

xwixwi’em’:
My Hul’q’umi’num’ story-telling journey

by
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Sq’utxulenuxw

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Ethics Statement

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Abstract

Storytelling is an important tool for sharing knowledge across generations for Hul’q’umi’num’ people. Stories teach us about our way of life and our perspectives on how to be as First Nations peoples. In this project, I share two stories of the creature world that were told to me when I was still a boy. With the help of Elders, I brought to life versions in the Hul’q’umi’num’ language, a Coast Salish language of British Columbia. I discuss my journey to learn how to tell them in Hul’q’umi’num’. I give advice on structuring a story in terms of its organizational schema. I give examples of interesting ways to start a sentence in a story, avoiding the pitfall of English influence. Storytelling has proven to be an interesting path toward fluency. Stories are also an important way of documenting our language and providing resources for language teachers and learners.

Keywords: First Nations language, Coast Salish, Hul’q’umi’num’, linguistics, stories

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I would like to thank my wife, Elizabeth, and our children for their support and understanding for me as a scholar. I dedicate this work to my children, grandchildren, and great-grandchild, and all the young generation, with the hope that they will one day be inspired to be fluent in our Hul'q'umi'num' language.

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Preface

When I think back on my life, I never realized what was planned for my future. My clearest, early memory was crying for my dad, who was a gillnet fisherman. Every day, every night, I cried for him. Then I was six years old and I actually went fishing with my dad. I remember each port, the places we anchored. I remember the wicked weather. I recall the wolves at Rivers' Inlet howling. I recall listening to the younger old men teasing each other about the northern women, and my dad reminding them that I understood what they were saying. I remember them changing languages (to another Salish language), and smirking because I could not understand them then.

We were lucky because my dad, as hereditary chief, was able to keep us at home so I did not have to go off to residential school like many of my friends and relatives here. I recall starting school at the age of seven, and the classes were from grade 1 to 7. I'll never forget the most embarrassing moment was when I spelled 'Jell-O'. I thought the hyphen was a minus sign, everyone laughed at me and I cried with embarrassment. It is funny to me now as we use a lot of hyphens when we write Hul'q'umi'num'.

My auntie, Katherine Edwards, my dad's older sister, was the one that was very keen for me to maintain my language and culture. She and my mom, all they spoke was the language. I recall the rules or protocol that kids could not attend the longhouse, but I was taken around to different longhouses by my aunt. She made sure I went to the bathroom first and then I had to sit beside her. My aunt said to me that I could not just be running around with the other kids. I had to sit, watch, and listen. And to this day, I understand mostly everything that goes on in the longhouse, even though it is said in Hul'q'umi'num'.

I have learned something from each society that I have been a part of. I know the respect instilled into all who have been initiated into whatever society that they belong. Traditions such as eating properly, bathing in the creeks or ocean, always preparing your mind, body, and spirit to be ultimately strong, and always reminding yourself it is your mind, body, and spirit forever.

I recall training for canoe races. When I was thirteen, I used to go to Shell Beach to practice paddling for the Mermaid Canoe Club. I distinctly remember two Elders calling me, and they were calling me by my dad's traditional name, Squtxulenuxw. I asked them why they called me that. They just told me that they knew. But because I was not the eldest, I always thought that name was to go to my older brother.

After leaving Kulleet Bay School, we went to St. Mary's Convent in Ladysmith for two years, and then on to North Oyster Public School, and to Ladysmith Secondary. I enjoyed school and did quite well at it. It was hard to keep up with everyone because every May we would go berry picking in the States. I would have to catch up in the fall. We were always busy, picking potatoes, harvesting seaweed and acorn seeds, fishing, and other activities.

I finished grade 10, but then my father fell ill and died, and my mom needed my earnings. I had various jobs: tree planting, boom work, millwork in saw mills and pulp mills—Harmac, Crofton, Ocean Falls. Rising in the ranks, I worked mills throughout B.C. until I was thirty. Then, I started in residential and commercial construction. I started serving my community as a politician in 1988; I served as chief council for two years and then on council for over a decade.

Language became interesting to me more recently. Before it did not really matter because I always understood that it was my older brothers', older sisters', or older people's job to teach the language. Then I started to realize that hardly anyone could speak the language anymore. When I was in the longhouse, I would be telling people who were my age what was happening and what they were saying. I did not realize that they did not understand, so it became my job to tell them what was happening. So I started to get more and more interested in the language. I could speak it and I could understand it, but I could not write it, so I needed to add that to my learning. There were words that I sometimes lost because I never used them. I never started using my language until I was forty years old because I worked away from home and played different sports most of my life with my friends in town.

I started my academic training in Hul'q'umi'num' language with Ellen White at Malaspina College in Nanaimo in 1998. This was a course for speakers to learn to

become literate in their language. I continued on with language courses with Mabel Mitchell and Florence James at Chemainus Native College in 2002. First of all, they were asking me how to say this, how to pronounce that, and I was helping at the CNC and at Kulleet Bay school. I quit my job and I started working part time here and there teaching language and culture to children in grades K–10. To help polish up my teaching skills, I was sent to various workshops and short courses in Kamloops and Chief Atahm School in Chase, to learn TPR methods as well as how to use stories for teaching the language.

I always thought the language and traditions were for somebody else. I stayed away from the longhouse unless my Auntie took me. She made sure I sat there. In 2006, I was approached by a family from Snuneymuxw to ask if I could stand up and speak on their behalf in the longhouse. During each ‘work’ that takes place, whether it is a memorial, receiving a name, or inheriting spiritual objects, a speaker has to stand up and do the announcing in Hul’q’umi’num’ on behalf of the family. I was nervous at first since it is hard work remembering all of the expressions and names. Gradually, I took on more and more responsibility and have now served my community in the capacity of ceremonial speaker for the last ten years. Besides spiritual work, I am called upon to be a speaker at public events such as graduations, weddings, funerals, and museum and university events.

I went to Hawai’i in 2009 for a one-week workshop on language research and a conference on language revitalization. It was revealing to learn that other people from around the world were facing the issue of the loss of their languages. The Hawai’ians told us they were not allowed to leave their island, and people were not allowed to visit there. That is how they protected their language. They told us that the young people you hear speaking were taught by linguists.

When I heard in 2012 that School District 79 needing language teachers, I joined their teaching team. I enjoy teaching language and culture. Besides the basics—numbers, colors, animals—I also tell stories and talk about our ways (e.g. harvesting) and beliefs. Right around then, I had the opportunity to take language and linguistics courses from SFU. My focus was to learn how to read and write better, but also how the language was put together and how it relates to culture. This has been an amazing experience for me,

studying with our native linguists as well as Donna Gerdts and other university linguists. So, I learned how to read and write the language and see how the words come together. I have learned a lot about stories and story-telling.

