K'asba'e T'oh: Sustaining the Intergenerational Transmission of Tāłtān

by

Kāshā Julie Anne Morris
BEd, Simon Fraser University, 1998

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Supervisory Committee

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Dr. Onowa McIvor, Department of Indigenous Education
Supervisor

Dr. Leslie Saxon, Department of Linguistics
Co-Supervisor

Abstract

The Tahltan language is endangered and at a critical juncture because there are now fewer than 30 fluent speakers. The Tahltan Nation is working to change this by creating many different opportunities for language learning, focusing on programming, documentation, and professional development and training. One way that our language is being revitalized is through immersion programs for young children. Using 'Tahltan Voiceability' as the overarching methodology, this study reports on the language nest model as an immersion method of Indigenous language revitalization in Tahltan communities in northern British Columbia. Parents, language mentors, and administrators shared their perspectives and experiences regarding the way in which K'asba'e T'oh (the Dease Lake Language Nest) began in Tātl'ah (Dease Lake), how things are progressing, and what motivated and continues to motivate people to be involved. Through an analysis of these conversations, I share esdahūhedech (their tellings) and report on emerging themes. With this immersion setting in place, there is hope that this program will create speakers, inspire others to learn our language, and be part of increasing the proficiency of language learners, thereby moving our language out of the endangered status. This study is part of a growing body of research in Canada studying language nests to promote the intergenerational transmission of Indigenous languages.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ALI	Aboriginal Language Initiative Grant
ANVILS	A National Vision of Indigenous Languages Sustainability
BC	British Columbia
CFNR	Canadian First Nations Radio
DDN	Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē (Tahltan Language and Culture Council)
DILR	Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization
DLC	Dene Languages Conference
FPCC	First People's Cultural Council
FPHC	First People's Heritage Council
GIDS	Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale
HREB	Human Research Ethics Board
ICLDC	International Conference on Language Documentation & Conservation
MA	Master of Arts (degree)
MAP	Mentor-Apprentice Program
MILR	Master of Indigenous Language Revitalization
N.D.	No date
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy (degree)
POP	Pregnancy Outreach Program
SCWG	Social Cultural Working Group
SFU	Simon Fraser University
TCC	Tahltan Central Council
TCG	Tahltan Central Government
TLRT	Tāłtān Language Revitalization Team
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNBC	University of Northern British Columbia
UVic	University of Victoria

Glossary of Tāłtān Terms

Tāłtān[1]	English[2]
Chacholōne hoti'ē	Good morning.
Ch'iyōne	Wolf
Chitleṣidēdli	We come together (circle time).
Dah dẕahge eṣigits	We write our language.
Dah dẕāhge nodeṣidē	We are speaking our language again.
Dah-tsiye kehke	Our grandfather's footprints.
Desbet	I'm hungry.
Didenek'eh	Tahltan language.
Didene E Kune Mehōdihi Eku Desijihi (or Didene E Kune Mehōdihi Dukuh Desijihi)	All Tahltan people are living the Tahltan way of life.
Didenek'eh hodinde	Speak our people's way.
Dinbeda	Are you hungry?
Dūda āhnt'ē	How are you?
Dukuh ja' łuwe ahuja	That's how the fish came about.
Dẕenēṣ hoti'ē	Good afternoon.
Dzimēs Chō T'oh	Swainson Thrush's nest.
Endodēsdił	"I will tell you something" or "I will tell you a story."
Esdahūhedech	"They told me" or "What they told me."
Enla' kadinhdī	Give me your hand (welcome).
Enla'ghatān' otẕ	Wash your hands.
Ets'ēge	White woman.
Esdedze	My younger sister.
Estsiye	Grandpa

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[1] The Tahltan orthography was developed in 1985 so there may be differences in spellings.

[2] Tāłtān is verb-based. It is different than English, which is more noun-based, so the literal translations are not completely accurate.

Tāłtān[1]	English[2]
Estsū	Grandma
Hedekeyeh Hots'ih Kāhidi (or Hedekeyeh Hots'ih Kāhit'ī)	Their roots are from that Tahltan village.
Kas̱den estseyh	I almost cried.
K'asba'e T'oh	Ptarmigan's nest.
K'asba'e T'oh dischā	I love the Dease Lake Language Nest.
Łakē	Two
Łēnt'e	Four
Łige	One
Łōla'e	Five
Łuwechōn	Iskut
Mā	No
Mēduh	Thanks
Meska'ā T'oh	Seagull's nest.
Nanustī	I will see you.
Nedishchā	I love you.
Nintē	Sleep
Soga ast'eh	I am fine.
Tādet'ē (or Tat'ē)	Three
Tāłtān	Tahltan language.
Tātl'ah	Dease Lake
Tehkahche	Frog
Theresa ja' sini, edla Sarah uyeh ete'ē ja' Loveman Nole	My name is Theresa and my parents are Sarah and Loveman Nole.
Tlēgo'īn	Telegraph Creek
Tsesk'iye	Crow
Yehū etl'ū	I wonder what she is crocheting.

Terminology

I have capitalized some words not normally considered proper nouns, in keeping with the writing of other Indigenous scholars (i.e., Archibald, 2008; Edōsdi, 2008, 2012; Wilson, 2008). Capitalizing the titles *Ancestor, Ancestral,* and *Elder* are to honour and respect my teachers; similarly, the term *Indigenous* is capitalized to show respect and acknowledgement, as "Indigenous is inclusive of all first people—unique in our own cultures—but common in our experiences of colonialism and our understanding of the world" (Wilson, 2008, p. 16).

Co-researchers: This research was community-led (see further explanation on page 8). I chose to use the term "co-researchers" to identify those people involved in the language nest who I visited and who helped me address the research questions. Each individual is formally introduced in Chapter Łēnt'e[3] (4). The co-researchers also influenced the shaping and the meaning-making process of this study.

Endodēsdił:[4] I have used this word in place of the term story; I have used this word to refer to my story at the beginning of each chapter and also for the co-researchers' stories (tellings).

Esdahūhedech:[5] I have used this word in place of the term stories to refer to plural of story and also for the collection of co-researchers' tellings.

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[3] Four.

[4] "I will tell you something" or "I will tell you a story."

[5] "They told me" or "What they told me."

Indigenous: I have used the term Indigenous to refer to all Indigenous people of Canada: First Nations, Inuit, Métis, status, and non-status.

K'asba'e T'oh, Dzimēs Chō T'oh, and Meska'ā T'oh: Hereinafter respectively referred to as the Dease Lake Language Nest, the Iskut Language Nest, and the Telegraph Creek Language Nest.

Language Nest: A program for babies and toddlers where only the Ancestral language is spoken to the children.

Teachings: "[The] cultural values, beliefs, lessons, and understandings that are passed from generation to generation" (Archibald, 2008, p. 1).

Acknowledgments

My name is Julie Morris and my traditional Tahltan name is Kāshā. I am a member of the Tahltan First Nation. My people are from Tlēgoʼīn (Telegraph Creek) and Łuwechōn (Iskut) in British Columbia (BC), Canada. I make my home in Lax̱ Keen (Prince Rupert, BC), which is located within the traditional territories of the Nine Allied Tribes of the Ts'msyen First Nation. I have been studying on the traditional lands of the Coast Salish people (Victoria, BC). I wish to acknowledge the traditional caretakers of these territories.

I begin by thanking my Ancestors, my Elders, and my Tahltan people for helping to put me in a good place spiritually, mentally, and physically, so that I am able to be of service to others. I am deeply grateful for the many people whose paths I have crossed on this journey. Because I do not wish to leave anyone out, I want to give mēduh[6] to everyone who has knowingly or unknowingly, guided, inspired, and helped me. However, there are a few honourable mentions that I would like to make:

Mēduh to my husband and best friend, Gordon. I admire you for all that you are and all that you do for our family. Nedishchā.[7]

Mēduh to my mother Cathy, a woman of strength and beauty, who is my one of my biggest cheerleaders. Without your love, I never would have thought myself capable or smart enough to do this work. Nedishchā.

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[6] Thanks.

[7] I love you.

Chapter Łige (1). Enla' Kadinhdī (Give me your hand)

To honour our Tahltan ancestors, and for the benefit of our current and future generations, we need to carry on the traditional way of living. We need to learn our songs, our dances, our art, our history and our own Tahltan language.

—Tahltan Band Council, Welcome home, 2014, p. 25

1.1 My identity

When I was five years old, I was across the street playing with a neighbourhood friend. We were having a great time making mud pies in his front yard, when, all of a sudden, his mom screamed at me to "Go home, little Indian girl, go home—shoo!" I looked all around me for that little Indian girl, but she wasn't there, of course. My friend tried telling her I wasn't an Indian, but his mom yelled at him to "Get in the house, now!" This was how my world was going to be for a while.

Growing up I sometimes questioned my heritage because, whenever I stared at my reflection in the mirror, my outsides matched up with a little Indian girl. I was in Grade 8 when my classmates began asking me if I was part-Indian. That bugged me because I wasn't asking them about their heritage! My mom told me I could tell them I was dark Norwegian. This made perfect sense to me because my last name was Thompson, and my dad's father was Norwegian. However, ever since I knew I was Tahltan, I tell people I am Tahltan.

Growing up in a family that valued being Canadian, I was not taught our traditional Tahltan language and culture. My teachings were the contemporary, or rather, the colonized ways of our people. Also, I was born and raised in the south, so I am an urban Tahltan. I thought, at the time, that if I had been raised on traditional territory, I would be a fluent Tāɫtān[8] speaker and culturally savvy. It saddened me to learn that living on traditional territory does not guarantee being brought up knowing one's Ancestral language and culture. However, today in our Tahltan Nation there is a growing movement toward retaining and promoting our language and culture. Our people are implementing different ways to pass on Tāɫtān or, as we say in our language, Didenek'eh,[9] to our younger generations.

This *little Indian girl* is going home after all, and not just across the street. I am going up north into our traditional territory to document how our second Tahltan language nest began in Tātl'ah.[10] K'asba'e T'oh[11] is one of three Tahltan language nests teaching Tāɫtān to our babies. For this study, I share esdahūhedech and report on emerging themes from the people involved.

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[8] Tahltan language.

[9] Tahltan language.

[10] Dease Lake.

[11] Dease Lake Language Nest.

Figure 1. Map of Tahltan territory

(Image from http://warriorpublications.wordpress.com)

1.2 The endodēsdił of Kāshā

As an Indigenous person, it is important to identify myself in my research

journey by sharing the identity of my maternal Ancestral territory (Absolon, 2011;

Edōsdi, 2012; Smith, 2012). My name is Julie Anne (Thompson) Morris, and my

traditional Tahltan name is Kāshā—pronounced "CAAW-shaa"—after my grandmother

Julia. I am a member of the Tahltan Nation, a Na-Dene speaking First Nation. My people

are from Tlēgo'īn[12] and Łuwechōn[13] in northern British Columbia, Canada. I belong to

the Tsesk'iye[14] Clan and the Tehkahche[15] is our crest. We are from the Tl'abanot'īne

territory. My parents are Tsi' Tsa Cathryn (Callbreath) and the late Wallace Thompson.

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[12] Telegraph Creek.

[13] Iskut.

[14] Crow.

[15] Frog.

My mother is the daughter of the late Kāshā Julia (Vance), and Eyakta' Charley Callbreath. My grandfather Charley was also a member of the Tahltan Nation. He was a member of the Tsesk'iye Clan from the Nālot'ine territory. My father was the son of the late Elizabeth (Lowrie) Webb and Alvin Thompson. My grandmother Elizabeth was a member of the Gitx̱san Nation and was from the community of Gitwangak in northwestern BC. She belonged to the Gisḵaast[16] Clan. My grandfather Alvin was of Norwegian descent from Minnesota, United States. I am the second eldest of six children who were born and raised in Lax̱ Keen,[17] which is located within the traditional territories of the Nine Allied Tribes of the Ts'msyen First Nation on the northcoast of BC. Even though I was not raised on my traditional territories, I have developed close bonds with many of my relatives, and I feel a spiritual connection to my Ancestors.

My grandmothers gifted me with crochet, and it is the closest thing I have to a second language. Crocheting uses its own jargon and shorthand, much like having its own dialect or language. I cherish the memories of my grandmothers teaching me how to crochet. We had so much fun giggling and carrying on while we "poked holes." Granny Julia taught me how to hold a crochet hook and make chains. She also taught me the basic stitches. I admired Granny Julia's colourful flower-motif doilies and Granny Elizabeth's pineapple doilies. I will never forget the summer I turned 12 because that is when I crocheted my first doily (see Figure 2). Granny Elizabeth taught me how to crochet one of her doilies (see Appendix A for the pattern). Crocheting enabled me to

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[16] Fireweed.

[17] Prince Rupert.

spend quality time with my grandmothers. My grandmothers were natural teachers who made me feel special and capable of learning.

Figure 2. First crocheted doily

During my parents' and grandparents' time, speaking English was not only important but it was expected. In fact, for them it was considered shameful to speak one's Ancestral language. Both my paternal and maternal great-grandfathers forbade it. Any second-language learning happened without the consent or knowledge of one's father. I discovered many years after Granny Elizabeth passed away that she was a Gitxsan speaker. Sadly, my mother and father were not taught to speak their mother tongue, and therefore neither were we as children. When I was presented with opportunities to learn Tāłtān, I chose not to learn our language. In all honesty, I did not see the value in learning a language I was unlikely to use and, besides, I considered myself to be a poor language-learner because of the difficulties I had in learning French in high school. My grandparents were not fluent in Tāłtān but they could have been had they had better language-learning opportunities and had there been better family and

community support. My great-grandmother Istosta Kitty Tatosa passed away when

Grandpa Charley was four years old, so he learned Tāłtān from the workers on his dad's

ranch. My great-grandmother Agnes (Quock) Vance taught Granny Julia Tāłtān, but

Granny said this happened only when her dad was away at work. My grandparents

understood and spoke our language but, for the reasons stated above, they chose not to

teach what they knew to their children. However, in 1991 that would change when they

both began speaking and teaching Tāłtān. This was because my sister, Dr. Judy

Thompson/Edōsdi (hereinafter referred to as Edōsdi), expressed an interest in learning

Tāłtān.

My grandparents set an example for everyone when they rekindled their

learning of the Tahltan language. This was a great example of the value they placed on

life-long learning. Edōsdi fondly recalls a time when our mom teased Granny Julia, "Why

are you so interested in all of this Indian stuff now? When we were growing up, you

never taught us anything!" My granny turned towards her and said, "Ever since my

granddaughter Judy has made me feel proud to be Tahltan!" (Edōsdi, 2008, pp. 38–39).

The Creator has a way of putting people into our lives to help us grow and change, and

indeed her interest in learning Tahltan language and culture helped to restore Granny's

pride. This also exemplifies what Granny Julia had been telling me for years. She always

said that she was never too old to learn and that she learned something new every day;

these new learnings include thinking about or seeing things differently. Because of

Granny Julia's teachings, I understand how languages represented different worldviews.

For example, there were times when Granny Julia suddenly laughed out loud. When I

asked her what she found so amusing, she told me she was thinking about it in Tāłtān and that it was not funny in English. Back then, I never thought to ask Granny to teach me Tāłtān, and she never offered.

The way in which I became involved in a graduate program is similar to the way in which I became a schoolteacher. The idea to become a schoolteacher came at a time when I did not know what I was going to do next in my work life. At the time, I owned and operated a business in Lax̱ Keen, and I had just decided to close it because it was not providing a living for myself and my young child. While I was contemplating my future, Edōsdi asked me if there was something I had always wanted to do. I told her that I had always wanted to become a schoolteacher, so with her encouragement I returned to university and earned a degree in primary education.

Twenty-two years later, I was at a place in my life where I was regretting not having learned Tāłtān from Grandpa Charley. By that time, I had been teaching for 15 years in the Career and College Preparation Department, at Northwest Community College in Lax̱ Keen (where I currently teach) and by then had taught various courses in mathematics, education and career planning, computer studies, English, and First Nations studies. I love what I do for a living and had never considered earning a master's degree until Edōsdi suggested I check out the 2014 Master's degree program in Indigenous Language Revitalization (MILR) at the University of Victoria (UVic). I could see myself helping to prepare people to become language teachers, so I submitted an application even though I felt my chances of being accepted to the program were low because I was not involved in language revitalization work. Moreover, I was inspired to

become involved with language revitalization because I thought it would be great if more people could learn Tāłtān and feel the joy of it. I feel incredibly grateful to have been accepted into UVic's MILR program.

The suggestion to study K'asba'e T'oh came from Edōsdi, who is my sister but is also the director of the Tahltan Language and Culture Program for the Tahltan Central Government (TCG). One of the reasons Edōsdi suggested this work was because it would be a first step toward the assessment and evaluation of our language nests. In addition, my study would provide useful, relational, and meaningful opportunities for the people (whom I refer to as "co-researchers") involved in the language nest to share their K'asba'e T'oh experiences. I approached this work as a Tahltan member and an emerging Tahltan scholar.

1.3 Background

In 2015, the Tahltan Nation had 3,000 members with 1,600 who make their homes in the present-day communities of Łuwechōn, Tātl'ah, and Tlēgo'īn along the Stikine River in northern BC (TCG, 2015a, p. 26). (See Figure 1.) Tahltan members also make their homes in urban areas, such as Prince George, Lax̱ Keen, Smithers, Terrace, and Vancouver in BC, Watson Lake and Whitehorse in the Yukon, and around the world (TCC, 2013, p. 17). Approximately 1.5% of our members are fluent in Tāłtān. In an FPCC (2014) study, it was determined that 4.6% of Tahltans were actively learning Tāłtān (p. 40). Our Tahltan language is highly endangered and at a critical stage because there are so few speakers remaining and our babies are no longer learning Tāłtān as their first

language. This is what Fishman (1990) described as "language shift" when a community shifts to speaking another language.

One of the ways the Tahltan language is being rejuvenated is by way of providing immersion settings for young children. We have a language nest in each of our three present-day communities. In language nest programs, preschool-aged children are immersed in language-learning environments where only the Ancestral language is spoken (Chambers, 2015; FPCC, 2014; McIvor, 2005; Michel, 2005). With the intergenerational transmission of the Tahltan language no longer occurring in most homes, these settings intend to resemble a homelike learning environment. Babies and toddlers get to spend quality language-learning time with language mentors in comfortable family-home learning environments. It is exciting and inspirational for family and community members whenever they hear young children use their Ancestral language (Chambers, 2015; TCC, 2014). Furthermore, there is hope that these programs will create speakers, inspire others to learn Tāłtān, and eventually move our language out of the endangered status.

1.4 Significance and purpose

The purpose of this study was:

1. To describe the process and underlying motivations behind starting K'asba'e T'oh, one of three Tahltan language nests, in Tātl'ah.

2. To understand the experiences of K'asba'e T'oh in order to assist others in furthering their goals of Indigenous language revitalization.

3. To share these experiences with the other two Tahltan language nests, and

   nations wanting to use language nests for Indigenous language revitalization,

   as well as act as a repository of knowledge for possible future Tahltan

   language nests.

My research was guided by the following questions:

1. What are the key considerations for developing the K'asba'e T'oh program in

   Tātl'ah?

2. What are the key considerations for implementing the K'asba'e T'oh program

   in Tātl'ah?

3. What motivated and continues to motivate people to be involved in K'asba'e

   T'oh?

4. How can the experiences of K'asba'e T'oh assist others in furthering their

   goals of Indigenous language revitalization?

Since the people involved in K'asba'e T'oh were busy running the nest, I was able

to be of service by documenting how the nest got going, how things were going so far,

and what motivated and continued to motivate people to be involved in the nest.

Reciprocity, or giving back, is fundamental to an Indigenous research framework

(Kovach, 2012; Wilson, 2008). It is important to document our history, and this study will

serve as a model for the future documentation of our other two language nests, as well

as contribute to the literature concerned with language nests in BC. Furthermore, by

acknowledging people involved in revitalizing the Tahltan language, I hope to garner

support within the Tahltan Nation for our existing language nests and to generate

support for more immersion programs.

1.5 Expected outcomes

There are many Tahltans who, like me grew up not knowing our Ancestral

language and culture. We have a responsibility to reach out to as many of our people as

possible in order to revitalize our highly endangered language, especially while we still

have willing and able fluent speakers, and have people willing and interested in doing

this work. I hope my study contributes to the wider language revitalization community,

and particularly those undertaking language nests.

