

TLINGIT LANGUAGE MENTOR-APPRENTICE HANDBOOK

*Bridging Challenges to Fluency
through Partnerships*



SEALASKA
HERITAGE

TLINGIT LANGUAGE MENTOR-APPRENTICE HANDBOOK



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Inside cover photo: Tlingit Mentor Apprentice graduation ceremony at the Walter Soboleff Building in August 2016 / Photo by Brian Wallace

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This handbook has been written to assist Tlingit Language Learners engaging in a Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice Program through the Sealaska Heritage Institute ANA Grant No. # 90NL0573-01-00. Bridging Challenges to Fluency through Partnerships: A Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice Program. The handbook will be used as a self-study tool, to serve as guidelines for language learners wishing to engage in Mentor-Apprentice learning with a fluent speaker. The ideas compiled here are drawn from a great number of resources within and outside of Sealaska Heritage Institute.



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WELCOME

Voices of Our Ancestors Throughout Our Land

We have come a long way since 1998 when our Board of Trustees first declared the revitalization of Native languages to be Sealaska Heritage Institute's highest priority. At that time, language programs were non-existent and Native languages were described as "moribund." We refused to accept that our languages were "death bound" and made the vow that the voices of our ancestors would always be heard in our land. We launched extensive language revitalization efforts on multiple fronts, including legislative action that would allow us to receive federal funding. Today we are fortunate in having several organizations, schools, and dedicated individuals participating in language revitalization programs throughout our region.

Native languages contain intellectual wealth accumulated through thousands upon thousands of years. They convey how Native people see and use the land, and they provide knowledge about our environment and land in Southeast Alaska. Language is a uniquely human gift central to our experience as people and as Alaska Natives. This knowledge and the differing world views among our Native societies are worthy of protection and transmittal to future generations. Linguistic and cultural diversity is a benefit to society. SHI studies and evaluations have also demonstrated that the integration of language and culture into our schools results in improved academic success that benefits individual students as well as our state and society.

This project developed around the teaching of Tlingit through a traditional mentor-apprentice model and also supported the development of this mentor-apprentice handbook. We hope that this text will become an essential tool in ongoing language restoration efforts.

We also want to thank those who have dedicated their energies to the teaching of our Native languages and the teams of mentor-apprentices who participated in this project, as well as those who contributed to the development of this handbook. Collectively, we can make a difference in ensuring the survival of our Native languages.

Gunalchéesh,
Rosita Kaa háni Worl, Ph.D.
President, Sealaska Heritage

BACKGROUND

The Master-Apprentice Program model started in California. Julian Lang, a Karuk speaker, suggested the original idea, and Leanne Hinton, Nancy Richardson, Mary Bates Abbott and others initially created the program (Hinton 2001). They developed the program specifically for Native American languages, but the method can be used to learn any language.

SHI's Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice Program

The mission of the Sealaska Heritage Institute, a regional nonprofit, is to perpetuate and enhance Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian cultures. SHI's Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice Program (TMAP) was funded by an Administration for Native Americans (ANA) languages grant, Bridging Challenges to Fluency through Partnerships. The project ran for three years, ending in December 2016.

The goal of TMAP was to revitalize the Tlingit language by increasing the number of fluent Tlingit speakers under the age of 60 by 300% (six fluent speakers) in three years. With only two fluent speakers under the age of 60 in Southeast Alaska, Tlingit is one of the world's critically endangered languages. Obstacles to our goal, (including distance, expense and opportunity) were bridged by establishing and strengthening partnerships among fluent speakers, language learners, and communities within our region. The project reflected a collaborative partnership among SHI, the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe in Yakutat, Alaska, and Sitka Native Tribes in Sitka, Alaska.

Specific project goals included the following:

- In coordination with project partners, SHI supported six Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice teams (each comprised of a fluent Tlingit speaker and a Tlingit language learner) to participate in 260 hours of Tlingit immersion activities annually for a total of 780 hours of Tlingit immersion activities by project end.
- In coordination with project partners, SHI provided a Tlingit immersion "language habitat" for 40-hour Tlingit immersion summer retreats for three consecutive years for a total of 120 hours by project end.
- The project included the production of this Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice Handbook as well as a series of Tlingit language learning activities for Mentor-Apprentice teams and a Tlingit language proficiency assessment tool.

"Teach the children to speak the language. There are no other rules."