My goal for the future is to teach the language. I would like to be certified to create a path for young people, especially my children and grandchildren, to learn the language and to teach the language. There are few families here at Stz'uminus where the language is still spoken. Currently, just a little language is taught but there is no reason we cannot be teaching more, including immersion. The training I received in the graduate program will help me do this and train future teachers.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Hul’q’umi’num’ is one dialect of the Salish language family (Gerdts 1977). It is spoken on central Vancouver Island, spanning communities from Qualicum to Malahat. My project is about becoming a story-teller in my language. In Hul’q’umi’num’ we use the word *sxwi’em’* for stories. To tell a story, we say *xwi’em’* and telling stories is *xwixwi’em’*, the title of my project. Most of the stories I know, I heard as a boy. At that time, they were told in Hul’q’umi’num’ by first language speakers. I always liked the stories, but I was unaware of the importance of them until I started studying my language formally. If I had not begun studying my language, these stories might have been lost. I now understand how the cultural, spiritual, and transformational beliefs of our people can be woven into our stories. I can see how they connect us to the land, the animals, the air, and the world that surrounds us. Even the seasonal activities of our people are embedded into our stories and can tell us much about the lives they lived in the past and, to some extent, the lives we live to this day. The messages they carry are timeless. Unlike English folklore, our stories are called *syuth*, meaning true to our cultural beliefs. Our stories tie us to everything we are. We believe everything is alive, so it is not a far stretch to envision these stories happening.

Hearing these stories as a child connected me to who we are as people, our longhouses and our cultural beliefs of the spiritual world. The protocols and teachings that have been passed down to the next generations from our Elders are often shared through stories. We are guided through stories and shaped into who are—our character, our morals, and our values. Our stories share how they hoped we would turn out. Everything we do in our life reflects on our parents and grandparents. As years go by and new teachings come out, different people will take something different from each story at each telling. Every person takes the teachings they need from the stories. Hul’q’umi’num’ stories differ from some English stories in that the message is not said explicitly. It is left for whoever receives the story to take what they need from it.

Throughout the many generations in our community, I find that at times, it is noticeable who has been exposed to our stories and who has not, based on their health. I

think the spiritual connection to the longhouse and to the shaker church is what saved our people. Spiritual connection is important to our people. Our most spiritual people seem to live longer, healthier lives. With what our communities have faced through generations of imposed residential school a large gap is felt within our communities when it comes to our stories and the knowledge that is passed on to them. This gap can extend through generations and can affect entire families whose Elders may not have had access to first language speakers and their stories.

Stories would be a great way to teach many generations of learners. Because of the rich cultural context and the nature of stories in general, they can be a question as well as an answer to our beliefs. It is important that we harness the stories within our communities and use them so that these beliefs can continue to live among us as First Nations people. The structure of Hul'q'umi'num' stories and sentences can be broken down in many ways to reach beginning language learners, as well as our many community members who have first-hand experience and memories of our spoken language without the current ability to speak it. Many First Nations people, myself included, were raised in times when speaking our language was not always acceptable and in many circumstances was deemed embarrassing. Through harnessing the beauty and complexity of our Hul'q'umi'num' stories, we can re-instill pride in who we are, where we come from, and the words that share our history and have been passed on for generations. Grasping the complexity of the speech and language structure of Hul'q'umi'num' is no easy feat. And there are many styles of teaching our language. However, I believe in the strength behind teaching through story-telling.

In my project, you will find some information about how to make and tell stories and the linguistic structures we find in stories in Chapter 2. I share two of my original stories along with vocabulary lists in Chapters 3 and 4. Also, you will find in chapter 3 some thoughts about story organization and expressing actions.

Chapter 2. Making and telling stories

I begin my discussion on story-telling by giving a little history about how the stories I share here were written and what I've learn from the experience of telling the stories to a variety of different audiences and by teaching them in my courses.

2.1. How to make a story

I personally think that stories are the best way to teach the language. This is because the learners hear the whole, complete language and the stories are fun and have messages built into them. My mom and many of the Elders were always telling stories, right from the oldest relatives to my late cousin Willie Seymour. Growing up I heard those stories and I understood them in Hul'q'umi'num'. Those stories were perfectly put together. I enjoyed hearing those stories. It was only later that I realized that they were teaching me something. Now those stories are going to help me teach someone else who has lost the language. I feel bad that I did not realize this sooner. I always thought that it was somebody else's job to do this, not mine. Now I find I am left with the work of trying to remember those stories and voice them in Hul'q'umi'num'. I really thank the Elders and Donna Gerdts for helping me take the first draft of the story and then fixing it up to the level where it authentically sounds like the stories I myself heard while growing up.

For me as a story teller, when I go to write it down, there are different parts to the story (and I say more about this in section 3.4). Telling a story comes naturally to me after hearing the Elders telling stories. How they tell the stories is what I aim for when I tell a story—laying down the action according to how it unfolds, using my voice to stretch the words, and slowing down and speeding up to make it exciting. It was really interesting to me when we took some of the very oldest stories and studied them. We marked them up to see what the speakers were doing with their presentation and their voices. That has really given me confidence in how I perform a story.

When writing the story down, you have to give the story a name. The name should be something that represents what the story is about without giving away any surprises or the ending. The heading of the story is pretty important. The beginning always tells about where the story is from and what it is about. Without that, it would really not come together as a teaching tool, especially one that links back to the traditional heritage. Then the main part of the story, I just remembered it the way I was told. There's a natural way the story develops as you introduce the different characters and then tell what action is happening. At the end of the story, you come back out of the story world and remind the audience again about where the story came from and sometimes you might add some explanation of the message in the story. Often though, the Elders did not lecture us about the meaning, they just left us to figure it out for ourselves. What I find is that each time I hear a story, I get a deeper understanding of it. And the meaning you bring away from the story depends a lot on the life experiences you have had.

I want to share a little with you about what actually goes into laying down a story, getting it to the last stage of how we made a little movie out of it. When we get it all finished, it looks like this is easy to do, but it actually takes quite a lot of work to get the story done. First, I would remember the story, thinking about it and making some notes about the sequence of events. I made a list of characters, the animals, birds, or whatever, and picture the action, making sure I had the Hul'q'umi'num' word for that action in mind. Then I would turn on the recorder and start speaking in Hul'q'umi'num'. Then Donna or her assistants would play back the story and I would write it out in Hul'q'umi'num'. I would patch it up some, adding words or phrases. The next stage would be to work with an Elder. In the case of the two stories in this project, I worked with Ruby Peter.

I would tell the story all the way through for Ruby, consulting the written part when I got stuck. Then we slowed it down. I would say one small bit at a time and then she would say it back to me, fixing it up if needed. I recorded her doing this. Then I used that recording to fix up my written version. By this time the story was really clear in my mind. I was ready to lay it down on the recording, pretty much straight through. This recording gets checked back to the transcript, to make sure the written version matches

what I said, and then also I put on an English translation for each line. Once that was complete, I was ready to stand up and tell it in public.

2.2. How to tell a story to language learners

Often when I tell stories, I am telling the same story a few times. If I know that there are people who are not fluent in the audience, I tell the story in Hul'q'umi'num', then in English. If they really do not understand Hul'q'umi'num', then I go back and forth, a little at a time. Sometimes I get invited to tell stories in situations where they only want me to speak in English, but I am stubborn about this, and always tell the Hul'q'umi'num' as well. If they can get the picture of what is happening in their mind when I tell the English first, then they hear it in Hul'q'umi'num', they can pick up some of the meanings. Plus, they get some exposure to the sounds of our language this way.

Sometimes when I am getting ready to tell the story, I teach them a few Hul'q'umi'num' words first. Like *yuxwule'* ‘eagle’, *stqeeye’* ‘wolf’, as they are going to hear those words in the stories. When I teach the story in the class, I tell it first, then I teach them some vocabulary and phrases, we practice that, and then we act out the story. Then I tell it again. By the second time they hear it, it starts to make sense to them. For the advanced students, I hand it out on paper. We go through the vocabulary and phrases on the page before I tell the story. Then I have them listen to be telling the story. Afterwards I have them read the story a line at a time, discussing the meaning of each word. Looking down the road, it would be great to have students that are advanced enough so that they could have the story just in Hul'q'umi'num', no English, and they could read it out and understand it. Then I tell the story once again. Each time they hear it they understand more.