1.6 Project overview

My project uses the metaphor of crochet because it helped me to make sense of

the research process and because of the strong connection that crochet has to my

grandmothers. Granny Elizabeth taught me how make my first doily by copying one of

hers, so I include research findings in tables and figures because they remind me of

crochet patterns—which also include diagrams (see Appendix A) or charts to support

the written text.

There are five chapters in this thesis and each is numbered in Tāɬtān. At the

beginning of each chapter I have included an endodēsdiɬ about my life and how it

relates to my research journey. Similar to other Indigenous researchers, I employ

storytelling throughout this project. I share personal stories which relate to specific

subject areas in order to make this study more reflective of the cyclical nature of Indigenous research (Kahtehrón:ni, 2016; Kovach, 2012; Rosborough, 2012; Wilson, 2008), and to honour the teaching ways of my people, my Elders, and my Ancestors.

Finally, chitleṣidēdli,[18] referred to in the language nest as "circle time," is when everyone in the language nest gathers together for social, cultural, and language-learning activities. The esdahūhedech my co-researchers shared with me about their experiences, insights, and challenges encountered in carrying out this work reminded me of chitleṣidēdli, which in turn reminded me of the slip knot, the foundation knot in crochet. While the slip knot is easy to make, if not done properly, crochet projects fall apart. Like crochet projects made with strong foundation stitches, our language nest programs have strengthened our language revitalization planning. In Chapter Łēnt'e (4), I present an endodēsdił for each co-researcher, which reflects the main theme of chitleṣidēdli and the three subthemes of collaboration, nation-building, and identity and belonging.

1.7 Summary

This first chapter provided an introduction to the researcher. I began with a childhood endodēsdił about how this study fits into the field of language revitalization, and how I came to want to do this study. I also provided the purpose of this research, the research questions, and a brief overview of the structure and content of the entire thesis. The next chapter reviews the relevant literature that informed this study.

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[18] We come together (circle time).

Chapter Łakē (2). Background and literature review

And we've got names for every mountain, every creek, every camping place, every lake, everything, we got name for it. Now you guys just make us forget. All the young generation just took your side and forgot about our own way.

—Rose Dennis, Tahltan Elder cited in Thompson 2004, p. 22

2.1 Hedekeyeh Hots'ih Kāhidi[19]

I was taught early on to embrace being Canadian. My sister Kathy and I wore matching Centennial tartan skirts to the Dominion Day festivities up at Roosevelt Park School. It was 1967 and everyone from my family was there celebrating Canada's 100th birthday. I felt so proud to see my aunt Char marching in the baton-twirling group and my dad participating in the beard-growing contest. This was an exciting day; in fact, it was an exciting year because Canada was also hosting the world fair at Expo 67.

As a young person, it felt as though it was more important to my family that I was assimilated into the white Canadian society than to be proud of who I was as a First Nations person. While I identify myself as a Tahltan woman, I am often mistaken for an ets'ēge.[20] Sometimes I felt as though things were not quite right because I did not feel fully accepted into either my First Nations world or the white Canadian world.

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[19] Their roots are from that Tahltan village.

[20] White woman.

Unsettling is the best word I know to describe how I felt. Fortunately for me, I experience peace whenever I am in the right place—some places are undeniably part of my spirit. For example, even though I did not grow up on my traditional territories, whenever I am there, or whenever I think of being there, I feel a connection to my Ancestors.

In 1995, I made my first trip up into Tahltan territory. I suppose my experience could have been like that of an outsider, someone who is not a community member and who has no ties whatsoever to the community. However, I have familial ties to the community, and I have met many of my relatives when they came south to visit. I recall feeling at peace—like I had been there before. This feeling is similar to how I feel whenever I am in Gitxsan territory. Even though I had been in my father's territory many times before, it was as a young adult that I recall feeling as though I could pick up Granny Elizabeth's paintbrushes and paint. When I told my mom about this feeling, she said to me, "I would understand if you wanted to change bands." "No, Mom," I said, "I don't want to do that. I don't know how to paint. I just feel like I could." As it turns out, my feeling of familiarity is not unique. My relative, Tahltan Elder Peggy Campbell, describes this as a home-coming phenomenon, Hedekeyeh Hots'ih Kāhidi (Edōsdi, 2012). Whenever I am on either of my Ancestral territories, I feel a kindred spirit, a sense of belonging.

2.2 Seeing ourselves

To write about my learnings and, indeed, about my research journey, was not an easy decision. Family has always been dear to me and any complicated feelings or confused thoughts about my identity are particular to me and are not connected to my love for my family. My writings are intensely personal, and it is important to clarify with readers that I am reflecting upon my own experience, not anyone else's, about how I arrived here to do this study.

Narratives about Indigenous people searching for their cultural identity are not new; however, they are not often used in academic writing (Kovach, 2012). I was motivated to do this work so that I could get to know my people and my culture better, as well as leave a contribution for others who are coming and who may also be searching for a sense of place and belonging. When I saw myself in the literature I was reading, I felt connected; I no longer felt *unsettled* or out of place. My intention was to bring this sense of myself to the study because "we need to see ourselves to make the change" (M. Hermes, personal communication, April 19, 2016). Therefore, I brought my voice to the work through narrative writing. I have included an opening endodēsdił at the beginning of each chapter, as well as throughout the thesis, which reflects my personal journey and relates to the reasons for doing this research.

One of my goals was to bring the voices of others into the work, so whenever possible, instead of paraphrasing or summarizing, I used direct quotations. Another goal was to create a community of voices which articulated the essence of Tahltan Voiceability (Edōsdi, 2012), an Indigenous methodology Edōsdi defined in her doctoral dissertation:

In regards to Tahltan Voiceablity, I define "voiceabilty" in a similar way to "readability," with readability (n.d.) being defined as, "the quality of written language that makes it easy to read and understand." In terms of Voiceability, I came up with this term when trying to find a way to portray the Tahltan voice—including that of the co-researchers, my Elders and Ancestors, and myself—in such a way that readers would be able to "hear" our voices on paper. However, I also wanted to extend it to mean how a people can find their voice and find strength in their voice, in order to heal and become a stronger healthier nation. (p. 90)

The style of writing used in this study has a conversational tone to it, as I wanted to use words that were less "high language" in order to make my work accessible to both non-academic and academic audiences (see also Edōsdi, 2012, p. 22).

2.3 Literature review

The work involved with revitalizing an Indigenous language is complex and challenging. Initially, I did not fully understand what language revitalization meant. I thought it meant recording and documenting the language, curriculum development, and the training of teachers. However, through my coursework, my professors, my MILR colleagues, and my co-researchers, I have come to understand that, while all those strategies are important, what is most important is producing new speakers.

My review of the literature involved a gradual and sometimes painful learning process as I came to understand the historical factors that contributed to the decline of

our Indigenous languages, the decrease in the number of our fluent Tāłtān speakers,

and the many challenges associated with language revitalization work. I have learned

about what we have been doing to revitalize our language—what we are doing today,

and what our plans are for the future to create Tāłtān speakers. The focus of this

literature review is concerned with the revival and transmission of Ancestral languages

to our younger generation, our babies, specifically with an emphasis on the importance

of using language nests as a language revitalization strategy. Today, immersion

programs such as language nests give Elders, fluent speakers, and language mentors

dedicated places to visit and provide them with a means to teach in our Ancestors'

language.

2.4 Speaking our language, again

The Tahltan language is highly endangered. Indeed, all of British Columbia's 34

First Nations languages—with their 61 dialects—are endangered (FPCC, 2016a). The loss

of Ancestral language speakers in our nation is something we have in common with

Indigenous peoples in North America and around the world. Unless deliberate

interventions are made to restore and maintain Ancestral languages, many of these

cultures will surely perish. In Canada, Indigenous languages are in danger because

children are being raised with English as their first language. Richard Atleo (2011), a

Nuu-chah-nulth Elder, recalled a time when this was not the case: "According to my first

memories of my community, those who spoke primarily English were the exception. By

a large margin, the language of preference was the language of our ancestors" (p. 43). In

a TCC document from 2006, similar concerns were expressed about the Tahltan

language:

> The number of fluent speakers is decreasing. The youth attending school
>
> are not able to practice Tahltan language at home or in the community.
>
> The number of hours per week Tahltan students is [sic] being taught
>
> Tahltan language in the schools and community is very limited. There are
>
> no organized attempts to preserve the loss of Tahltan language. Our
>
> culture is not dying but there are some pieces missing, we just need to
>
> revive the missing pieces. We are not speaking our language in the
>
> community and at community events. (Tahltan Central Council, 2006, as
>
> cited in Edōsdi, 2012, p. 165)

The Fishman 8-level Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) for Threatened

Languages indicates that Tāɫtān is on the threshold of Stage 7, where "only adults

beyond childbearing age speak the language" (Department of Canadian Heritage, 2005,

p. 85). The stages in the GIDS consists of eight stages where lower numbers represent a

lower level of disruption of the intergenerational transmission of the language (see

Table 1). Furthermore, according to Delaine (2010), "almost every stage of the

revitalization process is aimed at transmitting the language from younger generations"

(p. 72). There are now major efforts underway to revive our language, especially with

respect to increasing the number of children learning and using Tāɫtān.

Table 1. Graded intergenerational disruption scale for threatened languages

Suggested interventions based on different stages of language endangerment		
Current status of language		**Suggested interventions to strengthen languages**
Stage 8:	Only a few Elders speak the language.	Implement Hinton's (1994) "Language Apprentice" model where fluent Elders are teamed one-on-one with young adults who want to learn the language.
Stage 7:	Only adults beyond childbearing age speak the language.	Establish "Language Nests" in keeping with the Maori and Hawaiian models where fluent older adults provide a pre-school child-care environment in which children can be immersed in their Indigenous language.
Stage 6:	Some intergenerational use of language.	Develop places in the community where language is encouraged, protected, and used exclusively. Encourage more young parents to speak the respective Indigenous language at home with and around their young children.
Stage 5:	Language is still very much alive and used in community.	Offer literacy in the minority language. Promote voluntary programs in the schools and other community institutions to improve the prestige and use of the language. Use the language in local government functions, especially in the social services setting. Give recognition to special local efforts through awards, etc.
Stage 4:	Language is required in elementary schools.	Teach reading and writing higher-level language skills. Develop two-way bilingual programs where appropriate, where non-speaking elementary students learn the Indigenous language and speakers learn a national or international language. Develop Indigenous language text-books to teach literacy and academic subject matter content.
Stage 3:	Language is used in places of business and by employees in less specialized work areas.	Promote language by making it the language of work used throughout the community. Develop vocabulary so that office workers conduct their day-to-day work using their Indigenous language.
Stage 2:	Language is used by local government and in the mass media in the minority community.	Promote the use of written language for government and business dealings and record-keeping. Promote Indigenous language newsletters, newspapers, and radio and television stations.

Stage 1:	Some language use by higher levels of government and in higher education.	Teach tribal college subject matter classes in the language. Develop an oral and written literature in the Indigenous language through dramatic presentations and publications. Give tribal/national awards for Indigenous language publications and other notable efforts to promote Indigenous languages.

Today, people who speak Tāłtān are the exception. It is often said that language is our culture and without our language we have no culture. In a call for action, Elder Pat Etzerza lamented:

> I travel all over the place and hear other nations speaking their language and that's very important. They know who they are. We have our own government; we have our own language; we have our own history. I think it's very important that we revitalize our language…we must know who we are as Tahltan people. (quoted in Edōsdi & Bourquin, 2016)

According to Edōsdi and Bourquin (2016), with fewer than 30 Tāłtān speakers, our language is on the brink of disappearing unless we can create new speakers. Patricia Louie, Language Nest Assistant and UVic Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization (DILR) student, recently pointed out what she felt would be lost if the Tahltan language were to disappear: "Our language and our culture is what makes us unique. It's what makes each nation strong. And if we don't have it then we're just like everybody else" (quoted in Edōsdi & Bourquin, 2016). According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

> it is estimated that, if nothing is done, half of 6000-plus languages spoken today will disappear by the end of this century. With the disappearance

of unwritten and undocumented languages, humanity would lose not only a cultural wealth but also important ancestral knowledge embedded, in particular, in indigenous languages.

However, this process is neither inevitable nor irreversible: well-planned and implemented language policies can bolster the ongoing efforts of speaker communities to maintain or revitalize their mother tongues and pass them on to younger generations. (UNESCO, 2016, Endangered languages section, para. 1–2)

As a result of well-planned and implemented language policies many Indigenous peoples around the world have experienced success in reversing language shift and are sharing their successes with others. According to a number of sources, Indigenous peoples have successfully created speakers through language nest programs (Chambers, 2014, 2015; King, 2001; Okura, 2017; Wilson & Kamana, 2001). Excellent examples of language nest programs are those of the inspirational Māori and Hawaiians who have, for over thirty years, encouraged and shared their program knowledge and resources with others (Chambers, 2015; McIvor & Parker, 2016; Okura, 2017). Another inspirational language nest program close to home is BC's first language nest, the Cséyseten Family Language Nest[21] on the Adams Lake Reserve, near Chase (McIvor, 2005; Michel, 2005, 2012), also begun in the 1980s.

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[21] Formerly Secwepemc Ka.

A major focus of the TLRT has been to establish immersion language nests

modelled after Te Kōhanga Reo, the Māori of Aotearoa;[22] Pūnana Leo, the Hawaiians of

Hawai'i; and the Cséyseten Family Language Nest, the Adams Lake Band, Neskonlith,

and Little Shuswap Bands of BC. The TLRT initiative, has seen the opening of three

Tahltan language nests: Dzimēs Chō T'oh,[23] K'asba'e T'oh, and Meska'ā T'oh.[24]

Language revitalization work is not easy. In Canada, language revitalization

initiatives take time, money, and commitment. As McIvor and Parker (2016) succinctly

point out, our situation is dire: "All Indigenous languages in Canada face significant

threats to their vitality, as there is very little political or economic support for these

languages" (p. 23). Fortunately for the Tahltan language there has been funding

available from the Tahltan Central Government's (TCG) Socio-Cultural Working Group

(SCWG). In 2011, the Tahltan Nation signed agreements with the BC Government and BC

Hydro for the economic development of the Northwest Transmission Line in our

traditional territory. According to Anita McPhee, Tribal Chair of the Tahltan Central

Council:

> The agreement will enable us to foster social, cultural, economic and
>
> environmental health within our community. It will be a delicate balance
>
> to manage economic development and maximize the benefits to our
>
> people, while also protecting our culture and way of life and minimizing
>
> impacts to our land. But it is a commitment we have made to our people

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[22] New Zealand.

[23] Iskut Language Nest.

[24] Telegraph Creek Language Nest.

and one that we are confident we can deliver on. (McPhee, cited in

Tahltan Central Council, 2011)

Proceeds from this agreement helped to move Tahltan language and culture

revitalization program efforts forward (TCG, 2015b, p. 14).

2.5 Vision: Didene E Kune Mehōdihi Eku Desijihi[25]

Present-day Tahltan leadership is comprised of two band councils: the Iskut Band

Council (the community of Łuwechōn), the Tahltan Band Council (the communities of

Tātl'ah and Tlēgo'īn), as well as an administrative governing body, the Tahltan Central

Government (formerly Tahltan Central Council, located in Tātl'ah). Each has the

responsibility of protecting our Ancestral language and culture. For several decades, the

TCG "has directly or indirectly been involved in the promotion and documentation of

Tahltan language and culture" (Edōsdi, 2012, p. 165). In 2011, the Tahltan Social Cultural

Working Group, part of the TCG, was formed to strengthen the presence of language,

health, employment and training, and community and family development. According to

SCWG Lead Feddie Louie, "The SCWG was created to ensure that with all the rapid

development going on around us we were minimizing the negative impacts, social

impacts, and maximizing the benefits of what was being developed" (quoted in Edōsdi &

Bourquin, 2016). SCWG Co-chair Rob McPhee identified the following key areas:

The five key areas covered by the SCWG are things that we knew we had

to address to try to make sure we benefited more than we were

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[25] All Tahltan people are living the Tahltan way of life.

impacted: the language, which is critically important to the identity of Tahltan people; health because there are a number of things that stress the health system when you get rapid industrial development; education, we knew we wanted our people to be as educated as possible through this process; jobs and training, it was important that we participate in this; as well as infrastructure and that included everything from governance to community infrastructure. (quoted in Edōsdi & Bourquin, 2016)

In 2012, the SCWG's Tāɫtān Language Revitalization Team (TLRT), after consultation with the Tahltan Nation, developed a Tahltan Language and Culture Framework (TCC, 2013). This framework was developed in part from the 2012 doctoral dissertation entitled *Hedekeyeh Hots'ih Kāhidi—"Our Ancestors Are In Us": Strengthening Our Voices Through Language Revitalization From A Tahltan Worldview,* in which Edōsdi identified community involvement and consultation as being instrumental. Her research had two major objectives: "(a) identify what we need to do in order to keep our language alive and flourishing; and (b) considering [sic] how Tahltan language revitalization can positively affect the lives of our people" (2012, p. 321). Key outcomes of the four-year language revitalization action plan address the following elements:

1. Language Governance: establish sustainable governance structure; carry out research for language planning process; establish a communication process.

2. Language Programs: develop programs for children and youth; develop/offer programs for parents and adults; develop programs for all ages.

3. Documentation: recordings (transcription and translation of old recordings and creation of new recordings); development of a dictionary and grammar guide; development of language learning materials; development of technology for language learning; development of archives/repository.

4. Training and Professional Development: certification of language teachers; training of teachers; training of community members; access post-secondary opportunities; create networking opportunities. (TCC, 2013, pp. 31–38)

2.6 Language governance: Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē

In 2015, the TLRT, with support from the First People's Cultural Council's (FPCC) Language Revitalization Planning Program, brought about the formation of a language authority aimed at protecting Tahltan language and culture (see Appendix B for the Terms of Reference). The Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē (DDN) operates under the auspices of the Iskut Band Council, the Tahltan Band Council, and the TCG. The director of the Tahltan Language and Culture Program, Edōsdi, sets out the role of DDN:

This council provides…guidance in the promotion of our Tahltan language, it provides guidance in the creation of short and long term

> language and culture plans, it serves as a decision making body for our
>
> language and culture, it also acts as a language authority in the
>
> certification of Tahltan language teachers for BC Teachers' Regulation
>
> Branch and…it addresses issues of orthography and creation of new
>
> vocabulary…another area is people doing research, specific to our
>
> Tahltan language and culture, they could come to this body and bring
>
> their ideas to this group of people and they can get feedback and
>
> support. (quoted in Edōsdi & Bourquin, 2016)

The DDN is a vital first step toward Tahltan people speaking our Ancestral language, and
it also brings us closer to the 2012 Leadership Forum vision statement, "Didene E Kune
Mehōdihi Eku Desijihi" (TCC, 2013, p. 7). Language Teacher and Mentor, Angela Dennis,
feels that

> it's a giant step that we made when we decided to make that, create the
>
> language authority because with that in place there's a lot of things that
>
> we can do now to revitalize our language because it is endangered. If we
>
> believe that it isn't, then we're kidding ourselves. (quoted in Edōsdi &
>
> Bourquin, 2016)

With the creation of the DDN, our language teachers are now able to become
provincially certified teachers. The Tahltan Nation in partnership with UVic is offering a
community-based Tāłtān program in Tātl'ah where students can earn a DILR and a
Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization. In addition to this, we are
developing a language curriculum approved by the BC Ministry of Education. Since many

of our language teachers are lone teachers who work in isolation, creating curriculum

for them is a priority. Having an approved Kindergarten to Grade 12 Integrated Resource

Package (IRP) available in the school curriculum means Grades 5–8 students can study

Tāłtān instead of French, and high school students can count their Tāłtān classes

towards graduation credits. Universities, then, could be encouraged to accept high

school Tāłtān classes to satisfy second-language requirements for university entrance.

The importance of developing curriculum which incorporates Ancestral language and

culture cannot be overlooked. Research shows that "the younger the speakers, the

healthier the language" (McIvor & Napoleon, 2009, p. 7), and that youth suicide rates

drop in communities where "at least half the band members reported a conversational

knowledge of their own 'Native' language" (Hallett, Chandler, & Lalonde, 2007, p. 392).

