styégwtse ne qu7.  
*They put some type of medicine, maybe sage, maybe juniper berries, whatever is wrapped with the umbilical cord.*
- 26) Me7 kwéctem yi7éne te qu7s re skwíméñmelt, me7 tkéñectem me7 líqwtcem,  
*The child's umbilical cord is taken, a rock would be placed over where it is buried,*
- 27) me7 tkéñentmes nek skekík7et nek tmicws e pell tmícwes,  
*more rocks would be placed over it on their property,*
- 28) skekík7et.s re tsitcw héqen e tá7ews e pell tmicws. Nerí7 me7 sténes yirí7 tsukw.  
*near the house, if there is no land. To be left there, that's all.*

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<sup>5</sup> Word lengthening occurs, therefore xwexwéééyt is written as xwexwéééyt

<sup>6</sup> “...” represents a pause in the narration

- 29) Yi7éne skwimémelt e yews e stxerwílcs ri7, ta7 wes me7 súkwtes n(e) tmicw.  
*This child when it is grown into an adult, he/she will not have a restless spirit.*
- 30) Tucw w7ec me7 tselxemstéses thé7en k st7ékwes.  
*They will only know where they come from.*
- 31) Re s7i7llcw te qelmúcw m-w7ec n(e) tmicw, sxwexwiwúlecwems re tmicw, te m-  
 tšílem te plep re púsmens.  
*Some people travel the earth, all over the world, they feel lost.*
- 32) Ta7 thé7en wes k lé7es k púsmens tucw. Me7 mut nek nekulecw telrí7 me7  
 qwetséts me7 tek thenúlecw tri7 me7 mútes cwú7tsem.  
*They are not happy no matter where they are. They will live in one place, they will  
 move on to some other foreign place and live there again.*
- 33) Ta7 penhén me7 sle7s k púsmens tri7 thé7en e tá7ew e sxíllctem te qu7s re  
 skwimémelt.  
*They will never be happy anywhere if they don't do that with the child's umbilical  
 cord.*
- 34) Yi7éne núxwenxw me7 nekwestsút wel me7 q7es put. Yirí7 ta7 me7 sw7ecs nek  
 sxélwes ell me7...  
*The woman is to keep to herself for a length of time. They are not with their  
 husbands and...*
- 35) Yirí7 re skúyes ta7 mes nuxwentés re ste7s te leputéy tucw w7ec me7 q7émes ne  
 newí7s wel me7 tx7emwílcs re skwimémelt.  
*Their baby would not drink from a bottle, they would be breastfed until the baby  
 grows up.*
- 36) Yi7éne skwimémelt m-yews e stwit.s m-kectés te qelmúcw skwest.s, te xpé7es  
 héqen e yews enwí7s tek ckúltens, e xexé7es tek píxem, e xexé7es tek wéwlem, tri7  
 stémi. Yirí7 me7 kwéstntmes.  
*When the child grows up it is given an Indian name, it's grandfathers name maybe or  
 from how their actions are, if they are great hunters, if they are great fishermen,  
 whatever their personality is like. They would be given a name accordingly.*

- 37) Ell e kwens k skwest.s k stéx7éms, e tá7us e skulems enwí7s tek swest,  
*If they should take their parents names, if they don't make one up for themselves,*
- 38) e kwect.s tek skwest.s k xpé7es k kyé7es, ec me7 tsptínesemst.ses xwexwéyt re stémi te sw7ecs éytsell me7 w7écwes.  
*if they take their grandfathers name or their grandmothers name, they have to think about their actions carefully.*
- 39) Ta7 tucw me7 sxílems te tsútes e sxílems.  
*They can't do as they please*
- 40) Me7 ptínesmens ta7 me7 s... ta7 wes me7 kístes k sw7ecs n(e) tmicw.  
*They will think things through, the can't bring shame where they come from.*
- 41) Yi7éne l(e) skwest me7 xyemstés, me7 le7 te qelmúcw.  
*This name is honored, the person will be respectful.*
- 42) Ta7 me7 késtwílc s k swéti7 k skwest.s.  
*They don't tarnish someone's name.*
- 43) Me7 yucwemíct.s, me7 yucwmentsút, me7 yucwestsút ell newí7s.  
*they will take care of it, they will take care of themselves, being careful.*
- 44) Ell re núxwenxw, yirí7 xweyt yi7éne k eqw7úqwis-enke, me7 knúcwentmes es twítens yi7éne re skúyes.  
*And the woman, all her sisters would help in raising her child.*
- 45) Me7 yucwenílectem me7 wescítem te stsmelt.s kwemtús tucw me7 syucwemíctem.  
*They will babysit, keeping her children often, looking after them.*
- 46) K kyé7es ri7 tēlrí7 ell xpé7es yirí7 me7 tsúñmectmes m-yews e s7étsxems.  
*The grandmother there and the grandfather are the ones that do the traditional training.*
- 47) M-7étsxestem, m-qwlentém, m-néstem te t7íwelk tlu7 me7 xepqenwéllne7s, nek pésellkwe, nek tswec t7ri7 thé7en.  
*They are put into traditional training, they are instructed verbally, they are taken up into the mountains to learn, near a lake, near a creak, somewhere.*

- 48) Tlu7 me7 mútes re tuwíwt re yews e s̄x7eṛwílcs tek k̄woyí7se.  
*A young boy would stay out there when they are grown up a little.*
- 49) Re tutuwíwt ri7 ta7 put k s̄x7eṛwílcs re yews re s̄tekmińs k s̄x7eṛwílcs yirí7 m-  
kwéntmes te xpé7es,  
*The young boys at puberty age are taken by their grandfathers.*
- 50) e tá7us re pell k xpé7es, re síse7s ri7 mé7 étsxestmes.  
*if they have no grandfather, then an uncle would be the one to put them on their  
traditional training.*
- 51) Ell re Nuxwnúxwenxw re kyé7e ri7 me7 étsxemstmes re nuxwnúxwenxw.  
*And the girls, the grandmother is the one who puts them on their traditional training.*
- 52) Re kyé7e stelxemstés te p̄7ecw te cw7it te stémi te sw7ec le q̄7es te qelmúcw.  
*The grandmother knows lots of things about the past.*
- 53) Ell e tá7us e pell kyé7es k tñkwe7 tek úq̄wi k úq̄wis-enke yi7éne re núxwenxw te pell  
skúye, yirí7 m-tqwelmíntem, yirí7 m-kwéntem re tñkwé7, yirí7 put yi7éne héqen me7  
le7 stselxméms.  
*If one doesn't have a grandmother discussions about which Aunt to select, the one  
with the most traditional knowledge would be picked.*
- 54) Yirí7 tek tíkwe7 tek kúye, yirí7 me7 néstmes ne sqeltús tek me7 étsxestem re  
núxwenxw.  
*That's the Aunt that would take her up into the mountains for traditional training.*
- 55) Yirí7 re sw7ecs le q̄7es te qelmúcw ell le q̄7ese7úyes cum tlrí7 le nuxwnúxwenxw,  
*So that is how people long ago were and way before then the women.*
- 56) Lexéxyectsems yi7éne tñkwé7 te dákte ne c̄ke7péllcw le q̄7éses tsútsentems, le  
q̄7es te qelmúcw m-pell skúyus  
*I was told by one doctor in the hospital, long ago, when they had a baby*
- 57) m-yéqwlitem enén ts̄kempéllcw, m-kwens yi7éne le tsyeqw, m-kupens tken seq̄ut ell  
nerí7 es m-métselc ne7éne ne xixéyt te sqwléselp̄.