I'm not sure if we are ever going to reach the place where they can tell the story back to me in Hul'q'umi'num', though I know we could. When I am teaching for the school district, they are always going back to basics or having me switch into English to talk about our culture. It would be so nice if we could move ahead with what I think of as our own literature and ask learners to make more of an effort to become fluent. I was so thrilled to participate in the story class with Mandy Jones's class at Ladysmith. My own

grandsons were in her class. They got to read and study stories and then we got to help them make their own. Having a personal attachment to a story makes it much more fun to learn.

2.3. What we learn about our language by learning from stories

As we work through the stories, many grammatical features of the language come up. These features are important to know in order to produce authentic Hul'q'umi'num'. When Ruby Peter was helping me lay down the Blind Wolf story, I really did learn a lot. For example, in my draft I was just counting *nuts'a*, *yuse'lu*, *lhihw...* ‘one two three...’, but Ruby corrected me to use *nuts'ehw*, *thume*, *lhhwelh...* ‘one time, two times, three times...’. That is solid in my mind now. That really got me interested in the numeral classifiers and the different endings that appear on the numbers (Gerdts & Hinkson 2004). I always include that in my teaching now. I knew different ways of counting but never had stopped to think about that or organize it in my mind. I was happy to hear about how that works. There were also other old-fashioned vocabulary words that come up in the way Ruby helped me with the story. I am not afraid to ask the Elders for help, even though people think of me as fluent. There are many words that I need reminding of and also lots of aspects of the culture that the Elders know. I am happy to always be learning more and getting more and more fluent and authentic in my language.

When we started listening to stories in the SFU classes, I started telling them more. I realized there were some words—the particle pieces, that do not exactly have a place in the English translation. Little words like *p'e* ‘for certain’, *kwu'elh* ‘then’ (‘natural course of events’). These words come up all the time in stories. I started using them a lot more. Another thing Ruby and Donna pointed out to me was that I was using *i* ‘and’ way too much. Many times, I should be using *suw* ‘and then’, instead. *suw* takes a different kind of sentence following it, throwing the syntax into the possessive. But that is the proper way to do it when actions are strung together as a sequence of events. Once that was pointed out to me, I could really hear that in the way the fluent speakers talk. I also started doing that myself. These things have become really natural for me now and I feel much more confident when I stand up and tell the story, that I can

do it and it is interesting and proper. Even when the older generation is listening, I am happy to stand up and tell a story and they seem to enjoy it.

2.4. How to start sentences in stories

Because I heard the language through my youth from fluent first language speakers, my Elders, much of the structure of Hul'q'umi'num' is programmed in my memory. Before I started working in the language, I started telling these stories in English to my students from memory, without ever thinking of the structure of the story in either language. I don't ever think about how the story may be in terms of sentence structure, as it just rolls off my tongue, and I don't think about the structure of the English translation sentence either. But it was an interesting exercise to take a look at how sentences begin in the two languages by comparing the Hul'q'umi'num' with its English translation.

2.5. Hul'q'umi'num' sentence structure

What I noticed is that Hul'q'umi'num' sentence structure is often completely opposite of English sentence structure. English often starts with a subject noun phrase. You can see this in example (1). (The subject NP is underlined.)

(1) Mary was excited that the day had finally come.

But in Hul'q'umi'num', you wait until the end of a sentence to mention the subject as in example (2), from the Blind Wolf story. In Hul'q'umi'num', which has a verb–subject word order, the eagle comes at the end of the sentence.

(2) 'i' hwun' 'eey' 'ul' tu yuxwule'

But the eagle just continued on.

You can see other examples of the subject coming last in Hul'q'umi'num' in the following examples:

(3) wukw'lhuq' tu shelh kwsus hwtqetus kwsus thuw'nilh tens.

His mom just slammed the door.

(4) suw' thuytus tthu ti 'i' tu s'ulhtun thunu ten.

So mother made tea and something to eat.

(5) hwun' 'i'tut 'ul' tu tth'upsi'a'thun'.

The squirrel was still asleep.

In some ways, the formation of Hul'q'umi'num' sentences can seem contradictory. It takes time to teach learners when and where a subject should be mentioned if it is mentioned at all.

The fact that Hul'q'umi'num' almost never starts sentences with subjects raises the question: how do you start a sentence in Hul'q'umi'num'? For many sentences in our language exercise materials, an auxiliary verb is used to start a sentence that describes an action. Here are some examples with **ni'** (indicates 'there' and 'then').

(6) ni' p'ukw 'i' 'uwus stqeeye'us, ni' 'uye'q ni' hwu q'ullhanumutsun.

When it surfaced he wasn't a wolf any more—he had changed into an orca.

(7) ni' kwu'elh tuw' sht'es kw'un's nan 'uw' hwtsukwilum.

So that's what happens when you go too far.

(8) ni' qu'l'et kwunlhnenum 'u tthu swe's s'ulhtuns.

And he was once again able to get his own food.

This, however, is uncommon in stories, as you can see by looking how out the sentences start in the two stories given above.

Time phrases can start Hul'q'umi'num' sentences too. There are a variety of words that can be used in this way to notate a certain point of time or a certain amount of time. The beginning of the sentence can also indicate that something is still happening, has suddenly happened, or finally happened. All of these expressions are commonly found in the beginning of the sentence.

(9) **hwun' netulh** 'i' ni' wulh nem' tsam 'a'luxutus tu stth'oom.

And it was early morning and they went up to gather berries.

- (10) **tahw skweyul** 'i' yelh sis hwyunamut.
 It was noon before he woke up.
- (11) **nuts'a' skweyul** 'i' ni' tsun q'aq'i'. ni' tsun 'a'mut 'ul' sq'uq'a' 'u thunu tenulh.
One day I was sick, so I stayed home with my mother.
- (12) **'uwu hithus** 'i' m'i tus tu kwuhwtsum.
It wasn't long after and there was a knock on the door.

• **hwun' xut'u** 'still doing' = 'suddenly,' 'finally'

- (13) **hwun' xut'u** 'i' ts'elhum'utus tu ni' qwaqwul'.
Suddenly he heard a voice.
- **tl'e' wulh qul'et** 'also now again' = 'again'
- (14) **tl'e' wulh qul'et** ts'elhum'utus tu stqeeye', q'e'wum'.
 And again he heard the wolf, howling.

In Hul'q'umi'num', using a quantifying expression such as *mukw'* can pull a noun to the front of a sentence

- (15) **mukw' tu hwulmuhw** nem' 'u tl' pestun tsts'its'i'yu.
The natives all used to go to the States picking strawberries.
- (16) **mukw' lhwet** 'uw' hwu saay' kws huye's.
Everyone was ready to leave.
- (17) **mukw' sil'anum** 'i' nem' shaqwul 'u tu pestun tu hwulmuhw...
Every year the First Nations people would go to the States...

Some sentences use more than one sentence starter: the following example has both a time phrase and a quantified phrase.

- (18) **nuts'a' skweyul mukw' lhwet** 'uw' nem' lhum'ts'els.
One day everyone was going picking.

The following example has three starter phrases, a quantified phrase, a time phrases, and then another quantified phrase.

