

"WHEN WE TALK":
OKANAGAN WAYS OF SPEAKING OF ELDERS/FLUENT SPEAKERS IN
SOCIAL DOMAINS OF LANGUAGE-IN-USE
IMPLICATIONS FOR OKANAGAN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

by

Maxine Baptiste

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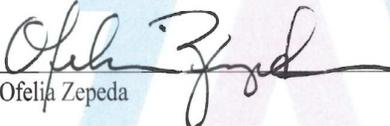
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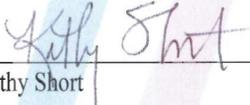
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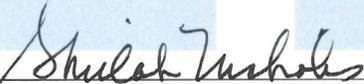
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taʔli kən limt̚ xəl yʕayʕat swit k^wu knxit kən ła cəqəyam axaʔ inpuʔpaʔk^w
limtmən iʔ ʔəx̄x̄ʔap, isx̄ilwiʔ, naʔl isq^wəsq^wsiyaʔ, naʔl isnʔimaʔt

I am grateful for everyone who helped me when I was writing this little book.

I thank the Elders, my husband, my children and my grandson

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Abstract

Okanagan is a Southern Interior Salish language spoken in south-central British Columbia and north central Washington State. Okanagan is considered an endangered language having 132 fluent speakers (Dunlop, Gessner, Herbert & Parker, 2018) remaining. There has not been a body of work done on conversation and discourse patterns by fluent speakers of this language. A descriptive study which focuses on conversation patterns, naturally occurring speech patterns, language use, functions and communication—descriptive features of Okanagan Elder talk-- is the focus of this research. The components of the study will be used in pedagogical materials and for reference by language learners and will be invaluable in the teaching of language, as it would best serve the needs of the language learner in learning the language in context and provide the learner with proper discourse patterns.

I wanted to answer the question "What do language learners need to know about the social use of language in order to use the Okanagan language appropriately and gain fluency?" How do we as Okanagan people use D/discourse? To answer this question, I recorded Elders and fluent speakers to document their language use in conversation with each other.

The data showed that language speakers use language in a variety of genres such as teasing, word play, and metaphor with very descriptive language through the use of morphologically complex words. The data also showed the importance of fluent speakers' ideology of language, language teaching and the need for revitalizing the language and the urgency of developing fluency in the language learners. Elders/fluent speakers' highly fluent language is important for informing the development of materials for language revitalization within our communities.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In *syilx* culture, it is important to introduce yourself before you speak at a function, when you are where there are Elders present and when people ask you who you are. It is expected of you to introduce yourself, providing your Okanagan name, *snqlax^wsk^wist*, if you have one, then your English name, *samask^wist*. Following your name, you provide the names of your *łaxəłłaxap*, your ancestors, your parents and grandparents. *inxacin*, *isłax^wip*, my lineage, my roots are from *qal cu?cu?wasqət*, from the *cu?cu?wasqət* line.

inca isk^wist sənsintk^w "a cove, where the water goes around and around", my name is Maxine Baptiste, my mother is Katherine, her parents are *təx^wmscut* (Saul Alec) and Margaret Eneas, Margaret Eneas' father is *słal* Eneas. My father is *q^walcn*, George Baptiste, his parents were Baptiste *cu?cuwasqət* and *akət* (Agatha Paul), Baptiste *cu?cuwasqət*'s father was also *cu?cuwasqət*, and *cu?cuwasqət*'s father was *łac^wx^wulałx^w*, "looks over the land." *łac^wx^wulałx^w*'s father was a Chief of an Okanagan band that lived near what is now Omak Washington and who summered in the Methow Valley along the Methow River near what is now the Twisp/Winthrop area. Oral record has *łac^wx^wulałx^w* born around the year 1736.³ I am Okanagan and was raised on the Penticton Indian Band Reserve. My husband and I live on the Osoyoos Indian Band Reserve where my husband is registered.

Research Context

The research contained herein began when I was hired to teach the Okanagan language in the fall of 2000. I taught the Okanagan language in the fall of 2000 at the

³ Harry Robinson, Aural History Project, 1981, Lower Similkameen Indian Band

Inkameep Preschool to children aged three to five and at the South Okanagan Secondary School to students in grades eight to eleven. In order for our language to be taught in the schools, the province of BC required that we provide a language curriculum based on provincial guidelines with an Integrated Resource Package (IRP) with prescribed learning outcomes (PLO's)⁴, and evaluation materials in the form of tests and quizzes. Okanagan is an oral language and a verb-based language. The question then became, for me, was "How do you teach an oral verb-based polysynthetic⁵ language using a noun-based curriculum?" Another dilemma was that the language was, and still is, offered as a subject in the public schools within the many school districts within Okanagan Traditional Territory. It is a well-known fact that language is not learned in 20-minute time periods (Greymorning, 1999; Hinton, 2001) as a subject similar to Math, Language Arts, and Science. The best method for language learning is language immersion. Learning lists of noun words by rote memory, and being tested based on those lists does not provide language learners with the tools they need to put phrases and sentences together to make a cohesive, understandable story, anecdote, joke etc. This language learning context raised the question: "How do you teach language learners to communicate in the language?" I wanted to answer the question What do language learners need to know about the social uses of language in order to use the Okanagan language appropriately and gain fluency? How do we as Okanagan people figure and shape our worlds, through

⁴ I have used the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-De Statements for Intercultural Competence as a guide for language learners for self-assessment and setting of language learning goals. ncssfl.org/linguafolio-materials/2017-can-do-statements/

⁵ Polysynthetic languages are languages which show high numbers of morphemes per word (Mithun, 1999, p. 38)

knowledge of language, ways of knowing/forms of knowledge that are relevant to context and how are they being used in the frame of D/discourse (Gee, 2014)?

Purpose of the Study

The research study was conducted on the Okanagan Nation Traditional Territories of the Okanagan Nation, BC, Canada. The seven member communities are: Okanagan Indian Band, Vernon BC, Westbank First Nation, Westbank BC, Penticton Indian Band, Penticton BC, Osoyoos Indian Band, Oliver BC, Lower Similkameen Indian Band, Keremeos BC, Upper Similkameen Indian Band, Hedley BC, and Upper Nicola Band, Douglas Lake BC. There are Okanagan speakers on the Colville Indian Reservation in Washington state which brings the Okanagan language communities to eight.

This study was conducted in the summer of 2010 in July and August and engaged Elder women and men fluent speakers from the Okanagan Nation who were 55 to 85 years old at the time of the study. These Elder participants were Okanagan language teachers and Okanagan culture teachers; today they continue to be Okanagan language teachers, Indigenous knowledge keepers and/or resource persons for ongoing language revitalization efforts. The primary purpose of this study was to contribute to the documentation of the language. I am interested in how Elder fluent speakers engage in conversation and how the fluent speakers and Elders use language in social situations. Through the analysis of word and sentence production of Elder fluent speakers engaged in naturally occurring conversational speech, I sought to gain a critical understanding of the pragmatic, socio-cultural and sociolinguistic dynamics of the language to answer the question: "What do language learners need to know about the social uses of language in order to use the Okanagan language appropriately

and gain fluency?" Methods included participant observation and audio recordings of group social conversations. I am engaged in ongoing transcription and analysis of the language data. The changes brought about by contact have affected our language and culture. Through concerted efforts within our communities, we have continued to maintain our language and culture.

Historical Contexts of Change

Pre-Contact

The Okanagan People have occupied the Okanagan Traditional Territory since time immemorial (Maracle et al, 1994). The Okanagan land base was approximately 43,000 square miles (Baker 1990) situated in what is now known as south central British Columbia (BC) and north central Washington state. Okanagan society was marked by community cohesion and strong kinship ties (Hudson, 1990), by cooperation, respect for community members and for the land. The society was a matrilineal society with sub-chiefs who monitored the territory's resources (Louis, 2002). A Tribal Chief oversaw the protection of the people, trade with other nations, and the safety of the people (ibid). Baker (1990) states, "Vast trading networks are evident in the archaeological record on the Plateau," (p. 46). The dynamics of Okanagan traditional society were irrevocably changed by "the land-based fur trade, the gold rush in the interior of British Columbia and the arrival of Christian missionaries" (Carstens, 1991, p. 29).

The Okanagan language is bounded by other Salish languages: From the north, by Shuswap, to the east by Kootenay (language isolate), to the south, by Spokane/Flathead/Kalispell, Coeur d'Alene, Pend Oreille, Moses Columbian, Wenatchi, Chelan, Methow, and to the west by Thompson.

The Fur-Trade Period

The first white man to enter into Okanagan territory was in 1810-1811 with the arrival of David Thompson of the Northwest Fur Company from the north along the Arrow Lakes and John Jacob Astor of the Pacific Fur Trading Company from the south along the Columbia River. The Okanagans did not fully participate in the fur trade (Abernathy Mellows, 1990). Instead, they discovered a more lucrative trade: horses. Horses were needed to move the furs from as far north as the Cariboo in north central BC to the mouth of the Columbia River near what is now Portland Oregon. They also supplied large quantities of dried salmon to the fur-trading Forts, thus, monopolizing on the fur traders' need for winter food. When the game and fish began to be depleted due to over-hunting and over-fishing, the Okanagan adapted also to the concept of agriculture in growing crops and in keeping cattle for sale or trade as early as the late 1830's (p. 110).

The Miners

Change progressed rapidly when gold was discovered in British Columbia and the Yukon in the 1860's. The Okanagan became involved in supplying miners with both horses and cattle, but this was a different sort of people who came to mine.

The miners came for gold, but many stayed to pre-empt land and settle in the "unoccupied" territories of BC. Another factor was that the Hudson's Bay Company's exclusive license to trade with the natives west of the Rocky Mountains came to an end and the colonial government took the place of the fur trade company (Carstens, 1991). The miners and the revenues from the mines required regulating. The Indians required "protection" from encroachment and the first reservations were set up by the colonial government beginning in 1864 (Louis, 2002).

The Missionaries

Missionaries were another strong influence on Okanagan society. The fur-traders came for fur. The miners came for gold and later land. The missionaries came for souls. The first missionaries that came into BC were Jesuits. They travelled with the fur traders in the late 1830's and 1840's (Carstens, 1991). Missionaries who came to stay arrived in Okanagan territory in 1859 in the persons of the Oblate priests (Thomson, 1990). Both the colonial government and the churches were in concert as to the "protection" of the Indians in BC (Furniss, 1992).

The last part of the 19th century saw the development of reservations (see Cail 1974 on the development of reservations during the early 1860's). Thus, began what was known as the "Indian problem" and the "legislation" of the Indians.

Legislation: Indian Act(s)

When British Columbia entered into the Confederacy of Canada in 1871, further changes were to take place with the inception of the Indian Act of 1876. The "administration" by the Canadian federal government of BC's Indians began under this Act and continued until 1951 when a New Indian Act was introduced (a newer Act was introduced in 1985). It was under the 1876 Indian Act that the reservation system was set up, government imposed election systems for Band Chief and Council, cultural and spiritual ceremonies were banned, lands reserved for Indians could and were taken by the government, and federal policies of education were implemented and carried out.⁶ In partnership with Christian organizations, the federal government entered into agreements for the education of the Indians of Canada. Thus, the

⁶ See http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_indian_act/ for a more detailed account of the Indian Acts

residential school system came into being (See Raufer, 1966 for Catholic influences prior to 1876 affecting the Okanagan people).

Education: Residential Schools

Okanagan children from all communities attended residential school either at the St. Mary's Residential school in Cranbrook BC or the Kamloops Indian Residential School in Kamloops BC (Louis, 2002, Haig-Brown, 1988). Not all children went, but in some communities, whole villages were empty of children from the ages of four to eighteen. If the families did not have the resources to bring their children home for holidays, the children stayed at the residential schools for ten months of the year. The effects of separation, culture and language loss, the legacy of sexual, verbal, physical and mental abuse, deprivation and loss of parenting skills have had long reaching generational impacts for the Okanagan people. Two and sometimes three generations attended residential school in the same families. Communities lost their children, and the children lost their ability to live in a community setting. Connections between the generations were lost.

Change: Impact and Response

The devastating effects of separation, language and culture loss, the emotional, physical and cultural abuse are documented in works by Fournier and Crey (1997), Haig-Brown, (1988), Jack (2001) and Grant (1996) among others. The legacy of alcoholism, suicide, all forms of abuse, child neglect, and cultural shame has been passed down through the generations and is still evident today with drug and alcohol abuse, and separation of families and grandparents raising grandchildren. When a few stepped forward in the eighties to seek retribution for the abuses enacted against them, it set in motion a series of investigations, lawsuits and in some cases convictions all

across Canada (Fournier and Crey, 1997). A number of Osoyoos Indian Band members launched a class action suit against the government of Canada and the Roman Catholic Church in the mid-nineties for the abuse and treatment received at the Cranbrook and the Kamloops residential schools. This class action lawsuit became a Canada wide lawsuit. On March 21, 2007, the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) received court approval with the full support of all parties involved: The Government of Canada, legal counsel for former students, legal counsel for the Churches and the Assembly of First Nations (www.nrsss.ca/). Due to the far-reaching effects and the commonalities of the abuses suffered at residential schools in Canada, there have been many groups that have come together to begin the healing of the people who attended residential school. The Turtle Island Native Network: Healing and Wellness (<http://www.turtleisland.org>) and the Indian Residential School Survivors Society (<http://www.irsss.ca>) are among the many organizations that have sprung up all across Canada to address the residential school syndrome. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established to facilitate community driven reconciliation processes among other objectives.

Indian Day Schools

Indian Day Schools were established on or near Indian reserves and were established by the federal Department of Indian Affairs. These schools were similar to rural one room schools with multiple grades and were run by religious groups or secular teachers who were hired to teach at these schools by the federal government. Students who attended these schools have reported experiencing the same types of

abuses as residential school students with the same impacts of loss of language and culture and generational impacts and damages.⁷

Inkameep Day School

Not all educational practices were devastating to the Okanagan people. After repeated requests from Okanagan chiefs, the government instituted what was called the Indian Day School on Okanagan reserves and other reserves across Canada. The most famous of these is the Inkameep Indian Day School (uvac.uvic.ca/gallery/truth/exhibition/art_work.../inkameep-indian-day-school/; inkameepdayschool.ca/English/story/inkameep.php) which was notable for the artwork that was produced by the students aged 6-16. The artwork has gained international prominence and has been exhibited worldwide. Anthony Walsh encouraged a learning style that was far ahead of its time. He believed in incorporating the language and culture of the Okanagan people into the lessons and in the school activities. Cianut (Baptiste George), chief of the Inkameep reserve during this time, refused to have the children of Inkameep sent to residential school. The Day School was in operation from 1914-1947. Anthony Walsh taught at the Inkameep Day school from 1932-1942. His teaching style was far ahead of his time and in direct contrast to the colonialist, paternalistic residential schools that effectively silenced the voices of the native children who attended them.

⁷ See <http://aptnnews.ca/2019/03/12canada-announces-indian-day-schools-settlement/> for information on Indian Day School class-action lawsuit and settlement announcement

Sixties Scoop

Another factor that has been addressed in its relationship to language and culture loss was what was called the "sixties scoop." Many of the people that went to residential school returned to their communities not knowing where or how they fit into their families and communities (Fournier & Crey, 1997, Haig-Brown, 1988, Grant, 1996). Those who had been living in an institutional setting during their formative years were not equipped to be in a familial setting nor were they given the necessary models to be parents themselves. Consequently, many who went to residential school fell into the alcoholism and substance abuse that was prevalent on the reservations which began with their parents as a result of the loss of their children to residential schools. As a result of continuing paternalistic policies, provincial welfare authorities saw those who returned from residential school and became parents themselves as unfit to care for their children (Sinclair, 2007; Fournier & Crey, 1997).

The circle is vicious and is all encompassing. Yet, the resiliency of the Native people of Canada and the US has proven to be more than enough to begin the healing journey and the empowerment of the peoples themselves. Language and culture renewal, restoration and rejuvenation began for some groups thirty years ago. Some groups have just begun their movement towards language and culture reclamation.

Okanagan Language: Linguistic Aspects

The Okanagan language has been classified as an Interior Salish Language, Northern Okanagan dialect (Mattina, 1973). There are approximately 132 speakers in

BC (Dunlop et al, 2018, p. 21). The language is in the severely endangered category.⁸

The Okanagan language has two dialects: northern and southern. The northern dialect is spoken in BC and the southern dialect is spoken in Washington State. The primary difference is the presence of rounded pharyngeals in the Southern dialect (Mattina, 1973). Northern Okanagan has two pharyngeals: /ʕ/, and /ʕʰ/. The southern dialect has four pharyngeals: /ʕ/, /ʕʰ/, /ʕʷ/ and /ʕʰʷ/. For instance, the word pray in northern Okanagan is: *kʰʕam*. The same word in southern Okanagan is: *kʰʕʰʷam*. There are also morphological and morphophonemic differences which have been discussed in Mattina (1973). I will not go into these here. The Okanagan language also has pronunciation differences between its communities mainly due to the proximity of neighbouring languages. For example, the Upper Nicola Language communities, Douglas Lake and Quilchena, are influenced by the Thompson language and the Shuswap language which are to the west and to the north of these communities. Many of the elders of these communities can speak both Okanagan and Thompson. Another example is amongst the Similkameen bands. There are vestiges of a now extinct language which anthropologists say was from an Athabaskan group that was first overtaken by the Nicola then by the Okanagan (Carstens, 1991). In the literature, it has been called the *stʷwix* language. Words and phrases of this language are found in the place names of the area and in the old language (high Okanagan) and in the ceremonial language. There are of course Chinook (Northwest trade language) words and Okanaganized French terms present in the Okanagan language due to the prolific

⁸ SIL International states “A language that is at risk of no longer being used by the younger generation is considered endangered.”
<https://www.sil.org/about/endangered-languages>

trading patterns of the Okanagan and the establishment of the Fur Brigade Trail through Okanagan Territory from 1811-1858 (Abernathy Mellows, 1990).

Okanagan Language Revitalization/Initiatives

For the Okanagan people, the move toward language and culture revitalization was formally instituted with the inception of the Okanagan Language Association in 1989⁹. Prior to this, the Okanagan Indian Educational Resources Society (OIERS) was created in 1981. OIERS is the parent organization of the En'owkin Centre located in Penticton BC. The En'owkin Centre's main mandate has been to record, preserve, enhance and continue First Nations cultures through education. In 1999, the En'owkin Centre initiated a two-year language teacher education program for Okanagan language teachers.

Other efforts have included language immersion camps held in 1989 and 1992, 2009, 2011, and 2013, summer institutes, digitization projects of reel-to-reel tapes of the sixties and seventies, digitization of cassette tapes of the seventies to the nineties, archival of language materials, curriculum projects, and fluent speaker language workshops and teacher training workshops and symposia. Creation of online language resources available to our Okanagan member communities.

Recent developments include Master/Apprentice Programs which pairs an Elder/Fluent speaker with a language learner. Several language learners have obtained funding from the First Peoples Culture Council through their Master/Apprentice

⁹ Prior to the inception of OIERS and the En'owkin Centre, Okanagan has been documented by the BC Indian Language Project under the auspices of Randy Bouchard, ethnographer/linguist and socio-cultural anthropologist Dorothy Kennedy in the sixties. Elders and fluent speakers took part in this project. The tapes from this documentation project are currently in the archives of the Royal BC Museum in Victoria, BC. A. Mattina has been working on Okanagan since the 1960's.

Program. These teams are given funding for three years for 300 hours of language learning with an option to renew for another three years when the first session is completed.

Each Okanagan community is involved in a variety of language retention and revitalization efforts. (See Table 1) These include Head Start Programs, Language Nest Programs, Day care Programs, public, private and band-operated school language programs, adult language programs, and culture camps.

Table 1 Okanagan Nation School-age Programs/Early Childhood Education Programs and Adult Programs

	Band Operated School	Head Start Program	Early Childhood Education	Language Nest Program	Adult Language Classes
Lower Similkameen Indian Band	ntamlqən School	No	No	No	No
Okanagan Indian Band	nkmapəlqs i? šnma?maya?tn kəl sqilxʷtət	scəcmala?tn Head Start	No	Yes	Evening Classes
Osoyoos Indian Band	sənpaqcin School	snpaqcin Head Start	No	No	Evening Classes
Penticton Indian Band	outma sqilxʷ School	Little Paws Daycare	No	No	En'owkin Centre Evening Classes
Upper Nicola Indian Band	nkʷala School	Upper Nicola Head Start	No	No	Evening Classes
Upper Similkameen Indian Band	none	No	No	No	No
Westbank First Nation	snsysyustən School	Westbank Childcare Centre	No	Yes	No

Source: First Peoples Culture Council Needs Assessment: En'owkin Centre April 2018

Elder Roles

The Elders of the Okanagan who are highly fluent speakers are very important to the language programs that are in place. They are a valuable resource and are kept busy throughout the year as resource persons, language teachers and cultural knowledge experts. Some have the affectionate distinction of being called "walking dictionaries." We know we can call them up and ask, "How do you say this?" They may not have the answer right then, but sometime later, they will give you their answer. These Elders are members of the Okanagan Language Association¹⁰. The Okanagan Language Association members are made up of Elders, fluent speakers, and language advocates. It is under the authority of the Elders Council and the Okanagan Language Association that decisions are made about the language. A standardized orthography based on the International Phonetic Alphabet was decided upon in 1985 by the Elders Council and formally implemented by the Okanagan Language Association in 1989. Permission to teach the Okanagan language in the public schools was also given by the Elders Council at this time. Researchers are not allowed to research Okanagan language and culture without express permission of the Elders Council and the Okanagan Language Association. New terms and words for modern items are passed through the Elders before they are included into the Okanagan corpus. Anglicization of words is frowned upon. The coinages of new

¹⁰ The Okanagan Language Association began in response to the BC Teachers Association requiring language teachers to be certified in the classrooms of public education schools. Another way to have Elder fluent speakers in the classroom as language teachers was to certify them through a Language Authority. After the Okanagan Language Authority was established, the Okanagan Language Association was formed to address language issues such as language teacher training, and included Eldes, language teachers, cultural and knowledge keepers.

words are based upon the actions of the item in question and coinages follow the morphological and phonological conventions of the language.

Okanagan Language: In School Programs

The Okanagan language has been taught in local school districts throughout the Okanagan Traditional Territory in public and private and/or band operated schools since 1989. There have also been adult language programs initiated and implemented in the Okanagan Nation member communities.

One of the stipulations for adding the Okanagan language as an accredited course in the local school districts was that the Okanagan language curriculum be modelled on provincial curriculum standards and testing/evaluation guidelines. The provincial language curriculum is noun-based. It has been well-attested in the literature that the Okanagan language is a verb-based polysynthetic language rich in morphological complexity (Mithun, 1999, p. 38). Language lessons based on the provincial curriculum guidelines focus on lists of nouns, sight words, and grammar (Okanagan Language Integrated Resource Package 2000, SD#53). The students learn words and phrases and some basic sentences but are not able to communicate in the language in Language as a Subject language programs. A contributing factor is the students have no one to communicate with when they get home as many parents do not speak the Okanagan language. The *Outma sqilx^w* School on the Penticton Indian Band offers evening language classes to the parents of the children who attend *Outma* so the parents can keep up with what their children are learning and use the language

at home. The *nkmaplqs i snmamaya?tn kl sqilxwtet*¹¹ (Okanagan Immersion School) in Vernon also has classes for their parents.

Okanagan Language Programs

With adult language learners, the language learning situation is different. There are language classes at the En'owkin Centre as a part of a Developmental Standard Term Certificate Program (DSTC) in First Nations Language and Culture the credits of which can be transferred to a Bachelor of Education degree. There are also adult language classes offered as a part of the Paul Creek Language Association language program. The En'owkin Centre program is offered during Centre hours which are 9-5pm. The classes offered utilizing the Paul Creek Language Association are offered mainly in the evenings, in the spring/summer, and in the fall for three to four weeks duration. The adult language learners are either full time students, are employed/self-employed, or are full time parents. Time is a factor in these language classes as the language learners have to take time away from their families and/or work to attend the language classes. Both language classes are primarily immersion type classes.

In the past five years, there has been a move towards implementing immersion programs in our communities. An immersion school, *nkmaplqs i snmamaya?tn kl sqilxwtet*, was started on the Okanagan Indian Band reservation near Vernon BC in 2006. The school offers a half day of full immersion and a half day of academic subjects beginning at kindergarten to grade three. Since 2018, this program has expanded and now the grades offered are up to grade seven. The *ntamlqən* School on

¹¹ I use the school's way of spelling as it is their formal name of their school.

the Lower Similkameen Indian Band offers immersion language to its students from kindergarten to grade five. A language nest, immersion pre-school is operating in Spokane Washington and is an all-day immersion school for pre-school to grade 3. Immersion pre-schools and day-cares are operational in Inchelium Washington, and in Omak Washington for the Okanagan language. Also, in 2012, an immersion language nest began in the fall in Vernon. An adult language house was operational for five months on the Lower Similkameen Indian Band for adult women in 2011 (it was also open to men, but only women attended). A language house began on the Penticton Indian Reserve in 2015 and is still operational utilizing the Paul Creek Curriculum. An exciting move to more immersion type language learning is beginning within our communities.

