

Mulyitul:
Hul'q'umi'num' perspectives on a wedding ceremony

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Sti'tum'atulwut

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Ethics Statement

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Abstract

Public speaking is an important aspect of all Coast Salish ceremonies. It is our way in the Hul'q'umi'num' territory for ceremonies to be conducted in our own language. While language and protocol at namings, funerals, and memorials has received research attention, weddings are an understudied topic. Weddings are especially complicated because they are a blend of native and modern elements, and they sometimes involve marriage of a community member to someone from outside the community—from a different cultural heritage. It can become a very sophisticated event to observe all the ceremonial elements required by both the bride's and the groom's families. This project documents Coast Salish protocols by laying down Hul'q'umi'num' stories that describe traditional and modern proposals and that also illustrate ceremonial speaking at the wedding itself.

Keywords: Coast Salish weddings; Hul'q'umi'num' language; ceremonial speaking

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this project to my children and grandchildren because they will be the ones to carry on our traditional ways.

Acknowledgements

I would like to start by acknowledging my grandparents Basil and Cecilia Alphonse, thanking them for their dedication to us. They raised us in a traditional cultural way. I would like to thank my mother and father Ruby and Ronald Peter for not straying from what my grandparents expected from them for us. A special thanks to my stepdad Norman Spahan (Cowboy) as he and mom supported my every endeavor. Thanks to all my siblings and their families. Thank you to my children Lynsey, Susan, and Joseph for always giving me unconditional moral support.

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I would like to thank the young couple, my niece Leona and her husband Thomas Ambrose, for letting us center our project around their happy event. Thank you for understanding the importance of bringing back our traditional ways and doing it in our Hul'q'umi'num' language.

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Preface

I am Sti'tum'atulwut Hwuneem, Bernadette Sam, from Quamichan. I was born in 1967 and I am the youngest child of Sti'tum'at, Ruby Peter. You all are familiar now with my mother, as she has been doing language research and teaching for over 60 years. Growing up, I was surrounded by Hul'q'umi'num' language and culture, and what a complete honor this is, because many families have lost their Elders and their chance to be brought up in the language. My grandparents, Basil Alphonse xitsulenuhw and Cecelia Leo qwulsimtunaat, also helped raise me. They were important speakers of the language and also made sure I was raised in our native ways, longhouse culture, canoe pulling, and other snuw'uyulh. How unique my upbringing was! Because Cowichan Tribes is a strong presence in the Duncan area, I was able to live at home and do my traditional ways as well as living a modern lifestyle, attending public schools and playing in sports.

I completed grade twelve, married young, and started my family. I completed my upgrading in the adult learning program at VIU (formerly Malaspina College) after the birth of my second child. In 1992, I went into the RCMP academy, and then served for eighteen years as a regular police officer, posted in North Cowichan, Ladysmith, West Shore, Chilliwack, and Nanaimo. I took an early retirement in 2012. I loved my job but found the force unwelcoming to women, and I am currently a litigant in the class action suit of RCMP women officers.

I have always been an assistant for my mother in her language teaching and research, and also her spiritual work. After my retirement, I had the freedom to pursue opportunities to continue in laying down my language and participating in cultural events. In 2012, I started doing a BA at VIU, majoring in First Nations Studies. I also took classes in Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology. I also took the VIU continuing education language courses. When I had the chance to start taking SFU languages courses in 2012, I was happy to find a way to broaden my understanding of linguistic structure and improve my fluency.

My mission to finish my BA was side-lined due to the court case, which is still dragging on. But I managed to complete ten courses at VIU as well as five SFU language courses. One of the highlights of the last five years is that I worked as research assistant

for Donna Gerdts and also Helene Demers, VIU anthropologist. One project concerned canoe pulling, and besides helping with interviews, transcriptions, and translations of Hul'q'umi'num' materials, I served as lead administrator for mounting the canoe exhibit at the Cowichan Valley Museum. Also, I was involved in a Jacobs Fund Research project on native weddings, and this work led to my MA project presented here.

I am very glad for the opportunity to be part of the SFU graduate cohort and to earn an MA in the Linguistics of a First Nations Language. My first goal has been to become more fluent in my language, going from understanding it to speaking it. My hope is that by becoming more proficient in my language I will be of more service to my community in their efforts to strengthen and support our Hul'q'umi'num' language. Language and culture are essential for the identity and well-being of the youth in our community. We can not do enough work to assure that our traditions are carried forward. I truly enjoy researching the language and culture and feel that there is much to be done to make sure that language materials have an authentic First Nations voice.

Chapter 1. Introduction

We are Coast Salish people, living on the shores of the Salish Sea. I come from the Quw'utsun' Tribe, in the vicinity of Duncan, British Columbia. We are Hul'q'umi'num' people and speak a dialect of the Salish language family. During my lifetime, year by year, I have become very aware of the loss of our Elders who speak the Hul'q'umi'num' language. Today only around thirty fluent speakers remain, and these are mostly over the age of sixty, so the Hul'q'umi'num' language is in danger of disappearing. For this reason, many of us who were raised speaking English have now committed to working with our Elders to become more fluent in Hul'q'umi'num' and help pass it on to future generations.

Although the Hul'q'umi'num' language has experienced a sharp decline recently as an everyday language, we maintain very strong cultural traditions that live on through our sacred ceremonies and longhouse spiritual practices that are conducted in our own language. This important work is the focus of our lives during the winter dance season. Traditional cultural ceremonies are also held throughout the year for namings, memorials, funerals, and weddings. As Hul'q'umi'num' people, we have grown up hearing our language spoken during these ceremonies.

When practicing our Coast Salish traditions, we often turn to our Elders to find out proper protocols and Hul'q'umi'num' wordings. Real life met up with research in 2015 when our family was called upon to host a wedding. This got us thinking about how we could turn our traditional ceremonies into research projects so that we could document today's practices and compare them to the ways of the past.¹ We drew inspiration from the work of Smith (1999), Wilson (2008), among others, as models of how to hold Indigenous research practices and ceremonial use of language in high regard and design projects that first and foremost benefit our own community.

¹ Funding for our wedding project came from SSHRC Insight Grant funds and also a Jacobs Research Grant.

I am thus grateful for this opportunity to share what I learned by doing this project with the hope that it will be an inspiration to all those who are seeking to improve their fluency in our language and to carry forward our cultural traditions. The Hul'q'umi'num' language was used at all stages of the wedding itself. First, the proposal, traditionally lasting four days, was revitalized as a one-day event involving speeches, songs, and gifts (see Chapter Two). The language was also used, as is our custom, on the day of the ceremony itself (see Chapter Three). One important aspect of a traditional wedding is lecturing the couple, and we recorded an example speech giving words of advice (see Chapter Four).

I have often been told by my Elders that language and culture go hand-in-hand and that the best research engages the heart and the mind. I found this to be the case working on this project. The many good thoughts and memories of this happy occasion sustained me as I did the challenging work of laying this project down on paper and studying and learning the stories word by word and phrase by phrase.

Chapter 2. Coast Salish courtship practices

In this chapter, we share some traditional knowledge about courtship, proposals, and engagement. Enclosed are the transcriptions and translations of two stories by Ruby Peter. The first talks in general about courtship practice in the old days. Story two gives a real-life modern example of when her granddaughter was proposed to by a family from a West Coast tribe.

2.1. ni' sht'es tthu tstsetsuhwum — Courtship Practices

Traditionally, Coast Salish marriages were arranged on behalf of the youth by the Elders from different families. To make a proposal, the man would wait outside the bride's house for four days as her family deliberated over the proposal. If the family found the young man to be acceptable, he would be invited in to meet the young lady. Then he returned with his Elders and the terms and conditions were laid out for the marriage to take place.