- (19) **mukw' netulh hwun' yutth'etth'ukw'ul's, mukw' lhwet nem' huye' nem' lhumts'els.**

Every morning the people would wake up at daybreak to go picking

Second language learners can concentrate on learning the story itself, and understanding the flow, before delving into the details. Sentence structure is important to the structure of the story. But practicing how to start up sentences, even if you do it immersion style in Hul'q'umi'num' without giving a translation, will help language learners become better at listening and understanding stories and also better at telling stories.

2.6. Learning to speak authentic Hul'q'umi'num' through stories

I think for fluent speakers it is natural to form sentences in a Hul'q'umi'num' way, but it can be confusing for learners to differentiate between the variety of ways sentences are constructed. This is why stories are an effective way to learn Hul'q'umi'num' sentence structure. Stories are more relatable and easier to understand from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph. Phrases that serve to anchor the beginning of the sentence are there for a reason—to add continuity and add background or to put special focus on something.

I would really like to help the language teachers and the language students to understand stories and to be able to stand up and speak fluently and tell the stories, whether it is an old story or one they are making up themselves, may be based on their own experience. Stories are one of the most important ways of teaching the language. And people have to realize that it is everyone's job to listen to and learn stories. They cannot be thinking this is someone else's job, not mine. Once they appreciate stories, it is only natural that they will want to tell some of their own, and this is how our own Hul'q'umi'num' literature will continue to thrive—one new story at a time.

Chapter 3. The Blind Wolf

The first story I am going to tell is about an eagle and a blind wolf that shows what can be accomplished by teamwork. You can find an movie version of this story at: <http://sxwiem.hwulmuhwqun.ca/tu-stkwas-stqeeye-the-blind-wolf/>. You will hear me tell the stories and see the story brought to life by the art work of Sally Hart.

3.1 Story

tu st'kwas stqeeye' The Blind Wolf

George Seymour (Sq'utxulenuhw)

1. 'een'thu squtxulenuhw tun'ni' tsun 'utl' shts'uminus.
I'm squtxulenuhw from Stz'uminus.
2. 'i' tunu sxwi'em', st'kwas stqeeye'.
This is my story about the blind wolf.
3. ni' tsun hekw'me't tu nuts'a' sxwi'em'.
I remember this one story.
4. skw'ey kw'unus 'i mel'qt tu sxwi'em'.
I could never forget this story.
5. mukw' sil'anum 'i' nem' shaqwul 'u tu pestun tu hwulmuhw—hwsenuch,
me'luxulh, quw'utsun', pun'eluxutth', shts'uminus, snuneymuhw.
Every year the First Nations people would go to the States—the Saanich,
Malahat, Cowichan, Penelekut, Stz'uminus, and Snuneymuhw.
6. mukw' netulh hwun' yutth'etth'ukw'ul's, mukw' lhwet nem' huye' nem'
lhumi's'els.
Every morning the people would wake up at daybreak to go picking.
7. nuts'a' skweyul 'i' ni' tsun q'aqi'. ni' tsun 'a'mut 'ul' sq'uq'a' 'u thunu tenulh.
One day I was sick, so I stayed home with my mother.

8. 'i' hwi' kwuhwtsum nuw'ilum thu s'eluhw slheni'.
There was a knock on the door, and an old lady came in.
9. suw' thuytus tthu ti'i tu s'ulhtun thunu ten.
So mother made tea and something to eat.
10. suw' 'eey' 'ul' qwiil'qwul'tul', yun'ye'num'.
They carried on talking to each other, laughing.
11. suw' ptem' thu slheni' 'uwees ts'elhum'ut 'u tu sxwi'em'.
The lady asked, "Would you like to hear a story?"
12. "hey' ch kwu'elh!" xut'u thunu ten.
"Go ahead," said my mother.
13. suw' nem'ust-hwus thuw'nilh tu sxwi'em'.
So, she started in.
14. 'i-i-i yu tth'etth'ukw'ul' 'u tu nuts'a' skweyul,
One day when it was daybreak,
15. 'i' sht'sunets tu yuxwule' 'u tu st'epi' thqet 'i le'lum'utus tu tumuhws.
an eagle was sitting on an old, dead tree. And he was looking over his land.
16. sht'eeuwun' stem kwu hay 'ul' yuw'en' sxlhass.
He was wondering what was going to be the first meal of the day.
17. 'i wulh ts'elhum'utus tu stuqeye'.
And he could hear a wolf.
18. 'i' hwun' 'eey' 'ul' tu yuxwule'.
But the eagle just continued on.
19. 'uwu ni'us q'el' 'u tu stqeeye'.
He didn't pay any heed to the wolf.
20. suw' nem' huye', nem' suwq' 'u tu s'ulhtuns.
So, he flew off to find some food.

21. suw' hi-i-ith kwus heew'u, 'i' ni' hwu'alum' 'u tu thqet-s.
He was away from his tree for quite some time before he returned to it.
22. 'uw' 'eey' 'ul' le'lum'utus tu tumuhws.
So he continued to watch over his land.
23. tl'e' wulh qul'et ts'elhum'utus tu stqeeye', q'e'wum'.
And again he heard the wolf, howling.
24. q'e'wum' tuw'nilh, xeem', xeem'.
He was howling, crying, crying.
25. suw' nem' lhakw' numnusus.
So, he flew over to him.
26. suw' ptem'utus tu stqeeye', "nutsim' kwu'elh kwus nan 'uw' sulewe' qiqul'us,
kwun's q'e'wum', q'anuq?"
And he asked the wolf, "Why are you so sad to be howling so, dear one."
27. "a-a-a, 'i tsun hwu t'kwas, s'aluhwthut 'i' tsun tl'lim' 'uw' kw'ekw'i'."
"Oh, I have become blind and old, and I'm really hungry."
28. "xwum tsun 'uw' ts'ew'uthamu," thut tu yuxwule'.
"I can help you," said the eagle.
29. "nem' tsun t'ahw 'u tu sta'luw', 'i' kwunut tsun tu hay 'ul' thi stseelhtun."
"I will go down to the river and get a big salmon."
30. suw' hwu'alum'st-hwus tu hay 'ul' thi stseelhtun.
So, that eagle left, and he brought back a big salmon.
31. 'uwu ni'us qwal tu stqeeye', 'i'lhtun' 'ul'.
The wolf didn't say anything, but just started eating.
32. suw' qul'et huye' tu yuxwule', suwq'tus tu qul'et s'ulhtuns.
So the eagle left again and went to look for more food.
33. tuw' hwu hith 'i' nem' hwu'alum' 'u tthu thqet-s.
After a long while, he went back to his tree.