Okanagan Language Context

The Okanagan language is spoken in south central British Columbia (B.C.) and north central Washington State on the Colville Reservation. The language is classified as a Southern Interior Salish language. The average age of the Elder speakers is 70. The younger fluent speakers range in age from 58 to 70. There are very few fluent speakers who are under the age of 55 (Dunlop, Britt; Suzanne Gessner, Tracey Herbert & Aliana Parker, 2018, p 45). This has caused much concern for the viability of the language for the next decades to come. The language is taught in the public schools as a subject. The *nkmaplqs i snmamaya?tn kl sqilxwtet* school offers an immersion language program. The Okanagan language teachers are reaching retirement age. There are two things that are of prime importance at this time: training of new teachers and increasing the pool of fluent speakers. Each Okanagan community has varying degrees of language interest and/or community participation

in language initiatives. In all communities, the more traditional¹² members are at the forefront of all language revitalization efforts. As the elders approach the age where they are no longer active in the language or the community, the succeeding community members becoming elders will be non-speakers. Moreover, other communities, such as the Douglas Lake community, which is the most isolated of the Okanagan communities, has a higher percentage of their population moving to urban areas for jobs, education and economic opportunities. The Upper Similkameen reserve has only four Elders, only one of whom is a fluent Okanagan speaker. Each community has its own dynamics which will have to be addressed in community revitalization efforts.

For the next decade, it will be important and necessary to make a concerted effort to promote the language and culture, continue to lobby at the reserve and national level for support of language initiatives from the Chiefs' Council. These initiatives must include training teachers in teaching methodologies such as immersion and foster a renewed and continuing interest in the language and culture for the upcoming generation and for the urbanized population. Parallel to this, I feel, there should be concerted efforts to continue the healing of those who are residential school survivors, and those who were taken in the sixties scoop. Each community has similarities and differences and will require efforts that are in some cases unique to that community. Any continuing and future language efforts must take into consideration the facts presented.

¹² Traditional here means those who practice their culture such as ceremonial practices, hunting and gathering of traditional foods, continue to train their children as per puberty rites, and are drummers and singers of the traditional songs.

Currently, the Okanagan Language Authority was established in 1989 for the primary purpose of addressing language issues such as the choosing of an official orthography for the Okanagan language, the certification of language teachers, setting protocols for researchers to follow within Okanagan territory, and overseeing the language revitalization efforts of the seven Okanagan member communities within BC. Traditionally, the language and culture were learned orally. Children were the responsibility of the whole community. Children were valued because they were the next generation. Each person in the community had a responsibility to the children and to the Elders in the communities. Children were nurtured and cared for wherever they went by the large extended families to which they belonged. "Did you eat? Sit down and eat," these phrases were always addressed to children upon entering a house. A child was told who their relatives were and each relative was responsible in the upbringing of that child. Time has brought change.

Changing Times

In these changing times, our knowledge keepers are not as readily available. The extended families of the past have given way to smaller units of family members. People are more mobile where education, jobs and work-places are concerned. The young men and women move away to urban centres for work and education opportunities. In all of our communities, the connection to the knowledge keepers is disrupted. Our communities have relegated the teaching and learning responsibilities to the public schools. As our language and cultures began to erode, the concern for transmission to the younger generations became urgent.

Through our language revitalization efforts beginning in the 1980's and the establishing language teaching in the public schools within our Okanagan Traditional

Territory, we found that the teachers of the culture and language were in their 60's to 80's. When we looked for resource people to come into the schools and teach language and culture, we found that there were very few that had the training to be teachers. They had the knowledge and skills passed down from their Elders but had no training in transmitting that knowledge to the students in a classroom setting. This was true of our adult fluent speakers as well. This is true in other language communities. Silverthorne (1997) states "fluent speakers gain their skill as children. By the time they consider teaching, they are so familiar with their language that it becomes challenging to explain it to the novice learner (p. 112)." Another point to consider is the fact that our Elders and fluent speakers are reaching the age of retirement. We have to increase the pool of fluent speakers and language teachers. This gives rise to a whole set of new considerations. Our future language teachers not only have to take language teacher training, but they have to learn the language as well. This dilemma requires programs that are suitable to the unique needs of these unconventional students.

Significance of the Study

The language is heard in the schools during language class times only, sometimes at band administration meetings, but only if fluent speakers are present. Fluent speakers will speak to each other when they meet or when they visit each other. There are adult language learners who are actively engaged in language learning at the En'owkin Centre and at adult language classes. These language learners speak the language with other speakers when they encounter fluent speakers and other language learners. The Elders are asked to offer prayers at community dinners, meetings and gatherings in the language. In order to use the language, fluent

speakers or language learners seeking interaction with others have to seek out those fluent speakers or language learners involved in language learning and/or language teaching. This research seeks to inform and enhance the language revitalization efforts of the communities by collecting data—critical language use of Okanagan speakers-- for developing school curriculum projects and language teaching situations.

Conclusion

Our history is common to other indigenous groups within North America. From first contact to the present, there has been so much change. My father, who was born in 1907, came from a horse culture to seeing men landing on the moon. From trading, to reciprocal relationships of providing horses and food resources, to a population shift with the influx of miners, and the imposition of religious beliefs and a foreign education system, our language and culture persisted. Through contact, our language and culture shifted drastically due to legislation practices by the colonial government. Through the legacy of colonialistic, imperialistic, and historic trauma imposed upon us through legislation, institutional education and religion, government policies we have maintained our identity as *syilx*. Since first contact we have maintained our identities, world view, ways of being through our language and our cultural practices, most appropriately through our stories including life experience stories. Our Elders' voices through these stories have been heard over time to sustain our way of life as *syilx*, as Okanagan. Although our languages had been targeted for extinction by colonial agendas, we have regained the right to sustain our own languages and cultures through our teaching and learning community driven programs. Elders play a significant role in these initiatives and are a valuable resource for their knowledge of and about the language. In each community, there are

dedicated individuals and families who promote the continuation of our language and culture. Through the development of immersion programs, specifically Master/Apprentice programs, in-school immersion, adult immersion and language nests, language and culture is being transmitted to our community members. But the urgency to develop fluent speakers who can take on the roles of Elder/fluent speakers is apparent as our Elders are past the age of retirement. We continue to appreciate the efforts and contribution our Elders give toward the language revitalization programs within our communities.

Overview of Chapters

In Chapter One I present the historical contexts of change brought about by the encroachment of the white man which began in 1811 with the fur traders advancing along the waterways from the west along the Columbia River near what is now Portland Oregon, and along the Frazer River from the east from what is now Tete Jeune Cache to the British Columbian coast. Following, were the miners in response to the discovery of gold in the Rock Creek area of British Columbia (BC from hereon). At the same time, missionaries were engaged in the establishment of missions within the interior of BC. With the influx of non-natives into BC, legislation of the natives was deemed necessary by the imperial government under the British crown “in order to confirm British sovereignty in the area” (Duff, 1964, p. 60). This was done through the Indian Acts and the development of the reservation system as well as education policies. The history of education policies within BC and elsewhere is a shared history across North America with the establishment of government run Indian Residential Schools and later Indian Day Schools. Along with the imposed school’s system, the Sixties Scoop which saw the apprehension of thousands of

Native children Canada wide by the Child Welfare System into non-native homes was also detrimental to family and community life within native communities and had a devastating impact to language and culture transmission. The Okanagan language is described along with the language revitalization initiatives, language teaching and Elders' roles who are central to this study, are described; they identify important language learner issues language learner issues and the language context within this time frame. In the past thirty years of language revitalization work, we (the Okanagan Nation) have come to place of having few Elders who are fluent speakers and able to work with language advocates in language work and initiatives. Their role as indigenous knowledge keepers is crucial to the ongoing language work such as curriculum, materials, and traditional knowledge initiatives among others. The need for building fluency for language teachers and learners is urgent at this time. Opportunities to hear the language within our communities is becoming a critical issue within those communities with few fluent speakers. Today, the language is heard as opening and closing prayers at community functions, and when there are gatherings where Elders come together such as language workshops or funerals. The opportunity to record Elders and fluent speakers came about through the Paul Creek Language Association's summer language immersion program in 2010. I was able to record these sessions in the months of July and August. Portions of the recorded data has provided a descriptive study of the characteristics of Elder/fluent speaker language use.

Chapter Two discusses the theoretical framework presented by James Paul Gee's four discourses: Big "D" and little "d" discourses, primary and secondary discourses and dominant and non-dominant discourses are described. James Paul

Gee's theoretical framework provides a template where identity, language in use, socialization practices, language that brings social goods or solidarity with a particular group can be examined. I examine each of these discourses within the language in use samples found in the recordings. I also draw on the existing literature pertaining to the Okanagan language including language revitalization publications. I identify and highlight published works of Okanagan Story. Publications that contain primarily Okanagan language with English translations and linguistic explanations. I also identify Okanagan language and Story in the context of language revitalization.

Chapter Three provides my background and positionality as an insider/researcher. I situate the language as it was at the start of this research. Although the sessions were expected to be language immersion sessions, the Elders/fluent speakers had difficulty staying in the language with language learners present as they wanted to provide translations rather than being in full immersion. While the premise was to record Elder/fluent speakers in conversation in an immersion type situation and setting. This did not happen as at a conservative estimate approximately 30% of the recorded data was in English. There were also a few occasions where there was only one or two Elders present so the immersion type interactions did not happen only in short conversation and storytelling formats. Therefore, the language that was chosen for analysis in this study was chosen based on the amount of Okanagan spoken so that the Okanagan language could be studied for language in use patterns. When I began the process of recruiting Elder fluent speakers as participants, the Elders were so busy it was a problem to find a natural situation to record fluent speakers in conversational contexts. The Elder conversations I analyze were recorded at the Paul Creek Immersion sessions in the summer of July

and August of 2010. The immersion sessions were held at three locations: an Elder's home in Penticton BC, An Elder's home in Keremeos BC, and at the language house also in Keremeos BC. I provide Elder participant profiles, language immersion activities during the language immersion sessions. I also provide a summary of the data transcription and analysis conventions I used.

Chapter Four examines the language in use patterns in Okanagan. How Elders talk is found in the genres. I expound on the following genres: formulaic greetings, performing "good host" customary observances in the home, and how teasing is played out in a number of situations. What Elders talk about in the seasonal round of gathering, fishing and hunting and how Okanagan people utilize their traditional territories in a seasonal round of hunting fishng and gathering of berries, roots, and medicinal plants as well as teas and crafting materials such as barks for basketry are examined.

Chapter five brings the implications forward and provides a conclusion. The need to hear fluent speakers speaking the language as a guide is so important for language learners as well as centering language learning around the Elders. Elders language and voices need to be a central part of language learning for fluency development. The best method is language immersion. Using the language, talking in full sentences, and teaching people how to communicate in the language are some of the methods used in language immersion (Hinton, 2001). Storywork and the telling of story through Elders' *cəpcaptikʷl*, oral stories and stories of experience provide rich fluent language, complex word forms, and metaphoric language. Elders provide the

“spice”¹³ (Littlebear, 1999, p. 2) of the language and they also provide the different ways of saying the same thing through their authentic, deep knowledge of the language.

¹³ Littlebear (1999) states that “Linguists call these “spice words” particles. These are words that give variety and meaning to our languages. When these words are isolated, they do not stand alone because they often depend on grammatical and semantic links to whatever is discusses. So when our people are recorded speaking their own languages, often these “spice words” are omitted and the language become very stilted and formal.” (p. 2)

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

In this chapter I provide the theoretical framework I have based my analysis of the language in use data found in the language recordings I utilized for this study.

James Paul Gee's discourses include Big "D" Discourse, little "d" discourse, Primary and Secondary discourses as well as dominant and non-dominant discourses. Through the illustration of being a "stickgame person" I show how Gee's Big "D" Discourse construct identities using an "identity kit." Our Primary Discourse is the one we are socialized into through our home, group, which we take on early in life. We are *syilx*, we belong to a specific place and have our own worldview and how we perceive the world around us. We have an intimate relationship with our *tmix*^w. I also use Armstrong's (1999) *oraliture paradigm* to illustrate our relationship to our land and the *tmix*^w. Secondary discourses come about as a result of being out in the world within the public sphere and can include the workplace, educational institutes, religious groups, organizations, businesses or governments. Dominant and non-dominant discourses are determined by the acquisition of social goods or not. Non-dominant discourses bring solidarity with a particular group but not social goods.

A review of the literature specific to the Okanagan language is comprised primarily of linguistic papers and manuscripts on topics such as syntax: wh-questions, clausal structure, transitivity; morphology: aspect, reduplication, future morphemes; phonology: vowel movement, pharyngealization of consonants and vowels, and sandhi. Literature related to language revitalization is found in theses by Johnson (2013), Cohen (2010) and Chambers (2014). Published works pertaining to Okanagan language are in the way of stories which were recorded then transcribed with interlinear gloss and also contain linguistic explanations about the language. Stories

compiled into textbooks for the Paul Creek Language Association are listed as these texts contain *cəpcaɪtikʷl* stories. Storywork according to Archibald is “a theoretical framework for making meaning from stories and for using them in educational contexts.” There are a number of theses on various forms of storywork that inform this work as they center on Elders’ stories, Elders’ teaching styles, historical stories, stories on the land, Elders’ personal experience stories, discourse, conversations and storytelling.

Theoretical Framework

Gee (1999) identifies four types of discourses: Big 'D' Discourses, small 'd' discourse, Primary Discourse, and Secondary Discourse. What is " 'd' 'discourse"?" Gee states "we as "applied linguists" or "sociolinguists," are interested in how languages are used "on site" to enact activities and identities. Such language-in-use, I will call "discourse" with a little "d." (p. 7). He goes on to say "when "little d" discourses (language-in-use) is melded integrally with non-language "stuff" to enact specific identities and activities, then, I say that "big D" Discourses are involved" Gee (1999).

Gee (2014) provides two meanings for the question "What does the word "discourse" mean?" (p. 17) The first meaning he provides for the word "discourse" as defined by linguists as to be "a part of language that has an intimate relation to syntax ("syntax" means the structure of language; the way words and phrases combine together into sentences)" (p. 17). Gee equates language to a film. Each frame of an animated film has to be designed and put together into a sequence. One frame could stand by itself but "animated films are made of many different frames that flow (very fast) one after the other" (p. 17). Syntax provides the rules that are followed to put

words together to make the parts of a sentence. For Gee , a sentence is like a frame, like a film compilation, we choose the "order of the sentences one after the other to tell a story, or a joke, make an argument and an excuse, write a report or a rant, and so on through a great many possibilities." (p. 18) This meaning for "discourse" is "the sequence of sentences" and is concerned with "how various sentences flowing one after the other relate to each other to create meaning or to facilitate interpretation" (p. 18)

The second meaning Gee gives for "discourse" is "language-in-use (language actually used in specific contexts) . . . is "when we linguists study language-in-use - and use the term "discourse" for this, they are concerned with the relationship between language and context, with the ways in which context helps determine the full extent of what we mean or can be taken to have meant" (p.19- 20). The difference between the first meaning for "discourse" and the second meaning for "discourse" is the first meaning is the sequence of sentences similar to the frames of a film; the second meaning is "like the study of how people actually interpret films as they watch them" (p. 20). These two types of meaning Gee posits for "discourse" have to do with spoken language and language-in-use, and syntax or the structure of language. Gee also defines four types of discourses that have to do with the social aspects of language use. He states that "language has meaning only in and through social practices" (p. 12).

So, when we communicate with each other we design not just with language but with everything at our disposal. We design with clothes, gestures, bodies, environments, props, tools, technologies, objects, the social display of beliefs and values, and configurations of all these which we create and use as we find them,

for our purposes. So, discourse is interactive identity-based communication using language. We therefore need another term for identity-based communication using both language and everything else at human disposal. We call this "Discourse" with a capital "D" or big "D" Discourse (Gee, 2014, p. 24).

Big "D" Discourse can be seen in the following illustrations from Okanagan life. Say I want to "pull off" (be recognized) as being a stickgame player (also known as: hand game, *lahal*, *slahal*, bone game). I am going to wear the proper clothes and accessories: a handkerchief, sunglasses, a cap/hat (for men), hat/scarf (for women), my tools will be a hand drum, a drum bag, and/or a rattle, a stickgame set containing sticks, bones and a carrier bag or pouch for my stickgame set. I will know the stickgame songs to sing, the hand gestures for pointing, and the rules for playing stickgames (rules differ as to region, location, culture and what rules the stickgame committee wants to adopt and post at their tournament). I will know what the terminology is: material game, traditional game, right side, left side, down the middle, inside, outside, pointer, guesser, captain, no bone points, no thumb points, you have to come out when ready etc. When I enact the identity of a stickgame player by doing saying and being, then I am in the group or Big 'D' Discourse of being a stickgame player.

So, what does "identity" have to do with "discourse"? Gee states that "we speak and listen, read and write, as particular people: for example, as students, scholars, politicians, gamers, birders..." (p. 20). Our identities are dependent on who we are talking to, and who we want other people to see us as being, so the other person's identity is important as well. "Such identities organize our social worlds." Gee states that

when two people are engaged in discourse (language in interaction in context) they are communicating with each other via enacting and recognizing socially significant identities. The identities are socially significant because various and different social groups construct, construe, use, negotiate, contest, and transform them in the world and in history. So, when two people interact, so too do two (or more) Discourses. It is as if socially significant forms of life (identities), formed in history via social work, talk to each other - continue a long-running conversation they have been having, by using different human bodies and minds at different times (p. 25).

This latter discussion speaks to the fact that stickgames have been a part of our culture since our *captik^{wl}* time. The *captik^{wl}* story "*ʔamcənɪk^w ʔarsik^w*", "Sitting by the Shore Turtle",¹⁴ tells of how Turtle was crying on the shore because he had no land, nowhere to live. Water spoke to him and instructed him to go to the stickgames saying, "When you win three times, come back and I'll talk to you again." Turtle travels to the stickgames where all the animals were playing. He won three times and went back to Water who asked him if he won three times. Turtle says, "Yes." Water next tells him, "Dive into the water, I will be your land." Turtle dove into the water and that's how he got his land.

Big "D" Discourse through an Okanagan lens depicts us as using props (stickgame set), tools (digging stick, fishing gaff), technologies (digital recorders), engaging in ways of thinking, acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, believing, using various sorts of symbols, and objects, ways of combining and integrating language .

¹⁴ Colville Confederated Tribes, 1996. "*ʔamcənɪk^w iʔ ʔarsik^w*," *nsəlxcin iʔ captik^{wls}* (no pg)

"A Big "D" Discourse is also a sort of an "identity kit" which comes with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize" (Gee, 1989). In our world, we exhibit many identities in many different situations. We can be a parent, a sibling, a lawyer, a teacher, an Elder, a language teacher, a housewife, a 'tough guy', a baseball player. We can have multiple identities at any one time. For instance, I am a mother who is in a store to buy items. With me are my four children. Through the course of my shopping, I can meet a friend, an acquaintance from work, my aunt, another mother with small children, the store clerk, the cashier, other shoppers in the store. With each encounter we enact identities as being different types of persons by saying, doing and being. Gee (2014) explains these identities through "identity kits" where the "kit is made of words, things, clothes, values, attitudes, and so forth" (p. 57). In this "kit" we would know "what we would have to look, act, interact, and talk like. We know what values and attitudes we would have to display. We know what sorts of objects, accessories, and places we would associate ourselves with" (p. 57). When we are being a different sort of person, doing and saying and being, we identify ourselves as that different sort of person.

In, *Literacy, Discourse, and Linguistics: Introduction* Gee (1989) identifies another discourse he calls our Primary Discourse. Our Primary Discourse Gee states that:

All of us, through our primary socialization early in life in the home and peer group, acquire (at least) one initial Discourse. This initial Discourse which I call our primary Discourse, is the one we first use to make sense of the world and interact with others. Our primary Discourse constitutes our original and home-

based sense of identity, and I believe, it can be seen whenever we are interacting with "intimates" in totally casual (unmonitored) social interactions. We acquire this primary Discourse, not by overt instruction, but by being a member of a primary socializing group (family, clan, peer group) (1989. p.7).

Our Primary Discourse is "the Discourse one picks up through one's initial socialization into life through their home and whatever counts as the group of people who socializes them early on in life. The Discourse that involves being a "person like us," where "us" is the primary socialization group of that person. This is the identity you take on early in life as a member of what counts as your family, group, or culture, depending on how this is defined in your specific case" (Gee, 2014, p. 223). Early in life, we all learn a culturally distinctive way of being an 'everyday person', that is, a non-specialized, non-professional person. We can call this our 'primary Discourse'. Our primary Discourse gives us our initial and often enduring sense of self and sets the foundations of our culturally specific vernacular language (our 'everyday language'), the language in which we speak and act as 'everyday' (non-specialised) people, and our culturally specific vernacular identity (Gee, 2014; 2015)

The Primary Discourse that Okanagan people, as *syilx* people, are socialized into is the "us," the "we" who identify as *syilx*, as Okanagan, and as belonging to a specific place, a territory. As Okanagan people, as *syilx*, we occupy our Traditional Territory, practice our traditions, culture and have our *nsyilxcn* language. We have the world view that we are caretakers of our Traditional Territory of all that exists here on our territory. All life forms: animals, birds, fish, plants, water, what we call *tmix^w*, which means all living things - are a part of our life. They provide us with our needs, our living, our resources such as food, medicines, tools, everything we need to sustain

us. We engaged and continue to engage in a seasonal round of resource gathering, hunting and fishing throughout our territory. We bring our children and grandchildren out on the land to gather, hunt, and fish. Traditional and cultural practice, our *syilx* language, have been handed down for generations. The land holds our Okanagan place names. Our *cəpcaptikʷl* (oral creation stories) form the record of our existence, our laws, our responsibility to the *tmixʷ*. Armstrong (2009) developed her thesis based on *syilx* oraliture. She states that "Syilx oraliture represents the voice of the Okanagan land and constructs in each new generation, an ethic arising out of an intimate connection between land and people" (p. 45). As *syilx* we have laws and responsibilities to the land passed down to us through our *cəpcaptikʷl* through our language *nsyilxcən*. Armstrong writes

In Nsyilxcen the idea of a right is expressed as *stəłtəłtət* -truthway as a freely held rights exercised as *skč̣x̣ʷx̣ʷiplatət* -binding laws originating from the *captikʷl* and is imposed by societal will as a responsibility of the Syilx. The responsibility is upheld as a covenant in the discipline required in holding title or entitlement within good relationship to *tmixʷ* which is the environment. The *skč̣x̣ʷx̣ʷiplatət* are a guide of societal laws with an expectation of an on-going knowledgeable adherence to be exercised by all Syilx. In Nsyilxcen this is what is referred to earlier as the *snterʷus*-unwinding of the continuing bond-thread or which in the contemporary can be referred to as *inherent Indigeneity* which expresses continuous living in a way that maintains the Syilx ethic. The Syilx ethic is expressed literally by the word *snterʷus* as the *bond- thread* of lived discipline in being one of the indigenous life forms in the life-force, which is environment, continuously unravelling to lead, unbroken to the future through a

long-term knowledge relationship to the land. The long-term knowledge is what connects the past to the present and the present to the future in a Syilx societal ethic, so long as the Syilx assert indigeneity in their relationship with the land. The long-term knowledge is what is framed and transferred in *captik^{wł}* oraliture as the Syilx perspective on environment. (Armstrong, 2009, p. 66)

As Okanagan people we have occupied our Okanagan Traditional Territory for millennia. We have knowledge of our eco-systems, landscapes, specific locations and places that are tied to our seasonal rounds and to our history. Our place names in our language anchor us to our territory. Our language and culture are found throughout the land through our *captik^{wł}* (stories). Experiencing the land can be seen through our own and our ancestors' stories of traveling on the land, and of Coyote leaving culturally significant landmarks throughout our territory. These personal experience stories and our *captik^{wł}* stories passed down through the generations provide us with language and cultural memory. Our collective memory of land-based story acknowledges our relationship to the land and our responsibility to it as caretakers, and responsible owners. This is our *stəltəltət*, our rights and our *kč̓^łx̓^{wł}ipla?* our laws.

while in the Syilx ethic the acceptance of *kč̓^łx̓^{wł}ipla?-laws* leading or directing them, determines a quality of action which demands continuous consideration toward each "person" of the *tmix^{wł}* community. This what the Syilx call *i?* *stəltəlt-the-truth-way*, which commonly translates into "duty-right" or "responsibility" or simply "rights". (Armstrong, 2009, pp. 237-238)

Language is culture, culture is language. Without language, there is nothing to ground us to the land, traditional practices, world view and cultural ways of knowing.

Language brings us back to who we are as a people. Language within story provides

us with connections to our past, to our present and to our future (Ignace, 2008). Story gives voice to who we are, how we are to be, what is expected of us, how we are to act in relation to the land, to our people, and how we are connected to our traditions through our past. Story also provides us with a way to express ourselves. Stories also provide us with a way to convey our shared experiences be they stories of survival in the face of harsh colonizing practices (Absolon 2011, Kovach, 2009), on the land gathering, hunting, fishing (Ignace, 2008), or *kmiltmn* “visiting” friends, relatives. How stories and conversations pattern are unique to a people’s world view, culture, and traditional ways of doing, ways of speaking. Stories are also used to teach, to instruct, to discipline, to impart knowledge of how things are done (Sterling, 1997) and why we do the things we do. Stories also give voice to the storyteller (Thompson, 2012). Our Elders voices are our most valuable resource as the language of our ancestors flows through them.

The fourth discourse Gee identifies is secondary discourse. "All the Discourses we acquire later in life, beyond our primary Discourse, we acquire within a more 'public sphere' than our initial socialising group. We can call these 'secondary Discourses'. They are acquired within institutions that are part and parcel of wider communities, whether these be religious groups, community organizations, schools, businesses, or governments" (Gee, 2014b, p. 184). Secondary discourses can be enacted in institutions in the public sphere such as schools, churches, politics, institutions, businesses, workplace or interest driven group. An example of a secondary discourse is someone who is a professor at a university. A professor must have the necessary language and literacy practices to be able to articulate and operate within the confines of the university community. A professor uses the appropriate

genres in order to enact and identify themselves as a professor capable of using the language of the university community. Another example is when someone starts a new job. They obtain the job by saying they are able to carry out the necessary duties required of them, having the skills, knowledge and language to do the job competently. This new job may require new language and literacy skills. Knowledge in dialects, genres and discourses is needed to work in a new work situation.