*they built a fire outside, they took from the fire, they would take cinders and push it to the side, they would crouch over the hot ashes*

58) m-nerí7 es pell skúyus héqen centésen k nerí7 k sísem tsuk es qwets.s k skwimémhelt.

*so they had their baby there maybe they put a blanket down so that the baby would be warm.*

59) M-yews es yucwt.s. Ta7 k stselxemstéten ri7, ta7 stqwelmíns nkyé7e k stsílems.

*So then it would be born. I don't know, my grandmother didn't say.*

60) Tsukw re qwéltsen ne ne7éne ne séylepens re spúltén,

*Only the fir boughs placed on the bed,*

61) m-nerí7es re í7ékwes yi7éne tek í7ek kíst tek mítk'ye trí7 stémi m-yúcwtes re skwimémhelt nerí7 m-sténes nerí7 ell m-kwens e wí7es íelri7 k yúcwts re skwimémhelt m-kwéntem yi7éne qwéltsen m-yéqwentmes.

*on there the afterbirth and the bad blood would drain onto it after the babies birth the fir boughs are taken and burned.*

62) Ell m-w7ec k sécwstmes re skwimémhelt n7éne ne kúltés m-lléllpen lu7 le swustém re skwimémhelt.

*The baby would be bathed once they were born, I have forgotten the process of what they done.*

63) Yi7éne le kikyé7e, tekséle héqen, w7ec me7 qw7éles, me7 qwlentés re skwimémhelt nek Secwepemctsín.

*The grandmothers, two maybe, they will be speaking in Secwepemctsín to the baby.*

64) Me7 tsuns "oooh yi7éne sqéqlemcw me7 le7 tek píxem, me7 le7 nek swéwlem, wenécwem me7 xexé7 tek sqélemcw.

*They will say "oooh this little boy will be a good hunter, a good fisherman, he will truly be a great man.*

65) Ell re núxwenxw m-qíllt re m-yews re núxwenxw m-qwelentém íucw.

*The woman would wake up and she would be spoken to.*

- 66) Nerí7 m-kúltes m-tsuntem re núxwenxw “Yirí7 me7 le7 tek qelmúcw me7 tsecwemínt.s re kwséltkten[s]”  
*After the birth, the woman would be told “he will be a good man, he will care for his relatives”*
- 67) “E yews e stx7emwílc me7 xexé7 tek me7... me7 xexé7 tek qwléwem, me7 xexé7 tek kwcum tek mirhc”, trí7 sténi.  
*“When the baby grows up, he/she will be good at berry picking, they will be good basket makers”, whatever.*
- 68) Ell e yews tlrí7 re skwimémelt m-sécwentem ne skepléñllp, Yi7én skepléñllp m-kwéntem wellqwentém ne tsyeqw ell m-kwéctem te séwllkwes tlrí7 m-méctmes nek csécmeñs k skwimémelt, nerí7 re sécwentmes.  
*And then from there the baby is bathed in rose water, this rosebush is taken and boiled by the fire and the water is taken and added to the baby’s bath water, the baby is bathed in that.*
- 69) Ell e wí7 k sécwentem tlrí7 me7 púsentem tek le7 tek estcwéís tek púske7 tsílem te kékku trí7 sténi k stsemét.s-enke yí7éne púske7 yirí7 m-púsente re skwimémelt.  
*And when the baby’s bath is over a nice smelling ointment is rubbed over the baby, an ointment like sage or some type of ointment,*
- 70) m-tyéwtšentem ell xetsxétst me7 styéwtšentem re skwimémelt.  
*the child is wrapped and wrapped in a straight fashion.*
- 71) Yi7éne kelkélcs me7 xetsxétst yí7éne sqexqwéxt.s me7 xetsxétst,  
*The arms are straight, the legs are straight,*
- 72) ell me7 yews e styéwtšes nerí7 me7 qíxt me7 stskuls kwemtús ne7éne tek me7 tsílem.  
*and when wrapped it should be tightly wrapped all the time and its to be that way all the time.*
- 73) Tsukw es le7s es tseléwt m-txemcwílcwes re skwimémelt, es toxwtóxwt.s tek qelmúcw e stá7s wes e tsxúpes re m-kwéctmes.  
*Just so the baby stands straight when it grows up, so that he/she would be standing straight and not be bent over when walking.*

- 74) Ell e wí7 k styéwtsentem tntém re skwimémelt ne xqwllínt.s. Yi7éne xqwllínt tskul te qwllin.  
*And when you are done wrapping the baby, he is put into a birch cradle. The cradle is made from birch bark.*
- 75) Nerí7 m-kúlctem te kyé7es m-tskwil. Pell xups nerí7 ne tqeltk tsukw es tncítem tek sítssem es tá7s wes e qwempsúpes m-kwéntmes te ts Kempéllcw  
*The grandmother makes the cradle, and has it ready. It has a “xups” (ring) on the top so that a blanket can be placed over that and the baby doesn’t go out of breath when taken outdoors.*
- 76) Ell e yews nerí7 e stntém re skwimémelt m-lúlentem te kyé7es.  
*And when the baby is placed there the grandmother lings a lullaby.*
- 77) Ell nerí7 m-qwiyentém ne mirhcs e tsúmes.  
*And the baby basket is rocked if the baby cries.*
- 78) Ell e ta7 k pell [re sw7ecs re] xqwllínt.s, me7 tntém ne xqé7ye7ten.  
*If it doesn’t have a baby basket, it is put into a baby swing.*
- 79) Yi7éne me7 tskul re xqé7ye7ten ne tqeltk re spúltens re kí7ce[s].  
*This baby swing is placed above the mothers bed.*
- 80) E qillt re skwimémelt nerí7 me7 tskwentés yi7éne k... wes ts kúmes-enke es qwiyéys re xqé7ye7ten.  
*If the baby wakes up she pulls what she pulls to rock the swing.*
- 81) M-nerí7es w7ec k sténes re skwimémelt re yews re stxemwíwelcs put re sta7s put re...pell xqwllíntes héqen re xyem7úy,  
*The baby is placed in there and when it grows up a bit and its outgrown its baby cradle,*
- 82) héqen e temllenku7e tek mégcen, úpekst tek mégcen m-tntémes nek xqé7ye7ten.  
*maybe around 9/10 months, they are placed in the baby cradle.*
- 83) Tucw e penhénes tlrí7 e xyemwílces te xqwllínt.s.  
*Just whenever from there when it has outgrown its baby cradle.*