34. tuw' hwu hith kwus le'lum'utus tu tumuhws, 'i' qul'et ts'elhum'utus tu stqeeye', q'e'wum'.
- He was looking over his land and he again heard the wolf, howling.
35. "suw' qul'et tsun nem' 'aluxut tun' s'ulhtun."
- "I will again go and get you some food."
36. "aaa, 'uwu," thut tu stqeeye'.
- And the wolf said, "No."
37. "'un' stl'i' 'u kwun's yath 'uw' xulhustham'sh 'u tthuw' mukw' skweyul, 'uw' kweyulus 'i' 'uw' qul'et kweyul."
- "Do you want to be feeding me today and tomorrow and every day?"
38. "aaa, nu stl'i' kw'unus tuw' ts'ewuthamu.
- "I really want to help you.
39. ts'elhumut tu sxiits tthunu sts'ewulhtun."
- Hear my plan about how I'm going to help."
40. "hey' ch kwu'elh."
- "Okay, go ahead."
41. suw' qwal tu yuxwule', "'uw' qul'etus kweyul 'i' m'i tsun lhakw', lhhwelh kwunus sel'ts'tamu 'i' m'i ch tseelqum.
- So, the eagle said, "Tomorrow at daybreak, I will come fly over you three times, and you will follow me.
42. "'uwu ch tum'temuhw 'i' 'unuhw, wuwa' kw'ekw'i' ch, lhtsiws, tsqul'qul'a, 'uwu ch 'un'uhwuhw."
- "Don't stop for anything. Even if you are hungry, tired, and thirsty, don't stop."
43. "'uy'!" thut tthu stqeeye'.
- "Good," said the wolf.
44. suw' tus 'u tu yu hwukwekwiyl', tl'upqinum tu yuxwule'.
- So daybreak came, and the eagle flew down.
45. suw' nuts'ehw, thume, lhhwelh, ni' sul'ts'tum.
- And he circled him once, twice, three times.

46. 'i' nem' huye' lhakw' tseelqum tthu stqeeye'.
And he flew off and the wolf followed him.
47. nan 'uw' hith kw'us 'i xwan'chunum', 'i' tl'lim' 'uw' kw'ey', lhtsiws,
tsql'qul'a.
He was running for a long time, and he got tired, thirsty, and hungry.
48. sis 'uw' hekw' 'u tthu shyaay's tthu nuts'umat shqwaluwun.
And he remembered what they had planned.
49. suw' timutus tthu shqwaluwuns, suw' 'eey' 'ul' xwan'chunum'.
So, he was determined to keep running.
50. hwi' huqwnuhwus tthu kw'atl'kwa.
Then he could smell the salt water.
51. hwi' 'eey' 'ul' xwan'chunum', 'i' hwi' hilum 'u tthu p'a'qus, qwus 'u tthu
kw'atl'kwa.
He was continuing, and he tripped and fell over the cliff and into the water.
52. hay 'ul' tl'up tsulel 'i' tiqw' 'u tthu tl'itl'up.
It was very deep, and he almost hit the bottom.
53. ni' p'ukw 'i' 'uwus stqeeye'us, ni' 'uye'q ni' hwu q'ullhanumutsun.
When it surfaced he wasn't a wolf any more—he had changed into an orca.
54. hwu 'uwu ni'us hwu t'qwas.
He wasn't blind anymore.
55. ni' qul'et kwunlhnenum 'u tthu swe's s'ulhtuns.
And he was once again able to get his own food.
56. tu nuts'umat sts'ewulhtun shqwaluwun ni' hakwushus tthu yuxwule' hwu
ts'ewutus tu stqeeye' niilh t-sas.
A plan of assistance is what the eagle used to help the wolf who was so pitiful.
57. sht'eeewun' syuths tuni' 'i ts'elhum'utuhw.
I believe this to be a true story that you are hearing.

58. ni' tsun ptem'ut tunu menulh, 'i' thut thu'it.
 I was asking my late dad if it was true.
59. ni' kwu'elh ni' 'u tu shtsa'nus.
 He said that it was there at Deception Pass.
60. ni' nexun' 'u tey' tun'a sxi'em'.
 That's the end of my story.
61. ni' hay. hay ch q'u.
 The end. Thank you

3.2 Vocabulary

In this section I organized the vocabulary for Blind Wolf according to semantic groupings. You will find the categories: creatures, places, quantifiers, the actions of *yuxwule'*, and the actions of *stqeeye'* in the lists that follow.

Creatures

yuxwule'	'bald eagle'
stqeeye'	'wolf'
stseelhtun	'salmon'
q'ullhanumutsun	'orca'
thqet	'tree'
st'epi' thqet	'dead tree'

Places:

hwsenuch	'Saanich'
me'luxulh	'Malahat'
quw'utsun	'Cowichan'
pun'eluxutth'	'Penelakut'
shts'uminus	'Stz'uminus'
snuneymuhw	'Nanaimo'
shtsa'nus	'Deception Pass'

Quantifiers:

nuts'a'	'one'
nuts'a' sil'anum	'one year'
nuts'a' skweyul	'one day'
nuts'a netulh	'one morning'
nuts'ehw	'once'
thume	'twice'
lhhwelh	'three times'

mukw'	'all'
mukw' lhwet	'everybody'
mukw' sil'anum	'every year'
mukw' skweyul	'every day'
mukw' netulh	'every morning'
mukw' tu hwulmuhw	'all the First Nations people'

yuxwule': (what yuxwule' does)

shts'unets	'sitting'
nem' huye'	'leave'
nem' suwq' 'u tu s'ulhtuns	'go look for food'
nem' heew'u	'go hunting'
nem' hwu'alum' 'u tthu thqet-s	'return to his tree'
nem' lhakw'	'go fly'
nem' t'ahw 'u tu sta'lув'	'go down to the river'
'i le'lum'utus tu tumuhws	'looking at his land'
'i ts'elhum'utus tu stuqeye'	'hearing the wolf'
nem' suwq'tus tu s'ulhtuns	'go look for food'
nem' 'aluxutus tu s'ulhtuns	'go gather food'
ni' ptem'utus tu stqeeye'	'ask the wolf'
ni' ts'ewutus tu stqeeye'	'help the wolf'
ni' hwu'alum'st-hwus tu hay 'ul' thi stseelhtun	'bring back the biggest salmon'

stqeeye': (what stqeeye' does and feels)

q'e'wum'	'howling'
xeem'	'crying'
xwan'chunum'	'running'
tseelqum	'follow'
lhtsiws	'tired'
kw'ekw'i'	'hungry'
tsql'qul'a	'thirsty'
ni' timutus tthu shqwaluwuns	'hardens his mind'
ni' huqnuhwus tthu kw'atl'kwa	'smells the water'

3.3 Typical high action sentences

Here you will see a table that highlights some high action sentences from my story Blind Wolf. High action sentences are ones where the characters are engaged in important actions that effect another character or object in the story. Blind Wolf is a story with a lot of high action sentences, because the eagle and the wolf are engaging in activities with each other and with the objects in the world around them. So this story is a great resource for highlighting the manner in which Hul'q'umi'num' is spoken in these contexts.

High action in Hul'q'umi'num' is expressed as a transitive clause: a clause with both a subject and an object. Sometimes both the subject and object are overtly mentioned and sometimes just the object is mentioned. Most often just the object is mentioned because the subject is already understood (Gerdts & Hukari 2008). In Hul'q'umi'num' it is evident that these sentences are transitive based on the transitive suffixes displayed in the third column: =*t*, =*st-hw*, and =*nuhw*. When the subject is third person, the verb ends with the subject marker =*us* (Gerdts 1988). Here are some examples of some high action sentences in Hul'q'umi'num'

Table 1 Some transitive clauses from Blind Wolf

AUX	VERB	TRANS	3rd Person	OBJECT
'i	le'lum'	ut	us	tu tumuhws.
'i	ts'elhum'	ut	us	tu stuqeye'.
nem'	suwq'	t	us	tu s'ulhtuns.
nem'	'alux	ut	us	tu s'ulhtuns.
ni'	ptem'	ut	us	tu stqeeye'.
ni'	ts'ew	ut	us	tu stqeeye'.
ni'	hwu'alum'	st-hw	us	tu hay 'ul' thi stseelhtun.
ni'	tim	ut	us	tthu shqwaluwuns.
ni'	huqw	nuhw	us	tthu kw'atl'kwa.