Here is a story about traditional proposal laid down in Hul'q'umi'num' by Ruby Peter, St'itum'at.

ni' sht'es tthu tstsetsuhwum — Courtship Practices

1. niilh sht'es tthu tstsetsuhwum 'u kw'unu wulh hiith tst tstsehwum tthu swuy'qe'
'u tthu slheni'.

This is about how we did courtship a long time ago, when a man is proposing to a woman.

2. nan'ulh 'uw' tl'i' tthu ts-tsehwum 'u kw'un'a wulh hith.

Long time ago, it was a very serious thing to do—proposing to a young woman.

3. 'uweelh kws tstsehwums 'u kwuw' kws 'uw' suw'q's 'ul' 'ukw' slheni' 'i
tstsehwum.

They never used to pick just any woman to propose to.

4. nilh kwthu tun'ni' 'u kwthu sii'em' mustimuhw nilh ni yul'qw'tus.
It's people from high status families that are chosen.
5. 'i' kwthu ni' xwutl'seylh sii'em' hwulmuhw ni' tl'i'stuhw kwthu mun'us.
And it's the parents that treasure their daughters that have potlatches for their
puberty.
6. 'i' lumstunuq 'u kwsus wulh 'uye'q tthu stl'itl'qulh hwu slheni' hay kws
stl'i'tl'qulhs.
And they show their daughter, when they have their change of life and become a
woman, and not a child anymore.
7. 'apun 'i' kw' lhihw, 'apun 'i' kw' xu'athun.
They are only thirteen or fourteen years old.
8. ni' tl'uw nets' kwthu tse'yulhtum.
It's different for a girl who has been sequestered.
9. tsa.a.akw nets' 'u kwthu tun'ni' 'u kwthu stsuy'elh 'i' kwthu tun'ni' 'u kwthu
sii'em' mustimuhw.
It's very different for a sequestered girl from well-off people.
10. kwthu ni' xwutl'seylh 'u thu mun'us, wulh apun 'i' kw' lhihw sil'anum suw'
tl'eshun'.
They have a puberty potlatch for their daughter, when she turns thirteen.
11. 'i' 'uwu 'uw' 'uhwiin'us 'ul' tthu stl'eshun'.
It's not a small potlatch.
12. qux mustimuhw, tthu stl'eshun' sht'es 'uw' niis hay 'ul' si'em'.
And they invite a lot of people, depending on how well off the parent is.
13. 'i' ni' saay'st-hwus 'u kwthu swuw'qw'a'lh.
And they have prepared some traditional goat wool blankets.

14. 'i' ni' pethutum ni' hay 'ul' hwu tsitsulh kwus hay 'ul qux tthu swuqw'a'lh.
And they spread them on the ground until the goat wool blankets are piled up really high.
15. ni' shts'e'nutss thu mun'us.
And that's what the girl is going to sit on.
16. 'i' nilh tse' ni' smem't-s 'u kwus wulh hay.
And after they will give all those blankets away.
17. ni' 'u kwthey' 'i' st'e kw'uw' hwu st'et'i'stum' 'u tthu ts'lhsi'em's 'u kwthu tun'ni kwthu si'em's mustimuhw.
This is how they show how well off they are to the other wealthy families.
18. nilh snem's 'uw' thut-stum, "nem' tst tse' nem' 'utl' nuwu 'u thun' mun'u ni' tse' ni' 'u kwthu st'e skweyul."
That's when one will go to say, "We will come to you for your daughter on some future day."
19. ha' ni' sht'eehun' kwsus niis thut ni' tse' st'e, yuse'lu sil'anum, yuse'lu sil'anum 'i' nem' tst tse' tl'u'ast thun' mun'u.
But if they set a day, it will be two years later before they come to propose.
20. ni' t'eeytus, nilh xut'ustum' "t'eeytus", sta'lusth tse' tthu mun'us.
Then their son will be called *t'eeytus* (promised).
21. suw' t'eeyt-s thu q'e'mi'allh.
So he is the intended of the young girl.
22. suw' st'e 'u kw'uw' s'ulmutsun 'u kwthu yuse'lu sil'anum.
So, they wait for around two years.
23. niis 'apun 'i' lhihw, niihw tse' kwu'elh st'e 'ukw' 'apun 'i' kw' lhq'etsus 'i' nem' tse' tstsehwum.

Those thirteen years old will then be fifteen, and they will go and propose.

24. nuw' sxuxitsst-hwus kwthu skweyuls 'i' ni' tse' nem' 'u tthu ni' st'et'i'st-hwus nem' tstsehwum.

They decide on the day that the promised youth will go propose.

25. 'i' 'uwu niis 'uw' yu 'eey' 'ul' ni' sxuxitsst-hwus kwthu nem' tse' ts'uyulh 'u kwthu sul'si'lus thu q'e'mi'.

And they just don't pick anyone, but rather people who are good at public speaking to go to speak to the girl's grandparents.

26. suw' kw'iinus kwthu nem' tse' yu huy'ust-hwus nem' tse' ts'uyulh.

Many people will go to speak on behalf of the young man.

27. 'i' kwthu slhewun ni' tse' s'ahwust-s kwthu ni' tse' hwu skw'ulwusth ni' 'uw' mukw' 'ul' stem kwthu ni' lheq'utus.

And the ones who will become the in-laws of the bride lay down the gifts of blankets as well as various other things.

28. xuxithum, ts'uhwle' 'i' le'tsus, luxwtun nilh nem' nemust-hwus.

Boxes, sometimes baskets, blankets are what they would bring.

29. kwus wulh tus 'u tthu lelum's tthu ni' nem' tl'e'tus, 'i' 'uwu kws nuw'ilums tthu swuy'qe', tthu mun'us tthu tstsetsuhwum'.

When they get to the house of the young lady, the young man, the son of the ones proposing, doesn't go inside.

30. hay 'uw' niis 'aatum thut-stum, "m'i ch nuw'ilum!" 'i' yelhs nuw'ilums tthu tsutshwe'mi'lh.

Only when he is invited and told, "Come in!" and then young man who has come courting goes in.

31. ha' ni' ni kwthu 'uw' niis 'uwustum, 'i' skw'ey kws 'aantewut kws nuwi'lums 'u thu lelum'.

And if there are any objections from the lady's family, he will not be allowed enter the house.

32. m'is 'uw' hwiwshum tthu s'ahwustewut tthu sh-hwhuw'welis.
They will bring gifts to the girl's parents.
33. nilh kwthuw' mukw' stem—xuxithum, le'tsus, luxwtun.
It will be various things—boxes, baskets, blankets.
34. ha' ni' s'ahwustewut 'i' tl'e wulh qul'et ts'uhw kwthu s'ahwustewut.
If they still refuse, then they bring some more gifts.
35. ha' 'uw' tl'lim' 'uw' 'uwu tthu ni' tsutshwe'mutum 'i' ni' hwluklithut.
If the family really refuses to let the girl be courted, then they will lock her in.
36. skw'ey kws nem's wi'ulthut thu q'e'mi'.
And the girl will not show herself.
37. qux niilh sht'es 'u kwun'a wulh hith, yelhs hwtulquns 'uw' niis hwtulqun.
There were many different steps a long time ago, before they would respond or not.
38. hay kwthunu sul'si'lu kwsus wulh tstsehwum, ni' 'uw' 'a'mut 'ul' tthu swiw'lus
ni' 'u tthu s'e'tl'q.
With my grandparents, when someone came to propose marriage, the young man was just outside.²
39. sus 'uw' nuluw'ilum tthu s'ul'eluhws ni' ts'uyulhnamut.
And the Elders of the young man went inside and did all the protocol.
40. nuw' hwune'unt yelh sus, m'i nuw'ushum tthu swiw'lus.
It was evening by the time he was allowed inside.

² The young men would sit on the porch, facing the East.