In conjunction with secondary discourses, Gee (1989) identifies dominant and non-dominant discourses. He writes, "We can also make important distinctions between *dominant* Discourses and *non-dominant* Discourses. Dominant Discourses are secondary Discourses the mastery of which, at a particular place and time, brings with it the (potential) acquisition of social "goods" (money, prestige, status, etc.). Non-dominant Discourses that are secondary Discourses the mastery of which often brings solidarity with a particular social network, but not wider status and social goods in the society at large" (p. 8). Traditional Okanagan society is communal. Traditional Okanagan society is community minded. Activities and practices are communal in nature. The seasonal round of gathering involves group activity with several families getting together to go out on the land and gather roots, berries, crafting materials, teas, and medicinal plants. Resources are shared with other community members who are unable to gather themselves. Dominant discourses such as schooling seek to individualize the student. Requiring individual work, such as essays and academic papers, promotes articulating their thoughts and opinions within the classroom environment. Many students from societies or social groups that hold different values and world views than the dominant discourse is not comfortable with the individualized and status seeking aspects of the education system. The dominant

discourse that offers this type of action is contrary to students raised with community in mind which privileges caring, sharing and respect for others, especially Elders.

Okanagan Language

The Okanagan language has been well documented in the literature. Much of what has been written on Okanagan are linguistic papers. Anthony (Tony) Mattina (1973) has worked on Okanagan since the mid 1960's. His PhD Dissertation is titled *Okanagan Grammatical Structure* through the University of Hawaii. Okanagan has a complicated transitive system. Transitivity is how a language indicates a direct object in a sentence. Mattina (1978; 1982; 1993; and 1994), N. Mattina (1995), and Hebert (1979, 1982) examine this topic. Okanagan also exhibits reduplication patterns to indicate plural and diminutives (Mattina, 1993, 1977). The phonological aspects of the language such as vowel movement and pharyngealization of consonants and vowels are discussed in Mattina (1978, 1979, and 1999). Both Mattina and Hebert examine sandhi in Okanagan (Hebert, 1978, Mattina, 2000). This aspect has to do with the time it takes to complete an action. Okanagan has many aspectual forms. Hebert, (1979), Mattina, N. (1996, PhD Dissertation) and Mattina, A. (1993) explore this topic. Syntactical aspects such as "noun and verb" (Hebert, 1983), clausal structure (Hebert, 1982), imperatives (Mattina, 1980), Wh-questions (Baptiste, 2001), determiner phrases and domain restriction (Lyon 2015), oblique marked relatives (Lyon, 2013) are investigated as well. Morphological items such as Okanagan future morphemes, (Mattina, 1995; Mattina and Mattina, 1995), and plural forms (Doak and Mattina, 1997; Doak 1981) are studied. Historical works on Okanagan word lists has been done by Doak (1983). The works on Okanagan also include PhD. Dissertations by (Lyon 2013, Mattina, N. (1996), Somday (1980), Watkins (1971), and several

Masters' Theses by Arrowsmith (1968), Pattison (1978), and Young (1971). A grammar was written in the form of a PhD dissertation by Mattina (1973). A dictionary was compiled also by Mattina (1987). Mattina (1985; 2002; 2015) also produced textual documents in book form of Okanagan/Colville narratives based on Okanagan/Colville legends and oral stories. Turner, et al (1980) produced a published work on the Ethnobotany of the Okanagan–Colville of British Columbia and Washington State. Mattina, A. is in the process of developing a new dictionary. He is also working on narrative texts and field notes that he has gathered over the years that he has collected on Okanagan (Mattina, April 20, 2005). Comparative studies on Salish languages include Kroeber, Paul (1999) *Salish Syntax*, Kinkade and Czaykowska-Higgins (1998), and Vogt (1940). There has not been a lot done on the "language in use" paradigm. James Paul Gee's D/discourse theory addresses the "language in use" paradigm.

Okanagan Language Revitalization

Each Okanagan community is involved in a variety of language retention and revitalization efforts. These can include Head Start Programs, Language Nest Programs, Day care Programs, public, private and band-operated language programs, adult language programs, and culture camps. The published articles involving Okanagan language revitalization are articles and dissertations written by Jeannette Armstrong (1990, 2009), Michele Kay Johnson (2013), Bill Cohen (2010, 2001), and Natalie Chambers (2014).

Armstrong's (1999) *oraliture paradigm* informs this thesis. Armstrong identifies high Okanagan words and provides explanations of how these words inform our relationship to our land and the *tmix*^w (all living things). Our *cəpcaptik*^{wł} (oral

creation stories) form the record of our existence, our laws, our responsibility to the *tmix*". She states that "Syilx oraliture represents the voice of the Okanagan land and constructs in each new generation, an ethic arising out of an intimate connection between land and people" (p. 45). As *syilx* we have laws and responsibilities to the land passed down to us through our *cəpcaptikʷl* through our language *nsyilxcən*.

Okanagan Story (published sources)

There have been published works containing narratives of the Okanagan/Colville Language. These narratives were collected by Anthony Mattina, a linguist? through his research during the late 1960's and early 1970's. These narratives he recorded and then transcribed with the help of fluent speakers and published them into book form. All of the books edited by Mattina are formatted with an introduction to the text, an English version of the story and a transcribed version in the Okanagan-Colville language with interlinear glosses, linguistic morpheme breakdowns of the Okanagan-Colville language and a glossary that provides lexical meaning of the morphemes found in the texts at the end. Mattina began working with the Okanagan language in the early sixties. He began recording Okanagan-Colville language data on the Colville Indian Reservation in Washington state. He recorded Pete Seymour¹⁵ in 1968 narrating *The Golden Woman* (1985). This story and others by Pete Seymour were transcribed by Mattina in 1969 and 1970. "*The Golden Woman* is a European story about a king who has four sons. The three oldest go out to see the world. Mattina, 1985, p. 7)." Three types of conflict occur which necessitates the

¹⁵ Pete Seymour (May 1, 1986 – Sept 26, 1979) was born in Kelly Hill on the Colville Reservation in Washington State. Anthony Mattina met him in 1968 and recorded stories with him in the late 60's to early 70's. (Mattina, 2015)

youngest brother to rescue his older brothers or to “do” what they set out to do in revenge against the youngest brother due to jealousy and subterfuge. The book, *Dora Noyes DeSautel la klcaptikʷl* (2002), consists of eight *cəpcaptikʷl* (creation stories). Mattina recorded Dora telling the *cəpcaptikʷl* in 1970, 1971 and 1974. *The Complete Seymour: Colville Storyteller* (2015) is a compilation of tales collected by Mattina in the 1960’s and 1970’s as told by Pete Seymour. There are nineteen texts of narrative. The texts are organized thematically into autobiographical (nine texts), ethnographic accounts of European origin (four texts of European fairy tales), and Okanagan-Colville myths (six myths). Mattina compiled another book of stories entitled *Madeline DeSautel* which is awaiting publication.

Linguist John Lyon collected stories entitled *Okanagan Grouse Woman: Upper Nicola Narratives* (2016) as told by Lottie Lindley, an Elder from Douglas Lake who was a fluent speaker of the Okanagan language. The book contains twenty-nine narratives recorded between 2009-2012. The narratives include *captikʷl*, history, traditional practices and personal anecdotes. The book is organized with the Okanagan versions of the story first, then the English versions, and transcriptions of the story including interlinear glosses. An interview with Lottie Lindley which was transcribed verbatim and a glossary completes the book.

There have been unpublished story collections as told by Okanagan Elder Andrew McGinnis. Andrew McGinnis compiled a collection of *cəpcaptikʷl* stories that he recorded himself telling stories on CD-ROMs, these CD-ROMs include booklets with transcriptions of the stories done by Andrew. These stories were photocopied with a title page and Andrew distributed them to whoever wanted a copy. There are some of his stories being held at the En’owkin Centre Library.

In 1996, a compilation of *cəpcaptikʷl* stories were developed by the Colville Language Group edited by Sarah Peterson with contributions by a group of Elders and fluent speakers from the Colville Reservation, *nsəlxcin iʔ captikʷls*, Colville Confederated Tribes Language Preservation Program. Each Elder contributed a story to the compilation. The Colville Language Group worked together to transcribe tapes, translate stories, prayers, and a children's songbook. This is not an exhaustive list. The language group has been working on language initiatives since about 1995 and are still working together. Their office is located in Omak Washington.

These books contain language as it is spoken by fluent speakers with rich highly complex word forms. I believe these books are a valuable resource as documented language and linguistic record.

Story in the Context of Language Revitalization

For the Okanagan language, there are no story books specifically for language revitalization per se. The Paul Creek Language Association in partnership with the Salish School of Spokane compiled six textbooks (in binder form) for teaching language. This curriculum package contains Okanagan language lessons for the first two binders: *nsyilxcn* 1 (45 lessons) and *nsyilxcn* 2 (39 lessons), *nsyilxcn* 3 contains units with seasonal themes. For example, Unit 1 Spring covers animals, plants and cultural topics such as seasonal gathering of plants and medicines that predominate during the spring season. Unit 2 summer; Unit 3 fall: and Unit 4 winter follow the seasonal theme to complete the *nsyilxcn* 3 binders. Three binders contain collections of *cəpcaptikʷl* stories: *captikʷl* 1 (16 stories), *captikʷl* 2 (15 stories), *captikʷl* 3 (20 stories). in addition, the Interior Salish.com website contains *nsyilxcn* Resources, Media, Language Assessment, Revitalizing Salish, and Cultural Resources with Links

and Contact information (www.interiorsalish.com). The Paul Creek curriculum is utilized in Okanagan on-reserve schools, adult language classes and in immersion settings.

While there are no published stories or narratives other than *cəpcaptikʷl* stories, these *cəpcaptikʷl* stories provide invaluable resources for Okanagan language revitalization initiatives.

Storywork

Storywork carried out in other tribal communities offers additional resources: JoAnne Archibald on Sto:lo (1997), Shirley Sterling on Thompson/*nlakapmx* (1997), Judith Thompson on Tahltan (2012), Ron Ignace on *sixʷapmx*/Shuswap (2008), Lisa Phillips Valentine (1995) and Roger Wilson Spielman (1998) on Ojibwe (1998), Andie Palmer on Shuswap, (2005), and Julie Cruikshank (1990) on Athabaskan and Tlingit.

Archibald (2008) states:

“The Elders taught me about seven principles related to using First Nations stories and storytelling for educational purposes, what I term storywork: respect, responsibility, reciprocity, reverence, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy. Experiential stories reinforce the need for storywork principles in order to use First Nations stories effectively. These same principles form a Sto:lo and Coast Salish theoretical framework for making meaning from stories and for using them in educational contexts. I learned that stories can “take on their own life” and “become a teacher” if these principles are used.”

(p. ix)

Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided an overview of James Paul Gee's discourse models: little 'd', Big 'D', Primary, Secondary and dominant/non-dominant discourses. I gave an illustration of Big 'D' discourse within an Okanagan context of being and enacting a stickgame player. A literature review related to the Okanagan language is listed along with Okanagan language revitalization initiatives within communities. Published works by linguists Anthony Mattina and John Lyon based on Okanagan Story as well as story in the context of language revitalization through the Paul Creek Curriculum Project is also given. Storywork which has been undertaken by authors who have focused on other indigenous groups is also provided.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter I situate myself and my interest in the research found in this work. The area where the language of the Okanagan people is spoken and the influence of neighbouring languages on Okanagan is explained. The research began when a situation (opportunity) was found where fluent speakers and language learners were gathering together in Okanagan language immersion sessions where Elder conversations and storytelling was being heard. I present the participants who attended the immersion sessions, the schedule and daily routines, as well as a description of the data transcription and analysis. I introduce the Elder speakers and the locations where the recording sessions were held. Methods included participant observation and audio recordings of group social conversations. I am engaged in ongoing transcription and analysis of the language data. This study was conducted in the summer of 2010 in July and August and engaged Elder women and men fluent speakers from the Okanagan Nation who were 55 to 85 years old at the time of the study.

Background: Positionality/Insider Researcher

My interest in language and language issues began in the 1970's. I was a stay-at-home Mom with two small children at the time. My sister was attending university in Victoria BC which is on Vancouver Island. My sister mentioned to me that there was a one-year certificate program, which one of our relatives from back home was enrolled in, for those interested in language issues. She encouraged me to apply to the program for September 1978. I did and I was accepted. I moved myself and my two small children, ages two and one, to Victoria in September of 1978. I attended classes for one month and due to financial circumstances and other extenuating

circumstances, I returned home in early October 1978. I would return to pursuing my education in 1987. My sister was always encouraging me to attend this meeting, go to this workshop, try this program, or go to hear this speaker. I was always reluctant because I had two, three, and then four children. I just wanted to be a Mom. She was determined to move me forward and out of the house.

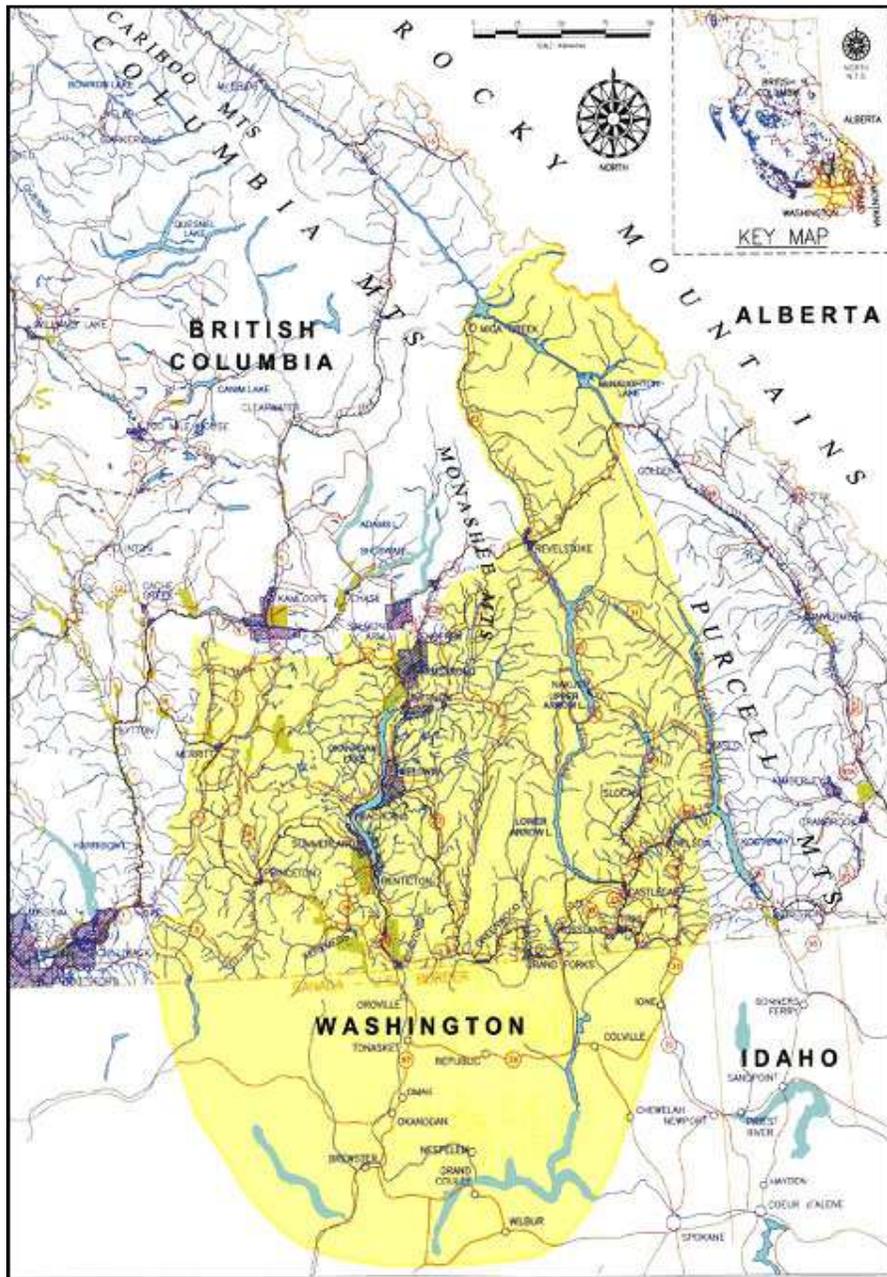
In 1985, there was an Okanagan Elders' gathering held to discuss language issues. I attended one day or one afternoon of these sessions, and this tweaked my interest. I did return to Adult Education to complete my grade 12 equivalency in 1987. I took a one-year certificate program in Cook's Training, worked at a restaurant for a time and applied to Okanagan College for University Transfer courses in 1989. In 1990, I was given the opportunity to work with a linguist named Tony Mattina from the University of Montana, Missoula. He had been working on Okanagan, and continues to, since 1965. He was writing a chapter in a book named "Okanagan Sources" and needed a typist to do the Okanagan language sections of his manuscript. I was willing to do this part time work and thus began my association with Tony and involvement with Okanagan language work. In 1992 and 1993, Tony returned to Penticton to do a two-year stint as a visiting professor teaching linguistics to Okanagan language fluent speakers and Elders at the En'owkin Centre. I attended these courses (being allowed to as I was a proficient typist using the Okanagan font developed by Tony). I am not a fluent speaker. I classify myself as a passive or latent speaker. I can understand the language and can follow about 95% of what the Elders say. I have great difficulty speaking my language. When I speak, it has to be with people I trust, otherwise, I stay silent or say very little. I attribute this to residential school experiences. Consequently, as an avid student of Tony's classes along with a

core of his students, we followed him around and took up almost all of his break times asking him questions and digging for answers about the language. We always were found in his office and at his heels wherever he went. I had it in my mind that I could use linguistics to learn about my language thereby regaining my speaking ability. He then encouraged me to attend university to obtain a degree in linguistics because of my voracious interest in the subject. At this time, I had taken almost 120 credits at Okanagan College, which was a two-year college, and not finishing any sort of certificate, diploma or program. It was self-preservation. I didn't want to move away from home to go to a 4-year college or university. The 1978 experience still haunted me. Tony told me at one time, "You are just going to have to bite the bullet, if you want to do a degree in linguistics. You will have to leave home. There are no linguistics courses here in the Okanagan valley." I finally submitted my application in 1994 to the University of Victoria linguistics department. I left home again in January 1995 to attend the University of Victoria in Victoria, British Columbia(BC).

I completed a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in linguistics in 1996, and a Master of Arts (MA) in linguistics from the University of British Columbia in 2001. In 2001, I began my job as language program director at the En'owkin Centre, Penticton BC. I have been involved in almost all of the Okanagan language initiatives at the En'owkin Centre since 1989. These initiatives included immersion camps, language curriculum development, language workshops for teachers, community language workshops, language program development, language consultation work, language teacher training and the development of a Certificate Program in Aboriginal Language Revitalization in conjunction with the University of Victoria's Continuing Studies Department and the Linguistics Department and the En'owkin Centre.

Situating the Language

“The *Syilx/Okanagan* People’s territory is a diverse and beautiful landscape of deserts and lakes, alpine forests and endangered grasslands. It extends over approximately 69,000 square kilometers. The northern area of this territory was close to the area of Mica Creek, just north of modern-day Revelstoke, BC, and the eastern boundary was between Kaslo and Kootenay Lakes. The southern boundary extended to the vicinity of Wilbur, Washington and the western border extended into the Nicola Valley” (See Figure 1.) (Okanagan Nation Alliance, syilx.org).



OIERS (Okanagan Indian Education Resource Society)
 Figure 1 Okanagan Traditional Territory

There are seven member communities in the province of BC that comprise the Okanagan Nation: Osoyoos, Penticton, Lower Similkameen, Upper Similkameen, Westbank, Vernon and Douglas Lake. Each community has varying numbers of fluent speakers. Each community is situated geographically in different areas of the

Okanagan Traditional Territory.¹⁶ Each community has different social, economic, and land use dynamics. The Okanagan language also has pronunciation differences between its communities mainly due to the proximity of neighbouring languages. For example, the Upper Nicola Language communities, Douglas Lake and Quilchena, are influenced by the Thompson language and the Shuswap language which are to the west and to the north of these communities. Many of the elders of these communities can speak both Okanagan and Thompson. Another example is amongst the Similkameen bands. There are vestiges of a now extinct language which anthropologists say was from an Athabaskan group that was first overtaken by the Nicola then by the Okanagan (Carstens, 1991). In the literature, it has been called the st'uwx language. Words and phrases of this language are found in the place names of the area and in the old language (high Okanagan) (Armstrong, 2009, pp. 148-149) and in the ceremonial language. There are of course Chinook words and Okanaganized French terms present in the Okanagan language due to the prolific trading patterns of the Okanagan and the establishment of the Fur Brigade Trail through Okanagan Territory from 1811-1858 (Abernathy Mellows, 1990).

Situation: Recruiting Participants

When I first began to seek opportunities for recording naturally occurring conversations in the early part of 2010, I faced a dilemma in that the speakers of Okanagan, those who are fluent, with the following definition of fluency - a person who is able to hold a conversation in Okanagan all day without reverting to English (Cohen, 2010), were few and far between. I approached a few people (Elders as

¹⁶ To view an interactive map of the First Nations' Language Map of BC, please go to the website: www.fpcc.ca/language/language-map/

potential study participants?) and they agreed that my research was valid and needful but there was no commitment nor was there a setting up of appointments. One individual I approached suggested I give him my recorder which he would carry with him at all times and would turn it on when he encountered a fluent speaker and they happened to be engaged in a conversation in Okanagan. I was reluctant to do this as I would not be present as a "participant observer" nor able to make notes and observe the dynamics of language in use. He then suggested I shadow someone, going wherever they go, whether to a meeting, teaching a class, on a visit to someone's home, etc. Since I was doing some part time contractual work, I decided this was not feasible either. I sat and talked to some Elders about my need to record and the need for participants. They all commiserated with me, but no commitment was made to participate or set up recording arrangements. Okanagan Elders are involved in many activities and wear many hats from being a language teacher themselves, and being involved with band meetings, committees, cultural activities etc. One Elder said "I have to have an appointment calendar. We are stretched so thin over all the meetings, committees, political organizations within the Okanagan Nation; we have no time for anything." She was willing to "pencil" me in but with no real commitment to a meeting time.

In the summer of 2010, I heard of immersion sessions that were taking place through the Paul Creek Language Association. The immersion sessions were to be conducted in the Okanagan language only, with no English spoken at all. The objective was to have the language learners hear as much language as possible. The language learners were not expected to talk, just to listen, but all present were to speak no English. I contacted the organizer of the classes and asked if it would be

possible for me to come and record the immersion sessions. He said he would ask the participants and the language teachers if they would mind being recorded and would get back to me. He contacted me at a later date and told me it would be fine if I came along to record. He gave me the dates they would be meeting for the immersion sessions which were apart from the language teaching sessions and the times the immersion sessions would be held. The scheduled meetings times were an afternoon to evening session, 4:00 p.m. going to 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. including a potluck supper or a morning to early afternoon session beginning at 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. with potluck lunch.

There was a total of nine immersion sessions (discussed below) in July and August of 2010 that I attended. I also had the opportunity to record two other times outside of the language immersion sessions—once at a home where there were four fluent speakers present, and once at a home where there were three fluent speakers present.

Setting: Elder Conversation Contexts

The language immersion sessions were held at two Elders' homes, one in Penticton, the other in Chopaka, and at the language house at Paul Creek in Ashnola on the Lower Similkameen Indian Band Reserve. The immersion sessions were a part of the Paul Creek Language Classes being held that summer at Paul Creek. They were set up by Chris Parkin (organizer of the language classes and the immersion sessions, language curriculum developer for PCLA) and Sarah Peterson (language teacher, language curriculum consultant) for class attendees who were registered in the summer language learning program and any interested language learners who wished to attend. The main premise was for the language learners to hear the Okanagan

language spoken by fluent speakers. The “immersion” aspect was the Elders/fluent speakers engaging in the Okanagan language with each other with no English being spoken during the sessions. The language learners were to listen only, and if they spoke, they were expected to speak Okanagan also.

Elder Homes

When we arrived at the Elder's homes, we brought something to share for a potluck supper or luncheon. We came in and sat in the living room/kitchen of the Elder's home. The language learners would meet and greet each other in the language, acknowledging the Elders by shaking their hand and introducing themselves to the Elder if the Elder did not know them. Preliminaries such as changes in scheduling, meeting times and locations would take place by the organizers and we would sit down and for the most part listen to the conversation and the talk of the fluent speakers. The fluent speakers sat at the kitchen table with the recorders set on the table for recording. These immersion sessions were not recorded by the Paul Creek Language Association. They were for fluent speakers to get together to speak with one another. The language learners sat on what seating was available and listened to the language spoken by the fluent speakers. The more advanced students would engage the fluent speakers in conversation throughout the immersion setting. At the times when English was heard, the organizer would say "*nqilx^wcən, nqilx^wcən, lut nsamacn.*" "Okanagan, Okanagan, no English."

Since the immersion sessions were held from either eleven o'clock to two or three, or three or four o'clock to seven o'clock, a meal was provided, either lunch or supper. Participants could bring food to share potluck style if they so wished. When the time came, a few of the women present would get up and go into the kitchen to

organize and prepare the food brought for the meal, whether it was for lunch or for supper. When the meal was ready, the participants would line up and serve themselves food and sit down again to listen to more conversation.