- 84) Yirí7 re swestém le skwimémelt le q7éses.  
*That is how they cared for babies long ago.*
- 85) Qwlentém mell qeqnímens mell re qwelténs.  
*When spoken to they already understood their language.*
- 86) M-súmens yi7éne le melámens, m-cwsenwéns re xqwillint.s, re tsít te melámen, te púske7.  
*They smelled the aroma of the medicine, they smelled the aroma of the baby cradle, the pitch medicine, the ointment.*
- 87) Yi7éne melámen e yews e swí7stem, ta7 tucw me7 sícwenc tucw we7 thénes.  
*This medicine when you are through with it you don't just spill it anywhere.*
- 88) Me7 kwenc k melámen me7 sícwencwes e tskwíles e tá7us e sqwenmíntem cú7tsem e stnmíntem ... me7 sícwenc yúmell re qwenmíntmes me7 sícwenc ri7 tken tá7us k wes kukwétmes k swéti7.  
*You take the leftover medicine water if not needed again and spill it where people don't walk...*
- 89) Ta7 k swet me7 kwétens yi7éne melámen te séwllkwe.  
*so that no one steps onto the medicine water.*
- 90) We7 tskwíles we7 tnmíntmes mell, me7 yecwemínc kwemtús.  
*If its leftover or used up, look after it all the time.*
- 91) Ell ta7 wes me7 tskwét.stmes ell yi7éne k qwéltsen k púnllp tri7 stérni ell me7 tsyeqw, héqen me7 tlu7 tkenú7s cucwéll tri7 then es ta7 re skwétentem.  
*And the fir boughs wouldn't be stepped on, the juniper and other things will be burned, maybe put to the other side of the road somewhere, where it wouldn't be trampled on*
- 92) Yirí7 stsukws!  
*That's it!*

### 3.1.1. Key Findings

The narrative that Jules speaks is based on information passed down to her from her grandmother and mother. She says a pregnant woman was not meant to be frightened by anything. If she did, the child would take on the characteristics of whatever frightened her. Birthing happened in the home with helpers assisting in the process. The helpers readied various supplies for the mother and baby. Fir boughs were piled on her bed with a blanket over top so that the “bad blood” would be soaked up by the boughs then burned. Scissors, a knife, string, water and medicine would also be kept close by. Once the baby is born, it is bathed in medicine water, then rubbed down with ointment which also made of medicines from the land. Once this was complete, the leftover The babies were spoken to in the language and were prayed over to possess good qualities such as kindness and skills in basketry, fishing, hunting and berry picking. Jules states that the babies were breastfed, they were not bottle fed. The women used *xqwilliñt* (baby cradle) made from birth bark. The babies were either placed in the *xqwilliñt*, which was usually made by the grandmother, or in a *xqétye7ten* (baby swing) (see Figure 3 and 4). Once the navel detaches from the baby, it is kept and sewn into a buckskin pouch. Different medicines such as juniper, sage or whatever is on hand are also placed into the pouch. The pouch is then buried in the homeland so that the child will not have a wrestles spirit or feel lost. The baby is also given an Indian name which is either based upon how their action or characteristics are or a name passed down from within their family. That name is honored, especially if it is a name that is passed down from a family member. Jules says that the child cannot do as they please, they must be respectful and not bring shame to that name. When it comes time for *étsxem* (traditional training) the grandmother, grandfathers, aunts and uncles step into action to help. The grandmothers and aunts took responsibility for the traditional training for the young girls; and the grandfathers and uncles took responsibility for the young boys.



*Figure 3 Csétkwe Fortier working on a deer hide while her niece rests in the xqétye7ten (baby swing)  
Photo credit: Tricia Manuel*

### **3.1.2. Linguistic Analysis**

In this narrative, Mona Jules often uses passive construction. “A passive voice is a type of a clause or sentence in which an action (through verb), or an object of a sentence, is emphasized rather than its subject” ([www.literarydevices.net](http://www.literarydevices.net)). Boelscher (1990) states that passive construction is used for three primary purposes: a focusing device; perspective and control; and cultural aspects of control and causation. In Secwepemctsin, passive construction is formed by the following grammatical structure: verb-stem + transitivizer + passive suffix (Boelscher 1990). Jules used the passive

construction in her narrative to maintain focus on either the mother or the baby. See example below from Line 13 where Jules uses passive construction to maintain focus on the pregnant woman.

M-tskwéctem te cw7it te qwéłtsen ell nerí7 me7 mólctem ne spúłtens

M-tskwé-ct-em            te            cw7it    te            qwéłtsen    ell    nerí7    me7  
 PST-CISL-take+IND-PASS    OBL            many            OBL            fir.branch    and    there    FUT

mól-ct-em            ne            spúłten-s  
 lay.down+IND-PASS    LOC            bed-3ERG

‘They brought her lots of fir boughs and that would be piled on her bed’

The passive construction is used frequently throughout the narrative. In contrast, Jules switches to active voice when referring to the grandmothers of the family in line 64.

Me7 tsuns “oooh yi7éne sqéqlemcw me7 le7 tek píxem,

Me7 tsun-s            “oooh yi7éne sqé•q•lemcw me7 le7 te-k píxem  
 FUT    say+DIR-3ERG    oooh    this.one    man•CRED•            FUT    good    OBL+DET    hunt

‘They will say “oooh this little boy will be a good hunter’

Instead of choosing the passive construction that would have meant ‘*the baby will be told*’, Jules uses the active voice meaning ‘*they will say*’. My thought on why Jules uses active voice in this instance may be because of the high respect that the grandmothers hold in the family unit. Therefore the focus moves away from the baby and onto the grandmother and what she is teaching.

Jules also uses word lengthening in her narrative for emphasis. An example of this is found in line 14 in the word *cw7it* meaning “many”.

Nerí7 cw7iit me7 tsqum, ell nerí7 me7 tncítem tek síłsem,  
*Lots were piled there, and on that there would be a blanket,*

It implies that the fir boughs were so plentiful that the pile was great. Word lengthening is used again shortly after in Line 21, when she talks about all the boughs being burned.

Another literary device that is used by Jules is the metaphorical use of words. Line 29 demonstrates this beautifully.