41. 'i m'i hwiwshum thu q'e'mi', hwiwshum thunu shuyulh.
And then the young lady, my older sister (Ruby's half-sister Adeline), was brought forward.
42. sus nem 'uw' huya'stum kwus wulh hwu slhelhuq' tthu ni' s'ahwustewut tthunu sul'si'lu.
They took her away after all the gifts were given to my grandparents.
43. 'uwu nilh'us tthu mens 'i' thu tens ni' shnem's tthu ni' s'ahwustewut.
All the gifts that came in didn't go to my sister's father or mother.
44. nilh tthunu sul'si'lu, nilh niilh shni's thunu shuyulh yelh sus huya'stum kwsus wulh hay tthu ni' ts'ii'ulhna'mut.
It was my grandparents, as that's where my sister lived before she left with the ones doing the negotiations.
45. nuw' qxe'luts tthu w'ne'ullh, sul'si'lus tthu swiw'lus 'i' tthu shhwhuwelis, shhwhumne'lukws.
There were quite a few of them, the grandparents of the young man and his uncles and aunts.
46. nii thuy'thi'qtul' kwus ts'ii'ulh tthu w'ne'ullh, qwiil'qwul' 'u tthu ni' sht'es 'eelhtun tthu shqwaluwuns 'u thu q'e'mi'.
And they all took turns asking for my sister's hand, speaking about their feelings for the young lady.
47. 'uw' hay niilh nu s-he'kw kwthey'.
That's the only proposal that I ever saw.
48. qux kwus nuts'tul tthu ni' sht'es tthu m'i tl'e't thu q'e'mi'.
There are many different things that can happen when people courting a girl.

49. niis nuts'uwmuhw 'i' tl'uw' nets', 'uw' niis 'uw' hul'q'umi'num' 'i' kwthu ni' shtun'naalhtuns.

It's like they are from another country or another nation they would have their own way of proposing, whether they speak Hul'q'umi'num' or not, and what their heritage is.

50. 'i' kwthu ni' yu kwun'etus thu slheni' yu kwun'et kwthu stem shts'uluhwus, shulmuhwtsus.

And sometimes the girl will be taking along with her masks, rattlers.

51. qux kwsus yu nuts'tul, tthu ni' sht'es nilh tthu ni' shtun'naalhtuns st'e 'u kwuw' wi'wul'utus, tthu ni' sht'es kwus si'em's tthu ni' shtun'ni's sht'es kws stsuy'elhs.

There are many different practices, depending on the status, whether they are from the high-status families or the hereditary chiefs.

52. nilh ni' wi'ultus.

And this is what they show.

53. hay tseep q'a.

Thank you.

54. nilh 'uw' hay 'ul' ni' shtatul'st-hween'.

That's all I know about this.

2.2. **tstsehwum — The proposal**

The idea for this project arose because my mother Ruby Peter is head of a family whose young female relative was going to be married that spring. Her granddaughter married the grandson of a very prestigious Nuu-chah-nulth family. That spring they did us the honor of coming to propose to the young lady at my house in Quamichan. My mother, Ruby Peter, relates her memories of that day in the following story.

tstsehwum | proposal

1. 'een'thu sti'tum'at, Ruby Peter tthu s-hwunitum'a'lh nu sne.
I am Sti'tum'at, Ruby Peter, my English name.
2. tun'a niis ts'twa' wulh kw'inus lhqel'ts'
It's been so many months since my granddaughter came to see me
3. 'i' m'i qwaqwul' thunu 'imuth kws mulyituls.
and told me she was going to get married.
4. 'i' stl'i's kws 'uw' 'uhwiin's 'ul',
She wanted just a small wedding,
5. 'uw' hay 'ul' kwthu tth'uxwten 'i kwthu xut'ustum *justice of peace*.
just using a masked dance and the justice of the peace.
6. tuw' hwni'umtul 'ul'. suw' qwul'qwul' 'u tthu shkw'ilhuw's yuthustus kwus
tse' mulyitul.
And her husband told his family that he was getting married.
7. 'i' tun'ni' 'u tthu tsa'luqw heskwit.
And they are from up north, Hesquiat.
8. suw' nem' 'huye' tthu'w' nilh nem' nets'uw't-hwum 'u tthu ts'lhwulmuhws
ni' 'u tthu heskwit,
Her husband went to visit his family up at Hesquiat,
9. suw' yuthustus, yuthustus tthu sul'si'lus kws mulyituls tthu 'imuths.
and told his grandparents that he was getting married.
10. niis kwu'elh hw'iint 'uw' niis 'u thut-stum kws tun'ni' tst 'u tthu thuthi'
mustimuhw.
They were told that the they (the bride's family) were high-status people.
11. sus 'uw' wulh tetsul tthu sqwal.

Because of what they were told, they sent word.

12. thut-s tthu s'ul-hweens, tthu shkw'ilhuw's thunu 'imuth,
Their elders, the in-laws, said about my granddaughter,
13. skw'ey p'e' kwsuw' mulyituls 'ul' tthu stl'ul'iqulh.
that the young people can't just get married.
14. tun'ni' 'u kwthu sh-hwhuw'welis lhu stl'itl'qulh.
Because of the status of the girl's parents,
15. 'i' stl'atl'um' kws yu tl'ul'im' tse' kws mulyituls.
they should do the marriage properly.
16. wulh qwul'qwul'tul tthu' ne'ullh.
And they had discussions.
17. suw' thut nem' tst kwu 'elh tshwemilh.
So they sent word to us, that they are going to come and propose.
18. wulh m'i yuthustalum,
Word was sent to us,
19. ni' wulh thut kwthu tun'ni' 'utl' nul'ts'uwmuhw heskwit kws m'is tshwemilh.
visitors from Hesquiat are coming over to propose.
20. 'o-o tl'lim' tsun hay 'ul' tth'uy'kw'thut nus.
And I was in a state of shock.
21. 'uw' sht'eewun' ni' wulh tl'e'ilum, tl'e'ilum.
I thought that everything was getting very, very serious.
22. tthu ni' sqwals tthu nuts'uwmuhw,
When they were discussing about the proposal,
23. thut tthu' ne'ullh 'uw' tun'ni' p'e',

they talked about their own background,

24. 'u tthu syuw'ens che'luf (stsi'tsi'elh) tthu syuw'en's tthunu 'imuth.
that they are high status people and their background is from the chieftains.
25. skw'ey kwu'elh kwsuw' yu 'eey's 'ul, nem' tst kwu'elh.
They just can't sit by and let things happen without coming forward.
26. 'i kwu'elh tuw' hith 'i' wulh tetsul tthu sqwal
And it was a little while later that word arrived
27. ni' tse' ni' 'u kwthu *February 21st* 'i' nem' tst tshwemilh.
that on February 21st they would come propose.
28. nus tuw' huy'thust tthunu siiye'yu
I was telling some of my relatives
29. m'i ts'u tshwemilh kwthu nults'uwmuhw 'ewu.
that there were going to be visitors coming to propose.
30. 'i' 'uwu te' nu shtatul'stuhw 'uw' stsekwul'us,
And I didn't know anything about their traditions,
31. 'uw' niis stsekwul' tthu shtun'naalhtuns.
how they do things where they are from.
32. nilh kwu'elh kwun'a, ni' ts'twa' wulh yuse'lu suxulhnet,
It must have been two weeks ahead of time,
33. 'i' 'i tsuntul'nuhw kwus 'i tse' tth'a'kwus kw' snuhwulh
I was told that there will be seven cars
34. m'i 'ushul m'i 'ewu, xut'ustum' 'ushul.
that will come "paddling".