The purpose of the immersion sessions held at the Language House (in 2010) was so that the language learners would hear the language as it is spoken by fluent speakers of the language. This premise is based on second language five stages of acquisition (Krashen, Terrell, 1983): silent receptive, early production, speech emergence, intermediate fluency, and continued language development/advanced fluency. Based on these five stages, the immersion sessions at the Language house were held so the language learners could hear the language spoken, equating the language learners to 2/3-year-olds where there is a "silent" period prior to production.

The Language House

The language house is situated on the Lower Similkameen Indian Band at Paul Creek (LSIB). The Chief and Council of LSIB agreed to allow the Paul Creek Language Association (PCLA) to use the house rent-free for the use of conducting language classes there utilizing the Paul Creek Curriculum. It is a three-bedroom house next door to an Elder from LSIB. The house, at that time, was used in the summer months by the PCLA to have summer immersion classes. Language learners participating in the language classes are able to live in the house or set up a tent or park a camper or mobile home outside if they are from out of town or live a fair distance away. They can have their meals inside the house and have access to the restroom and washer and dryer. The immersion sessions held at the language house were patterned the same as the immersion sessions at the Elders' homes. The Elders engaged in the Okanagan language with each other, a meal was served, either lunch or

dinner and all conversation and storytelling was expected to be in the language with no English. In the section below, I further describe the immersion contexts at the center of this study.

Elder Participants:

At the immersion sessions, there were from two to four Elders/fluently speakers and from six to fifteen language learners. (See Table 2)

Table 2 Participants

Date	Location	Elders, fluent speakers	Language learners, other
July 21, 2010	Penticton BC	three fluent speakers,	fifteen language learners
July 22, 2010	Penticton BC	two fluent speakers	ten language learners
July 26, 2010	Keremeos BC	three fluent speakers	six language learners
July 29, 2010	Keremeos BC	four fluent speakers	ten language learners
Aug 05, 2010	Keremeos BC	two fluent speakers	six language learners
Aug 09, 2012	Keremeos BC	one fluent speaker	ten language learners
Aug 10, 2010	Keremeos BC	two fluent speakers	seven language learners
Aug 16, 2010	Keremeos BC	four fluent speakers	eight language learners
Aug 17, 2010	Keremeos BC	four fluent speakers	seven language learners
Aug 27, 2010	Keremeos BC	three fluent speakers	seven language learners

The recording of the Elders in Okanagan conversation in the immersion sessions were held in July and August of 2010. I did not try to influence the immersion sessions in any way. I came at the appointed time, set up my recorder, set my recorder on the table where the fluent speakers were seated, turned it on and sat where I could observe, listen and write notes. I used a Zoom H4N digital voice

recorder for my recordings. I brought extra batteries, extra SD card, an extension cord, an extra surge protector, two lapel microphones with their cords, battery packs etc., and my notebooks. When there were activities taking place such as making rattles, yarn bags, I participated by making my own rattle and yarn bag. I also took my turn to help with preparing the meal during the immersion sessions.

The language learners present were at varying levels of fluency from no language to advanced language learners with the ability to use short sentences and basic conversation skills). The ages of the language learners were from early twenties to early fifties. The fluent speakers were in their mid-fifties to early eighties. The language learners were involved in the classes to develop fluency. For the most part, the language learners were involved in language teaching either in band operated schools, public schools, preschools, day-cares, adult language classes, or planned to be language teachers or were personally interested in learning the language. They were employed in their respective communities during the school year or were students at local college or at University of British Columbia Okanagan campus, Kelowna BC. They came from Okanagan Indian Band, Vernon BC Westbank First Nation, West Kelowna BC, Penticton Indian Band, Penticton BC Osoyoos Indian Band, Oliver BC, Lower Similkameen Indian Band, Keremeos BC, Colville Indian Reservation, residing near Inchelium Washington. Many of the language learners present were also involved in the Paul Creek Language Association (PCLA) language learning program where they participated in taking language lessons utilizing the PCLA curriculum which consists of texts, stories, Total Physical Response (TPR) activities, Books 1 and 2, *captik^{wl}* 1 and 2, as well as workbooks.

Table 3 Schedule of Immersion Sessions

Date	LocationI	House	Time	Activity
July 21, 2010	Penticton BC	TP Roddy Flats	4pm to 7pm	
July 22, 2010	Penticton BC	TP Roddy Flats	4pm to 7pm	
July 26, 2010	Keremeos BC	SP Paul Creek	11pm to 2pm	
July 29, 2010	Keremeos BC	TQ Chopaka	3pm to 6pm	
Aug 05, 2010	Keremeos BC	SP Paul Creek	11am to 1pm	canned fish this day
Aug 09, 2012	Keremeos BC	SP Paul Creek	5pm to 7pm	made deer rattles
Aug 10, 2010	Keremeos BC	SP Paul Creek	11am to 1pm	made deer rattles, yarn bags
Aug 16, 2010	Keremeos BC	SP Paul Creek	5pm to 7pm	
Aug 17, 2010	Keremeos BC	SP Paul Creek	11am to 1pm	
Aug 27, 2010	Keremeos BC	SP Paul Creek	12pm to 4pm	word list

Data Transcription and Analysis

I recorded approximately twenty-one hours and thirty-three minutes from the immersion sessions. The recording sessions I transcribed consisted of thirteen hours and thirty minutes of recordings. One recording session, I transcribed approximately five pages of this session. The recording was recorded so low in volume that it was difficult to hear what was being said. I typed two sessions consisting of four hours of recording. I made margin notes in the transcribed pages using the following coding: genres: word play, teasing, joking, prayer, song(s), story/stories; linguistic features/forms: topic, new story, type of story, cultural reference, question, code switching, interjections, clarification, chatter (when it is difficult to distinguish who is speaking and the words they are saying), pauses, spelling checks (note to self), speaker actions, times on recording counter (e.g. 10:15), reported speech, pronunciation (either wrong pronunciation or corrected pronunciation), speakers' initials, word constructions, laughter, when people leave, and story/stories. The

sessions that have Okanagan throughout among Elder fluent speakers with very little English are the ones that I concentrated on because this language data was important to my research rather than spoken English. The recordings that have a lot of interaction between fluent speakers and language learners I also chose for analysis the way language was used by a fluent speaker and a language learner. A couple of the recording sessions contained so much sound interference it was difficult to transcribe the spoken Okanagan. I was not able to transcribe much of these two recordings. The Elder/fluent speakers' language in use patterns chosen as samples were the recordings of primarily five fluent speakers who I profile next.

Elder Profiles

Sarah Peterson

Sarah is an Elder from the Lower Similkameen Indian Band. She is a fluent speaker and language teacher and has been involved in language initiatives since the 1980's. She has worked with the language on both sides of the border that separates our traditional territory, and is one of the founding members of the Paul Creek Language Association and its sister organization in Washington state the Interior Salish Non-Profit Society. She is also one of the developers of the Paul Creek Language curriculum which is now being taught in many of the on-reserve Okanagan Nation schools and in adult language classes throughout our territory in BC and in Washington state. Sarah is also a cultural teacher who is known for her hide-tanning skills. She has conducted numerous workshops to teach the art of hide-tanning, drum-making, and making moccasins, gloves, and other crafts with hand-tanned hides. Sarah is a doer. She advocates for the doing, not the talking about it; she is action oriented. When she teaches you, she shows you and explains as she goes. She is a

hands-on teacher. Sarah continues to do curriculum development for the Salish School of Spokane, adds to the Paul Creek Curriculum texts, and continues to provide language supports as needed as a fluent speaker.

Herman Edward

Herman is a fluent speaker from the Lower Similkameen Indian Band. He is a language and culture teacher currently working in the *ntamlqən* School. He is an accomplished musician having recorded CD's for his flute music. He also teaches singing, drumming and flute playing both at the school and to those who want to learn. He is also a traditional canoe builder having built traditional dug-out canoes for the annual canoe trek held each year within the Okanagan traditional territories. He is also a crafter and does beading, making flutes, drums, etc. Herman has been involved in language initiatives since the 1980's. He has been involved in curriculum development projects, culture camps, immersion camps, and cultural activities. He is an accomplished storyteller. He will always tell a story wherever he goes. Herman currently works as a language teacher at the *ntamlqən* School, and provides language supports as needed within our communities.

Thomas Pierre

Thomas is from the Penticton Indian Band. He is an Elder and fluent speaker. He is a rancher and a farrier by trade (retired). He is a language consultant for the *Outma sqilxw* school in Penticton BC and for the Paul Creek Language Association. He is actively involved in the development of curriculum materials for the language classes at *Outma sqilxw* and for the Paul Creek Language Association. He is a doer also. He prefers to be working and doing than waiting around talking.

Larry Pierre Jr.

Larry is a fluent speaker currently living on the Keremeos Indian Band reserve. He has taught language in the Okanagan Nation on-reserve schools in Oliver, Penticton and Keremeos. He is a crafter also working with regalia, drum making, flute making, and leather work using hand-tanned deer hides. He has been involved in language initiatives since the 1980's working on language curriculum, being involved in cultural camps, immersion camps and cultural activities. Larry is a singer and a drummer.

Tony Qualtier

Tony is a fluent speaker from the Lower Similkameen Indian Band. He is a language consultant for the Paul Creek Language Association and is involved in cultural camps, immersion camps and provides language supports as needed within our communities.

Locations: Recording Sessions

The recording sessions were held at three residences and at two different Okanagan communities: Penticton Indian Reserve and Lower Similkameen Indian Reserve. (See www.syilx.org/governance/member-communities/ for a brief synopsis and location map of each *syilx* community)

Thomas Pierre's House

Thomas' house is located on the Penticton Indian Reserve approximately 18 miles from the village proper. When we went to Thomas' house, there were three fluent speakers the first day and two fluent speakers the next day, all male, and fifteen language learners the first day and ten the second day. We had supper both days. At these recording sessions, there was some Okanagan language used but for the most

part, the interaction was in English as one fluent speaker said, "so the kids can hear." I take this reluctance to speak in Okanagan when there are those who do not understand the language or have limited understanding a notion of politeness as the Elder was reluctant to speak Okanagan because there were those present who would not be able to understand his words.

The Language House

The language house is situated on the Lower Similkameen Indian Reserve (LSIB) at what is known as Ashnola. It is located at *kłankx'no* (Paul Creek). The house is approximately 15 miles east of Keremeos BC (Sarah lives next door to the language house). There were seven recording sessions held at the language house with four lunches and three suppers. At these recording sessions there were from two to four fluent speakers and six to ten language learners. A problem I encountered later, after listening to the recordings, was the sound interference from the water taps turning on and off from the kitchen sink, the washing of the dishes by hand and the drying of the dishes with the noise of putting the dishes, cutlery, pots and pans in the cupboards and the clothes dryer being turned on while recording was taking place. For future reference, these activities could be suspended or recording with lapel mics would have been better. I also recorded almost a whole session without knowing the electrical plug-in I was using for my lapel mics did not work, consequently, the recording for this session is very low. Also, the day we made rattles, the noise from the hole punching of the raw hide was loud as they used a metal hole puncher made for leather which made a loud snapping sound.

Tony Qualtier's House

Tony's house is also located on the Lower Similkameen Indian Reserve (LSIB) but at the opposite end. His house is at Chopaka. Chopaka reserve lands that border the US/Canada border at the southernmost portion of LSIB. At this session, there were four fluent speakers and ten language learners. We had supper on this day.

Conclusion

In this chapter I provided the background of how I became interested in language and my position as an insider researcher. I have always been interested in language. When I was a child aged 5-8, we had wood stoves for cooking and heating and coal oil lamps for lighting. At night, when my mother had put us to bed, Elders would come to visit. My mother would make tea for them, set out biscuits or some sort of snack, maybe canned fruit. They would sit around the kitchen table and talk in Okanagan. I could hear them talking. I would come out of the bedroom, dragging my quilt with me and lay down on the floor beside my mother's feet and wrap myself in my quilt. The Elders would talk, talk, and talk through many hours, drinking tea. On occasion, my father would blow out the coal oil lamps and they would sit around the table with just the fire light from the kitchen stove to give light. I would lay there and listen to the rhythms of the language, it's cadence, it's songlike qualities and I absolutely loved to hear the language. I would wake up in my bed again, and if they were still talking out in the kitchen, I would again drag my quilt out to lay beside my mother's feet to listen to the language. The language is very important to me.

I see how the language is taught in the schools and how the schools are not doing a service to the language but only following their own notions of how language should be taught. I wanted to find a way to address this through doing a study on how

Elders use language. When I did the recordings for my research study, I found this as a great opportunity to record language as it was spoken by the Elders/fluent speakers. I was able to record Elder/fluent speakers in three locations through the Paul Creek Language Association's summer immersion language teaching sessions. The Elder participants who took part in the Paul Creek summer immersion sessions provided their time and their language knowledge. Having the recording sessions in Elder homes created an opportunity for the Elders to welcome us into their homes and for us to go and visit, to sit around and hear the language spoken and have some food and do more visiting around the lunch or dinner table. The recording sessions schedule and a participant charts show the activities, locations and attendees at the immersion sessions. It was a great opportunity for language learners to hear Elders speak the language and engage in storytelling, conversation and hear jokes. Language as spoken by Elders is so important for language learners to hear. Our language is one of 34 languages spoken in the province of BC. The language is in a critical state and any and all opportunities to hear the language is important.

I was able to have enough language recordings to provide me with data to have language in use data for this study. I looked for data that would show the different genres of talk such as jokes, teasing, stories, and conversation which would inform language learners of these different language in use patterns and to provide samples. I was fortunate to be able to have many hours of recorded language data to glean from. I also believe that language learners are just as important as they are the ones who are willing to take the time and put in the effort to learn the language. Many of the participants in the summer sessions were from other communities so travel was a part of their participation.

Chapter 4 Descriptive Language Findings

Language-in-Use Patterns in Okanagan

Introduction

In this section I describe the language of Elders in various social domains of talk. I discuss the formulaic greetings that take place when Okanagan people meet on occasion, arrive for a visit, meeting, or gathering and the concept of being a "good host." I also provide samples and discussion of joking and teasing by fluent/Elder speakers. I then discuss the importance of fluent speakers getting together to speak the language amongst each other for the purposes of language maintenance and their own remembrances of concepts and word brush-up. Next, I address the ideology fluent speakers have about how the language is taught in the schools: how the structure of the language (sentence structure) is being changed by utilizing the provincial curriculum guidelines, and how Elders' intuitions are not being recognized but rather the school curriculum is lifted up. I then illustrate Gee's "who/what" Big "D" Discourse through the *syilx* traditional practice of the seasonal round of gathering. How Big "D" Discourse conceptualizes *syilx* identity through *syilx* traditional activities. The importance of language learners and Elders are to the continued revitalization of the language complete the samples in this chapter. The portions I selected for analysis were selected for the language use, the types of talk they represented and the ways the talk was structured. As Okanagan people, we have traditional and cultural protocols that provide us with the way we should act toward one another and toward the land and all living things, what we call the *tmix*^w. Our *cəpcaptik^wl* (traditional stories) provide us with how we should be, live, and interact with the world around us.

When I was a young child, approximately 5-8 years old, and there was a gathering such as a funeral, my father would take me around to the Elders. At that time, funerals were held at the band hall. All meals were served during the wake prior to the actual funeral service (which was held at the Catholic Church). Tables and chairs were set up for meals, chairs were set against the walls of the hall, going all the way around the perimeter of the hall. The Elders sat around the perimeter of the hall, visiting, watching who came and went, greeting and conversing with whoever came by and stopped to greet them and talk with them. My Dad would take me by the hand, and he would go along from the first Elder to the next. He would greet the Elder in the language, shake their hand, engage in small talk, remark to them in some manner such as "you came a long way," or have a conversation. He would put me forward a bit and say "*axa? istəm̓kʔilt,*" "this is my daughter." Then he would say to me "shake hands with her or him." I would timidly put my hand out, if I didn't extend my hand appropriately, he would move my arm forward by my elbow and say again "shake hands." I would, and we would move on to the next Elder, going all the way around the room to however many Elders were seated along the walls of the hall. I was very shy and at times reluctant to shake hands, but my Dad would always say "shake hands with him or her." A caveat was, at times, the Elder would say "ooh, this is your girl?" Then he or she, mostly she, would pet my head, pat my arm, shoulder, or back and say "ooh *astəm̓kʔilt haʔ?*" "Ooh your daughter?" This is how my Dad introduced me and how he expected me to participate in greeting the Elders, by shaking hands. He was also showing me how to properly introduce myself. In Okanagan society, in formal situations, such as before you give a talk, a speech, opening a gathering, you are to say who you are, who your parents and grandparents are (both maternal and

paternal) and where you are from or live. This practice of taking me around the room to shake the Elders' hands and telling him who I was in relation to himself was a way to socialize me in how to formally greet Elders and how to introduce myself.

Another story was when I was involved in recording Elders on a particular day in January of 2019. We were recording at the longhouse at *skalusip*. I had just parked my vehicle when two others arrived, two men, an Elder and the host's brother. When I walked in the building, the host's daughter was setting up the food table for lunch later. She was also the videographer for the session so there was a lot to do. Set up the food table, set up her video equipment with cords, tripod etc. I was not sure where I could be of assistance. I didn't want to touch her video equipment because that was her arena. So, I asked if I could help with the food table. She said no, only one pot of food had arrived, the rest was still coming, and she had already done what was needed. So, I took a turn around the tables and chairs set up to accommodate the Elders who were yet to come, trying to see if there was anything else, I could do as the other participants had not arrived yet. The younger man, the host's brother, said to me, "Maxine, shake hands with the Elders, there are Elders here, go and shake their hands." There was only one, the one he had given a ride to. I felt summarily admonished, so I went to him quickly and reached out my hand. He didn't take it. Instead he gave me a good hug and said, "*nak^wəm anwi kw sqilx^w ha??*" "Evidently you're Indian?" A nice way to say, "it's ok, you're ok."

These two stories illustrate how we as Okanagan people formally and informally greet one another when we arrive at a home to visit, at a function such as a meeting, a talk, or on the street etc. Especially, it is important to greet and shake hands with our Elders. It is considered good form, a well brought up person,

politeness, to do so. Armstrong (2009) provides a "script" with a protocol that is a part of traditional *syilx* culture and is expected behaviour for welcoming guests into your home.

A sample "script"¹⁷ familiar to any Syilx, is that on entering a fellow Syilx member's home, guests are always to be greeted and then to be seated politely. Food will be shared with them, and then conversation or business takes place. The sequence of actions can be counted on, as simply what takes place, even in today's Syilx traditional homes. In traditional Syilx culture, a person simply entered a home, without waiting to be asked in, as a "home" was simply "shelter" rather than an individual "possession". Read as a "script", it reveals the presence of a social ethic resulting in the good sense and obligation to "share" shelter from the elements (Armstrong, 2009, p. 107)

She also illustrates this "script" in two *cəpcaptikʷl*: *Myth of Sinkelep the Coyote* (Hill-Tout & Maud, p.140), and *How Coyote Lost His Deer Meat and Created a Thirst* told by Josephine Shuttleworth (Shuttleworth, 1938).

Gee's (1989) Primary Discourse model states that our Primary Discourse is what we are socialized through early in life in the home with family, clan and peer group. It is the one whereby we first make sense of the world and interact with others. My father was showing me a social practice that we as *syilx* practice based on our

¹⁷ Armstrong defines a "script" as "'Scripts are valued as a device in *captikʷl* to set in place believable and familiar animated settings through cultural inference. In Syilx story the use of scripts are sometimes highly oblique and require cultural literacy to read. Scripts are also widely used as devices that can be manipulated to reveal character, or to include other kinds of essential story information.'" (pg, 112).

shared identity as *syilx*. My father was modelling what is the proper way to do formulaic greetings.

The following two samples illustrate formulaic greetings:

Greetings Sample 1

- 1) HE taʔlí p t x^waʔx^wʔit
there's a lot here
- 2) TP way Herman
Hello Herman
- 3) HE way, tałt ʔast łwikłmən ʔast łwikłmən, iʔ l ankilx way
Hello, it's good to see you all again, it's good to see you all again,
excuse me, your hand. Hello.
- 4) TQ way Herman way k^w ckicx
Hello Herman, you arrived here
- 5) TP alaʔ k^w ckicx Herman way
You arrived here, hello Herman
- 6) HE way
Hello

Greeting Sample 2

- 1) everyone way way
- 2) TP way k^w ckicx
Hello, you arrived
- 3) CP lut k^w tə ʔilx^wt
You're not hungry?
- 4) LB ki inʔmink
I want some (food implied)

In the above samples everyone greets the new arrival. Usually they shake hands all around as evidenced by Herman saying 3) "*huma ankilx, way*". Greetings always take place whether it is a visit to a friend's house, arrival in a classroom, at a meeting, at a gathering, and between friends as they meet on the street, or in the mall. People will

greet one another and shake hands and then converse or ask what's up. This language-in-use pattern (Gee, 2014) is an expected aspect of our culture as Okanagan people. It is said of someone who shakes hands with everyone present as a part of taking their leave "that person is a well brought up person," *"x̣ast i? cawts."* "His demeanour is good."

When I was young, when someone came to our house to visit, or on whatever business they came to see my parents or older brothers about, serving the visitors who arrive a meal, tea and fruit, or bread (bannock, biscuits) is an accepted practice. If it was close to a mealtime other plate(s) was/were set. If it was mid-morning, mid-afternoon, or in the evening, tea was set in front of them. This practice (Gee, 2014, p. 32; Armstrong, 2009, p. 107) enacted being a "good host."

Another aspect of good form is offering of food and/or something to drink takes place right after the greeting.

Offering Food or Drink Sample 3

- | | | | |
|----|----|--|-------------------------|
| 1) | LW | k ^w ?ilx ^w t | Hungry? |
| 2) | HE | kən ?ilx ^w t waỵ ki kən... | I am hungry, yes, I ... |

Offering Food Sample 4)

- | | | |
|----|----|---|
| 1) | SP | ili? a əckəqus ləkamin isk ^w əlncut
My cooking is on the stove there, the likmin |
| 2) | LB | ləqamin ha?
ləqamin Q-marker? |
| 3) | CP | axa? stx̣itk ^w ləkamin
this is stew, ləkamin |
| 4) | LB | ooh nak ^w əm ləqamin ixi? i? s?ums ləqamin
ooh, ləqamin, that's the name of that, ləqamin |
| 5) | CP | yeah pataq ntytyix
yeah, potatoes, salmon, |

- 6) LB taʔli qʷamqʷəmt axa?
this is very delicious
- 7) LB oh nakʷəm, ul iʔ ʔumən
Oh, and a spoon
- 8) CP lipli
corn
- 9) LB limləmt
thank you

These samples indicate the greeting and offering of food. Herman shakes hands with everyone before he sits down to eat with everyone. Levi is greeted and told there is food set on the stove, the implication is to help himself. Levi is unfamiliar with the term “*ləkamin*” as a beginning speaker¹⁸. He is told 3) "this is stew, *ləkamin*." He replies, 4) "ooh that's the name, *ləqamin*." By identifying the ingredients and showing him, Levi understands what they are telling him about the *ləkamin*. The work of being a "good host" is carried out while creating understanding of language. This offering of food or drink practice is also a part of traditional *syilx* cultural practices found in our *cəpcaptikʷl* as shown by Armstrong (2009, pp. 107-113) as illustrated in the *cəpcaptikʷl* stories mentioned above.

Elders, Language, Language Revitalization and Maintenance

The Elders of the Okanagan who are speakers are very important to the language programs that are in place. They are a valuable as resource persons, language teachers and cultural knowledge experts. Much of the culture and cultural practices are held in the language as an oral language. Elders have different forms of

¹⁸ LW and CP are learning speakers, as a result, some speaking errors occur. “*ha kʷ ʔilxʷt*” would be the correct way to say “are you hungry”? *likmin* is the way to say the soup Sara made. Levi says *ləqamin*, CP says *ləkamin*

expertise: medicinal plant knowledge, place names, protocols, traditional tool making, basketry, hide tanning, hunting, fishing, gathering, canoe building, ecological practices, and animal husbandry¹⁹. The most important aspect of Elder knowledge is language knowledge. Language is very important for all aspects of language revitalization, maintenance and perpetuation of succeeding generations. The number of highly fluent speakers is dwindling year by year. I have often heard Elders say, "We need to get together more often; when I don't speak the language as much as I can and with other speakers, I begin to forget words, phrases, terminology." In the following example, the talk is about the opportunities or lack thereof of speaking Okanagan. In Okanagan society, there are few fluent speakers from each community, and the opportunities to talk Okanagan with each other are few. The Elders come together at different types of gatherings from time to time. Many Elders and fluent speakers are involved in Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). Meetings are held at various locations to discuss such things as land stewardship and resource stewardship including of plants, fish, animals, and other endangered species. Other gatherings might be a meeting that is at the national level through the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA). These could be on health issues, social issues such as children and adults, schooling, or political issues such as land and resources. I have heard Elders say many times that the only time we get to see each other is at funerals, an occasion which brings people together as well. Talk about actual engaging in interaction and the opportunity to talk is also a topic that fluent speakers talk about.

¹⁹ Traditional hunters equate a herd of deer with a herd of cattle to care for and oversee as to hunting protocols, when to hunt, what animals to take, how many should be taken in a given season to ensure a healthy herd, and to prevent overkill.

The opportunity to speak Okanagan is welcomed by fluent speakers. In the following Elder language samples, the Elders poignantly express their sense of loss and alienation.

Elders and Language Sample 5

- 1) SP ha way' p ʔalʔilxʷt mat ha? Ha kʷ ʔilxʷt caʔkʷ
Are you all hungry? Maybe you are hungry, maybe
- 2) PP kma kən skawsʔilənx, **kən skəw'smilt, kən snkʷupils i?**
nqʷəlqʷiltntət
I came to eat, I came to visit, **I am lonesome for our language**

In this excerpt, in 1) Sarah asks Larry if he is hungry, Larry says in 2) rather than coming to eat, he came to visit, **I am lonesome for the language**. In the following example, the need for someone to talk to is poignant.