This table breaks down the pieces of our language so that learners can gain a better understanding. In the Hul'q'umi'num' language, as seen in this story, the subject is not mentioned repeatedly throughout. We refer to *yuxwule'* at the beginning, and *us* the third person marker attached to the verbs throughout the story to indicate him as the subject, without mentioning his name. In English, we would say the *yuxwule'* was looking at his land, or the *yuxwule'* heard the wolf. However, in Hul'q'umi'num' a subject isn't referred to unless it is being introduced or reintroduced.

Teaching high action sentence structure to learners is necessary to avoid the pitfall of reverting to English sentence structure. I have witnessed, time and time again, that some people will try to translate from an English book going word for word. However, this is an unauthentic way of translating because it goes against our own language structure. Attention must be paid to person-marking in Hul'q'umi'num'. In order to retain our language in its truest form, we can learn, study and teach through tables such as this, using our own stories.

3.4 Story schema

Hul'q'umi'num' literature is all based on oral story-telling. When you hear a Hul'q'umi'num' story out loud, you will notice it has a certain structure to it. This helps the story-teller with his/her oral performance and it helps the listener follow the story and understand it. Hul'q'umi'num' stories typically begin with an introduction. Many times, though not always, Hul'q'umi'num' story tellers will also include the origin of the story—where they first heard it, when they heard it, and who told it. You will notice that generally the actual story is nestled in between a vast amount of information. This information is what makes Hul'q'umi'num' stories so rich in cultural context. You may think of Hul'q'umi'num' stories as forming a sandwich. The introduction and the setting act as the top slice of bread. The epilogue and conclusion act as the bottom slice. The actual story is the meat. The purpose of the bread is to lead the reader/listener into the main body of the story by providing all the information that's needed to grasp the message within, without directly giving it away. The beauty of story-telling in this manner is that it allows the listener/reader to take what they need; what each person takes

from the story can differ. Some stories have the ability to connect people with their land, their history, and their spirituality.

The outline below shows the story schema for my story Blind Wolf.

INTRODUCTION:

Opening: speaker introduces themselves and the story, a short title or what the story is about. Lines 1–4

Origin of the story (optional): where the story-teller learned the story from. What was the setting when they first heard the story. Lines 5–13

BODY OF THE STORY:

Orientation: information setting time, place, mood. Lines 14–18

Complicating action or build-up: sequence of events moving the action along. Lines 19–48

[Usually there are a series of complicating actions interspersed with evaluation or elaboration]

Result or resolution: the final result of the complicating action

Precursor and lead up: Lines 49–52

Climax the culminating event usually having greatest interest

hwu q'ullhanumutsun!!! Line 53

Denouement elaborates on the climax and winds down to the final outcome. Lines 53–54

>>> *LEAVE THE STORY WORLD*

Epilogue

Moral: Line 55 summarizes the course of events after the time of the story. Lines 56–59

CLOSING: ni' hay. *The end.*

nilh kwu'elh 'uw' sht'es'ul' nusqwal 'u tun'a kweyul.

That is all I am going to say today.

huy tseep q'a. *Thank you.* Lines 60–61

This story schema is quite typical in Hul'q'umi'num' story-telling.

Chapter 4. The Little Squirrel

4.1 Story

I heard this story as a young boy while berry picking with my family in Washington State. It was told by a first language speaker in Hul'q'umi'num'. I shared it orally in Chase, BC, a number of years ago. However, it was not until the second year of studying Hul'q'umi'num formally that I wrote it down. tth'i'tth'upsi'athun is about a community of squirrels harvesting their food for the winter. It teaches of the importance of planning, going along with your plan, and having the discipline to follow direction.

tth'i'tth'upsi'athun' Little squirrel

George Seymour (Sq'utxulenuhw)

1. 'een'thu p'e' sq'utxulenuhw tun'ni' tsun 'utl' sts'uminus.
I'm Sq'utxulenuhw from Stz'uminus.
My English name is George Seymour.
2. nan tsun 'uw' 'uhwiin' kwus nem' ...
I'm very small ...
3. mukw' tu hwulmuhw nem' 'u tl' pestun tsts'its'i'yu
The natives used to all go to the States picking strawberries
4. ni' 'u tu Sakuma, Sakuma Camp, chupuni tu shsi'em' tst ni' 'u tey'.
at Sakuma camp, where the Japanese were the bosses.
5. nuts'a' skweyul mukw' lhwet 'uw' nem' lhum'ts'els
One day everyone was going picking.
6. hwuy tu mukw' lhwet 'i' tunu shhw'a'luqw'a', nu men, ten.
All of the family got up, my father, mother.
7. 'i' hwi' tth'etth'ukw'ul' 'i' nem' huye'.
It was daybreak and they left.

8. t-hwuy tu 'een' thu q'aq'i', m'i 'a'mut 'ul' 'i' 'a'mut thunu ten le'lum'utham'sh.
Only I was sick and stayed home and my mother stayed home to look after me.
9. 'i' m'i kwuhwtsum thu slheni', 'uwu nu shtatul'stuhw tu snes.
This lady came knocking, I don't know her name.
10. 'i' m'i nuw'ilum 'i' thuytum tu kafi 'u lhunu tenulh.
She came in and my mother made coffee.
11. 'i' qwii'qwul' 'ul' lhunu tenulh 'i' lhunu slheni'.
That lady and my mother were talking.
12. ni' tsun ts'elhum'ut tey' netulh tu shxwi'em'.
And I heard this story that morning.
13. yun'ye'num' 'ul' lhunu tenulh 'i' lhu slheni', s'eluhw slheni'.
My mother and that lady were laughing, that old lady.
14. 'e'ut tu shxwi'em' nu sqwul'qwul' ni' 'u tu tth'upsi'athun'.
This story that I'm telling is about a squirrel.
15. wulh q'ep'tus tu s'ulhtuns 'u tu tum'kw'e'lus.
They would gather their food in the summertime.
16. nilh tse' s'ulhtuns 'u tu tum'xuytl'.
That would be their food in the winter.
17. hwun' netulh 'i' ni' wulh nem' tsam 'a'luxutus tu stth'oom.
And it was early morning and they went up to gather berries.
18. mukw' lhwet 'uw' hwusaay' kws huye's.
Everyone was ready to leave.
19. 'uw' nin'ts'u' tu tth'upsi'athun' 'uw' 'i'tut 'ul'.
But one little squirrel was just sleeping.
20. suw' thath thu ts'i'tsut, "hwaythut! hwaythut!"
So, the mother said, "Wake up! Wake up!"