2.7 Tahltan language initiatives

Until recently, Tahltan language revitalization efforts have focused on audio

recordings and written resources. The work compiled in Table 2, adapted from a list of

Tahltan language documentation resources (Edōsdi 2012, p. 171), summarizes the

documentation and resources developed by people within and outside our nation.

Much of the language revitalization work happening today is due to this work (Table 2).

Table 3 summarizes the domains of Tahltan language activity along with the

documentation and resource development outcomes following the 2012 Tahltan

revitalization action plan. The information in this table is compiled from *TCG Tahltan*

quarterly/Tatl'ā (2015a, p. 25), *TCC Tahltan quarterly news/KYA·YŌ DĪ·DZE* (2015b, p. 6),

TCC Socio-Cultural Working Group: Language and culture report (2013, pp. 8–30), *TCC Socio-Cultural Working Group update* (2014, pp. 3–6), *Tahltan Central Council annual report* (2015c, pp. 15–17), and personal communications with co-researchers.

Table 2. Assessing the status of the Tahltan language

Documentation resources
Linguistic materials and publications
Stress and related rules in Tahltan (Cook, 1972)
Tahltan consonant harmony (Hardwick, 1984a)
Tahltan morphology and phonology (Hardwick, 1984b)
Some comments on the phonology of Tahltan (Nater, 1989)
Consonant harmony systems: The special status of coronal harmony (Shaw, 1991)
Laryngeal phenomena in Tahltan (Bob, 1999)
On tone and length in Tahltan (Alderete, 2005)
A corpus-based approach to Tahltan stress (Alderete & Bob, 2005)
Tahltan plant list (Turner, 1997)
Tahltan word list (Saxon, 1997)
Dictionaries and grammar guides
Notes on the Indian tribes of the Yukon District and adjacent northern portion of British Columbia (Dawson, 1887)
Dictionary/grammar descriptions/two Tahltan stories (Palgrave, 1957)
An outline of the language spoken by the Tahltan Indians [Thorman, n.d.)
Tahltan words copied from Mr. Matheson's notebook [Thorman, circa 1990]
The structural basis of Tahltan Indian society–(Adlam, 1985)-short glossary
Tahltan children's illustrated dictionary (Carter & Tahltan Tribal Council, 1994)
Classroom materials
Basic Tahltan conversation lessons (Carter, 1991)
Dene tsedle kedā kah ejidedāł: The Moose Hunt (2000) (booklet & audio recording)
Łuwe ek'ānh khidi: Tahltan fish camp (2000) (booklet & audio recording)
"Kuji k'at dahdahwhesdetch" Now I told all of you: Tahltan language stories told by Iskut Elders at Iskut, British Columbia (Iskut First Nation, 2003) (booklet and CD)
Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? (book adaption by Jenny Quock)
Recordings
Land claims recordings from the 1980s, 415 digital files (Tahltan Tribal Council)
Tahltan language and culture CD Series (Alderete, 2007)
Technology
Tahltan language lessons (http://didenekeh.com) (Dennis, n.d.)
Tahltan language youtube videos (http://www.youtube.com/user/TahltanChad/videos) (Day, n.d.)

Table 3. Tahltan language activity

Language programs		
Category	Activity	Group/Location/Date
Children/Youth		
Pre-school programs (3–5 year)	Very little language learning	Aboriginal Head Start/Tlēgoʼīn/Łuwechōn (ongoing)
K-9	Unaccredited courses (20–30 minutes of language learning per day)	School District No. 87 (Stikine)/Tlēgoʼīn/prior to 2016 (n.d.)
K-8	Unaccredited courses (20–30 minutes of language learning per day)	Klappan Independent Day School/Łuwechōn (n.d.)
Infancy to age 4	Immersion language nests: Dzimēs Chō Tʼoh, Kʼasbaʼe Tʼoh, and Meskaʼā Tʼoh	Łuwechōn/opened May 2014; Tātlʼah/opened December 2014; Tlēgoʼīn/opened briefly in June 2016
Adults/Parents		
Mentor-Apprentice program (MAP)	Consists of one speaker and one learner; 10–20 hours per week immersed in Tāłtān	one team Tātlʼah/2011–13; one team Tlēgoʼīn/2014; one-team Terrace, BC/2017
Immersion sessions	Two (one-hour) speaking-Tāłtān-only sessions per week (led by fluent and semi-fluent speakers)	Łuwechōn; Tātlʼah/Fall 2012 (ongoing)
All ages		
Language and culture camps	Only Tāłtān spoken during cultural activities	Tahltan Health and Social Services Authority and Iskut Valley Health Services/yearly
Documentation and resource development		
Recordings		
Digitize audio tapes	Oral data collected in the 1980s (digitize analogue tapes from archive)	Tahltan Central Council (TCC now TCG)/Tāłtān Language Revitalization Team (TLRT)/Tātlʼah (ongoing)
New recordings	iBook version (didenekeh.com) 2600 word database	TLRT (ongoing)

Language learning materials		
Dictionary and grammar guide (Research)	Developing an expanded version of the Tahltan children's illustrated dictionary (print and online)	Edōsdi, director of the Tahltan Language and Culture Program; Simon Fraser University (SFU) (ongoing)
Atlas	Developing an atlas of 36 maps (place names)	The Tahltan Ancestral Study Team, TCC (TCG)/Tātl'ah (ongoing)
K-12 Curriculum	Developing Tahltan language curriculum (materials and resources)	Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē (Tahltan Language and Cultural Council) and School District No. 87 (ongoing)
Materials	Developed language nest materials	Patricia Louie/Assistant Language Nest Coordinator/March 2016
Children's books (unreleased)	*Dah dẕahge eṣigits*[26] and *Dukuh ja' łuwe ahuja*[27]	TLRT/2015–2017 (ongoing)
Children's books	Three children's books	TLRT (ongoing)
Technology		
Networking	Facebook (social media website)	Tahłtan Thomas; Tahltan Language Collective (ongoing)
Software	Developing Tahltan language tutor applications: web and iOS	TLRT, SFU and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (ongoing)
Training and professional development		
Post-secondary	UVic: Master's Degree in Indigenous Language Revitalization	2 Tahltan members enrolled/Victoria, BC/July 2014–(ongoing)
Post-secondary	Completion of UVic's Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Language Revitalization	Tahltan Members: Odelia Dennis and Kāshā Julie Morris/ Victoria, BC/2015
Post-secondary	UVic: Two-year Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization (includes Tāłtān lessons)	18 Tahltan members enrolled/Tātl'ah/September 2015 (and January 2016)

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[26] *We write our language.*

[27] *That's how the fish came about.*

Training and professional development (continued)		
Post-secondary/ Teacher training	UVic: Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization and Professional Teaching Certificate at the elementary school level	Tātl'ah/TBA
Training: immersion programming	Salish School of Spokane: 2016 Summer immersion symposium	Spokane, WA, USA/TLRT/July 2016
Promotion of language		
Networking	13th Annual Chief Atahm Immersion School Language Conference	Three representatives (one from each community) /Kamloops, BC/April 2013
Presentation	"Didene e kune mehōdihi eku desijihi—All Tahltan people are living the Tahltan way of life: The building of a Tahltan language revitalization plan" at the Dene Languages Conference (DLC)	TLR Team/Prince George, BC/June 2014
Facilitated workshop	"Mentor-Apprentice Program Tahltan MAP teams" at the DLC	Edōsdi/Patrick Carlick and Pauline Hawkins/June 2014
Facilitated workshop	"Dzimēs Chō T'oh: Iskut Language Nest" at the DLC	Edōsdi/Ło'oks (TLRT member)/June 2014
Presentation	Tahltan language work at the First Peoples Cultural Council's (FPCC) launching of the *Report on the status of B.C. First Nations languages 2014 Second Edition*	Edōsdi/Victoria, BC/November 2014
Presentation	"Language: A reconciliation offering" at the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation's event	Edōsdi/Victoria, BC/February 2015
Screening	*Dah-tsiye Kehke: Our grandfather's footprints* at the 4th International Conference on Language Documentation & Conservation (ICLDC)	Michael Bourquin, Director/Honolulu, HI, USA/March 2015

Promotion of language (continued)		
Presentation	"Bringing it together: Implementing community-based Tahltan language revitalization research" at the 4th (ICLDC)	Edōsdi, Angela Dennis (Tahltan language teacher and mentor), and Odelia Dennis (language nest coordinator)/Honolulu, Hawai'i, USA/March 2015
Facilitate Workshop	2-day professional development event on Tāłtān language curriculum for Tahltan language teachers and teachers of Tahltan descent from northern BC	Edōsdi/Terrace, BC/February 2015
Presentation	"Dah dẕāhge nodeṣidē–Getting our talk back: Sharing our journey of Tāłtān language revitalization" at the First Nations Education Steering Committee's First Nations Languages Conference	Edōsdi, Angela Dennis, and Ło'oks/Vancouver, BC/July 2015
Presentation	"Dah dẕāhge nodeṣidē: Implementing community-based Tahltan language revitalization research" at the Language, Education and Diversity Conference	Edōsdi/Auckland, New Zealand/November 2015
Screening Workshop	*Dah dẕāhge nodeṣidē: We are speaking our language again* at the University of Alberta's ANVILS (A National Vision of Indigenous Languages Sustainability)	Edōsdi/Edmonton, AB/July 2016
Communication		
2014 FPCC Language Report	Case study (pp. 30–31) highlighting the Tahltan Nations' language revitalization work	Edōsdi/Victoria, BC/November 2014

Film		
Documentary (Tāɬtān and English versions)	*Dah-tsiye kehke: Our grandfather's footprints* aired on Aboriginal Peoples Television Network	Michael Bourquin, director/October 2014
Documentary/ premiere screening	*Dah dẕāhge nodeṣidē: We are speaking our language again* at the TCG Annual General Assembly	Edōsdi & Michael Bourquin, producers, Michael Bourquin, director/Tātl'ah/ July 2016
Documentary/ premiere release on Tahltan Day 2016	*Dah dẕāhge nodeṣidē: We are speaking our language again* http://vimeo.com/187218121	Edōsdi & Michael Bourquin, producers, Michael Bourquin, director/Tātl'ah/ October 18, 2016
Media relations		
CFNR Network "Nationview"	Radio interviews: Three-part series on Tahltan Language Revitalization	TLRT; Loveman Nole and Patrick Carlick (fluent Tāɬtān speakers)/aired August 4, 11, 18, 2013
CFTK-TV "The Journey"	Television interview on Tahltan Language Revitalization	Edōsdi, Oscar Dennis (Tahltan language revitalization coordinator)/aired November 6, 2013
CHTK- "Open Connection"	Follow-up interview to 2013 episode on Tahltan Language Revitalization	Edōsdi/aired February 23, 2015

The Aboriginal Head Start and School District No. 87 were offering Tahltan language-learning opportunities prior to the implementation of the Tahltan Language and Culture Framework. Since then, Aboriginal Head Start workers attended the FPCC Language Nest Training Workshop (November 2015). School District No. 87 is supportive of our efforts to develop Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum materials for Tāɬtān which will teach students the language, culture, and history of the Tahltan people. In addition to establishing the DDN and working collaboratively with others in Tahltan traditional

communities, the TLRT have been steadfastly working towards Didene E Kune Mehōdihi

Eku Desijihi. Much of the work set out in Table 3 represents an impressive amount of

time, money, and commitment from people, and in particular members of the TLRT.

Tahltan language-learning opportunities extend outside traditional territories to include

urban Tahltans, for example, access to electronic language-learning tutor applications,

ongoing language-learning-material projects such as children's books and dictionaries,

as well as professional development opportunities. Moreover, the work represented in

Table 3 represents an investment in the future given the ongoing training and

professional development opportunities designed to prepare our people for the future

growth of language learning. Our determination is evident as we create and take

advantage of opportunities to share our language revitalization esdahūhedech by

attending workshops, giving interviews on television and radio, and producing

documentaries. I know my grandparents, Julia and Charley Callbreath, would be proud

of what our people have accomplished since the inception of the program in 2012.

2.8 The language nest model

The Cséyseten Family Language Nest program has been successfully operating in

British Columbia for the past three decades (Chambers, 2014). Much like the Maori and

the Hawaiian language nests, the Cséyseten Family Language Nest was the catalyst for

founding the T'selcéwtqen Clleqmél'ten[28] (Chambers, 2014; McIvor, 2005; Michel, 2005;

Okura, 2017). The TLRT would also like to develop a comprehensive interactive program

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[28] Chief Atahm School.

for Kindergarten to Grade 12, and hopefully beyond for language nest graduates. This is something that would most likely begin in Łuwechōn given the presence of the Iskut band-operated Klappan Independent Day School (personal communication, Edōsdi, 2016).

In BC, for the past 26 years, the FPCC has provided various funding programs and services to help BC First Nations revitalize their languages. The FPCC also administers the Federal Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI) grant funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage, to a maximum amount of $35,000 per language nest. However, the funding is competitive and there are eligibility requirements. FPCC provides funding to communities offering language learning for young children in full immersion settings where no English is spoken. This pre-school language nest program funds up to 10 language nest programs per year to a maximum of $20,000 per nest. It funds full immersion nest programs which operate a minimum of 15 hours per week, have a minimum of two fluent speakers at all times, with a maximum ratio of one speaker per five children. These nests are small and are essentially "granny's house" offerings that do not operate out of a licensed daycare or pre-school, and are not associated with a school (A. Parker, personal communication, June 17, 2016).

Full immersion language nests may not work for everyone. Our community is able to offer full immersion programming but that does not mean such programs would work in other communities. Providing a 100% immersion environment is, in many cases, a funding requirement. Table 4 lists full immersion language nests in BC that received

funding from FPCC in 2015/16 (FPCC 2016b, p. 19) and which loosely follow the school

year, September to April.

Table 4. FPCC language nest grant recipients

2015/16 FPCC Language nest grant recipients	
Recipient	**Language**
Gitwangak Education Society	Gitsenimx
Adams Lake Indian Band	Secwepemctsin
Okanagan Indian Band	Nsyilxcn
Gitanmaax Band	Gitsenimx
Hesquiaht Language Program	Nuu-chah-nulth
T'it'q'et Daycare & Preschool Society	St'át'imc
Heiltsuk Tribal Council	Heiltsuk
Ehattesaht Chinekint Tribe	Nuu-chah-nulth
Tahltan Central Council	Tahltan
Asaabuus Daycare	Ditidaht
McLeod Lake Indian Band	Tsekhene

Government support for language revitalization is limited and insufficient (Kelly,

2015; Okura, 2017). McIvor and Parker (2016) emphasize that, "as B.C. is home to 60%

of Canada's First Nations languages and most have the smallest number of speakers in

Canada, the situation here is even more challenging" (p. 23). Competition for

government funding is inevitable. Immersion programs for children vary and not all

programs offer a full immersion experience, but since there is no provincial or national

registry of immersion programs, there is no way of knowing how many types are in

operation. Ts'e7í7elt re Yecwemníletens[29] in Kamloops, BC is a licenced child care facility

that has plans to, one day, offer full day immersion programming: "When we speak

about language revitalization initiatives our Secwepemc communities are in dire need of

not only fluent speakers, but qualified and caring people who can interact with children

and youth" (J. Arnouse, personal communication, June 20, 2016). In the end, each

community defines its own language goals and objectives—and this includes defining

language immersion and fluency levels for speakers. Applying for government support is

not always an option.

2.9 Choosing a level

The process of deciding on a crochet project brings me great joy. The first thing I

check out are crochet patterns that have been ranked by designers for levels of

difficulty. Skill level designations alert me to how challenging a pattern will be and the

time involved to complete it.

Table 5 lists helpful media resources about Indigenous language immersion

programs. The organization of this table was inspired by skill-level-rated crochet

projects. Intermediate-level crochet patterns are more challenging than beginner-level

patterns and less challenging than advanced-level patterns. The third category lists more

advanced crochet patterns with expert ratings. These crochet patterns feature advanced

techniques. Similarly, if someone wants to learn about language nests or is considering

opening a language nest, I would suggest some of my favourite media resources to help

---

[29] Little Fawn Nursery.

them get started. I consider these classics and have also chosen them based on their

readability and accessibility.

Beginner (general information)

The media resources in this category are introductory and also documentaries.

The language nest story: As told by Kathy Michel (FPCC, 2014, September 16) along with

Dah dẕāhge nodeṣidē: We are speaking our language again (Edōsdi & Bourquin, 2016,

October 18) provide an introduction to several of our BC language nests. Both videos

highlight and give voice to the challenges and successes of language nests and are told

by the people doing the work.

Intermediate (practicalities)

The media resources in this category include introductory information specific to

the operation of language nests, ranging from how to obtain funding to providing details

about language-learning activities. The FPCC website (2016c) offers free downloadable

language nest resources and links to funding sources, as well as with other helpful

resources including the "Language nest handbook for B.C. First Nations communities"

(2014), the "Language and culture immersion programs handbook" (FPHC, n.d.),

"Language nest programs in B.C." (McIvor, 2006), and the "Language nest handbook

online companion toolkit" (FPCC 2016c).

Advanced (best practices)

The media resources in this category include introductory and intermediate

information but also include references to the national and international literature on

the topic. These resources are similar to advanced-level crochet patterns which include fancier and more intricate stitches, and they refer to the original language nests, the Te Kōhanga Reo and the 'Aha Pūnana Leo. For example, Chambers (2014), McIvor (2005), and Okura (2017) present overviews of national and international language nest programs and highlight BC language nests.

Table 5. Language nest documentation resources

Documentation resources		
Author	Title of media	Publication
Videos		
First Peoples' Cultural Council (Beginner)	*The language nest story: As told by Kathy Michel.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffUTiwsRlag	2014/Canada (21:03)
Edōsdi & Michael Bourquin (Beginner)	*Dah dẕāhge nodeẕidē: We are speaking our language again.* https://vimeo.com/217095185	2016/Canada (1:04:06)
Web sites		
First Peoples' Cultural Council (Beginner)	Language/Programs/Language Nest http://www.fpcc.ca/language/Programs/Language-nest.aspx Pre-School language nest program	2016c/Canada
First Peoples' Cultural Council (Intermediate)	Language nest handbook online companion toolkit	2016c/Canada
Graduate theses		
Natalie Chambers (Advanced)	*"They all talk Okanagan and I know what they are saying." Language nests in the early years: Insights, challenges, and promising practices.*	PhD/2014/ Canada
Onowa McIvor (Advanced)	*Building the nests: Indigenous language revitalization in Canada through early childhood immersion programs.*	MA/2005/ Canada
Eve K. Okura (Advanced)	*Language nests and language acquisition: An empirical analysis.*	PhD/2017 USA
Journals		
Jeanette King (Advanced)	"Te Kōhanga Reo Māori language revitalization" in L. Hinton & K. Hale (Eds.), *The green book of language revitalization in practice* (pp. 119–128).	2011/New Zealand
William H. Wilson & Kauanoe Kamanā (Advanced)	"Mai loko mai o ka ʼiʼini: Proceeding from a dream": The ʼAha Pūnana Leo connection in Hawaiian language revitalization." In L. Hinton & K. Hale (Eds.), *The green book of language revitalization in practice* (pp. 147–176).	2001/USA

2.10 Methodology: Tahltan Voiceability

In this study, I incorporated Tahltan Voiceability (Edōsdi, 2008)—a qualitative approach which seeks to honour all peoples' voices—to guide my research journey as I discussed and shared my learnings with others. I also incorporated Shawn Wilson's Indigenous methodological framework (2008) for storytelling as a way of sharing the findings. The approach in Tahltan Voiceability is similar to a phenomenological approach, a framework other Indigenous researchers have used in their examination of language revitalization experiences to understand their own lived experience in the course of examining it (Chambers 2014; McIvor, 2005; Michel, 2012). A storytelling approach allowed me to connect, on a personal level, to my learnings. Furthermore, storytelling has always been a family tradition. For example, I learned about family history, traditions, and personal experiences while sitting around the kitchen table. As I noted above, I have included my own personal endodēsdił at the beginning of each chapter to frame and guide the research along, and I have also included esdahūhedech of my co-researchers in Chapter Łēnt'e (4) where I present the learnings.