Elders and Language Sample 6

Herman:

- 1) huy ul unixʷ ant kʷu łwis ul iʔ...
now, it's true, she left me, and the...
- 2) iʔ I incitxʷ ʕapnaʔ kən iliʔ ʔaʔt ti kəwəən,
in my house now, I am there, it sure is quiet (no voices)
- 3) ikliʔ kən knaqʷ ul əclaʔkin
I am alone there, and sometimes
- 4) ul li məʔ nʔaʔcnwilx kən ʔa cmayxcut laughter
and there I get louder, when I tell myself stories (laughter)
- 5) lut t' iʔ naʔəmʔ kən ʔa...kən...
not that, but however I am not...
- 6) lut ʔə icən iʔ...kən ʔa cmayxcut ixiʔ
I don't answer when I told myself stories there
- 7) ul ti way' kən spsəsayəʔx may ixiʔ
and I may be crazy. Is that it?
- 8) TQ ʔiʔ put iʔ kʷ ʔast ah?

that's it, still you are good eh?

- 9) HE kən esaʔsiχəlx²⁰, (laughter) kən ckəskəsəs kəl inca məl... (laughter)
I shift back and forth. I argue with myself
- 10) l ʕaχəncutn way kən lckəskəsəs,
at the mirror I am argue again with myself
- 11) ul iʔ skʷiʔtm lut...
and my siblings don't...
- 12) ʕant iʔkikxaʔ təxʷ əcqʷəlqʷilstn ʔa claʔkin ul, lut ʔa cqʷəlqʷilt təʔli
Look at my older sister, actually I talk with her sometimes and she doesn't talk much
- 13) čxil ʔa claʔkin ul spuʔusc ul qʷəlqʷilt naχəml lut niʕip,
It's like sometimes when she feels like, she speaks but not always
- 14) ul ah... xiʔmix kən milt ul kən qʷəlqʷilt kmiltəmən ul kʷu qʷaʔqʷʔal
wherever I visit and I talk, when I visit her and then we do talk together
- 15) kəm kən ʔa ckmax... ti kən nkawcən
and I think when I am alone... I am really not speaking out loud.

The above samples show that the opportunity to speak the language is welcomed by fluent speakers. Herman is talking about after his mother passed away, there was no one to talk to in the house 1-3). The voices were silent 2). He joked about talking to himself 4). It is an important fact that people who speak the language must be able to converse with each other in order to maintain their level of speaking. Having someone to talk to about the language and in the language is very important for fluent speakers so the words are not forgotten, and the language is used. Language maintenance is just as important as language revitalization.

²⁰ The word Herman uses refers to the concept of talking in two voices. He takes on the character of the (imaginary) person he is talking to when he is in his house alone. He shifts back and forth between characters as he constructs a conversation.

The many projects I have worked on with Elders to provide translations for such things as a pocket dictionary series, naming street names in Okanagan, doing translations for a bilingual Okanagan/English book, place names, plaques etc. reveal the need for Elders/fluent speakers to get together to converse and share language. I have heard the comment, "It is best if there are a few of us so that we can bounce words off of each other because we forget if we don't talk often with other fluent speakers" (D. Derrickson, Aug 03, 2004). Fluent speakers are often faced with the same problem--who to talk to. I have asked fluent speakers about translations and they invariably answer, "I will get back to you," which means either they are too busy at the time or they will have to think about it before giving a translation. Translating English concepts into Okanagan requires high fluent speakers as translating an English concept into Okanagan requires using the morphology, syntax and the lexical semantics of the language. It's the specialized knowledge high fluent speakers/Elders have about the language that must be documented as these forms will leave when the Elders leave us. The following samples show the various genres Elders/fluent speakers engage in.

Genres

Gee (2014) claims that "As we speak or write we choose what words and phrases we will put into or "package into" sentences, (p. 18), what he call "discourses" with a small "d." He also says, "We combine sentences to create bigger things than a single sentence, to create conversations, reports, stories, jokes, arguments, or meaningful parts of them (e.g., the set-up of a joke, the premise of an argument, the finale of a story, the first stanza of a poem, and so forth.)" (p. 19). When fluent speakers get together, there is usually a lot of teasing and play on words to make a

funny story funnier. Teasing is one genre of Elder talk. I present and discuss three Teasing Samples of Elder talk. In this sample, HE uses this genre in talking to Brandy about eating a fawn when she gets old.

Teasing Sample 7

- 1) HE q̣sapi ah k^{wu} cus ah Taras Squakin,
k^{wu} cus ah “iwa caʔk^w... t̄i k^{wu}... k^{wu} amtix^w ta λ̣əḳ^wλ̣^ʔaḳ^w, inx̣mink,”
she said to me "if you... for me... bring me a fawn to eat, I want some,"
- 2) t̄i kən lut təl siw̄x, kən t̄apam, xiʔ puk^wltin ʔasil.
I was reluctant, for her request, I shot some, I laid down in front of her two
- 3) “ohh limləmt, limləmt, limləmt,” ixiʔ ḳ^wulṣ, ixiʔ n̄cəqntis, naʔl Jack, taʔt
ʔaʔʔiɬnx̣əl̄x,
"ooo, thank you, thank you, thank you," she fixed it, set it in the oven, her and
J Jack they ate.
- 4) they eat the newborn, the old people used to eat that as a delicacy food,
that’s what they call it (a fawn) λ̣əḳ^wλ̣^ʔaḳ^w, λ̣əḳ^wλ̣^ʔaḳ^w,
- 5) so, when you’re an old lady you gotta eat some λ̣əḳ^wλ̣^ʔaḳ^w,
especially the head (laughter),
- 6) iʔ t̄inaʔ a cxʔit a cʔiɬən (laughter), cut iʔ spsaqs,
the ear is the first to be eaten (laughter), say the nose,
- 7) c̄mʕasəntx^w sic ʔiɬntx^w, sic iʔ ḳl̄kaʔm̄usts
you kiss it, then you eat it, then it's cheeks

Herman teases Brandy by telling her when she gets old (she is in her mid twenties at this time), she will have to eat new fawn 5). Then he teases her further by saying in 7) you will have to "kiss the nose before you eat it," there is a lot of laughter and hilarity at the picture.

Often Elders in telling a joke will embed the joke in a story. In the following language sample, Thomas conjures up the image of a friend who when he smiles, his eyes disappear. Thomas tells of a funny story with a joke embedded in the story.

Teasing Sample 8

- 1) TP k^wa ta... Willie Bessette, ha cmistix^w ah... Willie Bessette?
Willie Bessette, do you know Willie Bessette?
- 2) TQ ki· q̄sapi?, yeah, I did meet him, yeah
long ago, yeah, I did meet him, yeah
- 3) TP k^wa scəcmusaʔx, məl ʔayncut, məl əctkəmkəmpus,
well, he had small eyes, when he laughs, his eyes go out of sight
- 4) cusəlx “Willie taʔt ki k^w kcəcmus,”
When they say "Willie, you sure got small eyes,"
- 5) cut “kama k^wa stkacmus mi kən mispəspisʔus” hahaha,
he said, "it's not like you are making eyes at me for my eyes to be bigger"
- 6) ixi? Willie Bessette,
that's Willie Bessette,
- 7) ʔa cʔayncut ul əctkəmkəmpus,
when he laughs, his eyes go out of sight
- 8) kama ka səcʔac̣x^wusəm mi ʔ t̄pəspəsʔus.
It's not like you are examining his eyes that he needs big eyes
- 9) TP ha cmistix^w sʔalu?, Morris Charlie
Do you know sʔalu?, Morris Charlie?

Thomas tells of what Willie said to someone when they said he had little eyes when he laughed. Willie teases back by saying 5) " it's not like you are making eyes at me for my eyes to be bigger." In the following Teasing sample, Thomas teases someone else when they are talking about porcupines and how scarce they are these days.

Teasing Sample 9

- 1) TP Paul Lake?
- 2) HE kntils stkli? mat
I think it's on the other side maybe
- 3) TP Paul Lake yeah Skedam Flat then Paul Lake
- 4) HE iti? ki? wikən i? q^wilqən

Thereabouts I saw a porcupine

- 5) TP taʔt iti? lk^wut ki? ła kłq^wilqən, mhm
it sure is far where there's porcupine, mhm
- 6) HE taʔt i? naqs iscwik ʒapna? taʔt i? x^waʔspintk ka cwikstən ixi?
Only one I saw, now it sure has been many years since I saw
it (porcupine)
- 7) ti way mat cəlkspintk mat ninaʔx^w
it was maybe five years, maybe a little more
- 8) TP kən kłkwkwap xi? a? ckaʔkicm km məl taʔt ul kłcawtəlx nǰ^wmaqs
I had dogs that found (porcupines), they really have difficulty when
(they get) quills in their nose
- 9) HE taʔli k^wu c... k^wu ctyak^wt naʔ inkəkwap, x^wu·y ul ʔlal sic, ixi? məl
kamtinaʔn məl
we really... we were fighting my dog and I, then he died, and
I sat on it and then...
- 10) TP yeah
- 11) TQ inca nix^w cxił iti?
I did something like that too
- 12) HE x^wuy ul k^wu cus i? knaqs, i? slaʔt Bern, k^wu cus
by and by one person told me, my friend Bern
- 13) HE k^wu cus t'i ʒacntix^w ul nwisəlxstx^w kʒaciwsənt ti? ʔakswix... ixi? ul... ul
ʒaʔnumtstx^w klaʔ²¹
he told me, tie it up, lift it up, hang it when it's standing, and... and...
here you hurt him this way
- 14) ck^wisk^wəstx^w i?... spicən xi? ul ti, kʒaciwsənt k^wu cus, li-ʔ kstək^wpm mi
ʔunikstməntx^w
hold it... a rope and just hang it, he told me, laying there, then you let him go
from there
- 15) nwislkst tił məl ciwqtłx^w i? kəkwap ta cx^wuy q^wəlqin
lift it up straight and pull them out, the dog when it gets porcupine (quills)

²¹ Sentences 13, 14 and 15 are referring to how Herman was advised to get quills out of his dog's nose. He was told you put a rope around his neck, lift him up, when he is losing his breath, let him down, then lift him up again, when he is out of breath, lay him down and then he won't fight you when you start to pull the quills out.

- 16) TQ hmm taʔli qʷənqʷantəlx ha?
hmm, they sure are pitiful ha?
- 17) HE oh, ul taʔt iʔ kəkwap ła cyʔamncut kʷu ła c...
Oh, and the dog was very stubborn, fighting it, when we ...
- 18) LB iʔ skʷuy ǰsapi ah ʔaʔən iʔ kəkwapəʔ ʔasyaqən ul axaʔ ixiʔ...
my mother long ago I saw the dog's head, and it was...
- 19) pliers lut ʔa cmistin
Pliers, I don't know (what it's called)
- 20) HE ciwqəntxʷ
You pulled them out
- 21) LB ciwqən, ul lut ʔə qʷəlqin, iʔ whiskers, iʔ skʷuy nstils qʷəlqin, lut
ʔə qʷəlqin

I pulled it out, and it wasn't porcupine (quills), it was the whiskers, my mom thought it was porcupine, it was not porcupine.
- 22) CP iʔ supcins, iʔ supcins
his whiskers, his whiskers
- 23) LB ki kʷu... taʔli ʔaymt laughter ay ay ay ay
yes, we... he was very mad, ay ay ay ay
- 24) HE ʔiwkʷts iʔ supcins iʔ kəkwapəʔ laughter
she pulled out the dog's whiskers, laughter
- 25) TP la·qcinm
tweeze
- 26) HE xiʔ la·qcinm, ixiʔ a ʔumstsəlx la·qcinm, la·qcinm
the tweezing, that's what they call tweezing, tweezing
- 27) TP yeah
- 28) TP see some old guys you see always... whiskers
- 29) TQ yeah, ixiʔ inʔaxʔʔap ʔxʔil itiʔ
Yeah, my elder (dad) did that
- 30) TP got a tweezers in their pocket all the time
- 31) CP put ʔxʔil itiʔ Johnny Arlee mi qʷəlqʷilt
just like that Johnny Arlee does, then he talks

- 32) TP anwi, you got a project there, laughter...
- 33) HE cncəlx^wqin mi wiʔstix^w, k^w əcncəlx^wqin
 you'll have enough (hair) for a headpiece when you are done
 (Herman is referring to a roach, a headpiece used by men as part of
 their regalia)

The talk begins with when Herman saw porcupines at Skedam Flats 4) it was maybe five years ago, a little more 7). Thomas mentions how porcupines are scarce now 5). Herman relates how his dog had an altercation with a porcupine and had quills in his face. How difficult it was to pull the quills out as his dog was fighting and hard to hold 9). They tied the dog up and pulled the quills out (13-14). Levi tells his own story about porcupine quills. He said his mother thought his dog had porcupine quills in his face and tried to pull them out with pliers, but they weren't porcupine quills (18, 21)). They were his own whiskers. Levi says "whiskers" in English, Chris translates the word for him and says *supcin*, the word for "whiskers". Herman says the proper way to say, "she pulled out the dog's whiskers" "*ciwłts iʔ supcins iʔ kəkwapəʔ*" 24). Thomas says "*la-qcinm*," "to tweeze" 25), Herman clarifies the word *la-qcinm*, "to tweeze" and the process of tweezing whiskers 25).

Thomas then tells of how the Okanagan men would carry tweezers in their pocket to tweeze their few whisker hairs on their chin or upper lip (28, 30). In this example, both Herman and Thomas tease Chris about tweezing his whisker hairs. Chris is non-native and has a full beard (32-33). These samples show how one topic leads to another. The topics flow from porcupines (4-7), to dogs with porcupine quills (9, 11, 13-15. 17), Levi tells his own story about his dog and "quills," (19, 21, 23), Herman models the sentence for Levi containing the word "pullng out," 24), Thomas says the word for tweezers 25), then the talk turns to tweezers and whiskers, (26, 28-

33). This sample shows how quickly the talk turns to different topics and the word play that is involved as the words bounce off of each topic to create a new topic.

Teasing is found throughout all the types of talk and topic flow.

Levi's example of teasing is more of a play on pronunciation. Levi has just arrived at the immersion session at Sarah's house and there is food set out on the counter, everyone there has already served themselves. He is looking at the food. One of the things that happens is we sometimes try and make an Okanagan word for food items that we are eating just to remain in the language. A common practice for us is to put potato chips or any sort of chips into our sandwich, especially if it is a bologna sandwich or a ham sandwich. We started calling the chips "Indian lettuce" because almost everyone does that. Some people layer the chips onto the luncheon meat, then crunch the second piece of bread on top, others, like me, insert individual pieces of chips into the sandwich at every bite. Levi is looking at the assortment of food and he is trying to say "*packł*" which means "leaf" in Okanagan.

Teasing Sample 10

- 1) LB *pacł* *pact* *pacł* pizza
- 2) CP pizza
- 3) LB *pacł*
- 4) CP *pacł* *pic* *pacł*
- 5) LB *pacł*
- 6) CP *pacł* *stim* *ixi*?
- 7) LB *pacł*
- 8) LB pack leaf
- 9) TP *pacł*

- 10) CP ki
- 11) LB lut kən tanmuscən²²
I am not (telling) a joke
- 12) TQ lut ah?
not actually?
- 13) SP unix^{wəm}
it's true

Levi started to say the word for "leaf" but got more embroiled in the pronunciation tangle of sounds that he just couldn't get the right word out 1). Chris tried to help. Levi says the word four different times trying to get the right pronunciation 1); he says *pact* three times (1_2x, 5), *pact* once 1), *pactl* once 3), *packl* once 7), and *pack* once 8). Chris tries to say the same word three times *pact*, *pic*, *packl* 4). He also says *pact* twice; then, Chris finally says *stim'ixi?* 6). Chris says pizza, Levi says pizza. It is unknown if Levi was looking at the pizza or if it was the lettuce or if he was looking at the chips when he was looking at the food on the counter when he was trying to say *packl*. Somehow, pizza got in the assortment. Finally, after eight tries by Levi and five tries by Chris, Thomas calmly models the word saying *packl* 9). Levi then says in 11) "I am not (telling) a joke." Tony says in 12), "Not actually?" Sarah ever nurturing says in 13) "It's true" (implying Levi isn't telling a joke.)

In this example we see a few things: Levi is teasing, Tony is teasing, Thomas models the word, and Sarah nurtures by agreeing Levi isn't telling a joke. The dynamics within a group of language learners and Elder/fluent speakers is quite

²² Levi says "*tanmuscən*", there are two phrases Levi could have used in this context. "*kən ntanmuscən*" meaning "my words are crazy" or "*kən tanmscin*" meaning "I am joking", the proper word would be *ntanmuscən* "a joke," a noun

entertaining at times. When a group of speakers get together the words that fly around can be misinterpreted making for much fun at word play, and the jokes are so much funnier in the language because the words invoke a picture show as the story is told going past your eyes as you listen. Many times, when we gather to just talk the language there is much laughter, much teasing and lots of jokes. Gee (2014) states:

Now think of an animated film. Each frame in the film has to be composed (drawn) just like a painting. The designer has to choose what elements to put in each frame and how they should fit together. ... Each frame is a picture that could stand by itself. However animated films are made up of many different frames that flow (very fast) through time, one after the other. ...Language like film, flows in sequence through time. In language, we call a frame (a single picture) a "sentence" (p. 17). Like film, language moves through time. So, having composed a sentence (like a frame in film), we have to choose how to order our sentences one after another to tell a story, or a joke, make an argument and an excuse..." (p. 18).

Armstrong (2009) posits that in our *cəpcaptik^wl*, imagery is invoked through "active-image fragments" through language. Armstrong quotes Rubin (date):

He explains that his studies show that verbal imagery is viewed and experienced like a "picture or movie-created in the head". Things like size, distance, colour, shape, location and movement of objects operate in the brain much as they would in perception. (Rubin, pp. 39-44). Rubin 's findings provide support for theory that the way the Nsyilxcen language is experienced is through perception of active-image fragments to construct meaning. Active-image fragments in the

language enhancing the effects of and compounding the way captik^wl constructs "movies in the head" rely on the use of imagery analog (p. 131).

The following two samples from Larry illustrate this. Larry is talking about when Elders get together, they sit side-by-side and watch people as they come in, visit, do activities. On this particular day, they were sitting around at the pool hall watching the pool players play pool.

Teasing Sample 11

- 1) ul k^wu kslaχt ʔumsəlx ah klklxiwəʔs iliʔ ʔa cəʔəyám,
and we had a friend, they named him "little lizard," he was writing
- 2) ʔaxstmann iʔ ʔaxəχʔaxap,
they are jokers the old people
- 3) mu·t k^wu kamniwəʔs iʔ ʔaxʔaxap
sitting for a while beside me, this Elder
- 4) k^wu cus "ʔant yaʔχis, ʔant yaʔχis,"
he says to me "look at that there, look at that there"
- 5) cəʔacsts, "uc sux^wntx^wʔ"
he looks, "do you know who that is?"
- 6) cəʔacstən, ʔayncut ki sux^wən,
I looked at him, he laughed, then I recognized it
- 7) k^wu siwəʔs, k^wu cus ʔaʔt x^wəm klklxiwəʔs yaʔχis
he asked me, he said like a little lizard there
- 8) iʔ ʔəkəkqilx ʔant iʔ tix^wcks li·ʔ
It's licking around, look at his tongue there
- 9) iʔ ʔaxʔaxap k^wulsts iʔ a nχnχnustn,
the Elder was fixing his glasses (the Elder demonstrates putting on his glasses)
- 10) cəχil cəχil ʔa nkklxiwəʔs,
just like, just like a little lizard

This example shows how the Elders will observe and tease persons of interest.

Observing and watching, they will pick out characteristics, idiosyncrasies of

behaviour to comment on and tease about. In this sample, they are observing their friend concentrating while writing. His tongue was flicking in and out of his mouth (7-8). The Elders commented on how his tongue looked like a little lizard flicking like that (10). When Tony Mattina began to work with the Okanagan Elders in the late 1960's he said Pete Seymour was sitting there looking at him and he asked him "what does Mattina mean in your language?" Tony says, "morning," Pete says, "oh s̘əlpulaʔx^w," that's morning in Okanagan. That's your name now, s̘əlpulaʔx^w, He has been s̘əlpulaʔx^w ever since to us.

Another example of Larry's is his story of how he came to town to play pool and he talked with his Uncle Abe Paul.

Teasing Sample 12

- 1) li·iʔ λax̘łx̘ap twi²³ təmsn̘ił (Abraham Paul), snpintktn kəl
snklyalmintn,
my Elder, is passed on *twi təmsn̘ił* (Abraham Paul), at the Penticton pool hall
- 2) xiʔ c̘ił ta ncəq̘q̘ulaʔx^w iʔ skwalt,
it was like the heat hit the ground (was so hot)
- 3) yʕat taʔłt iʔ ʕann, naʔł iʔ x̘aʔx̘aʔ, c̘ilmiʔstəlx
all the magpies, the crows, they went into shady spots, they shaded themselves
- 4) nix^w iʔ· saqsəqcin x̘aʔx̘aʔ, taʔłt iʔ sk^walt,
also, the crows' mouths are hanging open, it was so hot
- 5) nix^w inca wa· kən kskəwsʔicknaʔx,
me too, I was going to go play
- 6) kən kskłlaymixaʔx, kən tawsq̘əmsqlawəm,
I am going to go play pool, I was going to put money in my pocket
- 7) ixiʔ t̘x^w ispuʔus, ixiʔ snʔuł, skemqinəm, k^wa inpuyxən kəwlsqaʔaʔ
puyxən

²³ It is customary to say *twi* then the person's name when the person you are talking about is deceased for example: *twi* Abraham Paul.

that was my thoughts, then I went in, I drove there, of course my car (was) an old horse

- 8) lut a kl... ?umsəlx i? air conditioner,
I didn't have... what they call an air conditioner
- 9) lut a kl... lut a kl... čxił a nǰəlsałx^wtən, kłnkax^wk^wipnt, ktqinant a sx^wsɟap, ixi? *in*air conditioner, ixi? *in*air conditioner,
They didn't have... they didn't have... it's like a window, open it, push the button, and it goes, that is *my*air conditioner, that is *my*air conditioner,
- 10) ixi? kən ?ułx, li·? mut inłaxłxap. Oh, ktəplaqstxən i·? cya?yaǰa? a ksułnalq^w.
I went in there; my Elder was sitting there. He had a blanket on his lap, he was watching, he had a pool stick
- 11) k^wu ɟač “way? ?ułxniča?”
He looked at me, “hello *?ułxniča?*”
- 12) cun “way?, təmsnǰil”
I said “hello, *təmsnǰil?*”
- 13) k^wu cus “ancawt”
He said, “how are you doing?”

Larry tells of how he went into town one day to play pool at the local pool hall. He encounters his Uncle Abe Paul there who was a fluent speaker. Larry uses metaphors and personification to indicate how hot it was that day:

Larry says:

- 2) xi? čxił ta ncəqǰula?x^w i? skwalt,
It was like the heat hit the ground (hit so hard on the ground) it was so hot

It was like the heat hit the ground, like it hit so hard it stayed on the ground it was so hot.

He then says:

- 4) nix^w i?·· saqsəqcin ǰa?ǰa?, ta?łt i? sk^walt,
also, the crows' mouths are hanging open, it was so hot

He says the crows' mouths were hanging open it was so hot. Larry's language is descriptive and colourful, depicting the heat in such a way that you knew it was

very hot that day. The frames Gee and Armstrong talk about are so evident in Larry's language; each sentence is like a picture. You can see the pictures in your mind going by as he speaks the colourful language, the metaphors and descriptions he uses.

Larry's language also gives many examples of morphologically complex words. In the language, the grammatical, person, place, number, possession, aspect, etc. are attached to the verb as prefixes, suffixes or infixes.

For instance, the word *ncəq̣q̣ulaʔx^w* has the following morphemes

<i>ncəq̣q̣ulaʔx^w</i>			
n	cəq̣	q̣	ulaʔx ^w
loc	hit	repetitive	land/ground
It hit the ground			

And *kskəwsʔicknaʔx* has the following morphemes

<i>kskəwsʔicknaʔx</i>			
ks	kəws	ʔickn	aʔx
future	going to	play	future
going to go play			

When language learners learn the language, they begin with simple words. As they learn, they begin to learn the more complex forms—the words that it takes a paragraph to interpret as someone once said. The excerpt above from Larry's story show this complexity. These types of words are needed so the language learners can learn the complexities of the language. The examples found in the recordings that are more complex and metaphoric provide the curriculum developers with valuable samples to use for more advanced learners because language is not talked in its most simple form but in all of its complexities.

Armstrong (2009) states

Nsyilxcen is made up of foundational root and affix morphemes that make up the words. It is at the morpheme level that meanings are formed of active

images expressing aspects of the natural world. Root morphemes can be combined in multiple ways connecting several reference root images to make up Syilx words. In that way Syilx words seem to the speaker of Nsyilxcen to be more like short sentences. Single words are experienced in the mind like animation images when spoken, since the reference roots are based in real images in nature (p. 86).

Okanagan marks person, tense, aspect, on the verb to name a few. Okanagan has a complex pronoun system that is paired with in/transitivity markers on the verb. Word formation is also dependent on stress markers.