35. 'i' 'uwu te' nu shtatul'stuhw 'uw' yu stsekwul'us
I had no idea how they were going to be
36. wulh hith kwthu niilh lumnuhw'een'.
because this hasn't happened for a long time [60/70 years].
37. 'i' nilh kwsnu shuyulh mun'us tthunu men. hay 'ul' sun'tl'e' mun'us.
The last one that I remember was my late sister, my dad's eldest daughter
[Adeline].
38. nilh niilh tshwemutum
She was the one that was proposed to,
39. 'i' 'uw' tun'ni' 'ul' 'utl' lhumlhumuluts' tthu niilh ts tsehwum.
and the people that came that time to propose were local people from
Clemclem.
40. 'uw' hay niilh lumnuhween'.
And that's the only one that I've ever seen.
41. 'i' nilh nus 'uhwiin' stl'itl'qulh 'i' tsun ts'twa' t'xum sil'anum.
And I was a small child, about six years old, when that happened.
42. ni' wulh hwu 'uwu te' 'u tthu xut'ustum' tsutshwe'mi'lh.
That kind of proposal doesn't happen anymore.
43. ni' wulh 'i'kw', nilh ni' wulh 'ukw'nuhwut
It's lost; we have lost how to do it
44. tun'ni' 'u tthu *residential school*,
all on account of the residential schools,
45. tthu luplit, tthu *Indian agent* sutst 'uw' 'ukw'nuhw.
the churches, Indian agent, so we've lost it.

46. st'e 'uw' niis yakw'utum tthu hwulmuhw.
It's like the First Nations people are broken.
47. suw' thut-s tthey' nul'ts'uwmuhw tun'ni' 'utl' heskwit,
So the visitors from Hesqiat said,
48. "mi' tst hwu'alum'stuhw kwthuw' t'at sht'es 'ulh kwhu s'ul'eluhwulh.
"We are bringing back how how our ancestors used to do it.
49. m'i tst hwu'alum'stuhw stsuy'tsi'elh tthu'ne'ullh
We are bringing back their style of doing negotiations,
50. mukw' 'uw' tun'ni' 'u tthu che'luf."
as they are all from chiefs."
51. 'i' wulh m'i qwul'qwul', m'i tetsul tthu sqwal
And then the word arrived
52. kwus tse' tth'a'kwus sunihwulh kw' m'i tse' tetsul.
that there will be seven cars that will arrive at my house.
53. nus 'uw' xut'ustuhw lhunu sq'e'uq, 'uw' hay tuw' qwiil'qwul'st-hween',
I was talking to my younger sister, who was my best advisor on this,
54. "skw'ey p'e' kwunus 'uw kwe't 'ul' lhunu 'imuth.
"I can't just let my granddaughter go.
55. tun'ni' tst p'e' 'u tthu stsi'elh mustimuhw.
We are from the high-status people.
56. hwts'e'nutsum tse' kwu'elh 'ukw' luxwtun 'i' 'uw' t'uyum tse' kw' nuts'a'
luxwtun
I will place one blanket on the chair where she will sit,
57. 'i' 'uw' luxwut tse' 'ukw' nuts'a' luxwtun."

and I'll cover her with another blanket.”

58. suw' xut'u lhunu sqe'uq, “wuwa' nilh nuw' stl'atl'um'.”
My sister said, “That's perhaps the proper thing to do.”
59. tahw 'uw' 'apun tintun 'u tun'a netulh 'i' wulh te'lutsul tthuw' ne'ullh.
At exactly ten o'clock in the morning, the people arrived at my house.
60. 'uw' thu'it tth'a'kwus sunihwulh.
There were seven cars.
61. m'i qw'elum, 'o-o qux ni' ts'twa' tsulel 'i' lhq'utsulhshe' tthuw' ne'ullh kwus
m'i sq'uq'ip.
When they all got off, there must have been almost fifty of them.
62. sutst 'uw' hwu xi'lhe'mut tl'uw' sun'niw' tthunu smun'eem tun'ni 'u tthu
kitchen sh-hwulmastun kwus xi'lhem'.
My family was watching from the kitchen window.
63. wulh nemust-hwus 'eelhtun thu st'ult'ilums.
And they were singing their songs.
64. 'o-o 'uyli'uy'mut thu st'ilums, qux st'ilum's 'eelhtun!
Oh, many beautiful songs they sang!
65. ni' 'unuhw kwus hay ...ni' wa'lu tuw qw'aqw'ulhuta'lum',
They would stop, like they were expecting something from us,
66. 'uwu tst niit yu wi'althut.
but we didn't go out.
67. tl'e' wulh qul'et t'ilum tthuw'ne'ullh.
And they sang some more songs.

68. slhhwelhs kwus t'it'ulum' 'i' ni' tsun nem' 'utl'qul nem' hwiwul lemut
'eelhtun.
About the third time they were singing, and I went out to look at them and
listen.
69. ni' kwelh ni' 'u kwthu sxuthunelhs kwus t'it'ulum' 'i' 'i' tsun m'i ts'iit m'i
nuw'ush.
It was about the fourth time that that they were singing that I thanked them
and called them in.
70. niihw si'lew' nuts'a' tintun kwus s'e'tl'q, 'i' 'i' tsun m'i nuw'ush nuw'ilum,
They were outside for more than two hours before I brought them in,
71. 'aat tthu s'ul-hweens, hay 'ul tthu s'ul-hweens m'i nuw'ilum.
inviting the elders, just the elders, to come in.
72. sus m'uw' nuluw'ilum tthu s'ulhween hwu 'aam'ut.
So the elders came in and sat down.
73. ni' wulh hay qwiil'qwul' hey'thithut tthu'ne'ullh kwus ni' 'u tthu s'e'tl'q,
They finished explaining their ancestral heritage when they were outside,
74. tthu shtun'naalhtuns yuthustalum 'u tthu ni' sht'es kwus stsuy'tsi'elh che'luf,
where they come from, telling us that they are from high-status chiefs,
75. ni' yu huy'thusta'lum' 'u tthu ni' yu 'iiw'ustum' tthu'ne'ullh che'luf.
telling us that each one they were pointing out are chiefs.
76. ni' tst kwu'elh wulh yu stutul'een'u 'u tthu ni' sht'es tthu'ne'ullh
So we already had an idea of who they were
77. 'i ni' hwu sun'iw' 'u tthu s'aa'lh lelum'.
when we got them inside our house.

78. suw' t'un'ut tthuw'ne'ullh, 'i' 'uw' 'een'thu ni' yuw'en' kwunus ni'
ts'uyulhnamut.
So they stood together and I was the first to express my appreciation.
79. nus nuw' yuthust 'u tthu ni' sht'e tst, tthu ni' shtun'naalhtun tst,
I explained to them about our background, our ancestry,
80. tthu hwuneem nilh wulh si'lew' 'apun tawsun sil'anum kwus 'i' 'u tun'a.
especially about the name Hwuneem that goes back ten thousand years.
81. yulhi'a'qwt 'utl' syalutsa' tthu hwuneem.
And I explained that Hwuneem was the second person following Syalatse'.
82. 'i' ni' tl'uw' yu st'e thu slheni' sti'tum'atul'wut.
Also I told them about the lady Sti'tum'atul'wut.
83. tiit thu ten 'utl' sti'tum'atul'wut, tun' ni' 'utl' sqwxwa'mush.
Sti'tum'atul'wut's mother Tiit was from Squamish.
84. ni' tsta'lus 'utl' qiyuplenuhw, niilh tthuw' yuw'e-e-en' quyuplenuhw.
She was the wife of the first Quypulenuhw.
85. suw tsmun'u 'eelhtun sus 'uw' neetus sti'tum'atul'wut.
And when they had a daughter, they gave her the name Sti'tum'atul'wut.
86. sis 'uw' tl'e'tum 'utl' quyxuletse', tun'ni' 'utl' s'amuna,
Quyxuletse' was betrothed to her,
87. sis 'uw' hwu'i 'utl' s'amuna thu sti'tum'atul'wut.
and that's why Sti'tum'atul'wut ended up in S'amuna.
88. tl'uw' chif tthu ni' ststa'lusth, quyxuletse'.
She got married to a chief Quyxuletse'.