2.11 Summary

I began this chapter with an endodēsdił of hope about my journey to find a connection with my Ancestors. I reviewed the literature concerned with Tahltan language revival initiatives and language nests, I recommended language nest media resources, and I concluded with an introduction to my methodology, Tahltan Voiceability. The following chapter addresses the methodology used in this study.

Chapter Tādet'ē (3). Yehū Etl'ū (I wonder what she is crocheting)

If there is an Indigenous methodology, it is rooted in decolonizing contemporary power structures of the state. It will require non-Indigenous researchers stepping back, turning their gaze, and following rather than directing.

—Charles Menzies, 2016, p. 7

3.1 Crocheting a strong connection

Granny Julia taught me how to crochet. With great patience, she showed me how to form the foundation knot, the slip knot along with the other basic stitches: chain (ch), single crochet (sc), and double crochet (dc). She also taught me how to crochet simple scarfs and doll blankets. However, it was Granny Elizabeth who taught me how to crochet my first doily. Holding on to the tiny steel crochet hook and fine crochet cotton was awkward at first. I was used to crocheting with a big plastic crochet hook and yarn, yet there I was trying to crochet with a tiny steel crochet hook and fine cotton thread. That hook kept slipping out of my hand and bouncing on the floor. I thought I was never going to learn how to crochet doilies! She also taught me the value of following a pattern and counting stitches. Whenever I made a mistake, Granny Elizabeth pulled back the cotton thread and unraveled the stitches back to where I made the mistake and then I carried on from there.

I have been passionate about this art ever since I crocheted my first scarf. As an experienced crocheter, I am well aware of the degree of difficulty in crochet patterns, but as a burgeoning researcher and academic I did not know what to expect. The Indigenous Kwak'wala researcher, Patricia Rosborough (2012), used the production of art (in her case specifically the button blanket), to frame her research, as did Edōsdi (2012, 2017), and McIvor (2012). So, for me to really connect to the research process, I used the metaphor of crochet to frame my study. Since I did not have a written pattern of my first doily, I decided to create a pattern of it to help my readers understand the crochet metaphor (see Appendix A). I felt my grandmothers' guiding presence as I wrote down the instructions for each row. While I crocheted, I thought of how much more skilled I was because, just like my grandmothers, I was able to spot and correct my mistakes.

I love to crochet, especially when I am making something for someone, and so, this study also presented me with awesome yet challenging opportunities to create a legacy. I had never considered designing a crochet pattern before, but I did it, and now it can be shared with others. Whenever the writing of this thesis got to be too much for me, I took short breaks to pause and reflect on the research questions. I also asked for guidance to help me unravel and sort out my new learnings, to put them into words and ideas, so that I could bring our voices to academia.

3.2 Preparing for the voices

I prepared the interview questions based upon my understanding of Indigenous methodologies, specifically Tahltan Voiceability, and my review of the relevant literature about language nests. In addition, the questions were designed to answer the four guiding research questions:

1. What are the key considerations for <u>developing</u> the K'asba'e T'oh program in Tātl'ah?

2. What are the key considerations for <u>implementing</u> the K'asba'e T'oh program in Tātl'ah?

3. What <u>motivated</u> and <u>continues to motivate</u> people to be involved in K'asba'e T'oh?

4. How can the <u>experiences</u> of K'asba'e T'oh <u>assist others</u> in furthering their goals of Indigenous language revitalization?

As an Indigenous person, it is important to me to approach the guiding research questions with a methodology rooted in an Indigenous worldview. Kovach (2015) said that "as Indigenous peoples are moving into research, the most protected realm of the Western academe, we are *not* forgetting where we have come from" (p. 58)! Due to the significant contributions of distinctly Indigenous methodologies to academe by Indigenous scholars and visionary thinkers such as Wilson (2008)—and others, such as Absolon (2011), Debassige (2010), Edōsdi (2008; 2012); and Wilson & Restoule (2010)—Indigenous researchers like myself can engage in a research process that is better suited

to strengthening the identities of our peoples. Edōsdi (2012) explained the importance of honouring traditional Tahltan ways of knowing in academe:

> Instead of looking for a methodology from a western research perspective that seems to fit into an Indigenous perspective (such as participatory action research, community action research, critical ethnography, phenomenology, or narrative inquiry), or examining what Aboriginal cultural protocols are in regards to research, and then trying to match that up with a western academic methodology, I needed to look at my people's worldview, cultural protocols, language, relationships, and then name that methodology. (pp. 15–16)

The values and principles that guided this study were grounded in our Tahltan worldview (Edōsdi, 2008; 2012). Edōsdi (2012) describes the Tahltan methodology she created for her study, *Hedekeyeh Hots'ih Kāhidi—Our Ancestors are in us*, saying it "sets the tone for not only how I carried out my research, but also how I have presented the voices of the people from whom I have received learnings, the co-researchers" (p. 34).

In honouring Indigenous oral storytelling traditions, Tahltan Voiceability empowered me to re-present the voices—the learnings of my co-researchers, and my own. The sharing of kinship, teaching and passing down esdahūhedech have always been part of my world, and today it remains a powerful and natural way for me to connect with people. However, Tahltan Voiceability "provided a way for the voices of my people to guide me on my research journey to carry out honourable, useful, and transformative research—all part of an Indigenous research process" (Edōsdi, 2012,

p. 18). This approach helped me to connect to the learnings, but, on a (more) personal

level. Edōsdi (2012) used creative writing in her dissertation to showcase the learnings

of herself, her co-researchers, and her Ancestors. I work as an English instructor, so this

style of writing resonated with me. I am familiar with the transformational healing

power of creative writing, which Edōsdi (2008) elaborates as "Tahltan Voiceability" and

describes in the following way:

> I also wanted to extend it to mean how a people can find their voice and
>
> find strength in their voice in order to heal and become a stronger,
>
> healthier nation. By the very nature of my people's worldview, the
>
> research will be useful, transformative, and relational; it will be
>
> interconnected with our land, our language, and each other. (p. 15)

K'asba'e T'oh: Sustaining the intergenerational transmission of Tāłtān will make a

valuable contribution to our collective language revitalization efforts. It shows how

important and necessary it is for language revitalization plans to include programming

for young children, and, even more so, it substantiates the claim that "the process of

revitalizing our language can be as valuable as the goal itself" (Edōsdi, 2012, p. 239).

3.3 Getting ready to visit

The principal data collection strategy of this qualitative research study was the

interview. I visited with eight people to document their involvement in K'asba'e T'oh

(see Chapter Łēnt'e (4)). While I am a member of the Tahltan Nation, I would not be

described as a "seen face" in the Tātl'ah community given that I live in the community of

Lax Keen, a fact that I was fully conscious of. I was determined that this study would not

be an assessment or an evaluation of the language nest. Furthermore, I did not like

describing the people involved in this study as participants because the endodēsdił that I

am writing is from their perspective. The co-researchers are comprised of the people

involved in the language nest study, including myself; I am documenting the

esdahūhedech of my co-researchers. Therefore, this study

1. Identifies the people participating as co-researchers (each are formally

    introduced in Chapter Łēnt'e (4));

2. Refers to the interview sessions as visits because the co-researchers are the

    experts with respect to their experience, and my relationship with them will

    not end when this research is complete.

Showing honour and respect to people who are involved in research is

something that resonates with me. I tried my best to create a comfortable environment

for my co-researchers. For example, I chose not to write notes during the visits although

I sometimes wrote down new questions as they arose. My decision to not write too

much during visits helped me to be as present as possible and did not take me away

from the conversation, whether it was over the phone or in person.

3.4 Picking the research

In addition to conducting valuable research for my people, the study also had to

be something I could fit in with my full-time job. I asked Edōsdi, the director of our

Tahltan Language and Culture Program, for suggestions and advice. I considered many

topics, including the following: language surveys to find out what our people want for

language revitalization; the history of our language nests; the creation of our language

and culture authority, Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē (DDN); the development of our Tahltan

Kindergarten to Grade 12 language curriculum framework; and the development of our

electronic Tahltan language tutor applications (apps). My first choice was documenting

the work we are doing with Simon Fraser University (SFU) to develop Tahltan language

tutor apps, where I would help develop assessment materials for the apps and

document the development process. My last on-campus semester at UVic centred

around this topic and included a training session with the developers. However, my

committee expressed doubts about this topic since the apps had not yet been

developed. After much consideration, and in consultation with Edōsdi, I switched my

focus to documenting how our first Tahltan language nest got started in Łuwechōn.

Since Edōsdi was considering focusing her research on evaluating the effectiveness of

our language nests (personal communication, November 2015), documenting the

history would be helpful. I officially switched my topic in December 2015; I revised my

thesis proposal and drafted an ethics application for UVic's Human Research Ethics

Board (HREB). Then, in March 2016, Edōsdi informed me that one of the language

mentors had stepped back from the language nest in Łuwechōn, so I switched my

research topic to the Tātl'ah language nest. I feel that I have listened carefully and

respectfully to the voices of our people and am convinced that this is a valuable piece of

work.

3.5 Getting permission

  The DDN (Tahltan Language and Culture Council) is a governing body that ensures our nations' knowledge and heritage are not exploited. Therefore, in order to conduct research in Tahltan territory I sought permission and guidance from the DDN (see Appendix B for the DDN's terms of reference). In January 2016, I wrote a Letter of Intent to do a case study of the Dzimēs Chō T'oh. Since the DDN was not meeting until March 2016, Edōsdi offered to personally present it to the DDN Chair, Pauline Hawkins, the Tahltan Band Council Chief, Terri Brown, the Iskut Band Council Chief, Marie Quock, and the president of the TCG, Chad Day, on her next trip to Tātl'ah. At that time I received everyone's verbal consent to go ahead. On March 13, 2016, I video-conferenced in to the DDN meeting in Terrace, BC; each board member received copies of the Letter of Intent and my 10-page thesis proposal. Following my presentation, the group provided feedback and stressed the importance of giving the questions to the people ahead of time so they had time to reflect upon the questions and prepare questions they might have prior to the conversation.

  Even though I received my people's approval, as a UVic graduate student I could not start data collection until I also received permission from UVic's HREB. The work I submitted for the ethics application helped me establish a framework for the visits. I developed a plan of how to inform people of the risks involved and what information I would present to them so they could make an informed decision about participating (see Appendices E, F, and G). Upon receiving the ethics approval, I began the interview

process. This process included the language nest coordinator, Odelia Dennis, asking the

parents whether she could give me their contact information. I telephoned everyone

who had expressed interest in learning more about the study.

The co-researchers who I spoke with over the telephone gave me verbal consent,

while the co-researchers with whom I spoke to face-to-face signed a consent form (see

Appendix F). I visited with eight co-researchers. Among the potential benefits I outlined

for my co-researchers was the prospect of their gaining a new perspective on their

work, as the shared learnings that I would document would be analyzed in a way that

could help them to better understand and articulate their contribution to the

revitalization of our Tahltan language.

3.6 Language nest profile

K'asba'e T'oh has been in operation since December 18, 2014, and is the second

of three language nests that the Tahltan Central Government's (TCG) Socio-Cultural

Working Group (SCWG) and DDN have founded. K'asba'e T'oh operates out of a house

subleased from the Dease Lake Pregnancy Outreach Program. It is the only Tahltan

language nest not situated on reserve land; the Dease Lake Indian Reserve No. 9 is

about 5 kilometres away. All our language nests resemble a family-like setting where

children spend time with language mentors and communicate only in the Ancestral

language—it is not like a daycare, a preschool, or a Head Start Program. With a one-to-

three ratio of language mentors to children, it is like visiting with estsū[30] and estsiye.[31]

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[30] Grandma.

Our language nests are modelled after the Cséyseten Family Language Nest immersion program of the Adams Lake Band near Chase, BC.

Two language mentors and a coordinator collaborate to guide a full immersion environment at K'asba'e T'oh where only Tāłtān is spoken to a small group of children, aged six months to four years old. The group is intended to be similar to that of a traditional family structure and, therefore, includes a cross-section of children by age. Currently there are seven children registered with four or five children of varying ages attending each day. The language nest operates 14 hours per week from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tuesday to Friday, September to June each year. Parents, along with everyone else in the language nest, respect the no-English policy of "Didenek'eh hodinde."[32] Parents are definitely allowed to speak English if there is a question about their child's health, development, or behaviour. English is also spoken to parents, but the concern is first explained as much as possible in Tāłtān and then translated to English.

The coordinator maintains a clean and safe environment, provides caregiving for the children (e.g., changing diapers, providing snacks, putting children down for naps), and organizes day-to-day activities which provide both structure and routine for the children and keeps them engaged and learning. The coordinator and language mentors have conversations in Tāłtān and provide the children with Tāłtān words and phrases specific to the activity. All of the activities are in Tāłtān. Activities include telling stories, exchanging news, singing songs, reading books, nature walks, and playing outside in the

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[31] Grandpa.

[32] Speak our people's way.

yard. The coordinator also creates and develops language-learning resource materials,

hosts weekly evening Tāłtān learning sessions for language nest parents and siblings,

and organizes monthly luncheons with the parents, grandparents, and Elders of the

community.

3.7 Meeting with the co-researchers

Eleven people (director, coordinator, language mentors, parents) who were

directly involved with K'asba'e T'oh as of May 2016 received an invitation to participate

in this study. These visits began on May 5, 2016, and concluded on August 3, 2016.

Initial contact with co-researchers varied. I am related to the administrators (the

director and the coordinator) and both language mentors, so I had their contact

information. The coordinator provided me with contact information for the four parents

who had expressed interest in receiving more information about the study. I telephoned

eight people and invited them to participate in the study (see Appendix E). I sent an

email with attachments to everyone interested in participating, with the exception of

the language mentors who received hand-delivered copies of the letter of introduction

(see Appendix F), the consent form (see Appendix G), and the questions (see Appendix

H). The consent forms and questions vary somewhat depending upon the group. I

waited several days before telephoning to give each person time to read the material

before arranging the initial visit. In addition to the initial visit, I visited with each co-

researcher a second time to revise or add to their first sharing. This gave me the

opportunity to seek clarification and gather new information.

All co-researchers live in Tātl'ah, with the exception of one who lives in La̲x Keen. The visits took place when and where it would be most convenient for the co-researcher. Of the 14 overall visits (one visit was with two language mentors together), seven took place by telephone and seven were face-to-face (two in La̲x Keen, one in Terrace, four in Tātl'ah). Six co-researchers were visited twice; one language mentor, due to scheduling challenges, was visited once. There were three sets of questions: one for the administrators, one for the language mentors, and one for the parents (see Appendix H). With the co-researcher's permission, I audio-taped the visits using an iPhone—Voice Memo App, and the Blue Yeti USB Microphone with the Apple MacBook Pro—and I later transcribed the conversations from all of the visits.

Following the process outlined above, I created shortened transcripts, one for each co-researcher. Each shortened transcript was compiled from original transcripts. The shortened transcripts are a thematic reduction of the original transcripts. Each tells an endodēsdiɬ about the co-researchers' experiences in her or his own words. Since the shortened transcripts were too lengthy to go into my thesis, I reduced them—the cut was theme based and each shortened transcript was re-created into an endodēsdiɬ. The endodēsdiɬ is an edited version of its shortened transcript but stays true to the authentic voice of the co-researcher.

Once the shortened transcripts were re-created, I revisited the data: I looked specifically for emerging themes and answers to the four guiding research questions. This method has been used by others researching language nests (Chambers, 2012; McIvor, 2005). Both Chambers (2012) and McIvor (2005) employed a phenomenological

reflection model for coding data. Creswell (2007) distinguishes phenomenological research from an individual narrative study this way: "Whereas a narrative study reports the life of a single individual, a phenomenological study describes the meaning of several individuals of their lived experience" (p. 57). In order to map the themes, I printed out each shortened transcript and then used different coloured highlighters for the various themes; I wrote initial thoughts in the margins and then I looked back and summarized the themes and important points. The data constitutes the voice of my co-researchers, the experts. I took breaks away from the coding, and after a while the research began to speak to me and the themes began to emerge.

My learning of Tahltan protocols was ongoing, knowing that it is important to conduct research in a respectful manner (Absolon, 2011; Edōsdi, 2012; Kovach, 2012; Wilson, 2008). I was mindful of our cultural protocol of giving thanks. As a way to honour my co-researchers' wisdom and knowledge, I gifted them for each visit they participated in to express my most sincere gratitude and appreciation for their time and involvement. Many of the gifts had cultural significance and were chosen with the co-researcher in mind. Traditionally, it is customary to gift someone with something that displays his or her clan or crest. Most of the gifts were purchased from either Tahltan or northwest coast First Nations artists. A third gift for the parents was a children's First Nations (counting or alphabet) book that could be adapted with Tāłtān. Co-researchers will also receive a copy of this thesis along with a crocheted doily. In addition to giving thanks to the co-researchers, I personally presented the language nest children with a First Nations doll dressed in an outfit I had crocheted.

3.8 Re-creating the visits

Co-researchers received the interview questions via email in advance of both visits, with the exception of the language mentors who received hand-delivered copies. Each visit focused on the co-researcher's experience in the language nest program and generally followed the interview questions. While it was important to let the words of the co-researcher guide the visit, it was also important for me to expand upon the conversation in the process of listening. Finding balance between listening and probing could have been challenging but I knew that, if needed, I could elicit more from our subsequent visits. After transcribing each conversation, I made note of the things about which I needed clarification or confirmation and included them in the second visit. I created follow-up questions for each group after I completed all the first visits. Because I did not collect enough specific data to create a timeline and a descriptive case study of the language nest, I used McIvor's (2005) "conversation topic areas" as a guide to help me create more direct questions.

Co-researchers received the draft transcript of their first visit via email to review and approve, with the exception of the language mentors who received hand-delivered copies. Only two co-researchers revised their transcripts, both making grammatical and spelling corrections. After transcribing all the second visits, I revised the transcripts and emailed the co-researchers their second transcript to review, with the exception of one language mentor who received a hand-delivered copy. Only two of the co-researchers revised their second transcript, again to make grammatical and sentence structure corrections.

While I was learning along the way, I did not begin formal analysis until I completed all the interviews. There were a couple of exceptions where I did a bit of analyzing to make sure I had collected enough data for a timeline and a language nest description. Seidman (2013) explains the process:

> Although, the separation of generating from analyzing data is impossible, my own approach is to avoid imposing meaning from one participant's interviews on the next. Therefore, I first complete all the interviews. Then I study all the transcripts. In that way I try to minimize imposing on the generative process of the interviews what I think I have learned from other participants. (p. 116)

After each visit, I saved the audio file to my computer and then I transcribed it into a Word document. Once all the transcripts from the visits were approved by the co-researchers, I began analyzing the data using an analysis framework influenced by Seidman (2013, p. 120), and inspired by Edōsdi (2012, pp. 99–106) and Thompson (2004, pp. 56–57).

My analysis process for analyzing the conversations was as follows:

1. Listening to the recordings and reading over each transcript several times;

2. Copying and pasting co-researchers' transcript answers into a single Word document;

3. Listening to recordings, and reading transcripts while highlighting and labelling interesting and quotable sections;

4. Copying and pasting the highlighted sections of each co-researcher into a

   separate Word document to write a shortened transcript;

5. Meaning-making of shortened transcript data to identify themes as they

   related to each of the research questions and coding for themes (Seidman,

   2013, p. 121);

6. Re-writing an endodēsdił for each of the shortened transcripts.

3.9 Designing the esdahūhedech

I have presented esdahūhedech in Chapter Łēnt'e (4) to honour the voices of my

co-researchers and to enrich the readers' experience with authentic narrative

storytelling. By creating shortened transcripts and then re-creating the shortened

transcript into an endodēsdił, I wanted to give readers an opportunity to experience this

language-learning environment firsthand. Giving uninterrupted voice to co-researchers

is something not commonly done:

Euro-Western academic discipline-related language continues to

dominate analysis procedures, interpretation, and reporting

procedures. During the reporting, for instance, the researcher

pulls together the voices of the interviewees to create

generalizations patterns, or sameness communicated in Euro-

Western academic discipline language. The voices of the

researched cease to exist except when cited to illustrate a theme

or a pattern. (Chilisa, 2012, p. 214)

3.10 Bringing the esdahūhedech together

In Chapter Łēnt'e (4), I presented the data analysis and interpretation of the co-researchers transcribed visits in the form of an endodēsdił, to honour and give voice to the co-researchers' experiences. My inspiration for the organization of Chapter Łēnt'e (4): K'asba'e T'oh Dischā[33] was a crocheted family heirloom blanket (see Figure 3). This crocheted blanket symbolizes the collective voice of my co-researchers and myself. Each crocheted square represents an endodēsdił which I arranged according to size and colour (main theme and subthemes) and joined with new yarn (postscripts). The postscripts are thematic discussions of the esdahūhedech.