Yi7éne skwimémelt e yews e stxerwílcs ri7, ta7 wes me7 súkwtes n(e)  
 tmicw.

*This child when it is grown into an adult, he/she will not have a restless spirit.*

The *Secwépemc – English Dictionary, Version 4* (SCES, 2012) translates *súkwt* as “to blow in the wind”. In this example Jules is referring to the child’s spirit.

Through the use of passive and active construction, word lengthening, and metaphorical use of words, Jules tells a beautiful narrative that is rich in cultural teachings.

### **3.2. William (Bill) Pete**

Although William (Bill) Pete tells a short narrative, the information is valuable and plentiful. At the time of the interview, Pete already had talking points written down in English on a piece of paper. Once the interview started, he spoke the talking points in Secwepemctsin. This was a process he needed to do to help him be comfortable with sharing a narrative. This was an important realization for myself as the researcher, fellow community member, and granddaughter of William Pete because it helps me to better understand how to respectfully elicit information in the language from him.

1) Le q7éses re qelmúcw re tsqwménkes. Ta7 k syucwmínt tek swet.

*A long time ago, when they were pregnant. No body looked after them.*

2) Ta7 íri7 sw7ec ri7 re doctor re syucwemíntem.

*There was no doctor there to help take care of them.*

3) Ta7 k sknúwentem tek swet.

*There was no one to help them.*

4) Qwménkes ta7 k estíls.

*When they were pregenant they didn’t stop.*

5) Élkest e me7 wi7s.

*They worked until they finished.*

6) Ta7 k sknúwentem tek swet.

*There was no one to help them.*

- 7) Xweyt ðri7 stem ne tsítcw me7 tscentés.  
*They fixed everything in the house.*
- 8) Kwéñllqten me7 élkstmens. Xwexwéyt re sitqt.  
*They worked the garden. Every day.*
- 9) Ec re élkstes ta7 k scentés k stem. Ta7 k sllépens k stem.  
*They worked, they didn't forget anything.*
- 10) Tsut ðlu7 e knucwstés e pell skúyus tek qelmúcw  
*They said, another Indian helped with the baby during the pregnancy.*
- 11) Ta7 ðri7 re stsut tek ðri7 te melámen k stem. Me7 kúlem ðucw me7 llwélentmes  
*There was no medicine there. After the baby is born they just leave.*
- 12) Tyégwtsentem tek stem.  
*They wrapped them in whatever they had there.*
- 13) Me7 kúlctem te xqwlliñt. Xwexwéyt re stsmémelt re m-skúlens re xqwlliñt.s  
*They were made a baby basket. All the kids had them made for them.*
- 14) Celena re kyé7es re knúcwses re pell skúyus re nuxwnúxwenxw  
*Celena's grandma helped the pregnant women to have babies.<sup>7</sup>*
- 15) Ta7 k pell melámens tek stem.  
*There was no medicine.*
- 16) E knucwentsútes e ta7 k sknúcwstem tek swet  
*They helped themselves if no one was there to help.*
- 17) Re sxélwes re knúcwes e stwítens. Stsmet.stés re baby.  
*The husbands helped raise the baby. They fed the baby.*
- 18) Le q7es ðlu7 ta7 k leputéys re nuxwnuxwenxw e pell skuyus. Re qeméltes.  
*Long ago, they didn't have bottles. They breastfed*

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<sup>7</sup> Pete later provides Celina's grandmother's name as Florina Eustache

19) Xweyt re stsmemelt lu7 ne qelmucwúlecw ta7 k snestém te cke7péllcw.

*All the children at that time in Indian country, they didn't go to the hospital.*

20) Ktsut re skwest.s re kye7es re Celena.

*Celena's grandmothers name was Ktsut.*

21) Qelmúcw lu7 xqétye7ten, tqeltk re spúlten.

*Some of the people back then had a baby swing, above the bed.*



Figure 4 – Infant resting in xqétye7ten  
Photo Credit: Csetkwe Fortier

### 3.2.1. Key Findings

William (Bill) Pete reinforces that the women who were pregnant were to keep active during pregnancy. He says, “they worked until they finished” and describes capable and hard working women. Similar to Jules’ narrative, Pete also states that the women did not go to the hospital for birth. He talked about the pregnant women being helped by whoever was around, then goes on to name Ktsut (Florina Eustache) as one of the women in Simpcw that was a designated birth helper. Pete says “E knucwentsútes e ta7 k sknúcwstem tek swet” (They helped themselves if no one was there to help), which again reinforces the strength of the women.



*Figure 5 - Celena Slater (L) & grandmother Ktsut (R)*

### 3.2.2. Linguistic Analysis

There were two main literary device that William Pete uses in his narrative. Similarly to Jules, Pete also uses passive construction. One example is in Line 13.

Me7 kúlctem te xqwllińt.

Me7	kúl-ct-em	te	xqwllińt
FUT	make+IND-PASS	OBL	birch.bark.cradle

'[the babies] were made a baby cradle'

In this example, instead of saying 'They made the babies a baby cradle', he uses the passive construction translating to 'the babies were made a baby cradle', thus maintaining focus of the babies, and not those who are making the cradles.

The next literary device that Pete uses is repetition. Repetition is used for reinforcing the information in the narrative. Lines 3 and 6, as well as Lines 11 and 15 show the examples of repetition.

Ta7 k sknúcwentem tek swet.

Ta7	k	s-knucw-ent-em	te+k	swet
NEG	DET	NOM-help-DIR-PASS	OBL+DET	who

'There was no one to help them' or 'they were not helped by anyone'

William Pete does not use any metaphorical phrases within his narrative. However, the information presented not only reinforces cultural practices that was stated in Mona Jules' narrative, but also speaks on the normalized practice of midwifery care in the community of Simpcw.

### 3.3. Ronald (Ron) Ignace

Ron Ignace comes from the Skítsestn community and provides great insight into the cultural practices of taking care of a child as he incorporated these practices into raising his own children with wife Marianne Ignace.

1) Stqwelmínstem, tkenhé7e re syucwmenstém m-kúltes re stsemémelt n7élye.

*We are talking about how to care for a child that's being born.*

2) L(e) q̇7éses lu7 yi7éne te melámen.

*A long time ago there was a medicine.*

3) Lexéẏectsen te melámen-ekwe le m-sq̇7es e skwens re núxwenxw m-tsqwménkwes

*I want to tell you about a medicine that is supposed to be good for pregnant women.*

4) Yi7éne stsemé7tstem qwlíle.

*It is called qwlíle*

5) There's this plant I'm told that are good to take when their pregnant. It's qwlíle. The meadowlark is singing it now.

6) The meadowlark sing[s] "tuwcíctsem te nqweq̇wíle! tuwcíctsem te nqweq̇wíle!"