89. 'i' nilh niilh st'es 'u kw'un'a wulh hith—
That's the way it was a long time ago—
90. hay tthu swuy'qe' mun'us tthu chif ha' mulyitul 'i' tl'uw' tun'ni' 'u tthu
ts'lhchif thu slheni' ni' tsta'lusth.
A chief's son when he marries only takes a lady that comes from a fellow
chief for their wife.
91. 'uwu kws 'uw' yu 'eey's 'ul'.
They wouldn't marry just anyone.
92. nus 'uw' xut'ustuhw tthu'ne'ullh tun'ni' 'u tthu heskwit,
So that was what I was explaining to those Hesquiat people,
93. "ni' ch kwu'elh st'e 'uw' niihw hwu'alum'stuhw 'i ch m'i st'e 'ukw' hulit
"You are reviving something
94. kwthu ni' wulh 'ikw' tun'ni' 'u tthu *residential school*,
that was lost on account of the residential schools,
95. tthu *Indian agent*, tthu hwst'uli'wi'ulh.
and the Indian agents, and religion.
96. nilh niilh qul'qul'ilt.
That's who destroyed our traditions.
97. 'i ch m'i tetsul 'un's nuw' st'e 'ukw' hwu'alum'stuhw."
You are reviving this tradition."
98. nuw' qux ni' nu sts'iit tth'uw'ne'ullh kwunus ni' qwal.
I said a lot of things to the Elders, talking to them and thanking them.
99. nus tl'uw' qwal 'u tthunu me'mun'u, thut-st-hwuhw 'uw' tl'ees 'uw' yu
ts'iiy'ulh.

And then I spoke to my children, gratefully praising them.

100. ni' tsun 'uw' lemut 'ul' kwthunu mun'u nuqwsumut,
I just looked at my son, and nodded,
101. 'i' 'uw' 'ulh nilhus sus 'uw' qwal.
and he knew what I wanted, and he spoke up.
102. nilh nuw' sht'e tst tun'a lhnimulh 'u kwutst sq'uq'ip,
And this is the way we are when we come together,
103. kws ha's ni' qwal kwthu na'nuts'a' 'i' ni' tst st'e' 'u kw'uw' huy'aatul'.
if one speaks then we all add our own comments on it.
104. 'i' ni' tl'uw' yu qwaqwul' 'i' ni' tl'uw' lemutus kwthu na'nuts'a' 'i' tl'uw'
hwi' nilh ni' qwal.
When my son was finished, he just looked at the next person that he expected
to speak up.
105. niw' mukw' 'uw' qwal tthunu smun'eem nu me'mun'u, lhunu sqe'uq.
So all my children had something to say and also my younger sister.
106. ni' tl'uw' tus 'u lhu tens lhunu 'imuth.
And then my granddaughter's mother [Barbara] spoke up.
107. ni' tst 'uw' mukw'uthut kwutst qwal ts'uyulhnamut,
We all spoke expressing our gratitude,
108. 'uy'stuhw tthu ni' wil' 'u tun'a kweyul.
happy for what was happening that day.
109. hay 'ul' 'uy'."
It was really good."

110. ni' kwu'elh wulh 'usup' kwthey' yelh sutst m'i hwiwsh lhunu 'imuth.
After everyone finished talking, we brought my granddaughter out.
111. nilh lhunu sqe'uq, nilh 'i m'i hwiwsh lhu Delores hukwumust-hwus 'u kwthu
luxwtun sis muw' hwiwul.
It was my sister, Delores who brought her out, covering her with a blanket
when she was brought forward.
112. nusuw' ts'iit lhuw'nilh nu 'imuth 'i' kwthu qe'is nu shhw'imuth,
Then I talked to my granddaughter and my new grandson-in-law,
113. ts'iit kws 'uwus 'uw' nilhus 'ul' tun'a kweyul tthu ni' sle'tewut
expressing thanks that this is not going be just for what happened today
114. 'i' nilh tse' 'uw' sht'es kwsuw' yu kwun'atul's 'i 'uw' s'ul'aluhwthut.
but it's going to be this way as you grow old together.
115. 'i' nilh niilh 'uw' sht'es 'u kw'una wulh hith.
And this is how they are going to be for a long time.
116. qux ni' nu sqwal 'i qux ni' sts'uyulhnamut-s tthunu smun'eem kwus yu
qwaqwul'.
And I said many words of encouragement on behalf of my family.
117. hith nuw' yul'ew' 'ul' tahws skweyul kwutst qwaqwul' yelh sus hay.
We talked for a long time, and it was twelve o'clock before we finished.
118. 'i' nilh kwthu na'nuts'a' 'i' m'i hun'nuw' kwthu yu kwun'et kwthu xthum
And then someone came in with the drum
119. sis tl'uw' qul'et t'ilum tthuwn'e'ullh.
and they sang some more songs.

120. 'iyus thu st'ult'ilums.
They were singing beautiful songs.
121. ni' kwu'elh hay kwthey' yelh sutst m'i hwiwsh kwthu s'ulhtun.
After they were finished, the food was brought forward.
122. t'i'wi'ulh, t'i'wi'ulhtus lhunu sqe'uq kwthu s'ulhtun.
My sister prayed for the food.
123. t'i'wi'ulhtalum.
She prayed for all of us.
124. 'uw' thu'it 'uw' kw'ey' kwthu qe'is ni' hwu skw'ukw'ilwus tst.
And our new in-laws were very hungry.
125. 'i tst sht'eewun' kwus 'uw' qux kwthu s'ulhtun tst 'i saay'st-hwut,
We thought we had a lot of food ready,
126. 'i' may nuw' 'uw'kw'.
but, oh my! it was all gone.
127. wuw'a' ni' ts'twa' 'uw' nets'uw'uts kwthu mustimuhw ni' ni' 'u kwthu
lelum' 'u tun'a netulh.
There were over a hundred people at the house that morning.
128. we' tthu stl'ul'iqulh 'i' nuw' sq'uq'a'.
There were even children there.
129. ni' tl'uw' hii'lukw tthu'ne'ullh kwus tl'uw' sq'uq'a' tthu stl'ul'iqulh.
They were happy that the children were included.
130. hay tseep q'u 'uw' yu thuthi's kwthu 'uy' shqwaluwun kwthu ni' st'e 'u tthey'
smulyitul.
I thanked everyone for their good thoughts toward the ones getting married.

131. ni' tse' kwu'elh ni' 'u kwthu March 21st kwthu thi smulyitul.
The big wedding will be on March 21st.

132. hay tseep q'u!
Thank you!

Table 1 Some marriage words and phrases in Hul'q'umi'num'

mulyitul	get married
smulyitul	wedding
sta'lus	spouse
tsta'lus	getting a spouse
tstsehwum	make a proposal, propose
stsiy'elh	high-status person
shqwi'qwal'	speaker
hwtulqut	respond
'aanlh	make an agreement
tl'eshunuq	invite people to a ceremony
stl'eshunuq	event, ceremony, potlatch
'a'hwul'muhw	couple
swuy'qe'	man, groom
hwu nuts'umat	become one

Table 2 Some Hul'q'umi'num' wedding phrases

ts'uyulnamut tthunu shqwi'qwal'.	The speaker does the protocol of expressing gratitude.
hwiyunem'staam 'ukw' sqwal, si'em'	You are called to witness, sir.
syaays tth'uxwten smulyitul	blessed wedding ceremony
ni' hwu saay' tthu lutem.	The table is ready.

Chapter 3. Smulyitul skeywul — Day of the wedding

This chapter talks about the events that happen on the day of the wedding itself. In Section 3.1, we describe the events as they unfold during the day of the *stl'eshun* 'invitational ceremony' that is hosted by the family of the bride. Section 3.2 gives some of the words and phrases used by the ceremonial speaker in Hul'q'umi'num' when they are officiating the event.