Figure 3. Dad's blanket

3.11 Summary

I began this chapter with an endodēsdił about the importance of finding connection in the research process. I described the methodology, the selection of the co-researchers, and the data collection process, and I concluded with the data analysis plan. This next chapter is the most important part of this study for it represents the

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[33] I love the Dease Lake Language Nest.

circle time sharing of kinship, the teaching and passing down of esdahūhedech which

has been practiced for time immemorial.

Chapter Łēnt'e (4). K'asba'e T'oh Dischā (I love the Dease Lake Language Nest)

Parents did not teach the language because they loved us and they didn't want us to suffer, to be abused, or to have a tough life. Because our parents loved us and our grandparents loved us, they tried to protect us from the humiliation and suffering that they went through. If you truly love your parents and grandparents, you can reconcile that. Because we live in an enlightened age today, opportunities are available to us that simply were not available to our parents.

—Darrell R. Kipp, Language activist, 2000, p. 7

4.1 From start to finish

I search through my crochet patterns for the perfect project.

One time my dad picked out a blanket that suited him.

A handmade gift from me, sends my blessings and good thoughts.

I carefully unravel stitches to correct my mistakes.

Sometimes I delete, rearrange, and sort out my learnings.

With my readers in mind, I do my best to write clearly and concisely.

4.2 Introduction

This chapter presents what I learned from my visits with the eight co-researchers, the people who helped me to answer the research questions. Administrators, language mentors, and parents shared their perspectives and

experiences about the way in which K'asba'e T'oh got started in Tātl'ah, how things were progressing, and what motivated and continues to motivate people to be involved. Through an analysis of these visits, I share esdahūhedech and report on emerging themes. The shortened transcripts and esdahūhedech are digest versions of the original transcripts. Each is a collaborative creation between the co-researcher and me. First, I used the co-researchers' transcripts to construct individual shortened transcripts and then, after thematic analysis from their shortened transcript, I constructed an endodēsdił to showcase the main theme and subthemes.

While I have used exact words and time sequence from the original transcripts, sometimes—in order to move the endodēsdił forward, and for better flow—I added words and started sentences midway. I did my best to honour my co-researchers' words by sticking close to the essence of the visits' words and meanings. The co-researchers reviewed their own shortened transcript and endodēsdił, and confirmed with me that they made sense and were representative of their perspectives and experiences in the language nest. Furthermore, the esdahūhedech of the co-researchers have addressed the guiding research questions and have been studied for thematic connections. One main theme of chitleṣidēdli and three subthemes of collaboration, nation-building, and identity and belonging rose to the fore as most significant.

I really wanted the co-researchers to be present in this study. I hope I have found a balance and created work that is accessible to both non-academic and academic readers. The most significant departure from academia was using co-researchers' exact words throughout the analysis rather than paraphrasing or summarizing. This is evident

in the use of lengthy quotations from shortened transcripts. Not including co-researchers' shortened transcripts, the short version of their transcripts, proved to be a difficult decision. However, what I aim to show is a concise sampling in the form of esdahūhedech to present readers with an authentic understanding of the issues involved in bringing an endangered Indigenous language back into everyday use through immersion programming for young children.

4.3 Organization of learnings

The learnings are organized as follows: I begin with an endodēsdił of a co-researcher that reflects his or her unique personal experience in the language nest and corresponds with the main theme of chitleṣidēdli and the three subthemes of collaboration, nation-building, and identity and belonging, all which emerged from the process of analysis. I invite readers to see for themselves how these themes appear in each endodēsdił before I comment in a postscript.

The main theme and subthemes appear across all the esdahūhedech. There were some overlap and fluidity between themes and so I found it challenging to sort the learnings into any specific category. Each endodēsdił presents a uniquely different perspective depending upon the lived experience of the co-researcher. I encourage my readers to envision themselves in the language nest during chitleṣidēdli, listening and learning from the experience of others.

4.4 Introduction to the co-researchers

The following are introductions to each of the co-researchers who helped me

answer the guiding research questions. I am very appreciative of their support and their

willingness to share their insights.

Administrators

Edōsdi: Director, Tahltan Language and Culture Program

Edōsdi is Tahltan from the Tl'abanot'īne territory. Her English name is Judy

Thompson. She is a member of the Tsesk'iye Clan and is esdedze.[34] Edōsdi has been

involved in learning Tāłtān for 26 years. She is the director of the Tahltan Language and

Culture Program. In May 2017, she began as a learner in the Mentor-Apprentice

Program (MAP) with mentor, Jenny Quock. She is also an assistant professor in the First

Nations Studies Program at the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC). I visited

with Edōsdi twice, both times at my home in Lax̱ Keen.

Odelia Dennis: Language nest coordinator

Odelia is Tahltan from the Tl'abanot'īne territory. Her traditional Tahltan name is

Gileh. She is a member of the Ch'iyōne[35] Clan. She is related to me through my

grandmother Julia. I met Odelia at the University of Victoria (UVic) on the first day of our

Masters of Indigenous Language Revitalization (MILR) program in Victoria, BC. She has

been involved in learning Tāłtān for four years. Odelia is a researcher on the Tāłtān

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[34] My younger sister.

[35] Wolf.

Language Revitalization Team (TLRT) and is also the language nest coordinator. She is a second-language instructor for UVic's Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization (DILR) program in Tātl'ah. Her son Arden is a graduate of Dzimēs Chō T'oh and K'asba'e T'oh. I visited with Odelia twice, once over the telephone and once in my hotel room at the Northway Motor Inn in Tātl'ah.

Language mentors

Pat Etzerza

Pat was born and raised in Tlēgo'īn and is a member of the Tsesk'iye Clan. His traditional Tahltan name is Shonmeta'. Pat is related to me through his marriage to Theresa. He is a semi-fluent Tāłtān speaker. I visited with Pat and Theresa in my hotel room at the Best Western Inn in Terrace, BC.

Theresa Etzerza

Theresa was born and raised in Tlēgōīn and is a member of the Ch'iyōne Clan. Her traditional Tahltan name is Gis-soū-met. Her maiden name is Nole, and she is related to me through her grandfather, Kishkush Edwin Pete Tashoots. My grandmother Julia (Vance) Callbreath and Kishkush were first cousins. Theresa is a semi-fluent Tāłtān speaker. I visited with Theresa twice, once with her husband Pat in my hotel room at the Best Western Inn in Terrace, BC, and once by herself in my hotel room at the Northway Motor Inn in Tātl'ah.

Parents

<u>Carmen Dennis</u>

Carmen was born in Whitehorse, Yukon, and has lived in Tātl'ah since she was four years old. She is a member of the Tsesk'iye Clan. Her daughter Myra had just completed her first year in the language nest. I visited with Carmen twice over the telephone.

<u>Cindy Dennis</u>

Cindy was born and raised in Tātl'ah and is a member of Tsesk'iye Clan. Her daughter Makinley had just completed her first year in the language nest. I visited with Cindy twice over the telephone.

<u>Roanna Gleason</u>

Roanna was born and raised in Whitehorse, Yukon, but has been working and residing in Tātl'ah since November 2013. She is the granddaughter of Jean (Callbreath) Jamieson, my grandfather Charley's sister. Her son Walker has been in the language nest since he was seven months old. I visited with Roanna twice, once over the telephone and once in my hotel room at the Northway Motor Inn in Tātl'ah.

<u>Mariko Waite</u>

Mariko is from the Carrier Sekani Nation. She was born and raised in Tātl'ah. Her daughter, Chloe, was in K'asba'e T'oh last year, and her son Lachlan has been in the language nest since he was two years old. I visited with Mariko twice, once over the telephone and once in my room at the Northway Motor Inn in Tātl'ah.

4.5 The esdahūhedech of the co-researchers

Edōsdi: Beginning with the roots

Several of us went to a conference, the Chief Atahm School First Nations

Languages Conference in April of 2013. Angela Dennis, Odelia Dennis, Verna Vance,

Pauline Hawkins' parents Patrick and Edith Carlick, and Pat and Theresa Etzerza all

attended the conference. We met Kathryn Michel, who started her community's

language nest back in 1987. She gave me advice about how to get a nest started, what

kind of funding to look for, as well how not to do it through a Head Start Program

(AHSOR: Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve), not to treat it like a daycare, to treat it like

going to visit grandma, and that it's like a family setting. She talked about all these

different things I would never have thought about in a million years. And by May 2014,

one year later, we were able to open a language nest in Iskut. I had a budget through

the Socio-Cultural Working Group (SCWG), so I was able to use some of the funding from

that to get the nest opened and then we applied for money from First Peoples' Cultural

Council (FPCC) and we were able to receive funding for the Iskut nest. Then through FPCC

there is the Aboriginal Language Initiative Grant (ALI), which is federal money. I applied

for the funds in January 2014 and we were able to get funding to start the nest in Dease

Lake. By August 2014 we received the funding, and we opened the nest in December

2014. I just followed what Kathryn told me, and how they got their nest off the ground,

and I mean they have had their nest open for 20 years now! Our dream and our goal is

to have immersion settings in the schools, like Kindergarten to Grade 12. It would

probably happen first in Iskut because it's a band-run school, and so I think it would be easier to implement. That's our dream.

I first started learning the language from Granny and Grandpa back in 1991. I didn't learn to speak the language fluently and still haven't, but going through that process of finding out, learning songs, learning stories, meeting our relatives, meeting more Elders, that definitely changed who I was and who I am. I feel really proud of what we've done as a people. With the documentary we did, we were able to get footage of the babies and adults speaking. And I feel as though I'm a key part of the work we're doing, so I feel a part of our community, our people. Even though I'm not physically up there all the time—I don't live up there, and I don't think I ever will—but just being involved in this, it connects me to our people.

I see the language nests as being the foundation of the revitalization of our language. It's sort of like getting to the roots, teaching the babies, so I see everything going from there. We still need to work with the parents. We all learn to speak our first language as babies, as toddlers, as newborns by just hearing language and just being around the language, and so this is where I see us doing it as naturally as we can. Obviously, it's not, if it were really natural, parents would be speaking it at home to their babies. But it's not happening yet, so I see this as working toward that. Maybe down the road we will have babies learning Tāłtān at home. If I had to only work on one program and get rid of all the other ones, I'd stick with the language nests. That's to me the number one, most important one, and so from there, everything flows from that with our language revitalization work.

Postscript

The endodēsdił of Edōsdi exemplified how working with others led to the successful implementation of our language nests. Venturing out with language champions and fellow language advocates, Edōsdi discovered relationships outside the Tahltan Nation which would be instrumental in providing funding, networking, and mentorship for developing language nests. In addition, she touches beautifully on the connection her heart has made to her people while on her journey to learn more about her language and culture, and the pride she feels from the work our nation has done so far in promoting the intergenerational transmission of our Tahltan language. Edōsdi places much value in language nests being central to a language revitalization plan.

This next endodēsdił is another great example of gathering people together, but this time it originates from inside the nest where people are being supported and empowered to learn the language.

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Odelia Dennis: Learning our language

At 12:50 we welcome the children into the language nest in the boot room. So, we do greetings with them and the parents. And then the children come inside and we ask them what do they want to play with because we have a lot of totes with different themes of toys, and so we have play time. And then after that is usually when the children start getting hungry, and so we have snack time after everyone is in the language nest. They have snack and then after that they have to go and wash their hands and then go have another little bit of free play again, and then after that we either do an art or craft activity like painting or colouring or beading. And then after that

we read a book to them and talk about the weather and do attendance, for chitleṣidēli

(we come together) what we call circle time. Once we are done with circle then they

have more free play, which is with the puppets or drawing on the dry-erase board. And

then after that we usually do a little bit more songs and then at the end of the day is

when the children like to go outside and play until four-thirty when their parents pick

them up.

We really do get to know our children very well. It's very interesting because

we don't spend a lot of hours with these children, but the hours that we do spend with

them it's like quality time with children. Because they're doing fun things, and I think

that's why all children who attend language nest really enjoy it there, and they look

forward to coming there. And it's really funny because when I was teaching the

language to the adults in the UVic program, one of the language nest children came

over, and she was looking mean towards me, and I asked her what's wrong, and she

said something like, "You're supposed to be at language, you're supposed to be at

school!" I thought that was so cute, and it's always nice to know when children miss

the language nest.

I think networking with other language nests would be beneficial in that sense

where we could all possibly work together to come up with a plan for how do we get

children to speak the language rather than speak English. I know one obvious way is

to teach the parents the language, but there has to be some strategies that we could

come up with. What I would like to see is all the language nest coordinators,

caretakers, and fluent speakers come together for a networking conference or

whatever. That would be so beneficial because it's a struggle sometimes. We're very lucky because we have two language nests happening in our territory, and we have one that's up and coming, and so we are able to network with each other all the time. Whereas some First Nations in BC may not have that.

Learning my Tahltan language has really put me at ease with my identity issues, which started in early adulthood. It seems like whatever anyone says about Iskut, it doesn't really bother me because I know my language, no one can take that away from me. They can talk about where I'm from, they can talk, they can say my grandpa wasn't Tahltan, or they can say anything about that, but they could not say that I don't even know my language. They couldn't say that because that's something that I have that can't be taken. So, I definitely identify myself as a Tahltan woman. I strongly identify with being Tahltan now; whereas, before it was people causing me to question that.

I started learning the Tahltan language in 2012, and my son Arden was two years old, so he barely even spoke English. I remember feeling so fulfilled in my life when he could understand me. And I would be alone in that, right? And then when Dzimēs Chō T'oh (Iskut Language Nest) opened, it was all five little kids, including my son. It was starting to happen all over again, all these children were understanding Tāɫtān and were responding to my Tāɫtān commands, and I was just so thrilled.

It's so amazing because the parents always tell me, "My child knows more Tāɫtān than I do." And I always say, "Yah, they do. They know more Tāɫtān than you." I really wish that more parents would decide to learn their language, so that they can

speak to their children at home. And also, what I would really like is for us to begin

doing language houses for adults because the one common feedback we get from

parents and other community members is—I wish we had this for the older children. I

really believe that an immersion house or language house would work for the people

who are genuinely interested in learning their language.

Postscript

The endodēsdił of Odelia strongly represents each theme. She provided

readers with a glimpse into the routine established in the nest. The chitleṣidēli, or the

gathering together of the people, is what was also exemplified in the endodēsdił of

Edōsdi of getting the nest established. The teamwork, mentorship and leadership

skills displayed in this endodēsdił are the qualities that go into the actual workings of

the nest community.

In her endodēsdił, Odelia identified the need for formal language nest

networking. This refers to the strength that comes with collaboration, needed for

problem-solving and moral support. Odelia, as a second-language learner, shared her

issues with her identity, issues that she has since resolved, which she attributes to

learning her language. And now, in her role as a teacher, she is able to pass on what

she has learned to others. Odelia and Edōsdi have ideas for expanding the immersion

program. Odelia recognizes the need for language learning for parents and people

outside the nest, and proposes establishing immersion programming for people

genuinely interested in learning our language.

This next endodēsdił will help to explain the power behind the words of Edōsdi: "Even though I'm not physically up there all the time—I don't live up there, and I don't think I ever will—but just being involved in this, it connects me to our people." Similarly, Odelia's emphasizes that "I definitely identify myself as a Tahltan woman."

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Pat Etzerza: Starting with the tots

Prior years, we had our language program but it was just ad hoc. You know we'd get funding from the government and it would only go for so long. Then when the money runs out everything runs out. Judy Thompson (Edōsdi) said she received some money to revitalize our language, and she asked me if I wanted to be involved because I've been involved for quite some years trying to revitalize our language. And I said I would, so I got involved and lo and behold I became a board member for Dah Dẕahge Nodeṣidē (DDN/Tahltan Language and Culture Council). And like my wife Theresa said, it is very important that we revitalize our language. It's our identity. It defines who we are as people. You know we have our own language, our own history. We're different people. Your identity, you must know your language to know who you are and where you come from 'cause it's very important that you know your history, your language, your customs. It's so important that we start with the tots because I've witnessed, I see it happening right in front of my eyes, these kids are picking it up so quickly and that's an awesome feeling!

This language nest has generated a lot of interest from amongst our people. They're getting to hear those little ones speaking, and that's so awesome to hear those little kids speaking like us. I went in the store last week and to one of our little students I said, "Dūda ahnt'ē?" "Soga ast'eh."[36] And I started counting I said, "Łige, łakē."[37] She went right to ten. She stopped and she looked around. It touched everybody in that store. Everybody says, "Wow!" That's ever awesome to see. And then, we have students in our language nest, and they're not Tahltan. They're from a different nation. I said to this one, "You're from Hazelton." "Oh, I'm not. I'm from Telegraph. I'm Tahltan!" It's like ptarmigan's nest. See we're trying to nest. We're trying to nurture these young, our young children. We're trying to nurture, that's why we say we have a home setting for our language, so that we've got the kitchen, the bedroom, nintē[38] or dinbeda?[39] or whatever.

I will tell you another story about when that Lieutenant Governor[40] came to Dease Lake. She came to visit our nest and everything worked out perfectly. Those kids were asking for what they wanted to drink, and in what cup—like we have green, red, all kinds of different coloured cups. They went to Odelia and said, "Desbet,"[41] and she gave them something to eat. And "Enla'ghatān' otṣ"[42] that's all you say "Enla'ghatān' otṣ";

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[36] I am fine.

[37] Two.

[38] Sleep.

[39] Are you hungry?

[40] The Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia visited K'asba'e T'oh on September 18, 2015.

[41] I'm hungry.

[42] Wash your hands.

they run to the bathroom. And then as the Lieutenant Governor was leaving, she turned

around, and my little granddaughter said, "Nanustī."[43] That took her heart with her. "I'll

see you," she said. It was so awesome for her to say.

Postscript

Like the administrators, Pat was already involved with Tahltan language

revitalization before becoming a board member on the DDN and a mentor in the

language nest. Collaboration with Canadian governments is not new, but these

arrangements have only provided support for short-term language programming. Pat

acknowledged that the language is our identity and that it defines who we are as a

nation. It is vital to begin connecting the children to their culture at a young age. The

children will emerge as leaders and mentors as they learn the language and use it, both

in the language nest and outside the language nest.

In this next endodēsdił, Theresa describes the changing role of language learning

and points out that the language nest children are generating a lot of interest in the

Tahltan language.

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Theresa Etzerza: Picking up the language

Our role in the language nest is to help Odelia to correctly pronounce the words

and speak more to the little ones in Tā̄łtān. Our granddaughter Kylielou is in the

language nest and like my husband Pat said, you'd be amazed how much she knows

'cause when she comes to our house, we continue teaching her Tahltan language and

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[43] I will see you.

asking her to say the words with us. You'd be amazed at how much she understands because she's only three. She started when she was two years old. She started when Odelia's son Arden was in the language nest. I'm so amazed at him. He answers us with Tahltan language because his mom taught him at home, and it's important to be taught at home.

Our role also in the language nest is being the estsū and the estsiye, grandma and grandpa 'cause it's like a family setting. It's been awesome working on this language program and learning how to teach Tahltan language to the kids, and like Pat said, hopefully one day it will be taught at home too. It's important to us that we all learn to speak it, and even to learn the basic words like introducing yourself and greeting people; it's a beginning. I say, "Theresa ja' sini, edla Sarah uyeh ete'ē ja' Loveman Nole."[44] And when you come into the building, like in the morning, you say, "Chacholōne hoti'ē"[45] or if you come in the afternoon, "Dẕenēẕ hoti'ē."[46]

Here at K'asba'e T'oh, Ptarmigan's Nest, the parents' involvement is really good because the parents come to our get-togethers we have on Thursday nights, and they come into the nest and sit with us for a while to see what we are teaching their children. We have a very good outcome of the parents that bring their children. They are also trying to learn the language, so they would know what their child is learning from us.

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[44] My name is Theresa and my parents are Sarah and Loveman Nole.

[45] Good morning.

[46] Good afternoon.