*"don't waste my qweq̇wíle"*

7) But also, what is important...relrált.s te sw7ec. Yews tri7 cum k snectéc re stsmelt re skwest.s te sq̇7es te stetéc7éms. Tá7ews tri7 te sxílem, me7 tsílem yi7 re stmélcmenç re kwséltkten ell xwexwééẏt te sw7ecs re tsúwet.s well re stetex7em.

*It's important that you give a child one of the names of deceased ancestor, never give a child a name of a living person.*

8) Me7 kwect re swumécs

*Because you will taking away that person's spirit.*

9) Me7 tspelq̇entéc yi7 re sumécs te skec te skwest.s.

*You are bringing that persons spirit back.*

10) If you don't do that, you are divorcing yourself from your history and your ancestors.

*And what the Elders say is tmélcmenç (you are turning your back).*

11) Ell me7 llukwmínc tkenhé7e yi7 tqwelmínc te skúye re stwit.s.

*You want to envision of what this child will grow up to be, and what they'd be like.*

12) Me7 kectéc tek yegwyegwténs.

*You give them a power.*

13) As a child is growing up, you tell them "Me7 lexéẏect stémi k skec le kúltes".

*You tell them what you did with them when they were born.*

14) Tkenhé7es re melámen.

*How you doctored them.*

15) And you always tell them as they are growing up,

“Yi7éne yi7 re smelámens”

*This is how I gave you this medicine.*

16) Le q7éses te qelmucw, w7ec yiri7 re tsmelámenst.ses re stsmémelt.s. Yi7éne te melámen, cw7it yiri7 to melámen yiri7 xwent k stens k'émell yi7éne ell te stselxmém yi7ene, e qwenénucw e syegwyégwt.s re stsmémelt re syucwmenstés re tmicws.

*The people long doctored their children. There are many medicines that could help the children if you want to make them strong to take care of the land.*

17) Yiri7 me7 kwenc re tskllíken's re skemcís neri7 me7 pespúsencwes re stsmémelt, me7 yegwyégwt yiri7,

*You take the grizzly bear grease and rub the child with it, so that it empowers the child,*

18) ell ne7éne te ... me7 kwemtús yiri7 re yecwmenstés t'ri7 xwexwéyt re stem ne tmicws.

*and they will always be defenders of their land and all things on it.*

19) Ell n7ene nek'ú7 te melámen yiri7 ell me7 melámenc re stsmémelts yiri7 re sts7emét.stem tsecwyénst.

*And there is one medicine, a medicine for the child that is called tsecwyénst (woodworm)*

20) Pepíp'7ese ne7éne yiri7 te...ta7 yiri7 k stem me7 re stcistém yúmell re sqwetqwét.s yem.

*It is small/delicate, nothing will stop it even though it is so soft.*

21) Xwent yiri7 k s7illens re stektsúsem wel me7 ptek.

*It can eat wood until it can pass through.*

22) Ta7 yiri7 ... e qwelmíncwes re7 stsmémelt es ta7wes re stem es wí7ses es elkst.s es tá7es stem re scistém.

*The child will always have the determination to finish the work that he/she is trying to do and nothing will stop the child (from accomplishing its objective).*

23) Yirí7 le7 ri7 te melámen re skectéc.

*It is a good medicine to give.*

24) Ell ne7ene cú7tsem nekú7 te melámen ne7éne re qwtells re spi7úy.

*And there is another medicine, eagle grease.*

25) Yirí7 me7 pspúsencwes re stsmémelt e xexé7 yirí7 re skekéééws es swikt.s k stem.

*You doctor up a child so that they can see things a long ways away.*

26) We7stémes yirí7 ell me7 kítsentmes, yirí7 me7 wikt.s

*Whatever, before it gets to them, they will see things.*

27) Ell yi7éne te sw7ecs cú7tsem yi7éne te stet'ex7ém-kt le q'7éses

*And our ancestors that lived long ago also did something more.*

28) W7ec ..... yirí7 re stsléqcts.tses re stsmémelt te qu7s,

*They buried the baby's navel,*

29) E qwenénes, e qwelmíntmes es xexé7s re s7el7eíkst.s es kwemtús es tá7wes es cswitúlls.

*If they wanted the child to be a hard worker, and not lazy.*

30) Me7 tntec yirí7 ne scwicweye7éllcw.

*You put it on an ant pile.*

31) Petá7wes re scwicweye7éllcw, xwent yirí7 k tntec ne sekí7.

*If there is no ant pile, you can put it by cactus.*

32) Me7 kwemtús yirí7 re s7el7eíksts, tikwemtús yirí7 ta7 me7 re stspat's t'ucw ne7éne ne tmicw.

*They will always be working, and not be lazy anywhere they are.*

33) Me7 kwemtús yirí7 re westés xwexwéyt te stem.

*They will always apply themselves to their work.*

34) E tá7us t'ri7 re slíqenc re7 stsmémelt te qu7s ne7éne es stsegwtsúl'ecws ne tmicws,

*If you don't bury the child's navel, he...the earth,*

35) me7 kwemtús yiri7 ts'ilem te ptsekl, te xwew te ptsek'll me7 sukwsúk'wentem t'ri7 t'hé7e t'ucw.

*Their spirit will be like a leaf, a leaf blowing in the wind here and there.*

36) Téke, e líqenctmes re stsmémelt te qu7s, m-tselxemstés yiri7 re tmicws, tselxemstés yiri7 thé7en k st'7ékwes, ta7 yiri7 me7 re spleps.

*Bury the child's navel and they will know their land, they will know where they come from, they wont be lost.*

37) Me7 kwemtús yiri7 slxemcúfecwt.s yi7éne te tmicws.

*And they will always know their homeland.*

38) Me7 yecwemenstéses, me7 le7stéses t'ri7 te tsúwet-kt.

*They will look after it and they will honour our culture.*

39) Yiri7 stsukws!

*That's it!*

### 3.3.1. Key Findings

There are many teachings within Ignace's narrative. One is that there are many medicines that the Secwépemc people used during the time of pregnancy and after the child was born. Particularly, the qweqwíle. The scientific term for qweqwíle is *Lomatium macrocarpum*, and other common terms include biscuit-root, hogfennell or "Indian carrot" (Turner 1990). Ignace also refers to this medicine in his PhD thesis *Our Oral Histories Are Our Iron Posts: Secwépemc Stories and Historical Consciousness* (2008). In a story recorded by Teit (1909), a girl who repeatedly refused all marriage proposals then finds herself alone while the other young women her age entered marriage. With no one left to marry, she ends up marrying *Qweqwíle*, then is gifted a son by him. Ignace refers to a teaching by Nellie Taylor from Skeetchestn (Skitsestn) who says that *qweqwíle* is used as a prenatal vitamin. Another teaching revealed in Ignace's interview is the process of naming the children. He states that "It's important that you give a child one of the names of deceased ancestor, never give a child a name of a living person." This was to ensure that the spirit of a living person remains with them and would not be taken. One teaching that stood out for me personally was to always remind the child the medicines that they were doctored with. This was a great reminder for me as a mother of two children who had been blessed at birth with different medicines. In Ignace's interview, he talks to doctoring the child with different medicines, depending on what qualities you want the child to possess. For example, grizzly bear grease to ensure the child is strong and will become a defender of the land. Or woodworm medicine, to gift the child with determination. Doctoring a child with eagle grease will help the child see obstacles from far ahead. These detailed and important cultural practices are revealed in this narrative.