3.1. Syaays tth'uxwten smulyitul | ceremony blessing the marriage

In this section we are giving details about one particular wedding. The bride was Leona Joe from Quw'utsun' and the groom was Thomas Ambrose from Hesquiat. Their wedding took place on March 21, 2015, at the Si'em' Lelum', at Cowichan Tribes, Duncan, BC. We thank them for allowing us to share this day in the form of this report.

ni' 'uw' chqwi'qwal' tthu ts'lhhwulmuhws thu q'e'mi'.

The family of the bride have a speaker.

The first step is to blanket the Ceremonial speakers. On the day of the ceremony, the family hires a public speaker who is the master of ceremonies. Harvey Seymour from Stz'uminus First Nations was one of the the speakers hired by the bride's family to speak and say what the family directs him to say. Blankets are placed on the speakers, and headscarfs. Then they are paid by the hosting families.

t'uyum't tthu lhuxwtun 'i' tthu shqitus.

Putting on blanket and headscarf.

The next step is for the public speaker to call on the members of the audience to act as witnesses for the event. The family decided that there would be four family members going out to pay each witness. There were about sixty people called to witness. The family lined up in groups of four (two by two) to pay each witness to remember the event. During events it is usually only men who are called upon to witness. Sometimes a

host family will call upon only the leaders of each territory to be a witness. On that day, the host family decided to call upon all the men present.

pethutum tthu xu'athun luxwtun ni' tse' shni's tthu mulyitul.

Setting the blankets down for the ones getting married.

The next step is the laying down of the blankets. The bride's family calls on two ladies from the crowd to lay down four blankets one on top of the other, which the bride and groom will stand upon. The two ladies are paid in quarters by both families. Next, the lady singers for the st'eymelh (singing and drumming for the mask dance) are called forward, blanketed, and paid by bride's family. The lady singers will sing a song that belongs to the host family during the mask dance. Next the men who will serve as the door man and mask remover for the mask dancers come forward. The door man's responsibility is to hold the door or curtain for the mask dancers when they enter the hall. His job is also to make sure he opens the door or curtain for each mask dancer to re-enter upon completion of the work. There is a mask remover, a man inside the door, and his responsibility is to remove the mask of each mask dancer as they complete the dance.

sxwayxwi' tthu ni' hakw 'u tthu smulyitul.³

The ceremony starts with a mask dance.

For this ceremony, there were four mask dancers. The mask dancers take the couple to the middle of the floor. They walk them around to the center of the hall to be married and brushed off with the cedar bough. All the mask dancers come out and brush off the bride and groom.

ni' tth'xwatum tthu ni' mulyitul 'u tthu sxwayxwi'.

The ones getting married are blessed by the mask dance.

The lady singers drum so the masked dancers can brush off the couple four times. The masked dancers use a cedar bough to brush the couple off. Each masked dancer

³ Even though some research about our sacred mask dance has been published (for example, Jenness (1955)) and non-community members attend events such as weddings, we ask for our spiritual work to be treated with the utmost respect. Please do not use or relate this information without guidance about what is appropriate from an Elder.

brushes the couple off as they pass them while they stand on the blanket. The mask ceremony begins with the ladies drumming a steady beat and then they quicken the beat for the brushing off, which is done four times. Upon completion of this portion of the mask dance, the lady singers begin a song that belongs to the host family. This sacred cleansing prepares the couple spiritually for their life together and sanctifies the event.

The justice of the peace is the one who marries the couple. He comes out during the mask ceremony and patiently waits to wed the couple the European way. The couple is moved from the center of the room. At the end of the mask dance it is announced that they are married according to *hwulmuhw* (Coast Salish) tradition, as that the mask dance is considered a legal ceremony by our community. The couple is moved to the side of the hall to be married by the justice of peace.

Pendleton blankets wrapping the bride and the groom are used to signify wealth and high status. After the mask dance, the Pendleton blankets are removed, exposing the traditional cedar capes worn by the bride and groom.⁴ For this wedding, the bride wore a traditional European white gown and the groom was wearing slacks and a vest with a native design.

m'i hwishum tthu shqwaluwunstuhw tthu qe'is mulyitul.

Elder shares valued knowledge regarding marriage.

The bride's family requested to have the honorable guests come forward to speak to the newlyweds. May and Skip Sam are one of the couples present to provide advice. May Sam speaks from the female perspective. The second honorable couple present is Wayne Paige and Muriel Peter, and Wayne speaks from the male perspective. You can find in Chapter 4 a reenactment of a speech giving words of advice to the couple.

The last part of the ceremony is a request made by the eldest of the family for the witnesses (who were called and paid at the beginning of the ceremony) to come forward to share their thoughts. The job of a witness is to recap the events of the day and share

⁴ We filmed Sharon Seymour weaving the traditional cedar capes, and we are currently making the capes into language and culture learning materials. The cedar capes were worn by the bride and groom to show the family's social status among the Quw'utsun' people.

their perception of events. They also have the job of taking what they learned that day out to the community to share.

ts'uyulhnamut tthu shhwuw'welis thu q'e'mi'.

Bride's family raise their hands in thanks.

It is now time to thank and feed everyone: families, guests, participants. First, the host family feeds the lady singers and masked dancers, along with the speaker, the ones who helped the individual masked dancers, and the sitter or care taker. The food was prepared by cooks from both communities. The people eat in turns until everyone is fed.

ts'uyulh tthu ni' thuyt tthu s'ulhtun.

Thanking the cooks.

With the host family's traditional work complete, the celebration moves on to some of the more modern (borrowed) practices. During the meal, the groom is asked to remove his new wife's shoe so it can be sent around to the guests to give a monetary gift to the newly wedded couple. A guest usually provides between ten and one hundred dollars for the newly wedded couple.⁵ Also during this time, the groom removes the bride's garter belt from her leg to be thrown out to all the eligible bachelors.

The speaker announces that this is the end of the bridal portion of this wedding. The groom's family has been patiently waiting for their turn, to provide drumming and singing. At this time the host family allows the groom's family to pay tribute to the newly wedded couple. The groom's family performs several family songs and traditional dances. An announcement is made that the bride and her children now belong to the groom's family and they are invited to participate in the singing and dancing. While they are dancing and singing the newlyweds are invited to the gift table to begin opening their wedding gifts.

With the traditional work complete, a DJ sets up for modern music, dancing, and singing, and the party continues into the evening.

⁵ At some weddings, there is a money tree, a small tree on which gifts of money are attached by the guests.

3.2. Hul'q'umi'num' language used for wedding ceremonies

The importance of ceremonial public speaking in the Northwest Coast cultural area is well-known. Among the Coast Salish people, serious young men are selected by the Elders to undergo training as public speakers. They learn how to project their voices so they can be heard throughout the longhouses or halls without a microphone. They memorize long phrases in their native languages to announce the sequence of events in the work. They are also responsible for knowing about protocol so that things can be done properly according to traditional rules and so that the event can proceed smoothly. They serve as a spokesperson for the family hosting the event and for the participants who want to announce something to the family or audience.

Public speakers officiate in all kinds of occasions within the community, including naming ceremonies, funerals, memorials, passing down of masks and rattles, welcoming visitors to the territory, and weddings. In addition, they are requested to make speeches at all kinds of public functions, such as award ceremonies, graduations, political events, Aboriginal Day, etc. The mayors of cities in our region have a First Nations public speaker on their speed dial, ready to dignify any event with recognition of the territorial rights of First Nations people.

All Hul'q'umi'num' traditional ceremonies follow the same procedures and protocol. The host family hires two public speakers to act as master of ceremonies on the day of the event and to help with the protocols leading up to that day. When the ceremony begins, the family places a blanket and headband on each speaker. The speakers stand on the floor and call out to all attending. Ours is an oral culture, and our events are made legal by being witnessed by community members. They direct the participants in the work that is to be done that day.