There is a little girl that's going to the language nest in Iskut. She saw me in the arena, and she said, "Dūda āhnt'ē?"[47] I turned to her and said, "Aw, nedishchā. Soga ast'eh." Then I asked her, "Dūda ahnt'ē?" She says, "Mā."[48] You see she answered me. I told her, "I'm fine and, how are you? You're not sick?" And she answered me back that she was okay 'cause earlier she was really warm, like feverish. I almost started crying when she told me that, "Dūda ahnt'ē?" So, you see the little ones are picking up the language. Yes, "Kaṣden estseyh."[49]

Postscript

Theresa shared with me that she and her husband are grandparents not only for their own grandchildren but also the language nest children. K'asba'e T'oh provides a place where language learning can occur because it is not happening in the children's homes. Theresa wants to see children learning their language at home. Her endodēsdił about the young child speaking to her in Tāłtān outside the language nest is something Edōsdi and Pat spoke about as well, which speaks to Theresa's self-identification as a Tahltan person as well as the importance of having someone speak to her in our language.

The last four esdahūhedech are from the parents' perspectives. It is evident from these narratives that their children are picking up the language and are happy at K'asba'e T'oh.

<center>***</center>

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[47] How are you?

[48] No.

[49] I almost cried.

Carmen Dennis: Singing Tāłtān

My daughter Myra, she seems to be one of their star pupils, so for me, it's made me very proud because I took just a little bit of language learning when I was in elementary but it was never a full afternoon or anything. I don't even think it was like maybe half an hour long. So, to hear my little girl, I mean she can sing songs that they teach her. She can sing it in Tāłtān. You know, she's asked something in Tāłtān, she can understand it. It just makes me very proud to know that our children are getting a part of their culture back. Like these young ones, well they are understanding their language, and I can see a difference. A couple of years ago it was just a few children. It seemed a bit more sporadic, and this year, it's more continuous. You know other than when they (the language mentors and coordinator) go for their schooling in the language program, it's every week. On the days that Myra doesn't go, Thursdays would be one of them, if another child from that group can't make it then sometimes they will call me and ask if Myra can make it. So sometimes she goes all four days, from Tuesday to Friday. And she loves it there. She looks forward to going to language nest.

Her singing took me by surprise this year, and for her to memorize it! The singing of it. I was like, holy man! I didn't expect my daughter to memorize that and getting so many compliments from the instructors and from the Elders. And when they have other students that are in the language program, every now and then they come over to the language nest here in Dease Lake like from Telegraph or from Iskut to build up their hours, and then they would come up and compliment me and be like, "Hey, you know your daughter, she catches on to this really good. You know we've heard she's a star pupil." And that makes me really proud.

Well, I'm hoping it will continue to grow from here. 'Cause when I was growing up we only had a small amount of time during each day to learn a few words and some of our stories and that, and to see them doing more stuff with the language and cultural things, it makes me happy. It seems like in the last two years that our people have really started coming together, and we're starting to do more cultural things. They are trying to open up old trails that haven't been walked on or ridden for a long time. I think a lot of that had to do with revitalizing the language.

Postscript

Carmen is clearly satisfied with the program and talked about how happy she was with her daughter's language-learning abilities. She expressed her joy over her daughter's success as she described how proud it made her to have other people recognize her daughter as a "star" pupil. Although Carmen herself learned some language and culture in school, she credits the Tahltan revitalization work now being done in our nation for inspiring our people to become more culturally aware. This next endodēsdiɫ is another example of parent satisfaction.

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Cindy Dennis: Engaging atmosphere

From what they have told me, and from what Makinley's speaking about in Tāɫtān at home, I think language nest has been very beneficial for her. I know they have been singing songs, and playing games, and it's all spoken in Tāɫtān. They learn social skills. They get to learn their language. It makes me feel proud to see my child engaging like that and learning our language. Her use of the language surprised me, and how easy

it is for her to learn, and how easy it was for her to adapt, I didn't expect that and how much she would really enjoy the language nest, and she asks to go there. And how she uses words at home as well, like when she calls me, for example, she says, "Āni" instead of "Come here."

I enjoyed those potluck lunches that we had, and just how all the parents had gathered, and all the children interacting with each other. It was just a great atmosphere to be in, just surrounded with your people and talking and engaging in conversation. I really enjoyed it. And seeing the kids playing together, that was the best. I'd like to see more events, maybe more luncheons, or maybe more walks. You know like going out and the mother can go out and explore, and they can learn words like trees and, just out in the nature. I think that the language nest is just great. It's awesome to see, especially for the kids, and Makinley loves going there. She loves it! "You like going to language nest?" She's just nodding her head.

Postscript

Like Carmen, Cindy was surprised at how quickly her daughter caught on to the language. Cindy praised the luncheons for providing an opportunity to build relationships, which in turn has implications for nation-building overall. Although she saw the language nest program as successful, she also had ideas about how to increase parental and community involvement. This next endodēsdił also praises the language nest, but this first-time mom puts an emphasis on connection.

***

Roanna Gleason: Hanging out together

For me, this is a whole new experience, the Tahltan language, because I had never been submerged in my own culture growing up. So that was my whole mission when I moved to Dease Lake two and a half years ago was to learn about my own culture, so this has been enhancing for me because now I'm being submerged with language too. Walker's at such a young age where he's copying the older kids. For a while there he was, the only boy in his group, and they all just called him baby Walker. He was the baby and these girls just doted on him. And now that he can run and keep up to them, it's a different environment. Before that he just sat there, and they brought all the toys to him. And so those other kids are singing songs in Tāłtān, they're talking in Tāłtān, and it's amazing to see the older kids, and I'm just like, yay Walker is going to be like that soon.

I'm learning a lot about my family from the Tahltan language nest Elders [language mentors]. It's neat because Walker's just there, enjoying all of it. When we were down at Tahltan he saw Pat, he went running right up to Pat. And at that point he just started two days a week at the language nest, so it wasn't a lot of time that he was spending with them. That's only eight hours a week and to see that connection, 'cause in the beginning it was only four hours a week, but to see that connection already there at 18 months, it's pretty cool to see.

It's been such a positive thing for Walker. There's been no tears when I drop him off or pick him up. He's excited to go. He just runs and plays. He's totally comfortable there and that's such a relief for me as a first-time mom that I can see that he's okay there. He's happy and content with them looking after him. When I go there and he's

asleep in Odelia's arms or something, and I'm just like, "Hey they're loving my child as much as I do." It's comforting for me as a parent that I'm reassured that he's fine. He's recognizing them. He's understanding what they're saying. In the store, down Tahltan, at other school events, they are all talking to him. And then the little kids, the other little girls that are there, they're always like, "Hi baby Walker." They're always talking to him when they see them in the grocery store, and they say hi to me. They're like, "Hi baby Walker's mom." It's that connection with everyone; it's like a little family within a family. They do things with the community where the parents and the kids can come and hang out together too, and it's just such a togetherness.

Postscript

Roanna and the other parents I visited with enthusiastically endorsed the language nest program. She praised the quality of care her son receives from both the adults and the children, and characterized K'asba'e T'oh as a "little family within a family." An important aspect of her endodēsdił was the way in which the language mentors welcomed her into the community and told her what they knew about her extended family. This next endodēsdił echoes the praise for the language nest and its welcoming community spirit.

*** *

Mariko Waite: Bringing people together

I used to work with Odelia so that's how I knew what was happening there because I discussed language nest with her. And then she had also posted around town about it, so I applied. She had open house and I went and applied for both my children at

the time. My older daughter (Chloe) went last year. She was four. Lachlan is three right now, so he won't be able to participate next year because there's more children now. If it wasn't for Odelia I wouldn't have applied because my children are quite shy, and so they've grown up with her, they know her, so that helped a lot. But I'm not sure if I would have done it if it were somebody I didn't know.

Well, to be honest it is like daycare in the afternoon for them. They only have preschool in the morning, but also I wasn't really raised learning anything cultural, so I am all for them learning anything about that. And it also brings together a different group of kids than my children normally are with in preschool because it's a lot of different ages. So it was pretty exciting that they have this program, and that my kids were allowed to join, which is also an amazing thing. Justin and I are not actually Tahltan, but I am Carrier, so the children and I are First Nations.

When we first started, it was just pretty much Odelia's son, Arden, and my kids. There weren't many people, so I always try to spread the word as much as possible. I'd say it was like preschool except for you speak Tāłtān the entire time, but you're still learning things. You're still learning colours and stuff, which are still the basics of what you learn in preschool except that you are learning it in the Tahltan language. It's great because you've got people looking after your children, and they're learning a culture.

I think the language nest program is amazing. The only downfall is that the school doesn't have a Tahltan language teacher, so my daughter has stopped really learning Tāłtān now that she is in kindergarten. If they do get a teacher, and they start from when they are babies just learning to speak until they're all through school. I mean

like that would be amazing. So hopefully they find someone, and it can continue because

really it doesn't help much if it just stops there, right? We can do it at home a little bit,

but my knowledge is limited.

Postscript

Like many of the parents I visited with, Mariko needed a personal connection to

the language nest before enrolling her children. Mariko acknowledged that, despite her

children's shyness, they were nonetheless learning about Tahltan language and culture.

When I visited with Mariko, she told me how the language nest had inspired her to learn

more about her own language and culture and how she was sharing her learnings with

her children. She also expressed her desire that language learning continues for

language nest children after they graduate to kindergarten.

4.6 Summary

This study highlights the importance of intergenerational transmission of

Indigenous languages and the positive impact it can have on community members.

Strong leadership is needed at both the individual and community levels. Participation

of parents is key for continuing language nest programs. While acknowledging the

successes of the language nest, co-researchers also had ideas for improvement and,

overall, were optimistic about the rejuvenation of our language. Co-researchers were

not hesitant about proposing that immersion language-learning programs continue

beyond the language nest.

The implications of the learnings set out above provide a strong starting point for examining the effectiveness of our language nest programs, and the insights provided here will also help to inform the direction of immersion language planning. The next and final chapter discusses the meaning and implications of these learnings.

Chapter Łōla'e (5). Learnings and future directions

I want to hear our Elders whisper the ancient words of the ancestors into

the ears of our babies. I want to see our young people speaking our

languages on school playgrounds. To Indigenous people, wherever you

are, I encourage you to seek out our fluent speakers and learn from them.

Insist on your right to have your local languages taught in the schools

systems and keep working at being able to speak your language.

—National Chief Bellegarde, cited in Assembly of First Nations, 2017

5.1 Preparing for the tellings

In July of 2016, I travelled up to Tātl'ah with Edōsdi and my mom for the Tahltan

Central Government's Annual General Assembly. There I visited with several of my co-

researchers, but I did not get to visit K'asba'e 'T'oh because it was closed for the

summer. However, I was invited back and so, in May 2017, my mom and I returned to

Tātl'ah so that I could observe the nest. This also gave me an opportunity to visit with

the language mentors and one of the language nest parents. I went over their

endodēsdił with them one last time before I added it to the study. I was not at all

disconcerted by what I saw and experienced.

Spending the day in K'asba'e T'oh, I got to discover for myself what co-

researchers had shared with me. There were two children in attendance that day, along

with the coordinator and the two language mentors. I observed the adults speaking

Tāłtān to the children and the children responding to their commands but answering

mostly in English. The adults were steadfast in their use of Tāłtān. I was delighted to see

the children speaking more Tāłtān at chitle̱si̱dēdli. Later in the afternoon, one of the

children helped the adults when she said out loud the Tāłtān word they were trying to

recall. That put a smile on everyone's face! This child also sang a song in Tāłtān! What I

experienced that day was a relaxing family visit where the children received quality time

from the adults.

As a result of this visit, I changed the title of my thesis to be more reflective of

what I saw happening in the nest. Initially, the title—*How the K'asba'e T'oh Language

Nest got going in Tātl'ah: Learning the language of our Tahltan Ancestors*—reflected my

strong focus on our Ancestors. However, it became apparent to me as I reflected back

on my research journey, that the work to learn the language of our Ancestors is about

what people today are doing to rejuvenate our language. These small children are

learning from mentors who—despite everything they have been through to maintain

their language—were passing the language on to the next generation. This insight led

me to change the title to *K'asba'e T'oh: Sustaining the intergenerational transmission of

Tāłtān*, as a way to better reflect this.

5.2 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of this study. I begin with a discussion of the

major learnings from the main theme and subthemes as reported in Chapter Lēnte'ē (4).

This discussion is followed by recommendations and future directions; I highlight the

importance of the language nest model and conclude with reflections on my research

journey.

5.3 Discussion of learnings

The following summaries represent the responses to the four guiding research

questions. They are organized around the main theme of chitleṣidēdli and the three

subthemes of collaboration, nation-building, and identity and belonging. The results of

this study show the importance of using language nests to promote the

intergenerational transmission of endangered Indigenous languages.

Main theme: Chitleṣidēdli

The main theme emphasizes chitleṣidēdli or what is referred to in the language

nest as circle time, when everyone in the language nest gathers together for social,

cultural, and language-learning activities.

Subtheme one: Collaboration

This subtheme emphasizes the coming together of like minds to create our

Tahltan language nests. We have made progress in creating Tāłtān speakers in part

because of the relationships formed between co-researchers and others as they came to

share their experiences.

A number of important considerations were taken into account in order to

initiate the K'asba'e T'oh, include securing the start-up capital, finding nest workers and

language mentors, deciding on a location, and identifying the children. The start-up was

financed in part from the Socio-Cultural Working Group's (SCWG) budget and an

Aboriginal Language Initiative (ALI) Grant. Staffing for a maximum group of six children

includes a coordinator (nest worker) and two language mentors. Odelia had read the

literature related to language nests, but felt that the most valuable information came

from the field visit she made to Cséyseten Family Language Nest in Chase, BC:

> *The field visit allowed both myself and Angela to realize that a language*
>
> *nest is not a preschool. It's not any type of school. It's basically just a*
>
> *home setting and pretty much anyone can open a language nest as long*
>
> *as they have the support behind to do it. The structures, like for instance,*
>
> *the house, the people, the fluent speakers. So for us to be able to see that*
>
> *happening really made us realize that it's possible that we could actually*
>
> *have a language nest in our territory.*

Four of the co-researchers who had visited language nests were inspired by what they

saw and came away feeling like this was something they could do!

Leadership and mentorship are key in getting language nests going. Kathryn

Michel, the founder of the first language nest in BC, provided support, advice, and

mentorship to the administrators with respect to the specifics of starting and operating

a language nest. In addition to providing expert advice about how to secure funding,

how to set up the nest, and how to structure it, Kathryn also provided emotional

support. She empowered Odelia to hang in and not give up when challenges came her

way. Odelia recalls Kathryn telling her, "Don't ever let any negativity get in the way of

your bringing your language back through the language nest." This advice emphasized that Odelia was not to take to heart the negative things people said about the language nest. For Odelia this was amazing advice because it helped her to brush off negative attitudes from the community. Both Edōsdi and Odelia continue to stay in contact with Kathryn.

Getting the language nest up and going was possible because the director applied for government funding, worked with the community to secure a location, hired the language nest coordinator, and recruited the language mentors. Edōsdi shared a memory that she says she will never forget:

Finding a building in a small community had its challenges:

I was trying to find a place for this nest, and it was like where can we do this? Where can we have this nest? I was talking to Mike Gordon, School District 87's superintendent and he said, "Maybe you should contact the Pregnancy Outreach Program (POP) because we rent this place to them."

So, I'm in Quebec City on holidays in September 2014, and I get a call from the person from the Friendship Centre in Smithers wanting to talk about this. That's when we found out that we had a place for the nest in Tātl'ah.

As Edōsdi has pointed out, it is important to know who your allies are in the community. It was through this display of community support that they found a place.

Subtheme two: Nation-building

The catalyst behind launching Tahltan language nests was our goal of nation-building, to make our nation stronger. Edōsdi affirmed that anything the SCWG does has to be done as a nation, which meant that projects had to be joint and inclusive. Since this was the second of three planned Tahltan language nests to be opened, there were no particular barriers to overcome. Nation-building is a key factor in our Tahltan language revitalization plan. Edōsdi recalled what the SCWG Lead said to her:

> *Originally when we started this work for the Socio-Cultural Working Group, Feddie Louie, who is the Lead, she always said, "This is nation-building; we want to do this as a nation." Because before the two bands would apply for funding for different things separately through Tahltan Central Council [now named Tahltan Central Government]. We have to have all initiatives occurring in all three communities and working on them together as a group. Not just being the Tahltan Band and the Iskut Band, it has to be a joint project in order to get these things off the ground.*

The Tahltan Language and Culture Framework and the language revitalization action plan identify the need to develop and offer language programming for children. Involving children in our language revitalization efforts has had a positive effect in our nation. Overall, the experiences reported by the co-researchers have been positive. Co-researchers remarked how proud they are to see the children and adults communicating in the language. For instance, parents shared how hearing their children speaking the language has helped create new relationships in the community. What was evident was

the reconnection to Tāɫtān that the language mentors experienced because they now

had both dedicated people to speak the language and the space in which to teach it.

This subtheme focused on the bringing together of like-minded people. The

esdahūhedech of the co-researchers also give examples of cooperation and

collaboration. The director, coordinator, language mentors, parents, and tots, play a

vital role and have an endodēsdiɫ to be told which leads to the heart of the subthemes—

identity and belonging.

Subtheme three: Identity and belonging

Of the eight co-researchers, only the four parents interviewed had not been

involved in Tahltan language revitalization prior to their involvement with the language

nest. Tahltan language revitalization initiatives were not new to language mentors Pat

and Theresa, who have been involved in Tahltan language revitalization for several

decades. Theresa recalled that she drew inspiration from her grandmother Ester Nole

who had also helped with revitalizing our language in the early 1970s.

The co-researchers also shared their recollections about family members who

helped them refresh their language. Theresa fondly referred to her Uncle Pat and Aunt

Edith Carlick as mentors and recalled how, over the years, they attended many language

workshops together:

I'm happy that I've learned a lot from them before they're gone. I still get

emotional when I speak of them. That's why I feel that I had to continue

this journey with the language because maybe that's what they wanted

us to do.

Theresa and Pat expressed hope that someday their grandchildren would speak our language. It is no wonder they take their role of language mentoring in the language nest seriously.

All of the co-researchers became involved with the language nest program so that our babies could have the chance to learn the Tahltan language. Pat said, "the language nest has generated a lot of interest because people are getting to hear the little ones speaking Tāłtān, and it's so awesome to hear the little ones speak Tāłtān out in the community." Carmen wants Tahltan language programs for her children; however, she also wants to see the ages in the language nest change:

Right now, they have an adult group and then they have this [children's]

group, and I think it's like zero to three. I wouldn't mind for it to grow so

that my older daughter can attend it more. I mean once this year is done,

Myra will be four in November and after that I don't think she will be

going [to language nest] anymore.

Carmen's daughter is not going into kindergarten for another year. All the parents expressed the desire to have the language continue to grow from the language nest.

Roanna reflected upon her upbringing and how she did not learn much about her culture until she moved to Dease Lake. Her decision to do this was so her son could have the opportunity to learn about his culture; however, she was in for a surprise:

Pat and Theresa have shared with me stuff about my family that I didn't

know, so I'm learning a lot about my family from the Tahltan language

nest Elders. They're the ones, the fluent speakers, that are sharing stuff

with me about my family, and I am learning stuff about my own identity,

outside of language there.

Roanna never expected to learn as much as she has about her family from the language

mentors.

The parents became involved so their children could learn the language and

culture. The language mentors got involved because language is important to them, and

it is equally important to them to pass on the language. Edōsdi got involved because,

even though it is her job to revitalize the Tahltan language, her own journey began in

1991 when she first wanted to learn our language and culture. Odelia's motivation to

learn her language was so that she could teach it to her son. Everyone's life has been

enriched and enhanced with a sense of identity and belonging, and this is what seems to

keep people motivated and involved. From what the co-researchers have said, the

language nest programs are just a beginning.

Working together to come up with solutions for the intergenerational

transmission of our language is shared by my co-researchers and myself. The co-

researchers emphasized that identity motivated them to become involved in learning

their Ancestral language. This was most evident with the administrators and language

mentors: "Speaking through an indigenous language is one of the deepest forms of

identity reclamation and validation for people of indigenous heritage" (Hermes &

Kawai'ae'a, 2014, p. 307). However, one barrier to involvement in language nests is the

reality that children will age out without any guarantee of continued language-learning

programming. Similarly, there is the risk of negatively affecting young children when

their nest is cancelled due to their nest workers being needed in other language

programs.