### 3.3.2. Linguistic Analysis

Ignace also uses word lengthening in his narrative, where the word *xwexwéy't* is lengthened for emphasis.

Tá7ews trí7 te sxílem, me7 t'sílem yi7 re stmélcmenç re kwséltkten ell xwexwééy't te sw7ecs re tsúwet.s well re sté7ex7em.

He also uses future tense form instead of using the imperative (command) form, which is known to convey politeness. This example can be found in Line 30 of Ignace's narrative.

Me7 tntec yirí7 ne scwicweye7éllcw.

*You put it on an ant pile.*

### 3.4. Bernadette (Garlene) Dodson

Elder Garlene Dodson also comes from the Skítsestn community and provides a vivid narrative of her personal experience.

1) Le ǵ7éses re nuxwnúxwenxw m-yéwes re meryís. Héqen re tá7es meryí. Héqen emut.stwécw túcw.

*A long time ago, when the women married, maybe they didn't marry. Maybe they just lived together.*

2) Ell re yi7éne núxwenxw méte sqélemcw re tkwéwses, m-yews yi7 re tsqwmenks re núxwenxw.

*They would live together and then the woman would get pregnant.*

3) Me7 temllenkúkw7e put re mégen, me7 stens ne7éne ne skwimémelt. Ne7éne ne welánk éytsell me7 yicwélt.s re núxwenxw.

*She stays pregnant for 9 months, and then the baby is born. The baby stays in her tummy for 9 months.*

4) Ell le ǵ7éses re nuxwnúxwenxw ta7 s7i7llcw kítscwes ne7éne n(e) Kamloops. Es yicwélt.s es kult.s re skwimémelt n(e) hospital.

*No all the women arrived in Kamloops, for the babies to be born in the hospital.*

5) W7ec túcw re nuxwnúxwenxw n(e) tsitcws ní7es m-yicwéltes.

*The women stayed home in their houses and had their babies there.*

6) M-tsútes es yicwélt.s yi7éne kwséltkten-kucw kwellno7xe te kwséltkten-kucw: Hilda Jules, Rosie Jules, Inez (Eynis) re kwséltkten7úys-kucw.

*Our related women, and the women of the village. Hilda, Rosie and Inez And these were our close relative.*

7) M-tsútes yi7 es yicwélt.s yerí7 (yi7) re nuxwnúxwenxw te kwséltkten-kucw. Aunt Maggie Jules ell re kítscwes.

*When the women were going to have babies, Aunt Maggie would arrive.*

8) M-yews xlítens nkí7ce, Celena Jules, e sknúcwens, Maggie stetemkélts re yews re yicwélt.s stetemkélts te skwimémelt.

*Then she would call my mother, Celena Jules to help Maggi's daughters, when her daughter's babies were being born.*

9) Ta7 lu7 le q7éses re tskítscwes-kucw ne7élye n(e) Tkémlúps.  
*Long ago, we never did go to Kamloops.*

10) Nekú7eses s7i7llcw te núxwenxw, m-qixt nekú7eses tsílem re sllgwups re syicwélt.s  
re skúye.  
*Sometimes, some of the women would have a difficult time when their babies were being born.*

11) M-yews yi7 s7i7llcw m-kúltes re tskítscwes ne7élye n(e) tmicw re skwimémelt  
s7i7llcw n(e)7éne qu7s re tsyem[tsirgím] n(e)7éne n(e) xqwyépstens n(e)7éne n(e)  
kelcs, n(e)yéne tlúne n(e) sqwext.s  
*When the baby is being born, the umbilical cord is wrapped around their neck, around their hands, and down there around their feet.*

12) Ntsétswe7 ri7 nyicwéltwen, nqé7tse knúcwens nkí7ce Celena Jules.  
*Myself when I was born, my father helped my mother, Celena Jules.*

13) L(é) kúkwéltwen ntsétswe7 yi7éne nqu7. Xwéytes-ekwe yi7éne tsyémes [tsirgímes]  
xweyt thén.  
*My umbilical cord was wrapped all over the place.*

14) Ell yi7éne núxwenxw Elizabeth Etienne re skwest.s  
*And this woman, Elizabeth Etienne was her name.*

15) Dad xlítens yi7éne núxwenxw e skitsc e sknúcwens nkic kémell yéws en sllgwup  
tl7éne en tskitsc ne7éne n(e) tmicw.  
*Dad invited that woman to help my older sister when I was being born into the world.*

16) Yi7éne núxwenxw wikt.s n(e) tsyem[tsirgím] n7éne n(e) nsqmélten, yi7éne n(e)  
nqu7.  
*That woman saw my umbilical cord wrapped around my neck.*

17) M-yews kellpékstmens re swi7s re knúcwens nkí7ce.  
*She dropped everything and stopped helping my mother.*

18) M-yews tsut.s "aahh, aaahh! Píp7ese! Pí7se!"  
*And then she says "It's a snake! Snake!"*

19) M-yews yi7s re tkílcs-ekwe. N Dad m-tsúnses yi7éne lespét [Elizabeth] lu7  
stse7mésem-kucw  
*And then she runs away. My dad said her name was Lespét*

20) Yerí7 lespét m-yews...tkílcs [tek7ilc] n Dad tsut "cuý ta7 k swi7s n(e)7élye e s7elkst  
k sknúncwentsemc.  
*Then dad runs and says "come one, you are not done helping me"*

21) Yews re tkílcs w7écwes re...M-yews wéws xwexweýt swéti7. Pe pí7se re kúlt n7éne n  
Celena yi7 syicwélt.s.