Different Ways of Saying the Same Thing

Our Elders voices are our most valuable resource as the language of our ancestors flows through them. The Elders/fluent speakers speak what we call “high” Okanagan. Armstrong (2009) states that “high Nsyilxcen, which is a form of academic Nsyilxcen spoken by Chiefs, knowledge keepers and *cəpcaptikʷl* keepers” (p. 6). It is within high language that complex forms are found. The complexities of the language need to be a part of language learning to maintain these forms and to pass them down to language learners. Language learners need to learn the different ways of saying the same thing. For instance, there are two pronoun systems for Okanagan, an intransitive set and a transitive set. I can say “I saw a dog” in two different ways using both intransitive and transitive sentence construction.

kən wikəm t kəkwap
kən wik-əm t kəkwap
 I saw-intransitive marker -m t dog
 I saw the dog.

wik**ən** iʔ kəkwap
 wik-(nt)-**ən** iʔ kəkwap
 saw-(tran)-I the dog
 I saw the dog.

In the intransitive phrase/sentence, Okanagan has intransitive markers on the verb /-m/, intransitive pronouns that are clitics, t indicates there is a direct object in the intransitive sentence. In the transitive phrase/sentence, Okanagan has transitive markers that mark the phrase/sentence as transitive /-nt-/, and transitive pronouns, a determiner is used in the transitive construction for the object phrase.

Intransitive Pronoun Set		Transitive Pronoun Set	
kən	I	-in	I
k ^w	You sg.	-ix ^w	You
0	he/she/it	-is	he, she. It
k ^{wu}	We	-im	We
p	You pl.	-ip	You folks
-əlx	They	-isəlx	They

Transitive markers are -nt-, -st-, -lt-, -xit. Okanagan also has subject pronouns and object pronouns that are specific to each transitive marker.²⁴ Stress also determines if the transitive marker is pronounced in spoken form. The verb *wik* to see is a strong verb with stress on the verb. This verb loses its transitive marker in the “I”, “he/she/it” and “they” forms. A weak verb will retain the transitive marker for all pronouns. Fluent speakers are able to put the morphemes together to form complex words using grammatical and functional forms effortlessly. Much of the language we hear in the classroom is based on what the teachers know or don’t know. Many of our language teachers are second language learners of Okanagan. Language practice with Elder/fluent speakers is essential to learning the complexities of the language, to know the different ways of speaking and uses of the language. Language is so descriptive and image provoking.

²⁴ See Mattina (1973), and Mattina, Nancy (1995) for detailed descriptions of the pronoun system and the in/transitive system as well as the transitive markers for Okanagan.

As stated previously, Gee (2014) equates language to a film. Each frame of an animated film has to be designed and put together into a sequence. One frame could stand by itself but "animated films are made of many different frames that flow (very fast) through time, one after the other" (p17). He states that each frame is a sentence, each sentence is an image. Armstrong states that each morphologically complex word is like animation images. These complex image invoking words are so needed for language learning. Gee goes on to state that when we communicate with each other, we design not just with language but with everything at our disposal. We design with clothes, gestures, bodies, environments, props, tools, technologies, objects, the social display of beliefs and values, and configurations of all these which we create and use as we find them, for our purposes. Discourse is interactive identity-based communication using language. We therefore need another term for identity-based communication using both language and everything else at human disposal. We call this "Discourse" with a capital "D" or big "D" Discourse (Gee, 2014).

Who, What, Big "D" Discourse

syilx people, those who practice our traditional cultural lifeways such as hunting, gathering, doing the seasonal round of activities every season, every year, understand the discourse of gathering, of being a traditional cultural person who knows the protocols associated with hunting, fishing and gathering. When people gather, or get together, and who are traditional cultural persons at functions such as cultural gatherings, powwows, bingo, or anywhere else, they may happen to run into other traditional persons, so the talk turns to gathering, hunting, fishing, places to go, places they've been, places they are going to go, when and where would be the best place to go and what places others have gone to check on the availability of berries,

roots, teas, etc. Okanagan place names are spoken of and referenced. Traditional Okanagan people are very much concerned about the environment and sustainability. There are protocols for hunting, fishing and gathering. At our annual hunting camp, the youth are brought out on the land and taught the hunting protocols and are shown the proper way to care for the animals when they get a deer, elk, moose, etc. These protocols are to ensure that there is enough game, fish, berries, roots, medicinal plants etc. for the next year and the next. Armstrong calls this “environmental ethic.”

Armstrong, (2009) states

The Syilx Okanagan environmental ethic willingly practiced as an unmitigated interdependence in the reciprocity of nature, expressed an egalitarianism which held in reverence the right of each *tmix^w* to be an on-going life form in the interdependency making up the life-force of a place. The Syilx Okanagan environmental ethic places a priority value on the ability for each *tmix^w* to fully regenerate, as a moral standard to guide their behavior toward other life forms. In particular, attention to a high level of respect by the Syilx Okanagan in their interdependent utility of other life forms is understood to be necessary in order for the environment to maintain its robustness and thus provide on-going requirements for continuance. The Syilx environmental ethic, rather than a disengaged but sustainable human ethic of utility, is an unqualified willingness to live within a strict imperative to continuously sustain a unity of existence through societal knowledge and reverent individual practice of respect toward all life-forms (Armstrong, 2009, p. 3-4).

We as *syilx* people practice our seasonal round as sustainable, ecological, and traditional practice in a respectful manner following the Okanagan *syilx* protocols as

shown in the samples below.

Gathering Sample 13

- 1) SP ha waỵ p̣ỵp̣yaq̣ i? ṣx̣ʷusəm?
Are the soapberries ripe?
- 2) LP i? luti? məṭ ḳikəṃ məṭ
Not yet, must be close maybe
- 3) SP i? luti? ah?
Not yet ah?
- 4) LP ḳəḷ wisṭ luṭ tạ ksiyaʔəḷx, uḷ nạx̣əṃḷ ili? ḳli? kị ḳʷulṣəḷx i? camp̣ məṭ.
Up high, there's no saskatoons, but they are making the camp there
maybe²⁵
- 5) ḳʷ kwisṭəmṣ itli? kị ʕạc̣əṇ i? ṣx̣ʷusəṃ,
I will look at the soapberries up higher.
- 6) ḳʷa waỵ məṭ ʔasiḷ skaʔciwṣ məṭ
Maybe in two weeks, maybe
- 7) SP c̣may ʕap̣na?
Maybe now
- 6) LP ʔasiḷ skaʔciwṣ məṭ kị p̣qʷəḷx̣ənṭəṃ.
In two weeks, I want to check it out
- 7) x̣ʷu·ỵ uḷ tx̣ʷuyṃəṇ ḳawṣ ʕạc̣əṇ i? ḳəḷ kṣpịx̣əṃ
We went, I went to go see for the hunting (camp)
- 8) ḳəḷ i? ḳsṇkaʔytaṇ xi? iṇx̣minḳ,
I want to go for my fall hunting/gathering
- 9) ḳʷa incạ iṇx̣minḳ i? sniḳḷcaʔ,
well, I want elk
- 10) uḷ ṃəḷʕạc̣əṇ i? ṣx̣ʷusəṃ,
and also, I will look at the soapberries
- 11) waỵ maṭ, waỵ i? mcaḳʷ, waỵ maṭ piʔqilṭn waỵ,
Maybe the blackberries are ready, maybe they are ripe

²⁵ LP is referring to the *syilx* hunting camp that is held each year for two weeks to take youth, young men out on the land to hunt, passing on the protocols and *syilx* practices

- 12) uł i? i? ləxʷlaxʷ ti way sic tqʷa?qʷa?lus
the chokeberries are getting red
- 13) SP ki ti sic ʃapna?
Right now
- 14) LP ixi? way mat kikəm ..
Maybe just about
- 15) way mat i? ...
way mat i? yxʷtula?xʷ, way mat pʷyaq i? stxəlq,
maybe below, the huckleberries are ripe
- 16) uł i? mcakʷ,
and the blackberries
- 17) ant way way pʷləm ʃapna? i? a xʷyalməxʷ, kstilxa?x
this moon is ended, (the moon is going to start new again)
- 18) SP ki·
yes
- 19) SP did you guys go...
- 20) kəl Princeton ki kən sʷqʷəliwəm t sʷxʷusəm,
it was at Princeton that I picked soapberries
- 21) ikli? i? xʷil təl Princeton uł kəl Summerland, ili?
The road to Princeton and then to Summerland, there
- 22) LP xʷ?it xi?, ikli? kən cxʷuy nixʷ.
There's lots there, I go there as well
- 23) stim ata? a cʷumla?xʷscəlx, i? la nqʷəlqʷiltntət, kəʃa?ms a kləixʷcəxʷt,
what is this, the name they call it in our language, this side of Snow Mountain
- 24) axa? a? tstqʷəlqʷiltəmstəm,
That we talk about
- 25) cʷacsts i? sʷxʷusəm təl Princeton ki ckʷitkʷ,
looking at the soapberries from Princeton, coming over the mountain
- 26) ixi? i? sʷumla?xʷs la nqʷəlqʷiltən,
the name of that area in the language
- 27) way a emistin ixi? mkʷiwt a kləixʷcəxʷt,
I know the mountain known as Snow Mountain

- 28) naǰəmł tkaʔlaʔms mat,
but it's on the other side maybe
- 29) ki k^wa ixiʔ xwił
Yes, well that road
- 30) TP ooh that's sqəqaʔpina?
Oooh that's the place name meaning 'having sandy soil area'
- 31) TP k^wa cut q^wəlq^wiltəm k^wa cnčlitk^w ka yx^wut ixi?
He said in the language below the place "where the trees are in the water" (cnčlitk^w)
- 32) ki aʔ ʕačənt axaʔ isutən, (LP: ki), iʔ sǰ^wusəm, a ksqəqaʔpina?
take a look my things, (LP: yes) the soapberries at sandy soil area
- 33) LP a ksqəqaʔpina?
At sandy soil area
- 34) SP Oo, ixiʔ la čumsəlx caʔk^w, čʔumlaʔx^wtsəlx
Oh, that's what they call it maybe, they call it

In this sample, Sarah and Larry are talking about *sǰ^wusəm* (soapberries) (1, 5, 10, 20, 32), *stǰatq* huckleberries (15), *mcak^w* (blackberries) (11), *siyaʔ* (saskatoons) (4), and about hunting camp (7-9). The conversation is about who went looking for berries, are the berries ripe, where did they go look, where did they find berries. The Discourse with a big "D" Gee (2014; 2018) of being a traditional cultural person in Okanagan society is played out in this conversation. Gee (2018) states:

If two people are to align with each other in conversation, they must do so in part through recruiting enough shared experience to know what words and things can mean mutually to, and for, each other in terms of what identities and activities (practices) are relevant here and now. It is not just people that are aligning, but Discourses that are aligning (and communicating or miscommunicating with each other) (p. 110).

The two having the conversation understand what the other is talking about. There are enough shared experiences between them that there is knowledge and understanding. Their identities (as traditional cultural persons) and activities (practices of gathering, hunting, fishing) are in line with their language. What begins when the question “are the soapberries ready” is asked is a conversation about places, products, and Okanagan place names. Those who are involved in a Discourse (with a big “D”) enact the identities through saying, doing and being (Gee, 2014). So how does one get recognized as a traditional, cultural person in Okanagan society? We do this by “making visible and recognizable who and what we are doing always involves a great deal more than ‘just language.’” These all involve acting-interacting-thinking-valuing-talking-(sometimes writing-reading) in the ‘appropriate ways’ with the ‘appropriate’ props at the ‘appropriate’ times in the ‘appropriate’ places (Gee, 2014, p. 51). The sample shows that the two in dialogue with one another understand what is involved in the gathering process: what is ready when, what is ripe, where to go to find what we want to gather. The understanding is that the seasonal round has been enacted for generations, with the knowledge having been passed down generation to generation. Utilization of food resources within our traditional territories involves ways of knowing and being in traditional cultural Okanagan society.

Alignment and Recognition

In the following sample, there is a disconnect in the language-in-use being utilized between the two engaged in dialogue. Levi is a beginning speaker of the Okanagan language (at the time of this recording).

Sample 14

- 1) LP q^wəyq^wəyɾəxən²⁶
- 2) LB stim
What?
- 3) LP iʔ la anpuyxən kmusxən, ha k^w ɫmulmən ili?
In your vehicle 4x4, do you have a net (or dipnet) in there?
- 4) LB mulmən, lut ʔa cmistin mulmən
Dipnet, I don't know dipnet
- 5) LP O, ixiʔ kəl k9qaqx^wltən
Oh, it's used for fishing
- 6) LB ki
yes
- 7) CP k^wuləm kəl qaqx^wəlx
Used for fish
- 8) LP xiʔ, xiʔ kəl k1qaqx^wəlxtən, ha k^w ɫmulmən iliʔ, ʔapnaʔ k
anpuyxən, lut ah?
Over at the fishing place, is there a net there, in your
vehicle now, no ah?
- 9) LB lut ʔapnaʔ sʔəlʔxalt
Not today
- 10) LP oh mat i...
Oh, maybe the...
- 11) LB ki, kən... sʔ^wəx^wnitk^w ... lut ʔa cmistin
Yes, I.. Ok Falls... I don't know
- 12) CP ki, k^w ɫmulmən a aswiskn, iliʔ iʔ k^wulmən, ili iʔ l qaqx^wəlx, sutən mul
t qaqx^wəlx
Yes, you (have) a dipnet (in) the vehicle, that's a tool, for the fish
there, a thing for fish
- 13) LP oh. way ɫmulmən ah? ixiʔ hum ʔi kswikəm axaʔ cultən axaʔ
iʔsisncaʔ
Oh, there's a dipnet there, seems like I'm going to see, I told
my little brother

²⁶ q^wəyq^wəyɾəxən is Levi's Okanagan name, his nqəlx^wsk^wist

14) LB ki
Yes

Levi does not understand the word *mulmən* (dipnet) 4). Larry gives him some clues 5), but Levi doesn't understand (4, 9, 11). Chris tries to get understanding by saying it is used for fishing 7). Levi picks up on the word *qaqx'əlx* (fish) 7) and says “Oh *sx'əx'nitk*” (which is the place name for Okanagan Falls, which has been a traditional fishing place for generations) 11) and thinks it is what they are talking about. But he says *lut 'a cmistin* (I don't know) 11). Gee (2018) says that “When we speak, we must speak as some sort of who engaged in some sort of what. The listener, in order to engage in the work of interpretation, must know who the speaker is trying to be here and now” (p. 110). In this sample, Larry is enacting the *What* of being a language and culture teacher; he is attempting to engage Levi in conversation so that Levi can practice the language he has learned. He is giving him words and phrases to engage him in a language lesson and language practice. Levi doesn't understand the word *mulmən* (dipnet) so he can't engage in the talk about fishing and fishing tools. Levi is also not understanding the “*Who*” Larry wants him to be—a language learner practicing language by engaging in dialogue. As Gee (2018) states, “The listener, in order to engage in the work of interpretation, must also know what the speaker is trying to do here and how” (p. 110). There is a disconnect between what Larry is saying and what Levi is interpreting what Larry is wanting Levi to understand. Understanding what Larry is wanting to do does not happen on Levi's part, so the conversation ends.

Ideologies around language is another topic that arises when Okanagan people get together, especially among those who are involved in language teaching, and language revitalization initiatives..

Okanagan Language: Ideologies

There are many issues that come up when Elders and fluent speakers talk about language and what they are concerned about regarding language. Such topics as how the language is taught in the schools, what is being taught, who is teaching the language, what language curriculum looks like in the schools, how they learned language when they were at home with their parents and grandparents, and how their dad or their mother taught them. I use the following language samples to further discuss Elder language ideologies and how they “talk” about them. Herman in Language Sample 15 voices a number of concerns he has about language in the schools. He talks about the writing of the language and how they construct sentences. How the curriculum is raised up rather than Elder intuitions about the language. In Language Sample 17, Herman talks about the different teaching styles of his mother and father. His father taught him by demonstration, hands-on learning, visual learning and through practice. He also states that they told him you hear more then you understand, listening is important

Thomas in Language Samples 16 talks about how children were raised with their grandparents in an extended family basis and how they conveyed language to the grandchildren by using simple commands and directives. In Language Sample 18 Thomas talks about how they were individualized at residential school and how this was contrary to the community mindedness of Okanagan culture where sharing and caring was a large part of our ways of doing. In Language Samples 19, 20 and 21,

Larry talks about how important language learners are to the continuation of our language and culture. He sees the language learners as undergoing training in the sense that training is a discipline and requires commitment and dedication. He also talks about the work the Paul Creek Language Association is doing in Language Sample 20 by recording Elders and using the recordings to develop materials and curriculum for use in the schools. Then he talks about how important Elders are to the language work being done in the communities and schools in Language Sample 21. He addresses Thomas and says how important Thomas' work is to the community. In [Language Sample 15, Herman talks about language in the schools.

Herman's Sample

Sample 15

- 1) HE naǰəmł čǰil ah... (cun) yfat sǰəlǰalt sqʷəlqʷilstən
However, it's like ah... (I say) every day I talk to him
- 2) xʷu-y ul way nixəlɣ lut tə lut lut tə xʷʔit naǰəmł
by and by and he understands, without a doubt, not much, however
- 3) way təxʷ way əcnsuxʷnaʔəlɣ, ul ah...
yes, for sure, they come to understand, and ah...
- 4) ixiʔ ʔacənt iʔ čǰil acmistin təxʷ anqilxʷcən ul ah,
look at like what I know, about the language and ah...
- 5) lut ta a paʔput anqilxʷcən iʔ kəl sqaʔqay,
it's not the same (it doesn't fit) the language, to the writing of it
- 6) axaʔ cūmstəlɣ iʔ sentence čǰil a nqilxʷcən taʔt ul
what they call a sentence, it's like the language, it's really too much
- 7) lut ta c... a nqʷəlqʷiltntət lut ta čǰil itiʔ,
it's not... our way of speaking is not like that,
- 8) ul ah iʔ caʔkʷ knaqs a sksmipnuys a nqilxʷcən
and if someone is to learn the language
- 9) ul qʷəlqʷiltstxʷ čǰil iʔ ta c... a nqʷəlqʷiltn

and you talk to them, it's like... the speaking

- 10) č̣x̣ił lut ks... č̣x̣ił axa? i? sq̣əmpusts a sq̣ẉəlq̣ẉilt,
like it should not... it's so long what you said (like a drawn-out rope)
- 11) ʃant inca, kʷ... i? knaqs cuntxʷ "cxʷuyx!"
look at me, you... to one person you say "come!"
- 12) ʃminks xʷuyx kəm lut, cniłc spuʔus, lut kxnstis,
the person can want to go or not, it's the person's choice, not to go along with
what you say
- 13) "kʷa kʷ ikstim̄tn."
so then "I don't need anything to do with you"
- 14) itli? asxʷuy, lut itli? ta ksq̣ẉəlq̣ẉi·ltəm a cʔaʃam
that's the way it goes, from then (you) can't talk to the person, you are chewing
on them
- 15) uł cuntxʷ, ti waȳ cuntsən cəm̄ caʔqintsən,
and you say, I already told you, I could hit you on the head with it
- 16) ili? a cq̣əlxiłstm̄əns č̣x̣ił i? yarmint tiʔtiʔmuł,
thereby manhandling the person, like you pushed around a lazy person
- 17) k̄əntils ah... č̣x̣ił wa... ili? t̄əxʷ a c̄k̄l̄paʃstin
I think ah.. it's like ... like that is what I am thinking
- 18) č̣x̣ił a n... a nq̣ilxʷcən č̣x̣ił ah... lut mat caʔkʷ ks... wisxəns ła cq̣ẉəlq̣ẉilt
it's like ... the language, it's like ah, it should not be so long (the sentences)
when talking
- 19) ʃant č̣x̣ił ah... č̣x̣ił ta kʷa ah...
it's like ah... it's like well ah...
- 20) tī tī kt̄əlcinm,
just say it straight out
- 21) č̣x̣ił ta c̄kliʔ, ʃač̄ənt q̄sapiʔ ahh...i....
it's like that. Look at there long ago ahh...the...
- 22) kʷu ła cust̄əlx "kapux" "ʔacqax" "cnʔaʔukʷaʔx"
when they used to tell me "put your coat on", "go outside," "pack things in,"
- 23) lut kʷu ta cus̄əlx "xʷuyx̄ i? k̄əl snlip'tn waȳ. kʷ cənʔaʔukʷm,"
they didn't say, "go to the wood pile, then you pack some in,"

- 24) k^wu cusəlx "x^wuyx, cənʔaʔuk^waʔx"
they told me, "go, pack some in,"
- 25) kntils c̣x̣iɪ iʔ l... k^w ɫa cṇɫ̣ax̣cinmsəlx ti kən snsux^wnaʔ
I think it's like when... when you talk louder, I then understand
- 26) c̣x̣iɪ q̣sapiʔ ixiʔ ɫx^wuyx iʔ təl, k^wək^wyumaʔ, waỵ kən...
it's like long ago, going back from the little one, yes I...
- 27) k^wu cusəlx c̣x̣iɪ taʔckliʔ, mistytym iʔ knaq̣s ɫə ksk^wi·s a nqilx^wcən
they told me, it's like that, it's easier for a person to take up the language
- 28) nạx̣əmḷ ɫə wisxnəms məl x^waʔcin,
however, when it's lengthened, it's talking too much
- 29) məl x^waʔcin iʔ l smipnwiɫn, kntils lut ɫa...
it's talking too much, for learning, I think it's not...
- 30) lut axaʔ sntils ant k^wa...
It not just thoughts, see because...
- 31) ɫant k^wa a ck^wulstəm axaʔ iʔ ...
see because what we are working on here it is...
- 32) iʔ q̣əymin c̣x̣iɪ... ant ɫapnaʔ... uɫ nwisəlx iʔ curriculum
the paper it's like... look at now... and they raise up the curriculum (notion of
the curriculum as being better)
- 33) c̣x̣iɪ q̣əyntisəlx uɫ kntils myaɫ x̣aɫt məl ɫa wisxən ɫa ck^wuləm
it's like they write and think it's too hard when they lengthen their work too
much
- 34) lut iʔ q̣sapiʔ a cmistin iʔ ɫax̣əx̣ɫ̣x̣ap uɫ a cq^wəlq^wilstsəlx
not from long ago that I know the Elders when they talked
- 35) lut k^wa ɫa cx^waʔcinmstsəlx
well, they didn't talk a lot
- 36) TP c̣x̣iɪ tə sq^wəlq^wəltutyaʔ k^w scut ha?
it's like to speak plainly you are saying?
- 37) HE xiʔ
that's right
- 38) TP myaɫ
too much

- 39) HE yeah
yeah
- 40) TP lut t̓ə... t̓ə... t̓ə qəmstix^w
you did not... not... not nurse it along
- 41) HE lut, k^wa q̓sapi? lut k^wu t̓a cx^wa?cinəms way̓ t̓i k^wu cusəlx k^wa
cən?a?uk^wa?x
No, well long ago, they didn't talk a lot to me, they just told me "well
bring some in"
- 42) way̓ ixi? uł way̓ əcmistin kən səxkina?x
that's all and I do know I came to understand
- 43) c̓x̌il t̓a c̓kli? i? λ̌x̌ap i? k^wu cusəlx lut k^wu t̓a c...
it's like that the adult, what it was that they told me they did not ...
- 44) x^wa?c... x^wa?cinəms t̓əx^w t̓i kmax,
a lot... talk too much to me, only simple
- 45) ixi? way̓ t̓i əcmistin t̓i kmax k^wu cus
that is what I know, only what they told me

Herman is talking about a concern that he has about how the language is changing to accommodate the curriculum 32). A proviso of having the Okanagan language being taught in the schools is that the Okanagan language curriculum be developed following BC Ministry of Education guidelines. An Okanagan Integrated Language Package (IRP) was developed in 1999 with Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLO's). The Package laid out how the language was to be taught from grade five to grade eleven. The curriculum follows a noun-based format with word lists, exercises and evaluation measures. The province provides funding for delivering the Okanagan language in public, private, and on-reserve schools but they have to follow the provincial IRP. Teachers develop language curriculum by developing sentence structures based on English sentence structure. This is what Herman is talking about when he says they make what's called a "sentence" in the school curriculum and it is

not a "sentence" that is normally spoken in the Okanagan language (6-7). When the teachers talk this way, using this sentence structure, they are making the utterances too long 10), it is not a natural way of speaking Okanagan 7). It is an imposition to talk that way. It is too much talking when they talk that way and teach these structures to the children 8). Herman says when he was a boy, his parents and his Elders didn't say, "go to the woodpile, get some wood, carry it to the house, bring it in, pile it in the wood box" 23), I am exaggerating to illustrate the point, but the concern here is modeling Okanagan sentences on English sentences which is not how the Elders spoke Okanagan to children. Okanagan is a verb-based language with information such as person, number and tense morphemes attached to the verb. When an Elder said,

22) "kapux" "ʔacqax" "cnʔaʔukʷaʔx"
"put your coat on," "go outside," "pack some in,"

these are simple commands that got the job done without a whole lot of words.

Herman understood what was expected of him just from these three words. He says the teachers are saying way too much when they use English sentence structure to teach the children 18). This is a difficulty of having to use the provincial curriculum guidelines.

The other concern Herman has is the teachers are "lifting up" the curriculum above what is actually spoken by fluent speakers 32). The curriculum is becoming the authority. The following example shows this as well. Thomas talks about how the grandparents gave directives to the children. In times past, the grandparents lived in the home with the parents and the children. When the parents went out to work or to gather, the grandparents stayed home with the small children too small to accompany

the parents. The household consisted of extended family members who all cared for the children in the family. Thomas speaks of this in the following sample.