Here are some typical phrases that are called out by the public speakers. Below you will find a vocabulary list. Thank you to Thomas Jones, Kweyulutstun, for providing these wordings and thank you to Ruby Peter for editing them.

- (1) temut kw' hwiunaam'stum.
Call to those who are asked to listen.
- (2) [sne], [sne], hwiiyuneem'staam 'ukw' sqwal, si'em'.
[name], [name], you have been called to witness, sir.
- (3) 'aa, sii'em' nu siiye'yu.
Ahh, my respected friends and relatives.
- (4) 'aa, sii'em' nu siiye'yu tthu lhwulup ni' hwiinaamstum.
Ah, my respected relatives, those of you who have been called to witness.
- (5) hay tseep q'a', sii'em' nu siiye'yu, kwun's 'ilup tetsul 'u tun'a kweyul.
Thank you, my relatives, for coming.
- (6) sii'em' tthu lhwulup, ni' hwiunaam'stum, ni' wulh tus 'u tthu syaays, tthu smuyitul.
To those called as a witness, it has come time to start the work, the wedding.
- (7) a-a-a sii'em' tthu lhwulup slhunlheni', ni' wulh tus 'u tthun' syaaysulup.
You respected ladies, it has come time for your work.
- tth'ihwum tseep 'i' m'i hwiwul.
Will you please come forward.
- (8) m'i tse' hwiwul kwthu yey'sul'u slhunlheni' pethut kwthu hulixwtun.
Two ladies will come forward to spread the blankets
- (9) [sne], [sne]. m'i ch tse' tth'ihwum m'i ch tse' hwiwul.
[name], [name]. Please come forward.
- nuwu yuhw shth'th'hwimuthut hw'um'tsunuqstaam, si'em'.
You will receive the person, respected one.

- (10) [sne], [sne]. m'i ch tse' tth'ihwum m'i ch tse' hwiwul.
 [name], [name]. *Please come forward.*

nuwu yuhw shth'tth'hwimuthut lheq'ut tthu snuw'uyulh, niwut tthu
 stl'ul'iqulh.

You will lay down the teachings to lecture the children.

- (11) a-a sii'em' tthu lhwulup, ni' hwiuneem'staam,
 ni' wulh hay tthu syaays shxaatth'ustun kwus 'i 'uw' st'ut'ul'een'e',
 sii'em' nu ts'lhhwulmuhw.

*To those who we called to witness, this completes this work, just to inform
 you, my fellow-First Nations people.*

Table 3 Longhouse vocabulary: preparing the speakers

qwal	to talk, speak
sqwal	word, speech
shqwi'qwal'	speaker
luxwtun	blanket
shqitus	headband
shqitustun	headband

Table 4 Additional longhouse vocabulary

hwiuneem'	listen
hwiuneem'stuhw	have them listen
hwiiuneem'staam	you are asked to listen
niwut	lecture
sts'uyulh	acknowledgement, gratitude
si'em'	respected person
sii'em'	respected people
sye'yu	friend, relative
siiye'yu	friends, relatives

Table 5 Longhouse vocabulary: blankets

xu'athun lhuxwtun	four blankets
hulixwtun	blankets
slhewun	bullrush mat = blanket in longhouse speech

Table 6 Longhouse vocabulary: women

m'i hwiwul	come forward
slheni'	woman, bride
slhunlheni'	women
yey'sul'u slhunlheni'	two women

In former times, speakers had less of a task because they were speaking in their first language. Speakers of today have a tougher time because they are speaking in a second language—one that is phonetically and structurally very different from English. In several recent projects, funded by a First Peoples' Cultural Council grant, Thomas Jones worked with the older generation of public speakers, recording the phrases to be used for the work in a memorial ceremony. These were transcribed and translated with the help of Ruby Peter and shared with young public-speakers-in-training along with the sound files to help them improve their Hul'q'umi'num' language skills so that they could be better speakers.

In our community, we still follow the tradition that the longhouse speakers do the work in our own Hul'q'umi'num' language. We thus encourage all of our youth to listen and learn what is being said. We have noticed other groups, for example, our mainland relatives, have started to use English more and more in their ceremonies, and we are determined to keep our language strong by using it on all occasions.

Elders agree that native ceremonies should continue to be done in the old-fashioned way, and this means that Hul'q'umi'num' will be used. And although practices have changed little-by-little over time, our sacred ways are taken very seriously by all. Traditional families request that the event be held entirely in Hul'q'umi'num', with as little English as possible used. It is therefore the duty of a public speaker to know how to carry on any necessary business in the Hul'q'umi'num' language. This includes

translating into Hul'q'umi'num' messages from the audience to the family, for example, when someone stands up to give money to the bereaved family at a funeral. And the young First Nations people are eager to learn to understand what is being said.

On the wedding I am reporting on, the groom's family were not Hul'q'umi'num' and so the speakers had to provide a translation so that they could follow the work. Their Elders stood and did protocol in their own language and so we had the opportunity to hear them using their language for ceremonial purposes. So the event was tri-lingual. Our Elders tell us that many times in the old days the work would proceed in several languages, depending on the languages of the hosts and the visitors.

Chapter 4. Advice to the couple

One important tradition that we observe during a wedding is that the host family asks Elders to give a speech of advice to the young couple. Two Elders are asked to come forward, one male and one female, to give *snuw'uyulh* (cultural teachings) to the couple about their responsibilities to one another. The Elders are a married couple themselves. Sometimes there are four Elders.

This next story is a reenactment of an advice speech that was recorded the week after this particular wedding. And you will see in it the traditional elements of reminding the couple who they are, where they come from, their future duties and responsibilities, and the expectations of their families. This couple already had children together and so they were also explicitly mentioned when the advice was handed down.

m'i hwishum tthu shqwaluwunstuhw tthu qe'is mulyitul.

Sharing valued knowledge with the new couple

1. a sii'em' nu siiye'yu, 'een'thu sti'tum'at.
My respected friends, I am Ruby Peter — *Stitum'at*.
2. nilh tthu shqwaluwun' ni' nem'ustum 'u tthu ni' qe'is ni' hwu sme'luyi'.
These are the teachings that were brought forward to the newly weds.
3. 'i' tl'e'tum thu slheni'.
The young lady was proposed to.
4. tun'tsakw tthu shhwuw'welis, sulsi'lus tthu swiw'lus tun'ni' 'utl' *Port Alberni*.
The grandparents of the young man are from far away, from Port Alberni.
5. ni' shlhq'a'th 'utl' Port Alberni tthu lelum's.
Their homeland is across from Port Alberni.

6. 'uw' hay 'u kwsus 'aalh 'u tthu snuhwulh pout 'i' yelh 'un's nem' tus 'u
kwthu shtun'ni's.
And it can only be reached by water because their home is in isolation.
7. s'ul'eluhw tthu 'i tetsul qxe'luts, tsi'tsut, thu tens, tthu mens,
shhwum'ne'lukws, sul'si'lus.
Those that have come are elders, many of them — parents, his mother, his
father, uncles and aunts, grandparents.
8. qux ni' lheq'utum sqwal kwthu ni' tse' yu sht'es tthu ni' shqwaluwuns tthu
s'ul-hweens tthu swiw'lus.
The Elders laid down a lot of words on behalf of the young man.
9. 'i' ni' thut-stum, nuts'a' tse' skweyul'i' nilh tse' ni' hwu le'lum'ut tthu
mustimuhw ni' ni' 'u tthu ni' shni's.
That one day he will have to be the leader of their community.
10. sisuw' tssethelum, lhxilushstelum, "qwulstuhw ch tthu qe'is ni' hwu
kwun'atul'."
They in turn stood me up, saying, "Give the newlyweds some advice."
- Here is my speech to the couple:*
11. 'a—a sii'em' stl'ul'iqulh, Thomas 'i' Leona.
O respected children, Thomas and Leona.
12. tthu shqwaluwuns tthu s'ul-hween ni' lheq'utus tthu sqwals.
The Elders have laid down their teachings.
13. 'i' he'kw' tseep' 'uwu tseep tum'temuhw 'i' me'mul'q 'u tun'a 'i sla'thut-s.
Remember them and don't ever forget what has happened here.
14. 'i' nilh p'e' kwsuw' tun'ni's 'u tthu stsi'elh mustimuhw 'u shus m'i 'ewu.
It is because they come from high-status people.