21. 'i' 'uwu 'ul'.
But he didn't.
22. 'i' nem' thu si'lus, "imiy'e', hwaythut! hwaythut!"
And next his grandmother said, "Grandson, wake up! Wake up!"
23. 'i' qu'l'et 'uwu 'ul'.
But again, he didn't.
24. thut-s thu susul'u, "kwe't lhu 'ul'! m'i tse' p'e' tseelqum 'ul'."
So, his Grandmother said, "Leave him! He can catch up later."
25. suw' mukw' 'uw' huliye'.
So, everyone left.
26. hwun' 'i'tut 'ul' tu tth'upsi'a'thun'.
The little squirrel was still asleep.
27. tahw skweyul 'i' yelh sis hwyynamut.
It was noon before he woke up.
28. hwi' yukw'ekw'i' suw' suwq'lhnenum 'u tu s'ulhtun, 'i' yu'uwu te'.
He was hungry and so he went to look for food, but there was none.
29. sis nem' hwi' tseelqum suwq'tus tu siiye'yus.
So, he went and followed them, looking for his relatives.
30. ni' wulh tth'kw'astul' 'u tu siiye'yus 'i' yut'at'ukw'.
He met up with his relatives returning home.
31. "nem' ch 'a'lu hwtsel?" thut-s thu si'lus.
"Where are you going?," asked his grandmother.
32. "nem' tsun p'e' yaays."
"I'm going to work."
33. "aa sha. nan 'uw' kw'e'lus.
"Shucks, it's too hot.

34. nem' tst wulh t'akw'.
We're going home.
35. hu'mi lhu nem' t'akw'.”
Come go home.”
36. “uwu, nu stl'i' kw'unus nem' yaays.
“No, I want to go work.
37. kw'e'kw'i' tsun.”
I'm hungry.”
38. “hey' lhu 'ewulh!
“Alright, go on then.
39. 'i' 'uwu ch nem'uhw hwtsakwil'um'.
But don't go too far.
40. nem' ch 'uw' tus 'ul' 'u tuni'.
Only go as far as over there.
41. ni' 'u ch statul'stuhw lhu stl'eluqum ni' 'u tuni'.”
Do you know about the monster over there?”
42. ni' tsun. 'uwu tsun tse' nem'un' hwtsukwilum.
“I do. I won't go too far.”
43. “m'i ch t'akw' hluw' es lhatsthutus.”
“Come home before dark.”
44. “uwu ch tth'etth'iyukw'uhw!”
“Don't worry.”
45. suw' lhum'ts'els 'u thu stth'oom 'i' ni' hwi' 'uw' yulhey'xtus 'ul'.
So he started picking berries, but he was eating most of them.
46. 'i hwi' lumnuhwus thu hay 'ul' thithus ni' tuw' tsakw.
Then he saw some bigger berries a little further along.

47. sis nem' 'uw' lhum'ts'tus, 'i' tl'e' wulh lumnuhwus thu hay 'ul' thithus ni' 'u tunanulh.
So he went and picked them, and then he saw bigger ones even further.
48. 'i' ni' 'uw' hwutsakw 'ul' tthuw'nilh.
He ended up going really far.
49. hwun' xut'u 'i' ts'elhum'utus tu ni' qwaqwul'.
Suddenly he heard a voice.
50. "tth'i'tth'upsi'athun', m'i lhu 'ehwe'tham'sh 'u thun' stth'oom."
"Little squirrel, come you, give me some of your berries."
51. "'uwu, 'uwu tsekwl'us kw'unus 'ehwe'thamu!"
"No, no way I'm going to give you some!"
52. sus 'uw' huye' yutsetl'um' 'u tu thuthiqut.
So, he left, hopping on the trees.
53. nuts'a', yuse'lu, lhihw, xu'athun thuthiqut ni' nem' yushtuy'ti'qul's.
One, two, three, four trees over he moved.
54. 'i' tl'e' wulh ts'elhum'utus tu qwaqwul'.
But then he heard the voice, it was louder,
55. "tth'i'tth'upsi'athun, tth'i'tth'upsi'athun,
"Little squirrel, little squirrel,
56. m'i lhe 'ehwe'tham'sh 'u thun' stth'oom."
Come you, give me some of your berries."
57. "'uwu tsekwl'us kw'unus 'ehwe'thamu!"
"No way I'm going to give you any!"
58. sus 'uw' huye' yu ts'etl'um' 'u tu thuthiqut—
So, he left, hopping on the trees—
59. nuts'a', yuse'lu, lhihw, xu'athun thuthiqut.
one, two, three, four trees.

60. sus 'uw' qul'et lhum'ts'el's.
And started picking again.
61. suw' xatsthut, "lhum'ts'els tsun tse' 'u kw' tth'aqw'um stth'oom.
So, he thought, "This time I'm going to pick some rotten berries."
62. "ha' tse' qul'et pte'mutham'shus 'i' hwpasust tsun tse'."
"When she asks me again, I'm going to hit her in the face with them."
63. 'i' tl'e' wulh ts'elhum'utus tu qwaqwul'.
But then he heard the voice, it was louder,
64. "tth'i'tth'upsi'athun', m'i lhu 'ehwe'tham'sh 'u thun' stth'oom."
"Little squirrel, come you, give me some of your berries."
65. suw' kwunutus tu tth'aqw'um stth'oom 'i' hwpasustus.
So, he took the rotten berries and threw them in her face.
66. "Aasha! qul tth'upsi'athun'! kwunnamu tsun tse' 'i' lhu yxthamu tsun tse'."
"Oh shucks! You bad squirrel! I'm going to catch you and eat you."
67. "skw'ey kw'un's kwunnam'sh.
"You can't catch me.
68. "nan tsun 'uw' hwsxwum 'ul' 'i' nan ch 'uw' s'eluhw, 'ayum."
"I am too fast, and you are too old and slow."
69. 'i' hwi' xwchenum t'akw'.
And off he ran home.
70. suw' putum's thu tens, "'i ch' 'a'lu tstamut?
And his mother asked, "What's the matter with you?
71. "'i 'u ch lumnuhw lhu stl'eluqum?"
"Did you see the stl'uluqum?"
72. "aa 'uwu', 'uwu te' stem ni' lumnuhween'.
"No, I didn't see anything."

73. sus 'uw' tstl'um 'itut sus 'uw' tl'hwi'qwum.
He jumped into bed and covered his head.
74. 'uwu hithus 'i' m'i tus tu kwuhwtsum.
It wasn't long after and there was a knock on the door.
75. [knock knock knock]
76. 'i' hwi' hwthiiqun tu kwuhwtsum.
And it was a loud knock on the door.
77. [knock knock knock]
78. suw' hwyuxwutus tu shelh thu tens.
So his mother opens the door.
79. 'i' wulh nilh lhu stl'eluqum.
And it was the stl'eluqum!
80. "ni' 'untsu tthu tth'i'tth'ups'i'athun' 'i nuw'ilum 'u tun'a lelum?"
"Where is the little squirrel that came into this house?"
81. wukw'lhuq' tu shelh kwsus hwtqetus kwsus thuw'nilh tens.
His mom just slammed the door.
82. suw' hwyuxw tu shelh nuw'ilum tthu stl'eluqum kwunutus tu
tth'i'tth'ups'i'athun' 'i' huye'stum.
The door burst open and the stl'euqum came in and grabbed the little squirrel and
took him away.
83. nilh shni's 'i' 'uwu kws tl'e's tum'tem 'i' lumnum.
And they never ever saw him again.
84. ni' kwu'elh tuw' sht'es kw'un's nan 'uw' hwtsukwilum.
So, that's what happens when you go too far.
85. ni' tsun ts'elhum'ut tu shxwi'em' kwunus ni' lhumts'els 'u lhu stth'oom.
I heard this story when I was berry picking.