*And then she runs away, and then she's hollering at everyone, there is a snake being born with Celina.*

22) Ooh n Dad m-toxwt.s geyéps-ekwe.  
*Ooh they say dad was so angry.*

23) Ell re kí7ces-kucw tsuns-kucw xweyt<sup>1</sup> then l(e) w7écwes re élkstes nDad,  
*and my mother told us wherever my father worked,*

24) Ec tskwénses-kucw<sup>1</sup> then e s7elkst<sup>1</sup> tlun(e) xweyt<sup>1</sup> then.  
*he took us wherever he worked over there and everywhere.*

25) M-mútes-kucw ne sqeltús ell tšílem lu7<sup>1</sup> t7ene temllenkúkúw7e te stsmémelt nki7ce ell nqe7tse.  
*We lived up in the mountains and there was 9 children that mom and dad had.*

26) Nukw7ú7ps te nuxwnúxwenxw ell nekú7 te sqwse7.  
*There was eight girls and one boy.*

27) Temllenkúkúw7e me7 wellenwí7s-kucw stse7mét.s-kucw kúlt-kucw te Celina ell Hyacinth Jules.  
*Nine of us that was born to Celena and Hyacinth Jules.*

28) Ell xwéytes yi7éne tsutsútsllke7 ndad knúcwens nmom yicwéltes nkí7ce.  
*And all the 7 of us was delivered by my dad.*

29) Héqen w7écwes re élkstes nqé7tse tlúne ne sqeltús the7en ni7 m-yicwéltes ell ndad tsukw yi7 m-knúcwens nkí7ce.  
*Maybe where my dad worked up in the mountains, there was only dad that helped my mom deliver us.*

30) Tsukw yi7éne nekúw7eses ni7 [ne Skitsestn]  
*In skeetchesnt, mom and dad had a log house on the reserve. That's where we were raised,*

(Dodson speaks in English)

31) M-yews re tsutsútsllke7 ndad knúcwens nkí7ce e skúlt.s-kucw n7élye e stskítscs-kucw n7élye e skúlt.s-kucw n(e) tmicw.  
*There was 7 of us that my dad helped my mother when we were born into this world.*

32) Ell seséle yi7 Sandra méte Dona yi7 strmémcw te úqwi.  
*And two, Sandra and Donna, were the two youngest sisters.*

33) N7uqwiyéws re tkwéwses re stmemcw. Ell the two [youngest stémi stse7mét.stem.]  
*My two sisters that are younger, and the two, how do you call "youngest".*

34) Séle yi7éne te nuxwnúxwenxw re tsétses-kucw.  
*Two of these girls were our youngest sisters.*

35) Tsukw yi7 kúlt n7élye ne Kamloops hospital.  
They were the only ones born in the Hospital.

36) Wi7 me7 tli7. Tli7 me7 wi7s nkí7ce ell nqé7tse e stsméltens.  
After those two girls were born, my mother and father were finished having children.

37) Nqé7tse tsuns-ekwe nkic. N kics-kucw yi7 mell twit.s stsmémelt yicwélt e skúlem-k  
te stsmémelt.  
My father told my mother, when these last two children are raised, we will have no more children.

38) Yi7 me7 yi7éne Donna stse7mét.  
Donna was the baby (youngest)

39) “Yiri7 stsukws me7 stméltem-kt.”  
“We will have no more children.”

40) Le q7éses xwéytes re nuxwnúxwenxw e knucwentwécwes.  
A long time ago, all the women all helped one another.

41) Tsqwménkes-kucw nkí7ce nqé7tse. tsuns nkí7ce me7 nes, me7 tskulc yi7éne  
nuxwnunxwenxw te melámen.  
When we were pregnant, my father told my mother go make the young girls medicine.

42) Yi7 te melámen te ste7ens tsukw n7éne n tmicw.  
The medicine that we drank, it's the only medicine that's here on our land.

43) Kúlt xweyt stémi. Ta7 yi7s xwéntes le7s e skult.s n7éne yews e skult.s n7élye  
stsmelt.s-kucw.  
Everything grows here. If we don't give our children that medicine, they wont grow up healthy.

44) Tsunses-kucw re Donna ste7 me7 le7 kwemtús stémi e s7illen.  
Donna told us when we drink this medicine, we will always eat healthy.

(section removed)

45) Ell m-tsútes re kwemtús m-kítswes ni7 sqeqéqllemcw.  
And they say, whenever men came around

46) Nqé7tse tsuns re kí7ce “qwlentéke re stemkél, tsúnte re stemkél yi7 ney yi7  
kekik7ete7úy te kwséltkten7úys. Ta7 yi7 e stqwéws”.  
My dad told my mom “ talk to your daughter. Tell you her that her and that man are too closely related relatives.”

47) Swet es yi7éne tlu7 te Stuxwtéws, tli7ene te Tkemlúps, yúmell n7éne ne Skítsestn  
xweyt swéti7 kwséltktens-kucw.  
Whoever from Bonaparte, from Kamloops, and even skeetchesten, all of them were related to us.

48) *He said* “tsítslem te mítk<sup>í</sup>ye, yi7éne skwímémelt tsítslem te mítk<sup>í</sup>ye pyin kwéséltkten7úy-kt.”

He said “this is new blood into the family, closely related to us”

49) Yi7 me7 nek<sup>t</sup> pyin re mítk<sup>í</sup>ye. Me7 ta7us es yi7ene tkwéwses, yi7ene te memús,  
And now the blood relations will be different. This couple who are together,

50) Re kí<sup>k</sup>7et re s kwéséltkten, yi7ene re7 qwménkes, yi7ene s [-] sqweménkes yi7ene kwéséltkens.

And if they are too closely related and if this man impregnates his relative

51) Yi7ene m-kultes, yi7éne yicwéltes re skwímémelt. Me7 tsoxwlém yi7.  
And if the child is born, it will be very awkward.

52) Tsuns-kucw re qe7tses-kucw “Ta7 yi7s kénems, yi7 wenécwem snek<sup>é</sup>enc..nék<sup>é</sup>ens re mítk<sup>í</sup>ye n7é<sup>í</sup>ye

So my father says, there is nothing wrong here. There is a change of blood here.

53) Kémell pyin ícwell, w7ecwes pyin nuxwnúxwenxw xwent pyin es tá7es meryís cw7it pyin ta7 meryí7es.

It's different now, there are a lot of people not marrying anymore

54) Tsukw tlu7 mut.stwécw. Yúmell yi7 kúlt re stsmémelt.

They only live together. And they even have children.

(section removed)

55) M-yews me7 upekst ell teqmékst te swucwt.s nstsmémelt, tsutsen “cu<sup>y</sup> me7 stémkelt, emút-ce n7éne. Me7 qwlentsín pyin re lexéyéctsen”.

And when my daughters were 16 I told them “sit down I will tell you something”

(section removed)

56) Ta7 yi7 tli7 e pell me7 tsuntsens slexemstés stémi nki7ces qweqwlút.s.

I will tell you what my mother said.

57) Tlentsút ta7 yi7s kénems e qweménkes yi7ene núxwenxw.