5.4 Recommendations and future directions

The following recommendations and thoughts about future directions for

bringing our language back into everyday use arose out of this study.

<u>Expansion</u>

All of the language nest parents wanted to see an increase in the language nest

offerings. For instance, the nest could operate full days and year-round by hiring

additional workers and recruiting language mentors. This would also enable the nest to

take on a higher number of children. Language nest parent Roanna expressed her

dreams for the expansion of the language nest:

> *It's great that we have the language nest, but if it could be bigger, right?*
>
> *And that more kids could go. And that they had the staff and able bodies*
>
> *to be there to meet the codes and the numbers, the ratios of adult to*
>
> *children, and to have a centre that they could have set up so that they*
>
> *could. Because right now they share the space with Pregnancy Outreach,*
>
> *which is great because it's a very homey environment. It's very friendly.*

It's very open. It's a great location. But to have their own where they

could leave the Tahltan stuff up and have it, just build with Tahltan stuff

and not have to share a space and be able to do it from eight to five and

have programs for the different age groups. They're doing an amazing job

already, it just would be awesome if they could go bigger.

Roanna described a space similar to a cultural centre, a gathering place for language

learning.

Family involvement

The parents did not express the need for more support to learn the language;

however, the language mentors and administrators wanted more support for the

parents' language learning so that the children could be supported at home to learn and

speak the language. In addition, one administrator wanted to find ways to increase the

involvement of fathers. For example, she proposed that employers could support

further family involvement by allowing time for parents to volunteer regularly in the

language nest.

Immersion programming

Creating places to speak the Tahltan language, now and in the future, emerged

as a clear goal. All of the co-researchers were keen to expand the language-learning

opportunities for children beyond the language nest. However, there was one subtle

difference: the parents spoke enthusiastically about expanding language learning into

the public-school system, where the language mentors and administrators spoke about their dream of immersion schooling.

Language mentors, Pat and Theresa—who have been involved in Tahltan language revitalization at the schools and other community programs for many years—are impressed with the achievements of T'selcéwtqen Clleqmél'ten and the Hawaiians. Recalling their visits to the Cséyseten Family Language Nest program and the T'selcéwtqen Clleqmél'ten in 2014, they spoke about their vision for Tahltan immersion schools:

> *Theresa: Their school goes up to Grade 12, right? They all speak their language.*
>
> *Pat: It's one of the requirements in that school.*
>
> *Theresa: It's taken 23 years but they're succeeding, eh?*
>
> *Pat: That's something! It's a good example. What's coming.*
>
> *Theresa: What's gonna come.*

Our children are our hope for the continuation of our language. For this to happen, there needs to be personal commitment from adults to learn our language. Direction and inspiration for this work can be drawn from T'selcéwtqen Clleqmél'ten—which also began as a preschool program and expanded by one grade each year (Michel, 2005, 2012). The Cherokee Nation of northern Oklahoma is another example where people developed full-time immersion programs by expanding by one grade each year (Peter, Sly, & Hirata-Edds, 2011; Peter & Hirata-Edds, 2006).

<u>Immersion houses</u>

Immersion language learning beyond the nest is a possible next step for our nation. Immersion schooling has been successfully accomplished by the T'selcéwtqen Clleqmél'ten (Michel, 2005, 2012; see also Hermes, Bang, & Marin, 2012). In addition to immersion schooling for children, Odelia also spoke about starting immersion houses for older children and adults.

> *What I would really like is for us to begin doing language houses for adults because the one common feedback we get from parents and other community members is, "I wish we had this for the older children." I really believe that an immersion house or language house would work for the people who are genuinely interested in learning their language, learning Tahltan language. And I think that should be the next thing that's up and coming for the Tāłtān Language Revitalization Team to work on.*

Similarly, language-learning opportunities for families, such as immersion houses, could also be developed. Johnson's (2014) account demonstrates that the immersion house strategy is great for creating proficient speakers in the Ancestral language.

<u>Assessment and evaluation</u>

Research to assess and evaluate our language nests should be a priority. This would provide the administrators, language mentors, and parents with valuable information about the effectiveness of the nests, as well as identify the successes and risk factors. This research could identify better ways to support language nest workers, language mentors, parents, and children, as well as ways to assess the language

development and progression of the nest workers, language mentors, children and

parents.

Formal networking body

Both administrators in this study identified the need for provincial language

networking for language nests. Although an informal network exists between Dzimēs

Chō T'oh and K'asba'e T'oh, no formal language nest networking system exists in BC or

Canada. Our language nests would benefit from consultation with other experienced

language nests about some of the successes and challenges, such as getting the children

to speak more Tāłtān in the nest.

Questions to consider going forward to support our language nests

1. How can we make our language nest programs more accessible?

2. How can we support families who wish to take part in our language nest

   programs?

3. How can we attract language mentors to participate in our language nest

   programs?

4. How can we meet the needs of language nest workers to create language-

   learning materials?

5. How can we better collaborate with members of other language nest

   communities to coordinate and share resources?

5.5 Importance of the language nest model

Today there are fewer than 30 fluent speakers of our language. The Tahltan

Nation is working to change this by creating a number of different opportunities for

language learning, with a focus on programming, documentation, and professional

development and training. This study has focused on the language nest model as an

immersion method to promote the intergenerational transmission of our language. With

immersion settings, there is hope that this program will create more speakers of all

ages, inspire others to learn our language, and be part of increasing the proficiency of

language learners, thereby moving our language out of the endangered status.

5.6 Postscript: Reflections of Kāshā

My use of crochet as a metaphor to connect to the research process also made

me aware of the lost opportunities to speak Tāłtān or Gitx̱an with my grandmothers

while we crocheted. Even though I may never have a conversation in either of my

Ancestral languages, I understand how important Indigenous languages are to one's

identity. I need to stress again that our Ancestral languages are important and that we

need to be creating fluent speakers; however, there are many other things apart from

learning the language that people can do to help rejuvenate our Indigenous languages.

I told my MILR colleagues many times that learning the Tahltan language was not

one of my goals, yet I developed and taught a lesson in Tāłtān. My message has truly

been sent out not only with my voice but also with my crochet hook, my pen. As with

the beginner's crochet pattern that I documented in the course of this study, I

documented the endodēsdił of K'asba'e T'oh. When I was asked by one of our language

mentors about my plans after I completed my master's, I told her, "crochet of course!!!"

She laughed and told me that she thought I was going to say something else, like "going

to conferences," and "talking about our language nests." I knew in my heart that, should

the opportunity arise, I would participate at conferences to spread the news about our

language nests. Soon after our conversation I applied to share my research and I was

invited by the Native Studies Graduate Students' Association to present at the Rising Up:

A Graduate Students Conference on Indigenous Knowledge and Research in Indigenous

Studies, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, March 17 and 18, 2017. I presented my paper entitled

"Using language nests to promote the intergenerational transmission of Tāłtān." Then in

April, Sense Publishing expressed an interest in publishing the work I presented at the

conference into a book with the working title *Looking back and living forward:*

Indigenous research rising up.

　　As I looked back over this research journey, I realized that I am no longer that

proud little Canadian girl from 1967 who was happily celebrating Canada's 100th

birthday. Coincidentally, this year is Canada's 150th birthday, and I am not

wholeheartedly in celebration mode. I am after all, Tahltan. I am especially grateful to

my co-researchers and the language nest children who, unknowingly, have through their

graciousness and generosity of spirit, helped me to feel more a part of my nation. I am

so proud of the work our people are doing to revitalize our language and culture for the

generations to come. There are many opportunities for people to become involved in

revitalizing Indigenous languages. One day I would like to work in Indigenous

communities and help with preparing people to become Indigenous language teachers.

Up next for me is crochet.

Nanustī

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Appendices

Appendix A: Beginner's doily

SIZE:
10" square, finished size (including border).

MATERIALS:
* Size 10 crochet cotton
* Steel crochet hook, size 7 (1.5 mm)
* Tapestry needle
* Spray starch, if desired

GAUAGE:
9 sp = 2".
To save time, take time to check gauge.

NOTE: When following chart, work right side rows from right to left, and wrong side rows from left to right.

CENTRE: Starting at lower edge, chain 68.
Row 1 (right side): Dc in 8th ch from hook for first sp, *ch 2, sk 2 ch, dc in next ch. Rep from * across (21 sps made). Ch 5, turn.
Rows 2–21: Sk first sp, dc in next dc, *ch 2, sk next sp, dc in next dc. Rep from * across, end ch 2, sk 2 ch of turning ch, dc in next ch. Ch 5, turn. Follow chart to end of row 21.
Row 22: Work as for row 21, but end the row with a tr tr. Do not ch 5, turn or break off.

BORDER: Rnd 1: Ch 3, work 17 dc in corner sp, *ch 2, sk first sp, (work a 4-dc shell in next sp, ch 1, sk 1 sp) 8 times, 4 dc shell in next sp, ch 2, sk last sp before corner, work 18 dc in corner lp. Rep from * around, join with slip st in top of starting ch-3.
Rnd 2: Ch 4, (dc in next dc, ch 1) 16 times, dc in last dc of corner, *ch 2, sk first sp and first 4 dc shell, (work a 4-dc shell in sp before next shell, ch 1) 7 times, shell in next sp, ch 2, sk last shell and last sp, (dc in next dc, ch 1) 17 times, dc in last dc of corner. Rep from * around, end ch 2, join with slip st in 3rd ch of starting ch-4.
Rnd 3: Ch 5, (dc in next dc, ch 2) 16 times, dc in last dc of corner, * ch 2, sk first sp and first shell, (shell in sp before next shell, ch 1) 6 times, shell in next sp, ch 2, sk last shell and last sp, (dc in next dc, ch 2) 17 times, dc in last dc of corner. Rep from * around, end ch 2, join in 3rd ch of ch-5.
Rnd 4: Ch 6, (dc in next dc, ch 3) 16 times, dc in last dc in last dc of corner, *ch 3, sk first sp and first shell, (shell in sp before next shell, ch 1) 5 times, shell in next sp, ch 3, sk last shell and last sp, (dc in next dc, ch 3) 17 times, ch 3, join in 3rd ch of ch-6.
Rnd 5: Work as for round 4, but have 5 shells on each side.
Rnd 6: Ch 7, (dc in next dc, ch 4) 16 times, dc in last dc of corner, *ch 4, sk first sp and first shell (shell in sp before next shell, ch 1) 3 times, shell in next sp, ch 4, sk last shell and last sp, (dc in next dc, ch 4) 17 times, ch 4, join in 3rd ch of ch-7.

Rnd 7: Ch 8, (dc in next dc, ch 4) 16 times, dc in last dc of corner, *ch 4, sk first sp and first shell (shell in sp before next shell, ch 1) 3 times, shell in next sp, ch 4, sk last shell and last sp, (dc in next dc, ch 4) 17 times, ch 5, join in 3rd ch of ch-8.

Rnd 8: Work as for Rnd 7, but have 2 shells on each side.

Rnd 9: Continue in pattern as established, but ch 6 (instead of ch-5), and have 1 shell on each side. Join with slip st in first ch and break off.

CHART FOR CENTRE
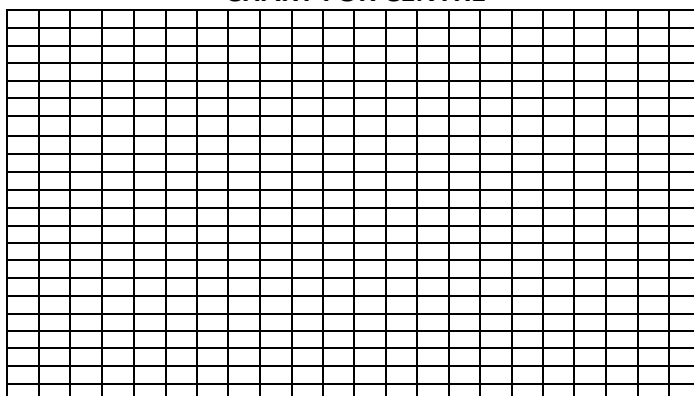
Row 22

KEY:

= 1 sp

Row 1

FINISHING: Weave in ends. Spray starch, if desired. Pin out to size on padded surface, press. Remove when dry.

ABBREVIATIONS:

bl	block
ch	chain
dc	double crochet
lp	loop
mm	millimetre
Rnd	Round
sk	skip
slip st	slip stitch
sp(s)	space(s)
st	stitch
tr tr	triple treble crochet

Appendix B: Dah Dẕā̄hge Nodeṣidē—Terms of reference
Tahltan Language and Culture Council

Dah Dẕā̄hge Nodeṣidē/Tahltan Language and Culture Council, operates under the auspices of Tahltan Central Council (TCC), Tahltan Band Council (TBC), and Iskut Band Council (IBC). The Council will be an Advisory/Steering/Decision-Making committee.

Our language is so much a part of who we are, and that is stated clearly in the language and culture vision statement from the March 2012 Socio-Cultural Working Group Leadership Forum: "Didene E Kune Mehōdihi Eku Desijihi–All Tahltan people are living the Tahltan way of life." By promoting our language and culture and creating awareness amongst our people about the importance of our language and how it connects us to our land, our Elders, our Ancestors, our culture, our identity as Tahltan people, our well-being and health, it will serve as a form of empowerment for our nation.

Who will comprise Dah Dẕā̄hge Nodeṣidē:

Voting Members:

- One representative appointed by Tahltan Central Council;

- One fluent speaker from Telegraph Creek appointed by Tahltan Band Council;

- One fluent speaker from Iskut appointed by Iskut Band Council;

- Tahltan School Language Teacher;

- Dease Lake School Language Teacher;

- Klappan School Language Teacher;

Non-Voting Members:

- Tahltan Language and Culture Lead

- Tahltan Language Revitalization Coordinator (1 representative from each community)

- Tahltan Language Research Assistant (minimum 1 representative from each community)

What are the operating guidelines of Dah Dẕā̄hge Nodeṣidē:

- Dah Dẕā̄hge Nodeṣidē will meet quarterly, which will include an annual general meeting;

- Meetings are open to all Tahltan people;

- The quorum required for decision-making will be 5 to 7 voting members;

- The political governing bodies (TCC, IBC, TBC) will appoint alternates for their representatives;

- Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē will select a member to serve as chair, with the chair position rotating amongst the voting members;

- Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē will select a member to serve as vice-chair, with the vice-chair position rotating amongst the voting members;

- Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē will select a member to serve as secretary;

- The chair and secretary will ensure that agenda and minutes are prepared for each meeting;

- The chair and secretary will ensure that minutes, records, and correspondence are maintained;

- Each member will identify a conflict of interest related to matters under discussion;

- Reports will be made annually regarding the status of Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē and any activities undertaken; these will be made available upon request, and presented at appropriate assemblies and events.

What is the purpose of Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē:

- To document, preserve, promote, and revitalize the Tahltan language and culture;

- To bring our communities together into one strong nation in order to work together to revitalize the Tahltan language and culture;

- To increase the number of fluent speakers.

What are the Roles and Responsibilities of Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē:

- Provide guidance in the promotion of the Tahltan language to our Tahltan people living within and outside our territory, as well as to non-Tahltans living within our territory;

- Provide guidance in the creation of short- and long-term language plans;

- Provide guidance in the development of a language policy;

- Serve as the decision-making body for language and culture revitalization;

- Act as a language authority in the certification of Tahltan language teachers for the BC Teacher Regulation Branch;

- Address language issues of orthography and new vocabulary;

- Be the nation's point of contact for individuals and/or groups researching Tahltan language and culture;

- Advertise the existence and role of Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē on a website with links to contacts and resources;

- Research and recommend traditional and cultural protocols;

- Review language curriculum, plans, guides, materials, resources, documentation, and teaching strategies prior to implementation in schools or communities;

How long is the committee formed for:

- Indefinitely, to ensure the security, evolution, and the vitality of the Tahltan language.

- Appointments will remain in effect until such time as the representative resigns or the Political Governing Bodies (TCC, TBC, IBC) appoint another person to serve as its representative.

Amended 30 June 2014.

Note: Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē/Tahltan Language Council Terms of Reference are subject to change to enhance the roles and responsibilities of the Council to meet any future Tahltan Language and Culture program objectives.

Appendix C: Letter of intent

Kāshā/Julie Morris

<div align="right">

209 Alberta Place, Prince Rupert, BC   V8J 3X7

(250) 627-7420/2kasha@gmail.com

</div>

<u>Updated and Revised</u>
March 12, 2016

Edōsdi/Judy Thompson, Secretary
Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē
Tahltan Language and Culture Council
3333 University Way
Prince George, BC   V2N 4Z9

Dear Edōsdi/Judy,

My name is Julie Morris and my Tahltan name is Kāshā. I am writing to gain the council's permission to conduct a case study with staff and parents involved in the K'asba'e T'oh in Tātl'ah. I am a graduate student in the departments of Indigenous Education and Linguistics at the University of Victoria. As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Indigenous Language Revitalization. I am attaching a flyer that explains this program.

I would like to document how the K'asba'e T'oh language nest got going, so we can share these experiences with the two other Tahltan language nests, as well as with other nations wanting to use language nests for language revitalization. My research project is entitled *How the K'asba'e T'oh Language Nest Got Going in Tātl'ah: Learning the Language of Our Tahltan Ancestors.* It is being conducted under the co-supervision of Dr. Peter Jacobs and Dr. Onowa McIvor.

I would like to conduct taped interviews with, interested and willing, staff and parents involved in the K'asba'e T'oh. Interviews could begin at the end of March. All participants will have an opportunity to review and approve the information they have shared. Once this information is compiled and the study is complete, those who have participated will receive a copy of my thesis and any material, for example a booklet, resulting from the analysis of the research.

It is my hope that this research will provide a model for future documentation of our two other Tahltan language nests and will contribute to the literature regarding language nests in BC. My completed thesis will be made available in the University of Victoria's electronic collection, UVicSpace. I would also like to present my research findings at academic conferences and submit articles for publication.

Please let me know if there is anything further that I can provide to assist in this process. If you have questions you can reach me at (250) 627-7420 or 2kasha@gmail.com. You may also contact my co-supervisors Dr. Peter Jacobs at (250) 721-7428 or pejacobs@uvic.ca and Dr. Onowa McIvor at (250) 721-7763 or omcivor@uvic.ca.

Mēduh,

Kāshā/Julie Morris

Attachment (2 pages)

cc: Terri Brown, Chief of Tahltan Band Council
    Marie Quock, Chief of Iskut Band Council
    Chad Day, President of Tahltan Central Government

Appendix D: Letter of approval from DDN

March 31, 2017

Julie Morris
209 Alberta Place
Prince Rupert, BC
V8J 3X7
2kasha@gmail.com

Dear Julie,

Thank you for meeting with us on March 13, 2016 to explain your research project entitled, *How the K'asba'e T'oh Got Going in Tātl'ah: Learning the Language of Our Tahltan Ancestors.*

This letter is regarding your request for a letter of support from Dah Dzahge Nodes̱idē (Tahltan Language and Culture Council). Dah Dzāhge Nodes̱idē operates under the auspices of Tahltan Central Government, Tahltan Band Council, and Iskut Band Council. As such, one of our roles and responsibilities is to be our nation's point of contact for individuals and/or groups researching Tahltan language and culture.

On behalf of Dah Dzāhge Nodes̱idē, I would like to inform you that we fully support your research project.

Mēduh,

Pauline Hawkins
Chair, Dah Dzāhge Nodes̱idē/Tahltan Language and Culture Council

Appendix E: Telephone script

Hello, my name is Julie Morris, and my Tahltan name is Kāshā. My mother is Cathy Thompson and her parents, my grandparents, were the late Charley and Julia Callbreath.

I have received permission from the Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē/Tahltan Language and Culture Council to conduct a case study with staff and parents involved in the in Tātl'ah. You are being asked to participate in this study because of your involvement. I would like to invite you to be a part of this study due to your involvement in the language nest.

I am a graduate student at the University of Victoria where I am doing a Master's degree in Indigenous Language Revitalization. My thesis is called, "How the K'asba'e T'oh Got Going in Tātl'ah: Learning the Language of Our Tahltan Ancestors." I hope you will consent to be a part of this study.