Thomas' sample

Sample 16

- 1) TP well I think that's how people learned years ago you know with their grandparents you know; the grandparents were the brains and the kids were the energy you know,
- 2) huma axa? k^wu ck^wilt, huma ya?x̣iṣ̣ you know,
excuse me, bring me that, excuse me, that over there, you know
- 3) and the kids you know, you know, as they get old, people get old you know,
- 4) huma k^wu ck^wilt, you know, and the kids ka cmipnwiłn,
excuse me, bring that for me, and the kids that's how they learn,

Thomas says the kids learn simple commands at first 2). The grandparents give them simple directives then they learn those and as they get older, more language is added 4). Language is not embellished unnecessarily; then you are talking too much.

In the next example, Herman talks about how unnecessary directives are given in the classroom. He says the curriculum gives a lot of commands. Which is in contrast with how he was taught as a child.

Sample 17

- 1) TP səcnx̣^wilcnx̣əlx
I threw away what they told me. (I didn't follow through with it)
- 2) HE cmay
maybe
- 3) TP scəcmala?
children
- 4) HE xi?, kntils ta?ckli? uł... ʃant ah...
so, I think it's like that and... look at ah...
- 5) ʃačənt i? snqəymin ti kmax cun “ḳawcənx, ḳəkniya?x,”

look at the schools, I only say "quiet, listen"

- 6) ʒant kwa k^{wu} cusəlx ɟsapi? stim a ksmipnunəm x^wʔit a ksnixəlmn ul
nsux^wna?
well, long ago they told me to learn something you need to hear it lots of times
and then you understand
- 7) lut ti... lut ti k^wən^wina?xcən,
not just... not just few words
- 8) naʒəmł inl?iw a ctix^wləm təl isk^wuy
however, my dad was different from my mother
- 9) ʒačənt i?... k^{wu} cus, "čkinx"
look at... he told me "what," (how to do)
- 10) ʒant inl?iw k^{wu} cus "ala? mi ʒilstx^w"
see my dad told me "do it this way"
- 11) ata? lut ʒilstən iti? k^{wu} kawsts, ixi? ul ah...
like that, if I don't do it like that, he would finish me (give me heck), and that
ah...
- 12) cniłc mat čxił ti? cawts i? k^wulxəlx,
himself maybe it's like his way that they did with him
- 13) mat lut ta cultsəlx səčkinx ta čxił a sčk^wul i? stim ti kmax a custəlx ta?čkli?
maybe they don't say to him why is it like that with the things you work on,
only they tell him like that
- 14) ul ta?čkli? k^{wu} cus inca,
and that's the way he speaks to me
- 15) ul čxił ahh...
and it's like ahh...
- 16) ʒapna? sčłpaʒstin ul snłək^wək^wmistn inca i? smipnwilən a? nqilx^wcən təl
ʒapna?
now when I think about it and remember, I learned the language to now
- 17) a ckswitstm ul lut tə pa?put,
what we are trying to do it's not enough
- 18) ʒapna? k^wa lut ta ksnxwankmstm ul way k^w lkak kəm... kəm... kəm ti?
ʒləpstinsəlx
now, certainly we wouldn't be disciplining, and we would be arrested or...
or... or they just stop you

- 19) ixi? təl smaʔmay
that is from what stories people tell
- 20) TP k^wa mat ʕapna? lut ʔa caltiɫn i? scəcmala
well maybe now the children don't hit one each other
- 21) HE unix^w
True
- 22) TP you know
- 23) HE taʔli əctix^wləm
it sure is different

Herman talks about how his father taught him. His father said you don't need to talk too much, you hear more than you talk, then you understand 6). Herman says his father would say do it this way, no explanations, just do it this way, listen, watch and learn (9-11). How Herman's father taught him was by demonstration and hands on learning, visualizing, watching, hearing then understanding. Constantly giving the children directives and commands is not the way he was taught by his Elders and parents. This is a concern as well—a form of talking too much. Too many directives and commands does not allow the children to be responsible learners. Thomas gives an example of what the students learned at residential school.

Sample 18

- 1) TP you know, ixi? kəl snqəymin you know ixi? kəl axa? i? k^wu
x^wuystəm²⁷
you know, to this school, you know, it was there they took us
- 2) kəl Kamloops itli? ki mipnuntəm iti? snxilsəm swit k^wa k^wu
kaknaqşəmstm ikli?,
to Kamloops, it was there that I learned to fear, well whoever, well they did to
us one at a time there

²⁷ Okanagan children were taken to the Kamloops Indian Residential School in Kamloops BC or St Eugene Residential School in Cranbrook BC. Okanagan children who resided in Washington State, US, were taken to Chemawa Indian School, Salem Oregon, and Chilocco Indian School in Newkirk Oklahoma.

- 3) you know, ul q^waʔmint iʔ təl snxaltih
you know, and we got used to being made afraid
- 4) way^ʔ ti k^wək^wyumaʔ məł naqs q^wəlq^wilstəms, ti ʔačənt
still when you are small and he talks to one, look at it
- 5) ixiʔ stiṃ anwi k^w knaqs k^wuləntx^w lut swit a ksknxitəm
there you do things by yourself, you cannot help anyone
- 6) HE ixiʔ nix^w x^wuymn, ʔapnaʔ cmistin ixiʔ
That I went through too, now I know that
- 7) TP yeah, yeah, way^ʔ cq^wəlq^wilstmsəl x ul ixiʔ lut ti inx^wmink ixiʔ
yeah, yeah, yes, they talk to you and that I did not like that
- 8) lut ti əksknxtultəm, you know, itiʔ mi k^wulənt knaqs
not to help someone do their work, you know, that you do by yourself
- 9) HE itliʔ k^wnusəl x iʔ ah...
from that it became what they took with them, that ah...
- 10) TP individualized in other words, in other words you know
- 11) HE xiʔ k^wnuntəm
that was what we took away
- 12) TP you know, *xiʔxiʔscut*, and if you don't do that you ain't gonna get good
at anything as you pursue that, if you have to wait for somebody *haʔ* it never
going to happen, kind of you know that's just the way it is now,
- 13) ʔapnaʔ, mis^włax^t t yʔat iʔ stiṃ yeah, ti way^ʔ k^w kəłimntx^w k^wu kəłʔamtiṃ məł
k^wiwt
now, everything is faster, yeah, if you wait, if we are people who wait then it
sticks out

Thomas talks about another concern. He talks about how students are individualized in the school just as he was individualized at the residential school 5). He is making reference to the fact that cooperative, collaborative and communal learning is not pursued at the schools. In Okanagan society, we are a community. We help one another; we are community minded. Herman says the individualization in the schools

is what they internalized, which is contrary to the communal way of learning and helping one another in Okanagan society.

The concerns the two speakers have about the way the teaching is changing the way the language is spoken and the influence of the provincial curriculum as well as the teaching styles of the language teachers in the schools are the same concerns many Elders have about how the language should be taught in the schools. There is no understanding on the part of the school district about ownership of the language and the speakers' understanding of the language. The way the language is spoken is secondary to the school district's need for conformity and the marginalization of the fluent speakers. The teachers are seen as the changers of the language because they are "lifting up" the curriculum above the speakers' intuitions about the proper way of speaking and the traditional ways of teaching the language. The way the language is spoken and the way it is taught in the schools offers an example of how teaching styles and learning styles are different for Okanagan fluent speakers and language learners. How the school district curriculum is changing the language is an example of why the way Okanagan Elders and fluent speakers speak is an important part of Okanagan pedagogy for language.

At the same time, new language learners are needed as well as language teachers. The fluent speakers who are involved in the immersion language program as mentors also take part in the recording of their talk for the purposes of utilizing their talk for curriculum development; this is specific to the Paul Creek Language Association. Larry sees the young people who are learning the language as important.

Sample 19

1) LP talt limləmt ala? i? scəməla? ?ulus mipnusəlx a nq^wəlq^wiltn,

I am so thankful the children are here, together they learn the language

- 2) ali? ʕapna? way cʔiǰ,
because now, it is getting hot
- 3) cʔiǰ i? təmɣwula?x^w
the land is getting warmer
- 4) axa? custən axa? i? k^wiłt ul axa? i? smʔił,
I told the rest here and my uncle here
- 5) yʕa·t a cnsux^wna? a cŋqilx^wcənm,
all those who understand that speak the language
- 6) yʕat cəǰ^wilt, lut tə li·?
all is disciplining, not just there

Larry is glad the "children"²⁸ are learning the language. He sees them as being in training. In Okanagan society, training begins when the child is still relatively young. Children are instructed and trained based on Okanagan mores and worldviews. Larry sees learning the language as training, being prepared for life and adulthood. Larry also talks about the work that Sarah and Chris are doing in the recording of Elders talk and conversations.

Sample 20

- 1) LP ul pnicɪ k^wu lʔulus kəl sqəqəyisxən, kicx, ul kicx ²⁹ʕann naʔl sʕampicə?
And at that time, we gathered at sqəqəyisxən, (he/she) arrived, ʕann and Sarah arrived
- 2) TP hmhm
- 3) LP ul axa? sntx^wus, k^wu kicxəlɣ ul k^wu k^wiłtəm i? scxələkək axa?
i? sq^wa?q^waltət,
and my cousin, they arrived, and they put on the tape,
(taped) our conversation

²⁸ The "children" referred to here are the language learners attending the language immersion sessions. Their ages are from early twenties to mid fifties.

²⁹ ʕann is Chris Parkin's Okanagan name.

- 4) axa? stq^wəlq^wiltmstm ʒapna?, ul ah k^wu siws i? ta kstim, k^wa cun ximix stim a
 cq^wa?q^w?almin i? a nqilx^wcən
 this we talk about now, and ah he asked me are you going to do it, I said
 whatever I talked about in the language
- 5) way cmiscutəlx cmay ti miltn, lut ta cmistin
 yes, they know some things, maybe just visiting, I don't know
- 6) TP hm
- 7) LP ɪmiltn k^w klʒantisəlx ul k^wisəlx i? spiwcən inca ʒast ixi?
 Visiting again, they turn (it) on, and they take my echo
 (voice), I am good with that
- 8) naʒəmɪ axa? hum ti pək^wmɪtim ʒann, i? sck^wuls kəl sʒamtica?, yʒat ul ɪa
 anʒmink, k^wintx^w
 however, it's like we threw his works to Sarah, all if you like, take it
- 9) ixi? inca i? snsux^wna? ha ixi?, way. a? cx^wuyst way ʒast ki.
 that is what I understand, is that it? Okay what you are doing is good, yes,
- 10) ixi? təx^w inca ispuʒus ul təx^w i? snsux^wna?
 well so that's my feelings, and well what I understood
- 11) ʒant k^wa q^wəlq^wiltn i? pəptwina?x^w kəl a? nkmaplqs ul kəl spaʒmən
 see well I talked to an old lady at Vernon and at Douglas Lake
- 12) TP k^wa ti ckaʒkin
 well just whichever way works
- 13) LP ki ta ckaʒkin mi x^wuystəms stim mat
 yes, whichever way, he brings whatever maybe
- 14) k^wa ʒapna? yʒat kaʒkin snmaʒmayaʒtn naʒəmɪ xi?
 well now everywhere in schools, however, it...
- 15) TP mhm
- 16) LP naʒəmɪ ixi? isq^wənq^want kaʒckicxtm i? a cnqilx^wcnm
 However, that is where I am pitiful, we found, who speak the
 language
- 17) ikli?, x^wuystnm i? scəcmala? akla? a cnqilx^wcnm
 I brought the children over here that speak the language
- 18) ul nixlmsəlx ul axa? nix^w, təx^w inca i? skəɪpaʒ
 and they heard, and this also, is what I think

Larry is talking about when Sarah, Chris and I went to his house and recorded four fluent speakers in conversation and in storytelling (1, 3). The materials are made available to the schools and they will be used in whatever capacity. The recordings are needed to bring the language to where they are learning the language and that's good, he's okay with that 7); he is willing to let them take his words to use for the schools' language needs 9). This speaks of having the Okanagan ways of speaking and communication patterns available to the language learners to learn the language from fluent speakers and not from a non-contextual, non-situational, language learning places such as in public school language programs. It is important for language learners to hear authentic Okanagan language in use. He knows this work is important because the recordings are transcribed and the words and phrases, phraseology, sentence structure, pronunciation etc. are used in developing curriculum and materials for the language classes for the schools and the adult language classes. The Paul Creek Language Association curriculum³⁰ is used by the on-reserve schools in Vernon, Penticton, Oliver and Keremeos as well as on the Colville Indian Reservation in Washington State. The adult language classes that are offered periodically during the summer months in evening classes both in BC and Washington use the Paul Creek curriculum.

Larry also sees the importance of the Elders in these contexts of sharing the language as well as sharing their time. Many Elders are stretched very thin over the many activities that are taking place within the Okanagan Nation on many levels, social, economic, political, and traditional at the community level and national level.

³⁰ The |Paul Creek Language Association curriculum is available at interiorsalish.com

Larry tells Thomas how much he appreciates Thomas and his efforts in the language revitalization and maintenance initiatives he is involved in. Thomas is a doer. He would rather work than sit around and talk about what needs to be done. He is actively involved in the *Outma sqilx^w* school on the Penticton Indian Band. He goes in as often as he can to interact with the children as a language mentor and as a Grandpa. He goes into the classrooms and talks the language so the children can hear the language spoken by a fluent speaker. He also provides curriculum materials mainly through recordings and providing language materials to the schools and is a language consultant for *Outma* as well as Paul Creek. He has a wealth of information that he is more than willing to share "for the children" he says. In the following example Larry tells Thomas how important it is for his Uncle to be doing the work he does.

Sample 21

- 1) ca?k^w ala? cmistisəlx, axa? i? scəcmala?, ixi? inca čxił axa? ʕacənt
if maybe here they knew this, these children, this for me it's like look at this
- 2) uł lut swit k^{wu} lcus ixi? wikənt xi··? uł ixi? təx^w palkmstip ʃmink,
and if nobody told me again, see this, and this you all turn it over and over if
you like,
- 3) ha p nsux^wna?, ha
do you understand
- 4) ha p nsux^wna? i? sq^wəlq^wilt uł q^wa?q^w?almintm
do you understand what we said and what we talked about?
- 5) k^{wu} ʔulus uł kən limt
we gather and I am happy,
- 6) ta?li k^w ka?kʔusm,
you worked hard,
- 7) anwi k^{wu}··lənt, uc mistix^w, kən limt ili? k^w mut, k^{wu} ʔulus,
you woork, do you know, I am happy you are sitting there, we gather
- 8) inca ispuʔus lut tə skasəs lut tə sʕimt

my thinking is it isn't an argument, it is not about anger

- 9) ixi? čx^waxtət axa? i? scəcmală ǰa?ǰa?, x^wuystəm tə ǰa
this is our discipline, these here children are sacred, we bring the sacred
- 10) TP xi·
 that's right
- 11) ixi? təx^w isq^wəlq^wilt, ul kən mǰalxa?
that's my talk, and I am lying (laughs)

Larry talks to his uncle about how important it is that Thomas is doing the work he does in helping with the language. He says maybe the children don't know how much you do 1). He says the training of the children is sacred, we bring the sacred to them 8). He is saying the language and culture is sacred and when we teach the language and culture to the children, we are bringing them that which is sacred. That is why he is glad, and he is happy we are gathering for the sake of the language 5). Thomas agrees 10). Then, to break the emotional charge that was in the air, Larry teases and says, "that's my talk, and I am lying," 11) he laughs and everyone else laughs too.

This example shows how fluent speakers feel about the language and culture and how important it is to teach the succeeding generations the language because it is who we are. The concerns the fluent speakers have about the language and what is happening with the teaching and learning situations have very much to do with this notion of sacredness. The language and culture are our identity as *syilx*, as Okanagan.

Embedded in our language is our ways of being and doing. This is why the language is so important to the Elders and fluent speakers.

When We Talk: Engaging with Language Learners

Herman and Thomas have a conversation about the language learners as well. Herman tells Thomas how proud he is of the language learners and how much he

appreciates the way they have dedicated themselves to language learning. Herman has been involved with language initiatives since 1986-1987. I have Herman say a number of times, “if you want to know something, just ask. I’ll answer you, especially if it’s about the language. I will help you.” I have brought Herman into my language classes to tell a *captikwł* story, and/or to speak Okanagan to the students so the students can hear Okanagan spoken naturally. He is always telling comical stories and jokes, making people laugh. Herman enjoys being a mentor and to impart any knowledge he has about language and culture. He recognizes the fact that language learners are important to the revitalization and continuation of our language and culture

Sample 22

- 1) HE *tált unix^w* I find that’s it’s kinda... it’s kinda scary.
It’s very true. I find that it’s kinda... it’s kinda scary.
- 2) I’m pretty proud of aḥ.. the ones that are working now a cn... a cn...
- 3) way^ḥ nsux^wna?
now they understand.
- 4) TP yeah
- 5) HE Brandy is one of them, *tətwit³¹* is here, he started like when he didn’t...
Brandy is one of them, *tətwit* is here, he started like when he didn’t...
- 6) lut tá c.. knəqsina?
didn’t have one word in his ear.
- 7) TP yeah, lut tá knəqsina?lx huh?
Yeah, they didn’t have one word in their ear huh?
- 8) HE yeah, then he pushed it n pushed it ul q^wəlq^wəlti?st

³¹ In this sentence, Herman is referring to Levi, he says *tətwit*, meaning “little boy” or in this case “young boy.”

Yeah, then he pushed it n pushed it and he was able to talk.

- 9) TP ha uł, yeah
Is that so? yeah
- 10) HE naǰəmł lut tǰx^w ta nǰəlcn
However, he isn't a clear speaker
- 11) naǰəmł way kswitmist uł k^vəlⁿus
But he did his best and he did it.
- 12) TP way
Yes
- 13) HE uł cut la cx?iti
He said at first
- 14) TP way cnixəl ah?
He understands now ah?
- 15) HE k^w wikəm... way əcnixəl, way ənsux^wna? uł cut aḥ.
You see it... he understands, he understands it and he said ah
- 16) k^wu cus naqs "cak^w ili? kswitnt lut k^w a ksnsama?cnxtm"
he told me one time "could you do your best not to speak English to me"
- 17) ixi? k^wu cus, cus...
that's what he told me, he said...
- 18) TP ixi? nix^w q^wəlq^wəltus ixi? nix^w ha?
he talked to you about that as well ha?
- 19) HE k^wu cus... k^wu cus... "ixi? uł cmay aḥ... ken nixəl"
he told me... he told me... "and then maybe ah... I get to understand"
- 20) TP yeah misnixəl ha cunts way ha?
yeah, he understands more he told you ah?
- 21) HE misnixəl, ixi? k^wu cus
he told me he understands better
- 22) TP sak^wtus way i? a nsama?cən ha way?
halfways now with the English is that right?
- 23) HE k^wu cus ka... ta?li
he told me so... really a lot

- 24) TP way̓ nksinəm hahaha
now he understands bad things, hahaha
- 25) HE ʃminks nixəlaʔx
he wants to understand
- 26) TP yeah
- 27) HE ixiʔ məł a cwikstən... wikən kəwtimtk iʔ kəl siʕa, ixiʔ kʷu
qʷəlqʷilts
then when I see him... I saw him down south at the gathering,
he talked to me there
- 28) TP yeah
- 29) HE way̓ ʃxast
it's good

Herman says how good it is that the language learners like Levi and Brandy are working hard at learning the language (11). As Herman says, Levi comes up to him and talks in the language, not in English, making a conscientious effort to remain in the language at all times (15-16). Increasing the fluency levels of these language learners requires them to be able to speak with fluent speakers for practice in conversation, storytelling, learning how to tell a joke, how to pronounce the words and how to structure phrases and sentences. The students need this interaction in order to develop fluency and this is what Herman enjoys, just to talk to the language learners and to be able to interact with them and help them in their language learning (19, 21, 27). Herman knows that it is important to speak just Okanagan to the language learners but for other fluent speakers it is very difficult to remain in the language when the one you are speaking to doesn't understand what you are saying.

Tony is Sarah's brother and attended the language immersion sessions in the summer of 2010 at Sarah's house and he hosted a session at his own house in July of that same summer. Tony is a fluent speaker and has worked with the language for a

number of years as a language consultant. Tony has had occasion to sit with language learners and talk with them in the language. He wants to know why immersion is being used as a teaching tool. He illustrates this in the following example.

Sample 23

- 1) TQ *ti nix^w ah stim a ck^wulstəm uł a cnmycinəm,*
 and what more we work on, and we interpret it
- 2) *i? knaqs ła cq^wa?q^w?al təx^w*
 when someone is in conversation you see
- 3) *i? knaqs nsamacən, uł i? knaqs nqilx^wcnəm*
 one talks in English, and one talks in Okanagan
- 4) SP *ha uł*
 is that so?
- 5) TQ *we tried it, uł ti inca ta?li ǰact, uł iti? tʃanya,*
 we tried it, and for me it's very difficult, and this king salmon
- 6) *k^winx, spiǰəm a cmipnunsəlx*
 How many, hunting they would learn
- 7) SP *naǰəmł i? ła cmarwi? i? ta nsamacən ixi? a cmistix^w,*
 However, when it's mixed with English that's what you know
- 8) *uł ixi? a ckəkniya?mstx^w, lut ti i? nqilx^wcnəm*
 that what you listen to, it's not just the Okanagan language
- 9) TQ *stim təx^w iti?*
 what is it there?
- 10) SP *ki·*
 yes
- 11) TQ *ixi? k^wa axa? ǰast ixi? i?, i? TV, kəm ǰiləm iti?, lut tə*
 naqs
 well it's good that the... the TV, or does it, not just one
- 12) SP *naǰəmł kəkni·ya?x ca?k^w pułəm uł stim aksnłək^wək^wminəm*
 However, listen to the end, and you can remember some things
- 13) TQ OO

- 14) SP stim aksnłək^wək^wminəm,
 whatever you remember
- 15) ixi? anqilx^wcən a scwik ha kəm i? nsamacən
 this language you see or else English?
- 16) TQ ixi? way i? ixi? a ckəkniya?mn ha
 that's good enough what you are listening to?
- 17) SP ki ałi? i? cmistix^w, cmistix^w i? ansamacən
 yes, because you know, you know the English language
- 18) uł ixi? ti ixi? mi cnłək^wək^wmistx^w
 and that, just that you will remember
- 19) pułəm axa? i? k^wiłt ałi? ixi? snłəx^wti^wlcən
 when this is done the rest because they talk differently
- 20) TQ uł načəmł la?kin təx^w ti axa? i? axa? sqilx^w i? k^wiłt
 and however, when there is just this, these native people, the
 rest
- 21) lut ta nsux^wna? i? knaqš q^wəlq^wilt, lut ti ixi?, ti čast ha ikli?
 when one talks there's no understanding, it's not just that, is that good there?
- 22) SP mat
 maybe
- 23) TQ ta cnmiscutsəlx
 what they know

Sarah tries to explain the concept of immersion to Tony, but he is still not convinced that the method is good for the language learners because they don't understand what the fluent speakers are saying (1-3, 5-6), (20-21). Sarah says what they will hear, they will remember (8, 12, 14). If you hear English mixed in with the Okanagan, you will remember the English and not the Okanagan (7-8). That is why they use just Okanagan in the immersion sessions. It is very difficult for some fluent speakers to stay in the language because of what Palmer (2005) states in her book *Maps of Experience*:

Palmer states that "the Elders followed a rule of politeness, despite my urgings to talk in Secwepemctsin for the tape recorder, that one should speak to a person in a way that they are not capable of understanding. In this, they share with the fine Lushootseed, or *dex^wləšucid*, orators of Coast Salish territory an understanding that one's words should be spoken in a way that they can be remembered and understood by the entire audience." (p. xviii)

This illustrates that Okanagan Elders are of the same mindset. When I recorded at Thomas' house for two immersion sessions, much of the recordings were in English. The stories told were in English and the conversation. Thomas' brother said, "so the kids can hear." When we first began to stress immersion at the En'owkin Centre language classes, the Elders and language teachers were very reticent to do immersion. Constant reminders to stay in the language took place. The need to interpret is very difficult to stay away from as Tony says above, "*tí nix^w stim a ck^wilstəm ul a cnmycinəm*, "and what else are we to do, we interpret." Using language in immersion settings is so important for effective and successful language learning of language-in-use.

Language House Immersion Activities

The immersion sessions consisted of six sessions with no structured activities, three with structured activities. One day, the participants canned salmon. They deboned the fish, cut the fish for the jars, jarred the fish, and placed the jars into a pressure canner and set the canner out to boil for the appointed time. Another day, the participants made deer skin rattles. They drew the shape of the rattle they wanted on a damp untanned deer skin, cut out the shape, sewed the sides, filled with sand and attached a stick and hung the rattles to dry. The next session, those who did not make

a rattle the first day, made their rattle. Those who made their rattle the first day, spilled out the sand, chose what sort of material they wanted to place inside their rattle (stones, pebbles, rice, sand etc.) then attached a stick and decorated their rattles with paint etc. When the rattles (first group) were finished, they made yarn bags. Instruction during these activities were in the language.

The seven sessions where there were no structured activities followed approximately the same format. The participants arrived, greeted the Elders, sat down and listened. The topic of conversation was at the discretion of the Elders/fluent speakers. The types of talk were conversation, storytelling, recounting experiences, and asking questions which lead to stories or personal experiences. A meal was prepared, either lunch or supper, and the participants had a meal, cleaned up the kitchen, had some more visiting, conversation or storytelling, said their good-byes (traditionally, this involves shaking hands with the Elders, saying "I am leaving now" and shaking hands with the others and leaving) and left.