She said “there is nothing wrong if this woman get's pregnant”

58) Yi7ene ne nechtsutst n7ene n welánks. Wenécwem yi7 te qelmucw7úy.

The child she is carrying within her, this is a true native.

59) Ta7 yi7s pus7i7elt, ta7 yi7s sqexe7é<sup>y</sup>e.

It isn't a kitten, it isn't a puppy.

60) *I'm gonna end with that.*

### 3.4.1. Key Findings

Dodson also states that the women never used to go to the hospital to have their babies, but gave birth at home. She also names women in the community of Skeetchestn that were birth helpers and names her “Aunt Maggie” as the one who helped with the birth of the babies. Dodson also adds that her father stepped in to help her mother when it was time to birth the baby because they lived secluded in the mountains. Her father helped deliver the seven oldest children, and when they moved to the Skeetchestn reserve, the two youngest were born in the hospital. One of the key messages in Dodson’s narrative is about bloodline and family relations. The teaching relayed in her narrative is that no one should have children if they are related. This is a taboo for the Secwépemc. Her father reassures her that nothing has been done wrong and there has only been a “change of blood”. Those children will be “true native”, they are not kittens or puppies. This speaks very strongly to family connection and demonstrates the teaching that every child has a right to family.

### 3.4.2. Linguistic Analysis

Dodson predominately uses active voice throughout her narrative. This could be because the story is of her personal experience as well as her mother and fathers experience with their nine children. One lexical suffix that Dodson uses in her narration is *-ekwe*. Lexical suffixes “are [particles of] words that refer to concepts, or perhaps mental images, that invoke something’s shape or kind of features, like human and animal anatomy or geographical features, the latter often derived from human body lexical suffices” (Ignace and Ignace 139). In this instance, the lexical suffix that Dodson uses is *-ekwe* which is an evidential suffix that the speakers uses to indicate information according to what someone told the person who is the topic of the information. (Ignace and Ignace 138). Line 13 of Dodson’s narrative provides the sample.

13) Ooh ndad m-tuxwt.s re sgeyéps-ekwe.

Ooh	n+dad	m-tuxwt.-s re	sgeyép-s-ekwe
Ooh	POSS+dad	PST-truly 3ERG	angry-3ERG-QUOT

‘Ooh they say my dad was so angry.’

In the same example sentence above, Dodson demonstrates how grammatical structure in Secwepemctsin can be applied to english words. Instead of using the Secwepemctsin

word for father (*qé7tse*), she uses the english word “dad” attached to the possessive suffix, *n-*. This is a common occurrence the fluent speakers, especially if the sentence pertains to a convention that did not traditionally exist.

## Chapter 4. Conclusion

### 4.1.1. Summary of Findings

Through the narrative of the four Secwépemc Elders, I can conclude that homebirth was a normalized practice within Secwépemc communities prior to colonization. The women continued to stay active throughout her pregnancy, whether it be through gardening or household chores. Medicines from the land were used for both mother and baby. Some of the examples were: qweqwíle as a prenatal pill; juniper or rosebush to bathe the baby in after birth; and medicine infused ointments to rub onto the baby after birth. The Elders spoke of the pregnant women being helped by other women in the community at the time of birth, even providing names of those who were known to be the helpers. They spoke of the *qu7* (naval) being either buried in the earth or placed in an anthill so that the child would always be connected to the land and so the child would grow up to be a hard worker. The process of naming the baby was also discussed in the narratives. The names would be passed down from deceased ancestors, this would not only ensure a strong history and connection to family, but it would make certain the child acted in a manner that brought honour to that name. There was further mention of strong family connection through the teaching that no matter how little Secwépemc blood, the child was accepted and cared for by the family.

### 4.1.2. Challenges

The greatest challenge for me while conducting the research was not having the level of fluency to understand what was being said by the Elder at the time of the interview. I was not able to translate from Secwepemctsin to English thoroughly, however all of the Elders were patient and generous with their help in this process.

The other challenge was to decide what writing convention to use when transcribing the interviews. The writing convention I tend to use when working with the language is more similar to how Mona Jules taught me. This writing convention differs slightly from Aert Kuipers (1974). See example below.

Kuipers

Jules

ren kyé7e  
re+n kyé7e  
DET+POSS grandmother

nkyé7e  
n+kyé7e  
POSS+grandmother

In Kuipers style of writing, you can clearly see linguistically what the grammatical structure of the sentence is. While in Jules' writing style, she focuses more on pronunciation rather than grammatical structure.

### 4.1.3. Further Research

There is a great deal of further research that can be conducted on this topic. For the purposes of this research, we were only able to include speakers that were fluent in Secwepemctsin in order to record narratives that were true to the fluidity of the language. However, there is a wide range of resource people within the Secwépemc Nation that have a wealth of knowledge on cultural practices of pregnancy, birthing, and postpartum care. This information is no less valuable to young families that wish to incorporate Secwépemc culture into such an important time of their lives.

There is potential for the creation of accessible resources about this topic of discussion; much like the "Parent-Child Handbook" that was produced by the SCES, and the resources that Catherine Dworak (2009) mentions in her theses.

It is my belief that further research must continue to include the viewpoint of the men in the communities and family. This presents a more holistic approach to the care of the babies in the Secwépemc Nation. That way, both young women and young men will both be equally invested in the cultural practices and the new babies will have a balance of support.

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## Appendix A.

### CA Transcription Abbreviations

3	third person
CISL	cislocative
DET	determiner
ERG	ergative
FUT	future tense marker
IND	indirect
LOC	locative
NEG	negative
NOM	nominalizer
OBL	oblique
PASS	passive
PST	past tense marker

# Appendix B

## Consonants in Secwepemctsin

Table is based on the International Phonetic Alphabet chart and was developed by Charlene Fortier as a part of the graduate studies course work. See Kuipers 1974, Ignace and Ignace 2017.

		Labial	Alveolar/ dental	Lateral	Post- alveolar & Palatal	Velar	Labio-velar	Uvular	Labio- uvular	Pharyngeal	Labio- pharyngeal	Laryngeal
Stops	Voiceless	p	t			k	kw	q	qw			
	Ejectives	p̰	t̰ [tʰ]			k̰	kw̰	q̰	qw̰			ʔ
Affricates	Voiced											
	Voiceless				ts							
	Ejectives		t̰s	t̰ [tʰ]								
Fricatives	Voiceless		s	ll		c	cw	x	xw			h
	Voiced					r						
Resonants	Plain	m	n	l	y			w		g	gw	
	Glottalized	m̰	n̰	l̰	y̰	ɾ		w̰		g̰	gw̰	

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<sup>8</sup> [tʰ] and [t̰] are allophones of the same phoneme t̰

Secwepemctsin speaker may use either pronunciation without changing the meaning of the word