15. ni' tul'namut Thomas kws tun'ni's thu qe'is.
And I should talk with both Thomas and the young woman.
16. ni' hwun' sq'a' 'u tthu stsi'elh mustimuhw.
It is because of being high status that they came.
17. niihw qwulqwul'tul tthun' sul'si'lu, 'un' shhwuw'weli kws m'is 'ewu
tshwemi'lh.
They must have talked together, your parents and grandparents, and decided to
come to do a proposal.
18. 'i' nilh wulh hay 'ul' 'uw' tsitsulh tthu 'i sla'thut-s.
This is the highest sign of respect that they are doing.
19. 'i hwu'alum'st-hwus 'eelhtun tthuw' t'at snuw'uyulh ha' ch tul'nuhw kwthu
ni' 'u kwun's tshwemi'lh.
They are bringing back the old teachings about when you go to propose.
20. 'i' tl'i'.
And this is serious.
21. 'e'ut kwu'elh tulmutus 'eelhtun 'i' he'kw' tseep kwu'elh.
So the two of you must hold on to this and remember.
22. 'uwu ni' 'us 'uw' tl'uhwla'usstaam 'ul'.
It is not meaningless.
23. ni' stsi'elhstaam, Thomas, 'i' thu ni' hwun' sq'a' tl'uw' st'e, tl'uw' tun'ni' 'u
tthu stsi'elh.
And the young woman you are with is the same, also high status.
24. sthuthi'stuhw ch kwu'elh ni' 'u tthun' shqwaluwun 'u tthu qux sila'num yu
'e'wu.
Keep your thoughts proper for the many years to come.

25. ni' thut-staam nuts'a' tse' skweyul 'i' nuwu tse' ni' hwu hul'q'elh 'u tthu ni' shni's tthun' s'ul-hween.
You were told that one day you will be the one to carry the teachings of your Elders.
26. kwun's tun'ni' 'u tthu stsi'elh 'i' ni' ch tse' p'e' 'uw' yu kwun'atul' 'u thun' sta'lus 'uw' niihw tse' wulh luq'alhthut.
As you are a high-status person, you will carry this with your mate— the young lady you are with.
27. 'u kwthu ni' sqwals tthun' s'ul-hween 'un' si'lu, 'uwu niis 'uw' tl'uhwla'ustaam 'ul'.
When you take that responsibility that your grandparents have asked of you, it is never meaningless.
28. ni' wulh st'e 'uw' niis wulh yu kwun'etsusthaam, yu huy'thus-thaam 'u tthun' shtun'naalhtun, kwus hay 'ul' tl'i'staam 'u tthun' s'ul-hween.
It is like they are holding your hand, guiding you verbally about your heritage, how your elders and grandparents treasure you.
29. Leona, ni' ch tl'uw' st'e 'uwu ch 'uw' tl'uhwla'usuhw 'ul'.
Leona you have the same responsibility.
30. tun'ni' ch 'u tthu stsi'elh mustimuhw 'i' 'uwu ch p'e' me'mul'quhw.
You are a high-status person and don't you ever forget.
31. 'ay'ithut tseep.
You both respect everyone.
32. la'lum'uthut tseep 'u kwuthu ni' 'un' sht'e 'u tthu yu 'e'wu skweyul.
How you have to look after yourselves in the days to come.
33. ha' ni' kwthu ni' 'un' shqwixwtul 'i' uwu tseep thethi'utuhw.
If you should have some misunderstanding together don't ever carry it on.

34. nilhs tthun' shq'ilus nilh kwunutuhw 'un's 'uw' qwul'qwul'tul'.
Settle your differences using your teachings and communicate with one another.
35. thaytul tseep 'uwu tseep 'uw' 'eey'uhw 'ul' nilhs 'un' shtun'naalhtun kwun's yath 'uw' sthuthi'stuhw tthun' shqwaluwun.
Settle your differences and don't be mixed up about your heritage so that you can always do things the proper way.
36. tl'ul'im'stuhw—kwthu ni' 'un' shtu'e 'i' ni' tse' st'e 'uw' niis yu xi'xlhe'muthaam 'u tthu stl'uliquh 'i' tthuw' 'un' swe' 'un' smun'eem.
Do things properly—your children and your descendants will be observing you.
37. ni' ch tse' yu kw'a'mut tthun' smun'eem, 'un' stl'ul'iquh.
And this is how you will raise your own children.
38. 'i' nilh ni' sqwals tthun' sul'sil'u kws stl'i's kws yu tl'uli'im's kwthu slhi'a'uqwt ni' tse' hwu le'lum'utuhw.
And this is what your grandparents want that you are following the proper way when you are looking after them.
39. tl'i' tthu ni' hwun' shni' ni' tseep p'e' hwun' st'ee kwuw' yu tatul'ut tthu ni' hwun' shluq'elh 'u tun'a kweyul.
It's important the way that you still have to be learning for the ones still following behind you today.
40. 'i' hay 'ul' ni' tl'i'st—hwus tthun' s'ul-hween.
And this is how serious your Elders are taking it.
41. 'i' 'uwu ch tum'temuhw 'i' me'mul'q kwun's tun'ni' 'u tthu stsi'elh mustimuhw.

And don't ever forget that you are both from high status people.

42. 'i' 'uwu tseep niihw 'uw' hali 'ul'.
and that you are not alone.
43. he'kw' ch 'u tthun' me'mun'u kwun's stsi'elhstuhw.
Remember that your children are also high status.
44. hw'iiw'tsust 'u kwthu hay 'ul' stsi'elh shqwaluwun.
Teach them how to hold the high-status teachings.
45. 'i' nilh tse' hay 'ul' 'uw' 'uy'.
This is going to be for the best.
46. 'i' nilh tse' st'e 'u kwuw' slhexun's tthun' s'ul-hween.
And this is going to be the best medicine for your Elders.
47. hay tseep q'u.
Thank you.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

Carrying our traditions forward

This project documents the language of Coast Salish wedding protocols. While language and protocol at namings, funerals, and memorials has received some research attention (see references), weddings so far have been an understudied topic. Weddings are especially complicated because they are a blend of native and modern elements, and they sometimes involve marriage of a community member to someone from outside the community—from a different cultural heritage. It can become a very sophisticated event to observe all the ceremonial protocols required by both the bride's and the groom's families.

For example, the particular wedding that anchored my project united a Hul'q'umi'num' person and a someone from a West Coast group, Hesquiat. The wedding took place in three languages, with English serving as the language in common. This wedding gave us an opportunity to reflect on our traditional protocols with the aim of strengthening the practices that are in danger of being lost. Many families no longer do the proposal in the traditional fashion, but we found that our ceremony was a very important way to support the new couple and to introduce the two families to each other. Following the protocols of the Elders of both cultures is a clear sign of mutual respect. Our practice of lecturing the new couple in front of their families brings forward the responsibilities that the couple has to each other and their children, who, through the union, inherit rights and cultural heritage from both parents.

By laying down these stories in Hul'q'umi'num', we hope to also strengthen the language and provide the wordings so that future weddings can be conducted authentically. We hope this study will be of use to the community to help train public speakers and to inspire those who are planning weddings to follow our traditional ways. Our hands go up in thanks as we have been honored to have received these wordings and heritage teachings, and we are grateful to be able to share them with up-coming generations of Hul'q'umi'num' speakers.

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