Extenuating Circumstances

Although the purpose for the immersion classes was to just talk and listen to Okanagan, this did not happen at each session. The Elders would choose to use English instead of Okanagan as one Elder stated, "so the kids can hear." It is very difficult at times for the Elders/fluent speakers to just speak Okanagan only. If there is a non-fluent speaker or someone who does not speak Okanagan at all, the Elders/fluent speakers switch to English so those who do not speak or understand would be included in the conversation. This is a form of politeness and also speaks of inclusiveness. They did not want to exclude the non-speakers. The speakers were

reminded to speak Okanagan only, but at times, they chose their own path. Palmer (2005) states that

the Elders followed a rule of politeness, despite my urgings to talk in Secwepemctsin for the tape recorder, that one should speak to a person in a way that they are not capable of understanding. In this, they share with the fine Lushootseed, or dex^vləšucid, orators of Coast Salish territory an understanding that one's words should be spoken in a way that they can be remembered and understood by the entire audience. (p. xiii)

This was also the case with the Elders and fluent speakers that attended the immersion sessions. On occasion, the coordinator had to say: "*huma, ta nsyilxcən*," "Please speak Okanagan,"

Also, since these were immersion sessions with immersion as a focus, there were also classes outside of these immersion sessions. These other classes were in the evenings scheduled on different dates and times of the immersion sessions and were a separate activity of formal language classes using textbooks and lesson plans. The students doing these other classes were following the Paul Creek Language Association curriculum and were doing "textbooks." Since the coordinator of the other classes was also organizing the immersion sessions, he also scheduled testing days for the "textbook" classes. He also came up from Spokane Washington to attend the immersion sessions so he would schedule the testing days for when he was at the language house in Ashnola. There was one day during an immersion session where testing took place. The students who came on the testing day and were not part of the immersion sessions were tested in another room. Another day, there was only one or two Elders/fluent speakers present, so the coordinator had one of the teachers who

teaches the Paul Creek Language Association curriculum do a lesson from their book for those who were at the immersion session. It was immersion but was curriculum focused. Another day was spent recording a comprehensive word list compiled by one of the Elders who was working on another project for one of the on-reserve schools he is a language consultant for. There is some conversation on this tape but since there was only one or two Elders/fluent speakers present, the recording session turned to the wordlist.

Conclusion

This Chapter has focused on language in use patterns of Okanagan. I have looked at the formulaic way of greetings, greeting the newcomer and the shaking of hands, and the notion of being a "good host," by offering food and drink. Hospitality, caring and sharing are concepts that Okanagan people carry as a part of their Okanaganness. They carry this forward from the *captik^{wl}* as a part of being *syilx*. The samples also show that language speakers use language in a variety of genres one of which is teasing, another is word play, another is metaphoric with very descriptive language. Morphologically complex words "paint the picture" by providing vivid imagery much like the frames in a film. Each morphologically complex word can be its own frame, a whole sentence, whole paragraph.

I also looked at how fluent speakers feel about being able to talk in the language. Having someone to talk to at this time, when there are so few fluent speakers, gets to the very heart of the speakers. They see the dwindling numbers, the need for revitalizing the language and the urgency of developing fluency in the language learners. As Archibald (2008) says "the echo of Elders saying, 'we do this for the children' is heard once more" (p. 148). The work of the Elders is very

important. They see it as a responsibility and a role they have to fill as Elders in their communities (p. 148).

I have also looked at the Elders' concerns of how the language is being changed in the language teaching methods in the schools. How the Elders were taught and the methods their Elders and parents taught them. Sterling (1997) mentions the two teaching styles of Quaslametko and Yetko in her examination of storytelling and teaching of stories. One is authoritarian and a disciplinarian carrying a willow switch to use if you didn't react quickly, the other is gentle and kind, talking as she teaches, never raising her voice but demonstrating and showing, hands-on learning. Sterling equates the first method as equivalent to the harsh Christian church rules and regulations of the day, and the second to the more traditional method of showing, doing and talking through the process, and guiding the learning rather than making them learn (Sterling, 1997, p. 98). Thomas speaks of this when he says the residential school individualized the children and he doesn't want to see that in the schools, advocating for a more communal style of learning.

There is also a concern of how the language is taught using the imposed curriculum guide by the Ministry of Education. How the curriculum is "lifted up" as opposed to the speakers' intuitions about the language. The issues and concerns that the fluent speakers had about how the language is being taught in the schools speaks of the dichotomy between the Primary Discourse of the Okanagan fluent speakers and the Secondary Discourse of the school and the school staff. The school exhibits a dominant discourse in that it does not consider the concerns of the Elders, parents and students' needs and expectations. Nor do they include the Elders' values and identities in the school curriculum.

The fluent speakers and Elders also see the language learners' development as very important to the revitalization of the language, and their own involvement in the recording of their talk, how the recordings will be used for the benefit of the children and the schools. Elder involvement is very important, and their efforts need to be recognized as their dedication is exemplary. Archibald (2008) in quoting Dr. Ethel Gardiner states "she notes that the Halq'emeylem revivalists draw their inspiration from the fluent-speaking elders who contribute unconditionally to the revival effort; their greatest rewards are hearing the children speak, sing and pray in Halq'emeylem," (p. 148). This is how Larry sees his Uncle, as a tireless worker and he acknowledges him for his work and his dedication. Also, the speakers see the language as sacred to the Okanagan people and they equate the work they do as a "training" of the children in language learning.

A big concern is culture specific as Tony's concern is with the immersion method itself. He sees this method as not conducive of the concepts of caring and sharing knowledge. He doesn't want to see the confusion and he doesn't want the language learners to struggle to learn. Sarah tries to tell him why it is important to use immersion methods, but he is not convinced. It goes against his notion of "politeness" which is another topic and I will not discuss it here, except to say other Elders feel the same way. They would rather interpret and let the language learners in on the knowledge rather than exclude them, which is their idea when they see the struggle to learn going on in the language learners' minds.

I find myself very privileged to be able to sit amongst a group of fluent speakers with the words, phrases, jokes, stories, arguments, etc. etc. coming out of their mouths. I am like Herman; I get lonesome for the language. I enjoy hearing the

myriad ways they can put together their talk to make it so entertaining so that the language invokes imagery, feelings, and a sense of belonging.

Chapter 5 Conclusions: Tenets for Okanagan Language Work

I was interested in how Elder fluent speakers engage in conversation and use language. Through the analysis of word and sentence production of Elder fluent speakers engaged in language in use patterns, I sought to gain a critical understanding of the pragmatic, socio-cultural and sociolinguistic dynamics of the language and to answer the question: "What do language learners need to know about the social uses of language in order to use the Okanagan language appropriately and gain fluency?" I draw on the theoretical framework found in Gee's 2014 book *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*. Gee identifies four types of discourses: Big 'D' Discourses, small 'd' discourse, Primary Discourse, Secondary Discourse, Dominant and non-dominant discourses. I joined the Paul Creek Language Association immersion sessions in the summer of 2010 to record Elders/fluent speakers using participant observation, audio recordings of group social conversations of the immersion sessions and am engaging in ongoing transcription and analysis of the language data.

In this chapter, I open with a discussion on the Okanagan language situation today. Although our language is considered endangered, there are in place language revitalization programs that we are engaged in such as in-school language programs, adult language programs, Master/Apprentice, in-school immersion, language nests, adult immersion, certification of language teachers, and community adult language classes. The support of Elder/fluent speakers in our programs is much valued and appreciated. The dedicated language learners who are involved in language learning are also valued as they are our future language teachers and mentors.

I advocate for language immersion programs as being the best for language learners. Master/Apprentice programs, language nests, in-school language programs, adult immersion are all ongoing in our communities. The in-school language programs have their challenges but are continuing with language transmission to our children.

Okanagan Language Situation

The Okanagan language is quickly following the path of many of the languages in BC – it is an endangered language. Fluent speakers have reduced to 132 speakers. The urgency to document our fluent speakers is apparent as our fluent speakers are between the ages of 55 and 88. This generation may be the last generation to hear the language as the Elders/fluent speakers speak it. This is a daunting thought. As those of us who are in our sixties are considered “elders.” For myself, I do not consider myself an “elder” as I do not believe I can hold that title as I am not as knowledgeable or think I hold enough knowledge, wisdom, and experience to be an “elder”.

Language Learner Motivation

Many of the language learners have committed to using Okanagan only at home and when they are out in the communities and wherever they go. They seek out fluent speakers just to go up and talk to them in Okanagan and to have a conversation with them. These language learners who are learning Okanagan in the immersion sessions organized by the Paul Creek Language Association and the language immersion classes at the En’owkin Centre are dedicated learners. Many of the students are wanting to be language teachers or plan to obtain their teaching certificates.

Language Teaching

Language teaching has taken many forms within our communities, and has included all ages, master/apprentice programs, language nests, in-school programs, adult language classes, adult immersion, in-home language learning, community language classes. Elder involvement is so important for these language initiatives as their voices hold the language. The caveat is that access to Elder/fluent speakers is not always possible in some communities. Documentation projects are so important at this time to capture the language of the Elders/fluent speakers for sharing this knowledge within communities.

Fluency development is an ongoing issue as there is a need for language and culture teachers in our communities both on-reserve and off-reserve in the public schools. Immersion language teaching is the best way to learn language. Providing language learners with Elder/fluent speaker input periodically is a recommendation I would give as many of our teachers are second language learners themselves. Hearing the language as the Elder/fluent speakers speak in in the myriad ways of speaking is important to avoid fossilization of errors.

The conclusions I have drawn from this study are the importance of immersion language teaching and the various immersion models that Okanagan communities can invest in such as the Master/Apprentice program, language nests, in-school language immersion, adult immersion classes, and community language immersion classes. I outline these conclusions as tenets for Okanagan language work that centers Elders.

Tenets for Okanagan Language Work

Opportunities for Elder Talk

Centering language learning around the Elders encompasses many areas as Elders are able to impart their knowledge in many ways. Elders have invaluable expertise that emerge language sessions. Opportunities for Elder talk must be created for language maintenance. Elders need to hear the language for remembrance and recall of terms, Language learners will have the opportunity to hear language spoken by Elders. The complex phraseology and word forms are in their voice. Opportunities for Elders to engage in Elder talk provides Elders with language practice, remembrances of words, word brush up, content for language teaching, sharing of ideas, language forms and genres, and socializing protocols.

The need to speak the language to one another is important to the Elders for their own maintenance purposes and for word brush-up. An important aspect is Elders need to get together outside of language work, just to visit, catch up, hang out and just to speak Okanagan. Opportunities for the Elders to get together are important for their own language maintenance, remembrance, and just for the pleasure of having someone to talk to in the language. These type of gatherings and get-togethers are important to the Elders as they need to practice their speaking ability to maintain their level of speaking. The many ways Elders talk such as teasing, joking, remembering, life experiences, stories and conversation need to be documented and heard by language learners as it is a very natural way of speaking.

All the languages and discourses involved in these can provide a rich database of vocabulary, phrases and sentence structure as we use these in situational venues and opportunities. Another aspect of Gee's Big "D" Discourse is the social display of

beliefs and values, and configurations of all these which we create and use as we find them, for our purposes. Gee states our Primary Discourse is "the Discourse one picks up through one's initial socialization into life through their home and whatever counts as the group of people who socializes them early on in life. Our Primary Discourse of being an Okanagan person belonging to the Okanagan Nation encompasses who we are as a people. We can choose any number of our activities as an access point to learning. If we do the learning through immersion, with the assistance of Elder/fluent speakers. This would answer the question: How do you teach language learners to communicate in the language? By immersing them in language and in our culture. Through our practices, socializing them in our ways of saying, being, and doing. This would also answer the question: What do language learners need to know to effectively communicate in the language? Through our language and through the language of our culture. The words, phrases and sentences, stories, jokes, teasing, arguments, political talk, laws, governance, conversations etc. are all found in our Primary Discourse and in our Big "D" Discourse of being, saying and doing. We need to immerse ourselves in this learning with Elders/fluent speakers as guides using our old ways and contemporary ways.

Elders Must be Recorded

Elders language, in all of its genres such as speeches, prayers, political talk, storytelling, conversations, jokes, teasing, arguments, *cəpcaptikʷl* oral stories, etc. need to be documented for the sake of language maintenance, language revitalization, and language perpetuation. Documenting and recording Elders are important to the revitalization of the language as the data from the recordings is used for the benefit of the children and the schools' language programs as well as within communities.

The Elders voiced their concerns in the data in this study. These same concerns have been voiced before. The topic of language change is a common concern as Elders see how language is taught in the schools. Sentence structure is patterned after English sentence structure and the result is very stilted language that does not sound like proper Okanagan speech at all. Much of the provincially imposed curriculum is noun based and children learn lists of words that does not lead to proficiency in the language. This is a concern that fluent speakers have expressed before. Comments such as “they are not pronouncing the words properly.” Another matter that is common to endangered language groups is that the language teachers who are teaching language now are second language teachers who are not fluent speakers. I sat in on an immersion class a few years back thinking it would be a good class to take. The teacher was not proficient in the language and I was the one who was pronouncing the language for her for the other students. The words were written down on paper in lessons and she didn’t know how to pronounce the words for the class. This is why oral language with plenty of different forms with Elders/fluent speakers speaking in an immersion setting is important as the students just hear the language before they attempt to speak, and it is a long period of time before they read and write. Which is why a documentation project is so important and needed to capture those types of talk, ways of speaking and language in use patterns from the Elders/fluent speakers so the language learners will have audio support in their language learning.

Gathering together to speak the language is very important to Elders/fluent speakers as I have heard this any number of times as I have arranged gathering before for Elders to come together and spend the day doing language activities, workshops,

and a time to sit together to visit and catch up. The Elders enjoy getting together and just talk, visit and talk, with a meal. I had an Elder come up to me and say, “I’m losing my birds.” I was thinking, “ok.” Then he said I can’t remember the word for swallow. I said “oh, ok, I can see if I can find it for you.” I often get phone calls for requests for words, or for translations. I found the word for swallow and I gave it to him. The Elders say, “we can bounce words off one another, then we will come up with the word or phrase that is needed, we will remember it that way, otherwise we have to wait until we see one another.” We at the En’owkin Centre have a documentation project which will end in 2021 which audio/video tapes Elders in the language and includes all seven communities. Each community will have six to eight recording sessions per community each fiscal year. The data from this project will be transcribed, annotated and archived. Communities will receive copies of their own audio/video recordings for their use in their language revitalization programs

Language Learners – Opportunities to Hear Elder Talk

Language learners must have the opportunity to hear Elders engaged in language. It is imperative that language learners have the opportunity to hear fluent speakers engaged in speaking the language in whatever form. This is so they can hear the sounds of the language and hear the language as it is spoken by Elder/fluent speakers in order to correct the pronunciation in language learners’ production and avoid fossilization. Language learners, just as children when they begin to talk, tend to overgeneralize sounds across the words with similar sounds such as a glottalized /k/ in the word *ḳaʔkin* “where”, they will say *kaʔkin*, glottalizing both k’s. Language learners also pronounce the sounds of Okanagan as they would English sounds, which for most language learners is their first language. For example, the work *syilx* “the

Salish people” is often heard pronounced using the pronunciation of the English /x/. If you say “box”, the phonetic pronunciation would be /baks/, with the ‘ks’ representing the /x/ sound sounding much like ‘kiss’ without the /i/. The Okanagan /x/ is voiceless and is fricative. Beginning speakers often make this pronunciation mistake, following the pronunciation of English letters rather than the Okanagan alphabet. Okanagan also has consonant clusters that are pronounced sequentially. The word *packl*, “leaf” is an example. Errors in pronunciation can include inserting a schwa /ə/ between the k and the barred /l/ *packəl*, or glottalizing the /k/ *pack’l* to make it easier to say the word are common.

Okanagan is a polysynthetic language with many morphemes to make up a word such as pronouns, in/transitivity, tense, number, possession etc. These are only a few conventions of the Okanagan language. Language learners must learn the complexities of the language to speak Okanagan properly with the proper verb and pronoun construction. I have found that teaching language learners the pronoun system is best with props, pictures, role play, TPR and much repetition in an immersion setting.

Engaging in language immersion sessions provides opportunity to hear the language as language learners need to hear the language as it is spoken by Elder fluent speakers in order to gain proficiency in pronunciation and word, phrase, sentence production. Okanagan sentences are primarily verb first. I hear language learners say, “the language is backwards.” I say, “no, the language is perfect, beautiful, exhilarating, especially when spoken by Elder/fluent speakers.” I gravitate to speakers when I hear them talking. I love to hear what I call a million-dollar word that takes a paragraph to translate it. Those words only come from fully fluent speakers

The importance of language learners is also voiced as the language learners are needed for the perpetuation of the language to succeeding generations and will be the future language teachers and advocates. The need for language learners to get together where Elders are to hear the language and engage in language with the Elders is very much needed for word clarification, interpretation and pronunciation. Language learners need that support. The Elders are glad to see such dedicated learners learning the language.

*Sustain and Create Opportunities for Active Engagement of Elders in Language,
Culture and Community Work*

Elders are very involved in many aspects of Okanagan language and culture teaching and learning. They are involved in on the land projects such as place names, historical connections, natural resources, Traditional Environmental Knowledge (TEK), language and culture education in the areas of curriculum development, Elders in residence in schools, materials development: stories, dictionaries, audio/visual recording, documentation, Master/Apprentice programs, language teaching, governmental issues such as land use planning, title and rights, meeting within communities and within the broader nation. Our Elders are a very valuable resource to our communities and our nation. Their involvement in our communities and nation are very much needed and their contributions in all of their endeavors and capacities are valued.

Telling of Story

Storywork involves language unique to a culture. It includes complex word forms, voice intonation, body action in the telling, personification, metaphors, and language use patterns. Story is important as they can impart values and mores, life

experience, historical accounts with place names and land use patterns, culturally relevant sites. In an immersion session, story offers so much to the language learner.

Our *cəpcaṭtikʷl* oral stories are handed down generation to generation from time immemorial. These stories tell us how to be, act, and interact with the world around us and with each other. My mother and father spoke *cəpcaṭtikʷl* oral stories to us. The stories are spoken to this generation and will be spoken to the one following. These stories tell us of our landmarks, land features and the responsibilities we have to the land and to each other. Our collective memory of land-based story acknowledges our relationship to the land and our responsibility to it as caretakers, and responsible owners. This is our *stəltaltət*, *our rights and our kč̣x̣ʷx̣wiplaʔ* *our laws*. while in the Syilx ethic the acceptance of *kč̣x̣ʷx̣wiplaʔ-laws* leading or directing them, determines a quality of action which demands continuous consideration toward each "person" of the tmixʷ community. This is what the Syilx call *iʔ stəltalt-the-truth-way*, which commonly translates into "duty-right" or "responsibility" or simply "rights". (Armstrong, 2009, pp. 237-238).

The complex language forms found in stories and within the Elders high fluent language provides language in all of its complexity rich in metaphor and visibility with many ways of saying the same thing. This complexity is best taught in immersion formats as learning lists of words does not provide language learners with the ability to put phrases and sentences together in a cohesive way to have a conversation, tell a story, or a joke. Engaging in interaction with Elder/fluent speakers in an immersion setting affords the practice needed, the hearing of the language for pronunciation and language learning in real life situations. Elder/fluent speakers' language is a valuable resource for language learners whether through face to face

interaction or listening to recorded speech. How stories and conversation pattern are unique to a people's worldview, culture and traditional ways of doing, ways of speaking.

There are few Elders who hold the stories and are master storytellers. A *cəpcaptikʷl* night is well attended as storytellers gather in the winter months to tell *cəpcaptikʷl* stories. The storytellers use any number of storytelling devices to tell their stories, body movement and gestures, speaking in character, making the appropriate sounds, and facial expressions with intonation make for a very entertaining story. The language is colourful and image provoking. I enjoy hearing *cəpcaptikʷl* stories as the language is used throughout. Life experience stories are also entertaining as there is often teasing and joking interspersed throughout the storytelling time.

I will reiterate what I have said before. Language is culture, culture is language. Without language, there is nothing to ground us to the land, traditional practices, world view and cultural ways of knowing. Language brings us back to who we are as a people. Language within story provides us with connections to our past, to our present and to our future (Ignace, 2008). Story gives voice to who we are, how we are to be, what is expected of us, how we are to act in relation to the land, to our people, and how we are connected to our traditions through our past. Story also provides us with a way to express ourselves. Stories also provide us with a way to convey our shared experiences be they stories of survival in the face of harsh colonizing practices (Absolon 2011, Kovach, 2009), on the land gathering, hunting, fishing (Ignace, 2008), or *kmiltmn* "visiting" friends, relatives. How stories and conversations pattern are unique to a people's world view, culture, and traditional ways of doing, ways of speaking. Stories are also used to teach, to instruct, to

discipline, to impart knowledge of how things are done (Sterling, 1997) and why we do the things we do. Stories also give voice to the storyteller (Thompson, 2012).

Implications

Elder talk informs how we can develop language teaching activities. Utilizing props can be using the outdoors, the city/town such as restaurants, shopping centres, gas stations, in the large sense. In smaller things, toys, books, kitchen, clothing for skits and plays, dress up. The list is endless as the whole world is at our disposal. Tools can be both contemporary and cultural, gardening, mechanicing, cooking, carpentry, fishing, hunting, gathering, occupational “tools” to list a few. Technologies have played a part in language revitalization for the past two decades through computer assisted learning, email, web-based learning, online books, databases, podcasts, you tube, chat, Facebook, Instagram. New technologies are being invented quickly and some forms are outdated already. Objects can be motorcycles, trucks, campers, boats, canoes, puzzles, board games, any sort of thing you can think of to use as a learning tool.

Master/Apprentice (M/A) immersion teaching is the best way for adult/teens to learn language (Hinton, 2002). There are a number of M/A pairs who have done the program in the last 15 years within the Okanagan territory. There are also active pairs who are engaged in M/A learning now. The language learning is very successful when the pair is engaged and dedicated to language learning and teaching.

Language nests are very good programs for 0-4 aged children to be involved in. There have been three language nests in Okanagan territory in the past ten years with documented success rates (Chambers, 2014).

Language immersion classes are also best for language learners in the school years as well as adult learners. There is an immersion school in one community that has been active for 14 years (Cohen, 2010). Other schools have partial immersion for designated time slots as the main premise for these schools is to focus on academic subjects first, then language and culture. These are *ntamłqən* School and *Outma sqilx^w* School.

These immersion programs are dependent on funding. The First Peoples Cultural Council (FPCC) provides funding for M/A programs and language nests, as well as adult immersion programs, summer immersion camps, immersion classes but they can't be an accredited class. The FPCC can only fund so many project proposals so what usually happens a language nest is denied funding for the next year so, it has no other option but to stop operation. A dream solution would be to have a broad-based funding endowment just for language within our communities.

Language apprenticeship is very important for language learners to engage with Fluent/Elder speakers for the many ways Elders use language throughout the day whether in activities, on the land, or visiting with other Elders. Elders voices, whether on audio or video, are very important so language learners can hear the language as spoken by Elder/fluent speakers. A concern I hear from Elders, as I work with Elders in my work through the En'owkin Centre, is there needs to be much more work with the Elders to get their voices out there in community for language maintenance, revitalization and perpetuation to community members of all ages.

Continued Language Revitalization in the Schools

Language is very important to us and to our succeeding generations. Each community has different dynamics pertaining to providing language in the schools.

Within our seven communities, there are different school districts, different public schools who support language and culture to varying degrees, availability of language teachers who are certified to teach in the schools, number of available Elder/fluent speakers to work with the schools, the number of time allotted to language and culture varies with each school including the on-reserve schools. There is a very high need for certified language teachers, a need for control of language and culture programming, availability of Elder/fluent speakers to work with the schools, and language curriculum and materials. The language programs in place now have their own concerns such as available resources, access to language materials, and staffing issues. In order for these programs to continue, these needs must be addressed.

Training of teachers, fluency development, resource development and access to Elders' materials for inclusion in the language programs is essential to these programs. The Elders are a valuable resource as their knowledge encompasses language and culture norms and values, medicines, environmental knowledge, protocols, place names and land-based learning etc. The ongoing documentation of Elders in a variety of situations and formats is needed for their language knowledge and the contribution of their voice to all of our language programs as they would all benefit from such rich data.

Conclusion

The Elders' voices are the echoes of the ancestors and they are the holders of the language, so language learners need to hear their voices. Thompson (2012) coined the term "voiceability" for the notion of giving "voice" to our Elders. Elders' voices must be heard. They must be given their "voice" where language and cultural teaching is concerned. As Thompson states,

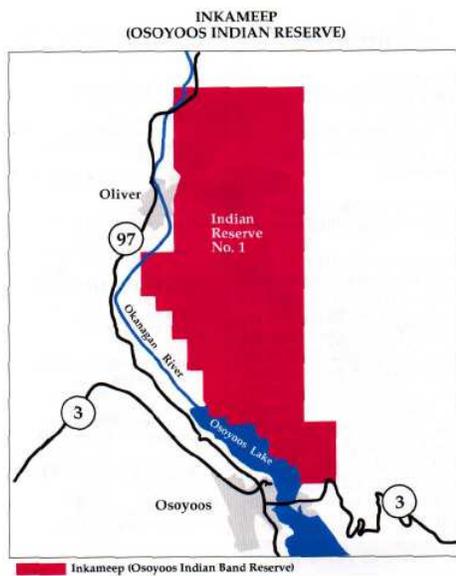
Tahltan Voiceability is couched in the Tahltan worldview that I have articulated Hedekeyeh Hots'ih K!hidi, "Our Ancestors are in Us." Tahltan Voiceability involves the teachings of our Ancestors, learning and knowing these teachings, and the sharing of these teachings with our people. Thompson, (2012, p. 89)

This concept can also apply to Okanagan Elders as they do so much in our communities.

Figure 2 Okanagan Communities³²



Figure 3: Osoyoos Indian Band, nk'mip



³² Upper Nicola Indian Band is not shown on this map. It is located northwest of Vernon, BC approximately 60 miles.

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