86. yath tsun 'uw' hekw'me't.
I always remember it.
87. ni' tsun huqstunmut kws 'een'thus ni' shnu'asth tu sxwi'em'.
And I wondered if they aimed this story at me.
88. hay 'ul' qux snuw'uyulh ni' sq'uq'a'stum 'u tu shxwi'em'.
There were many life's lessons that were taught through stories.
89. ni' nexun' 'u tey' tu shxwi'em'. ni' hay. hay ch q'u.
That's the end of my story. The end. Thank you.

The outcome of *tth'i'tth'ups'i'athun'* is different than what we would expect from an English story. In fact, I once shared this story with a grade one class where one boy at the end said, "Mr. Seymour, you can't end a story that way, you know." Although the meaning of the story is not directly stated, listeners/readers are made aware of the implied consequences of not being responsible or respectful to parents and grandparents. To me, he was able to use his nice, pitiful voice to say he needed a few more minutes of rest. And he got away with getting more sleep, eating all his berries, disobeying boundaries set for him, and disrespecting the known *stl'eluquum*—but he faced the consequences of his actions at the end.

4.2 Vocabulary

Below you will find the *tth'i'tth'ups'i'athun'* vocabulary listed by semantic domain. You will notice many of the words used are words that are associated with humans, including Hul'q'umi'num' kinship terms. This is a common feature of Hul'q'umi'num' stories, as we tend to associate ourselves closely and equally with the animal world.

Cast of characters

<i>tth'ups'i'athun'</i>	'squirrel'
<i>tth'i'tth'ups'i'athun'</i>	'little squirrel'
<i>stl'eluquum</i>	'fierce being, monster'
<i>si'em'</i>	'respected person'

shsi' em	'boss, chief'
siye'yu	'friends, relatives'
shhw'a'luqw'a'	'siblings'
tsi'tsut	'parent'
men	'father'
ten	'mother'
si'lu	'grandparent'
slheni'	'woman'
s'eluhw	'elder'

Objects in the stories

s'ulhtun	'food'
stth'oom	'berries'
tth'aqw'um stth'oom	'rotten berries'
thuthiquit	'trees'
lelum'	'house'
shelh	'door'

Seasons and time of day

tum'kw'e'lus	'summertime'
tum'xuytl'	'wintertime'
lhets	'to be dark'
lhatsthut	'to get dark'
net	'night'
netulh	'morning'
tth'etth'ukw'ul'	'day breaking'
tahw skweyul	'noon'

Actions

'a'mut	'sitting, being at home'
'itut	'sleep'
'i'tut	'sleeping'
hwuythut	'wake up'

hwuynamut	‘manage to wake up’
q’aq’i’	‘be sick’
kw’ekw’i’	‘be hungry’
tth’etth’iyukw’	‘worrying’

Motion verbs

m’i	‘come’
nem’	‘go’
huye’	‘leave, go away’
huliye’	‘leave (plural)’
huye’stuhw	‘take it away’
nuw’ilum	‘go inside’
tsam	‘go up the mountain’
tseelqum	‘follow’
t’akw’	‘go home’
t’at’ukw’	‘going home’
hwtsel	‘go where’
tsakw	‘to be far’
hwtsukwilum	‘go far’
hwtsakwil’um’	‘going far’
tus	‘arrive’
tstl’um	‘jump’
tsetl’um’	‘jumping’
tuy’ti’qul’	‘moving’
xwchenum	‘run’

Action words

a’luxut	‘gathering, picking’
lhum’ts’t	‘pick it’
lhum’ts’els	‘pick berries’
tsts’its’i’yu	‘picking strawberries’
suwq’lhnenum	‘looking for food’

Chapter 5. Conclusion

I believe that the stories I have shared are very representative of the rich Hul'q'umi'num' oral literature that has been handed down from generation to generation. Great care has been taken to ensure that we never forget these important values and ways of being. I believe that if a linguist like Donna Gerdts was not here to help us and break the language up in a way to explain it linguistically, that we would not move forward in the way that we are. I believe that moving forward together with the knowledge from those that have gone before us, in combination with the understanding that comes from study such as this is how we will rejuvenate our language and aim towards fluency within our communities.

Both stories are authentic but different; they could be viewed as opposites. However, each story is reflective of Hul'q'umi'num' values: one displays how you should carry yourself and the other is a clear example of how you should not be. *yuxwule'* was very helpful to the poor blind wolf and little squirrel tried to get away from everything right until the end. He carried on this way until he met his fate. In *tth'i'tth'upsi'athun'* the meaning was left up to the listener to contemplate, whereas in *tu st'kwas stqeeye'* the ending and meaning were made clear. He transformed into an orca, was no longer blind, and was able to hunt for his own food as he wished through the help of the *yuxwule'*.

I have found that learning to dissect the story schema, sentence structure and words has been a big help in my overall understanding of Hul'q'umi'num'. Although it can be a time-consuming process and there is a steep learning curve, if you stick to it, it pays off. I, myself, felt the same frustration that many learners feel, where I felt like I was not going to be able to get it. But through work, and perseverance, I have come to see the wealth of knowledge that is embedded in our language and its structures.

I think these two stories helped me realize that there are a lot of teachings in Hul'q'umi'num' literature that can be benefited from today by our youth and communities in many ways. And the teachings each person picks up are not all the same.

They are diverse. Different listeners and different readers will pull their own insight out of the stories. Even when I think I know what a story means, I am often and continually surprised by what others have expressed that they take from the rich context of the story that I have never considered before.

Stories hold the authentic structure of the Hul'q'umi'num' language. The stories I heard as a child, like *tu st'kwas stqeeye'* and *tth'i'tth'upsi'athun'*, are stories I could never forget. Because we are losing our fluent speakers, I believe the work we are doing is helpful. It is clear to me in witnessing the young learners advancing at an accelerated rate, by learning from linguists how to study stories in many different ways, that we are heading in a good direction. Today is different from twenty years ago mainly because we have only a fraction of our first language speakers remaining on each reservation throughout our communities. Whereas in 2010 there were 5000 speakers of the Salishan language family, now, we are at a fraction of that. We are beginning to lose our last fluent speakers and we don't have a choice about how to move forward with all we have. Without unity we cannot advance.

The first-grade student I came across through my work highlights the ability of learners to grasp an in-depth understanding of story structure and recognize, even if they do not understand, the differences in stories among various languages and cultures. I witnessed in Hawai'i how a language can be taught through linguistic study and I heard from the Elders there of how proud they were of their young people for carrying on their studies and holding on to their language in that way. I believe in the importance of the work that's being for Hul'q'umi'num'. I have witnessed other ways of learning like TPR and Where Are My Keys, and how effective they can be if they are managed correctly; but I believe that for us, stories are an important part of the work in becoming fluent in the language.

Before I started working in the language, I started telling these stories in English to my students from memory, without ever thinking of the structure of the story in either language. In both languages, the stories have an impact on our youth. When I would tell them in English, my students would ask if these stories are true. I told them yes; they call these *syuth*, which means true story. Most of the stories I heard growing up were about

the animals in our world such as wolves, orcas, and birds. Most do not include humans. Examples of these stories about animals include our famous stories about raven and thunderbird. I have had students ask why this is so. My personal opinion is that we would not want to be prejudiced against each other. When we are speaking about animals, we are not talking about anyone specifically. Instead, we use animals who we can relate to and learn from. They become our teachers and they connect us to our land and the environment around us.

This has been a very important journey for me, learning to become a story-teller in my language. That is all I am going to say about this at this time.

ni' hay. hay tseep q'a'. The end. Thank you.

References

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