Do you have any questions or concerns so far? If you were to agree to participate, I would travel before June to meet with you in Terrace or Smithers or Hazelton or Prince George and to meet with you at a time that is good for you. If you wish, I could also meet with you via telephone or Skype. I would meet with you twice. Each visit would last between 45 and 90 minutes.

Could I send you my letter of introduction by fax, email, or post mail, which explains the study in detail and requests permission to meet with you?

Mēduh (thanks) for your time and consideration, I will send you my letter of introduction along with a consent form. I will be back in touch with you within the next week to set up our first meeting time.

Appendix F: Letter of introduction to participants

Kāshā/Julie Morris

209 Alberta Place, Prince Rupert, BC   V8J 3X7
(250) 627-7420/2kasha@gmail.com

Research Project Title: How the K'asba'e T'oh Language Nest Got Going in Tātl'ah:
Learning the Language of Our Tahltan Ancestors

Dear (Participant Name),

My name is Julie Morris and my Tahltan name is Kāshā. My people are from Tlēgo'īn *Telegraph Creek* and Łuwechōn *Iskut*. I am a member of the Tsesk'iye Crow Clan, our territory is Tlabāotine, and the Tehkahche Frog is our crest. My mother is Cathy Thompson and her parents, my grandparents, were the late Charley and Julia Callbreath. I have received permission from the Dah Dẕāhge Nodeṣidē/*Tahltan Language and Culture Council* to conduct a case study with staff and parents involved in the K'asba'e T'oh. Because of your involvement in the language nest program, I am writing with some background on this project and to request your consent to participate in this research project.

I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Humanities, Department of Linguistics; and the Faculty of Education, Department of Indigenous Education at the University of Victoria, which requires me to conduct research. You may contact me at (250) 627-7420 or 2kasha@gmail.com. You may also contact my thesis co-supervisors Dr. Peter Jacobs at (250) 721-7428 or pejacobs@uvic.ca and Dr. Onowa McIvor at (250) 721-7763 or omcivor@uvic.ca.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Indigenous Language Revitalization. The main purpose of this research is to document how the Tātl'ah language nest got going, so we can share these insights and experiences with the two other Tahltan language nests, as well as with other nations wanting to use language nests for language revitalization.

The potential benefits associated with participation include participants gaining a new perspective on their involvement in language immersion practices, as the shared learnings will be compiled and analyzed in a way that may help them to better understand and articulate their contribution to the revitalization of Tāłtān and what further steps can be taken. This study is intended to contribute to knowledge of Indigenous languages revitalization practices, such as immersion programs, and to society as a whole as First Nations people recover from the damage sustained to language decline.

It is my hope to conduct two audio taped interviews with each participant about their experiences, insights, and challenges with the language nest program. Telephone or Skype interviews could begin at the end March; however, I would travel to meet you in Terrace or Smithers or Hazelton or Prince George before the end of May. Being a participant in this research project is voluntary. Participants will receive in advance of the second interview, a draft transcript of the first interview to review and approve. The second interview gives participants the opportunity to both revise or add to their sharing. Anyone who is interviewed will have the opportunity to review the information they have shared before it is incorporated into my thesis.

It is my hope that this research will provide a model for future documentation of our two other Tahltan language nests and will contribute to the literature regarding language nest programs in BC. My completed thesis will be made available in the University of Victoria's electronic collection, UVicSpace. I would also like to present my research findings at academic conferences and submit articles for publication.

I thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I will contact you within the next week to arrange a time and place for the first interview.

As per university ethical demand, it would be great if you could review the attached consent form prior to our interview. If the interview is being conducted via telephone or Skype, your verbal consent is acceptable so it is unnecessary to mail me a signed consent form. I have also included the interview questions.

I am looking forward to visiting with you and learning about the language nest program. Please let me know if there is anything further that I can provide to assist in this process. If you have questions you may reach me at (250) 627-7420 or 2kasha@gmail.com. You may also contact my co-supervisors Dr. Peter Jacobs at (250) 721-7428 or pejacobs@uvic.ca and Dr. Onowa McIvor at (250) 721-7763 or omcivor@uvic.ca.

Mēduh,

Kāshā/Julie Morris

Attachment (5 pages)
1. Participant Consent Form
2. Interview Questions

Appendix G: Participant consent form
For Groups 1 and 2

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled, "How the K'asba'e T'oh Language Nest Got Going in Tātl'ah: Learning the Language of Our Tahltan Ancestors" because of your involvement in the Tātl'ah language nest.

I, Julie Morris, am a graduate student in the Faculty of Humanities, Department of Linguistics; and the Faculty of Education, Department of Indigenous Education at the University of Victoria. You may contact me if you have further questions by phone at (250) 627-74202 or 2kasha@gmail.com. You may also contact my thesis co-supervisors Dr. Peter Jacobs at (250) 721-7428 or pejacobs@uvic.ca and Dr. Onowa McIvor at (250) 721-7763 or omcivor@uvic.ca.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Indigenous Language Revitalization. The main purpose of this research is to document how the Tātl'ah language nest got going, so we can share these experiences with the two other Tahltan language nests and other nations wanting to use language nest programs for language revitalization. The goal of this research is to ask the people involved to share their experiences, insights, and challenges encountered in carrying out this work.

Research like this is important because it will provide a model for future documentation of our two other Tahltan language nests, and it will contribute to the literature regarding languages nests in BC.

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your involvement in the day-to-day running of the program.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include:
- Two interview sessions lasting 45 to 90 minutes each.
- The interview questions are open-ended and intended to allow for you to share your experience.
- The interviews will be audio-taped with the purpose of transcribing the interview session, and I may take notes to make sure what I hear on the tape is correct by comparing it to my notes.
- The interviews will focus on your experience in the program and will generally follow the proposed interview questions.
- As a participant, you may decline to answer any interview question.
- The interviews will take place at a mutually agreed upon location that is most convenient to you.
- In advance of the second interview, you will receive a draft transcript of your first interview to review and approve.

- The second interview is for review and approval as well as to revise or add to your sharing.
- Upon completion of both interviews, you will be given the opportunity to review the transcripts and the findings emerging from your interviews for final approval before they will be included in the research document.

Initialing here indicates that you understand that if audiotapes are published as part of this study results, you may be identifiable even if you are not named.

Audiotapes may be taken of me for: Analysis _____ Dissemination _____

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include contributing knowledge to the wider language revitalization community.

As a way to compensate you for any inconvenience related to your participation, you will be given an agreed upon gift for each interview that you take part in to honour the sharing of your wisdom and knowledge. Examples of such gifts include jewelry, a scarf, a blanket, or something that displays your crest. Please participate in this research only if you freely choose to do so, and if you feel it will in some way benefit the broader Indigenous community. If you have questions about participating or wish to contact my co-supervisors, Dr. Peter Jacobs or Dr. Onowa McIvor, about your decision to accept or decline involvement in this research please feel free to do so.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you decide to participate you may withdraw at any time without consequences or explanations. Please contact me (or Peter Jacobs or Onowa McIvor) via telephone or email if you no longer wish to participate in the research. If you withdraw from the study your data will be used in the study ONLY if you agree. In the event you withdraw from the study part way through you will be asked if you want the data that you have contributed to be part of the analysis. If you agree your data will remain in the study, if not your taped interviews will be erased and all transcripts, field notes, or other data associated with you will be destroyed. Should you withdraw from the study, at any time, the agreed upon gift is yours to keep. You will also receive a copy of my thesis and any material, for example a booklet, resulting from the analysis of the research.

To make sure that you continue to consent to participate in this research, at the beginning of each interview, I will check to see if you are still willing to participate and remind you that you are able to withdraw from the research at any time.

You have a choice to have your name associated with the research. Your anonymity can only be partially protected as there are not many people associated with Tahltan language nest programs, making it possible to be identified. While there may be a partial loss of anonymity in data collection, your anonymity will be protected in the

reporting of data, if you request it. If you request anonymity, your name will not be recorded on the transcribed data, a fictitious name or coded initials will be used in place of your name and the researcher will be the only person who knows your identity.

All of the transcripts and findings will be kept in a locked file cabinet. As the sole researcher for this project, only I will have access to the interviews captured on audio and in transcription form. All data will be archived by the researcher for future generations. You can also consent to this data being made accessible to Tahltan community groups of your choosing. If your data is used in the future for educational purposes other than this research project, the researcher will seek your permission.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways:

- Dissemination of findings to participants
- Dissemination of findings to Indigenous community (as requested by general Indigenous community)
- Presentation of findings to Indigenous research and scholarly community (classrooms, conferences, guest presentations)
- Publication of this research in either a journal or book format

Individuals you may contact about this study, at any time, include myself or my co-supervisors identified at the beginning of this consent form. In addition to being able to contact myself (the researcher) and my co-supervisors at the above phone numbers and email addresses, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250) 472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca.

Name of Participant	Signature	Date

WAIVING CONFIDENTIALITY–PLEASE SELECT STATEMENT only if you agree:

I consent to be identified by name/credited in the results of the study: _____
(Participant to provide initials)

I consent to have my responses attributed to me by name in the results: _____
(Participant to provide initials)

A copy of this consent will be left with you and a copy will be taken by Julie Morris.

Participant consent form
For Group 3

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled, "How the K'asba'e T'oh Language Nest Got Going in Tātl'ah: Learning the Language of Our Tahltan Ancestors" because of your involvement in the Tātl'ah language nest.

I, Julie Morris, am a graduate student in the Faculty of Humanities, Department of Linguistics; and the Faculty of Education, Department of Indigenous Education at the University of Victoria. You may contact me if you have further questions by phone at (250) 627-7420 or 2kasha@gmail.com. You may also contact my thesis co-supervisors Dr. Peter Jacobs at (250) 721-7428 or pejacobs@uvic.ca and Dr. Onowa McIvor at (250) 721-7763 or omcivor@uvic.ca.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Indigenous Language Revitalization. The main purpose of this research is to document how the Tātl'ah language nest got going, so we can share these experiences with the two other Tahltan language nests and other nations wanting to use language nest programs for language revitalization. The goal of this research is to ask the people involved to share their experiences, insights, and challenges encountered in carrying out this work.

Research like this is important because it will provide a model for future documentation of our two other Tahltan language nests, and it will contribute to the literature regarding languages nests in BC.

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your involvement in the day-to-day running of the program.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include:
- Two interview sessions lasting 30 to 50 minutes each.
- The interview questions are open-ended and intended to allow for you to share your experience.
- The interviews will be audio-taped with the purpose of transcribing the interview session, and I may take notes to make sure what I hear on the tape is correct by comparing it to my notes.
- The interviews will focus on your experience in the program and will generally follow the proposed interview questions.
- As a participant, you may decline to answer any interview question.
- The interviews will take place at a mutually agreed upon location that is most convenient to you.
- In advance of the second interview, you will receive a draft transcript of your first interview to review and approve.

- The second interview is for review and approval as well as to revise or add to your sharing.
- Upon completion of both interviews, you will be given the opportunity to review the transcripts and the findings emerging from your interviews for final approval before they will be included in the research document.

Initialing here indicates that you understand that if audiotapes are published as part of this study results, you may be identifiable even if you are not named.

Audiotapes may be taken of me for: Analysis _____ Dissemination _____

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you, including becoming tired or fatigued during the interview process. If at any time you are feeling fatigued, please let me know, and I will stop the interview, so that you can have a break. Plus, we could reschedule or stop the interview altogether.

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include contributing knowledge to the wider language revitalization community.

As a way to compensate you for any inconvenience related to your participation, you will be given an agreed upon gift for each interview that you take part in to honour the sharing of your wisdom and knowledge. Examples of such gifts include jewelry, a scarf, a blanket, or something that displays your crest. Please participate in this research only if you freely choose to do so, and if you feel it will in some way benefit the broader Indigenous community. If you have questions about participating or wish to contact my co-supervisors, Dr. Peter Jacobs or Dr. Onowa McIvor, about your decision to accept or decline involvement in this research please feel free to do so.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you decide to participate you may withdraw at any time without consequences or explanations. Please contact me (or Peter Jacobs or Onowa McIvor) via telephone or email if you no longer wish to participate in the research. If you withdraw from the study your data will be used in the study ONLY if you agree. In the event you withdraw from the study part way through you will be asked if you want the data that you have contributed to be part of the analysis. If you agree your data will remain in the study, if not your taped interviews will be erased and all transcripts, field notes, or other data associated with you will be destroyed. Should you withdraw from the study, at any time, the agreed upon gift is yours to keep. You will also receive a copy of my thesis and any material, for example a booklet, resulting from the analysis of the research.

To make sure that you continue to consent to participate in this research, at the beginning of each interview, I will check to see if you are still willing to participate and remind you that you are able to withdraw from the research at any time.

You have a choice to have your name associated with the research. Your anonymity can only be partially protected as there are not many people associated with Tahltan language nest programs, making it possible to be identified. While there may be a partial loss of anonymity in data collection, your anonymity will be protected in the reporting of data, if you request it. If you request anonymity, your name will not be recorded on the transcribed data, a fictitious name or coded initials will be used in place of your name and the researcher will be the only person who knows your identity.

All of the transcripts and findings will be kept in a locked file cabinet. As the sole researcher for this project, only I will have access to the interviews captured on audio and in transcription form. All data will be archived by the researcher for future generations. You can also consent to this data being made accessible to Tahltan community groups of your choosing. If your data is used in the future for educational purposes other than this research project, the researcher will seek your permission.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways:

- Dissemination of findings to participants
- Dissemination of findings to Indigenous community (as requested by general Indigenous community)
- Presentation of findings to Indigenous research and scholarly community (classrooms, conferences, guest presentations)
- Publication of this research in either a journal or book format

Individuals you may contact about this study, at any time, include myself or my co-supervisors identified at the beginning of this consent form. In addition to being able to contact myself (the researcher) and my co-supervisors at the above phone numbers and email addresses, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250) 472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca.

Name of Participant	Signature	Date

WAIVING CONFIDENTIALITY–PLEASE SELECT STATEMENT only if you agree:

I consent to be identified by name/credited in the results of the study: _____
(Participant to provide initials)

I consent to have my responses attributed to me by name in the results: _____
(Participant to provide initials)

A copy of this consent will be left with you and a copy will be taken by Julie Morris.

Participant consent form
For Group 4

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled, "How the K'asba'e T'oh Language Nest Got Going in Tātl'ah: Learning the Language of Our Tahltan Ancestors" because of your involvement in the Tātl'ah language nest.

I, Julie Morris, am a graduate student in the Faculty of Humanities, Department of Linguistics; and the Faculty of Education, Department of Indigenous Education at the University of Victoria. You may contact me if you have further questions by phone at (250) 627-7420 or 2kasha@gmail.com. You may also contact my thesis co-supervisors Dr. Peter Jacobs at (250) 721-7428 or pejacobs@uvic.ca and Dr. Onowa McIvor at (250) 721-7763 or omcivor@uvic.ca.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a Master's Degree in Indigenous Language Revitalization. The main purpose of this research is to document how the Tātl'ah language nest got going, so we can share these experiences with the two other Tahltan language nests and other nations wanting to use language nest programs for language revitalization. The goal of this research is to ask the people involved to share their experiences, insights, and challenges encountered in carrying out this work.

Research like this is important because it will provide a model for future documentation of our two other Tahltan language nests, and it will contribute to the literature regarding languages nests in BC.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you have a child in the program.

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include:
- Two interview sessions lasting 30 to 50 minutes each.
- The interview questions are open-ended and intended to allow for you to share your experience.
- The interviews will be audio-taped with the purpose of transcribing the interview session, and I may take notes to make sure what I hear on the tape is correct by comparing it to my notes.
- The interviews will focus on your experience in the program and will generally follow the proposed interview questions.
- As a participant, you may decline to answer any interview question.
- The interviews will take place at a mutually agreed upon location that is most convenient to you.
- In advance of the second interview, you will receive a draft transcript of your first interview to review and approve.

- The second interview is for review and approval as well as to revise or add to your sharing.
- Upon completion of both interviews, you will be given the opportunity to review the transcripts and the findings emerging from your interviews for final approval before they will be included in the research document.

Initialing here indicates that you understand that if audiotapes are published as part of this study results, you may be identifiable even if you are not named.

Audiotapes may be taken of me for: Analysis _____ Dissemination _____

There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include contributing knowledge to the wider language revitalization community.

As a way to compensate you for any inconvenience related to your participation, you will be given an agreed upon gift for each interview that you take part in to honour the sharing of your wisdom and knowledge. Examples of such gifts include jewelry, a scarf, a blanket, or something that displays your crest. Please participate in this research only if you freely choose to do so, and if you feel it will in some way benefit the broader Indigenous community. If you have questions about participating or wish to contact my co-supervisors, Dr. Peter Jacobs or Dr. Onowa McIvor, about your decision to accept or decline involvement in this research please feel free to do so.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you decide to participate you may withdraw at any time without consequences or explanations. Please contact me (or Peter Jacobs or Onowa McIvor) via telephone or email if you no longer wish to participate in the research. If you withdraw from the study your data will be used in the study ONLY if you agree. In the event you withdraw from the study part way through you will be asked if you want the data that you have contributed to be part of the analysis. If you agree your data will remain in the study, if not your taped interviews will be erased and all transcripts, field notes, or other data associated with you will be destroyed. Should you withdraw from the study, at any time, the agreed upon gift is yours to keep. You will also receive a copy of my thesis and any material, for example a booklet, resulting from the analysis of the research.

To make sure that you continue to consent to participate in this research, at the beginning of each interview, I will check to see if you are still willing to participate and remind you that you are able to withdraw from the research at any time.

You have a choice to have your name associated with the research. Your anonymity can only be partially protected as there are not many people associated with Tahltan language nest programs, making it possible to be identified. While there may be a partial loss of anonymity in data collection, your anonymity will be protected in the

reporting of data, if you request it. If you request anonymity, your name will not be recorded on the transcribed data, a fictitious name or coded initials will be used in place of your name and the researcher will be the only person who knows your identity.

All of the transcripts and findings will be kept in a locked file cabinet. As the sole researcher for this project, only I will have access to the interviews captured on audio and in transcription form. All data will be archived by the researcher for future generations. You can also consent to this data being made accessible to Tahltan community groups of your choosing. If your data is used in the future for educational purposes other than this research project, the researcher will seek your permission.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways:
- Dissemination of findings to participants
- Dissemination of findings to Indigenous community (as requested by general Indigenous community)
- Presentation of findings to Indigenous research and scholarly community (classrooms, conferences, guest presentations)
- Publication of this research in either a journal or book format

Individuals you may contact about this study, at any time, include myself or my co-supervisors identified at the beginning of this consent form. In addition to being able to contact myself (the researcher) and my co-supervisors at the above phone numbers and email addresses, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria (250) 472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca.

Name of Participant	Signature	Date

WAIVING CONFIDENTIALITY–PLEASE SELECT STATEMENT only if you agree:

I consent to be identified by name/credited in the results of the study: _____ (Participant to provide initials)

I consent to have my responses attributed to me by name in the results: _____ (Participant to provide initials)

A copy of this consent will be left with you and a copy will be taken by Julie Morris.

Appendix H: Interview questions

Group 1: Administrators (director and coordinator)

1. How did it come to be that you got involved in the K'asba'e T'oh language program?

2. What did you use as a model to design the K'asba'e T'oh language program?

3. What criteria were used to develop the qualifications of the individuals involved in the K'asba'e T'oh language program?

4. How was the start-up of K'asba'e T'oh financed?

5. How is K'asba'e T'oh financed today?

6. Describe a typical day of your duties and functions at K'asba'e T'oh.

7. How has K'asba'e T'oh impacted your life?

8. Do you feel there are benefits coming from the K'asba'e T'oh program and would you recommend it to someone?

Group 2: Language mentors

1. How did it come to be that you got involved in the K'asba'e T'oh program?

2. What is your role at K'asba'e T'oh?

3. What in your life's story has prepared you for teaching at K'asba'e T'oh?

4. How has the K'asba'e T'oh program impacted your life?

Group 3: Parents

1. How did your child become involved in the K'asba'e T'oh program?

2. Describe a typical day your child attends K'asba'e T'oh.

3. How has the K'asba'e T'oh program impacted your life?

4. Do you feel there are benefits coming from the K'asba'e T'oh program and would you recommend it to someone?