Darrell Kipp, from "Encouragement, Guidance, Insights, and Lessons Learned for Native Language Activists Developing Their Own Tribal Language Programs"

Scope and intent of the Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice model

After a careful review of Mentor Apprentice language programs, Sealaska Heritage Institute staff determined that B.C.'s Master-Apprentice Language Program developed by the First Peoples' Cultural Council—a First Nations-run Crown Corporation with a mandate to support the revitalization of aboriginal language, arts and culture in British Columbia—would be an excellent model that SHI could adapt for this project.

In order to adapt B.C.'s Master-Apprentice Language Program, the institute established a Mentor-Apprentice program committee – the Building Bridges Committee. The Building Bridges Committee was comprised of the Building Bridges coordinator, SHI's education director, SHI's president, and our regional language community project partners in Juneau, Sitka and Yakutat.

Using the handbook

This handbook is intended to be a tool for individuals who want to use the Mentor-Apprentice Program as a language learning method. The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a resource from which communities and individuals can gather ideas and guidance for planning and implementation of a Mentor-Apprentice Program in their own community.

Please note that many examples in this handbook are given in English. These examples are provided to help generate ideas and are not intended for direct translation into indigenous languages. Concepts from one culture are not easily adapted to another. Often direct translations are impossible, and one language cannot express meanings from another language in exactly the same way.

INTRODUCTION



What is the Tlingit Mentor Apprentice Program?

The Mentor-Apprentice Program is a method of learning language in which a fluent speaker of the language (a Mentor) teaches a language learner (Apprentice) through language immersion.

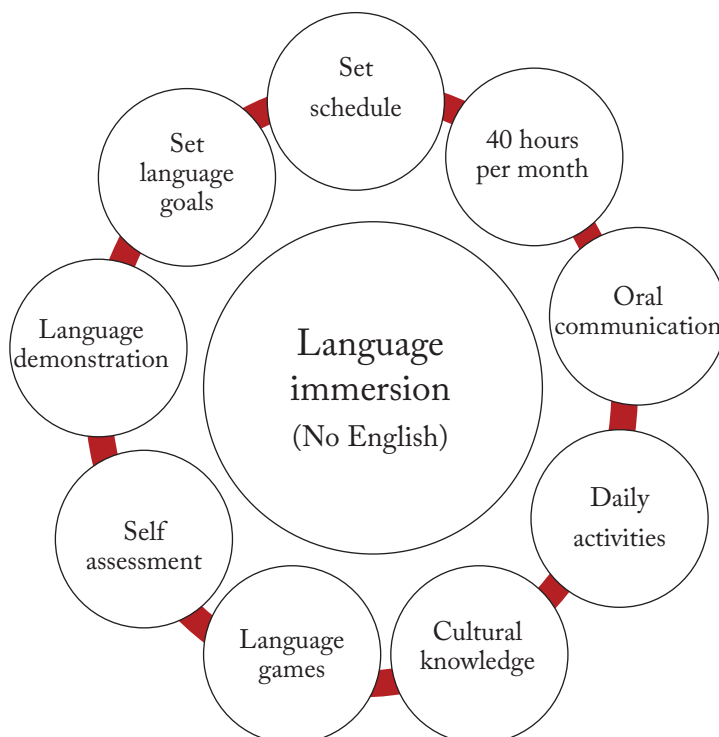
The goal of the program is to have Apprentices increase their fluency in speaking and comprehension. While reading and writing are valuable skills, an Apprentice must be able to speak and comprehend to become fluent.

As each Apprentice becomes more fluent, he or she can teach others the language, impacting the language community through the creation of new speakers.

The Mentor-Apprentice team must commit to spending a lot of time together, at least 40 hours a month. During immersion sessions together they “live life in the language” by doing everyday activities using only Tlingit language.

Visual Model of the Mentor-Apprentice Program

The Mentor-Apprentice model is a cycle and includes a Mentor and an Apprentice speaking only in their language – no English.



“Every time we lose a speaker, it hurts us all, but we should also be celebrating that as each day goes by, our language becomes stronger.”

SHI President Rosita Worl



Tlingit Language Mentors. / Photo courtesy of SHI

Strategy & Approach

Participants set language goals and a schedule to spend time together speaking only the language for at least 40 hours per month. The principals of immersion as defined by Leanne Hinton in “The Mentor-Apprentice Language Learning Program” are repetition and review, and using vocabulary in full sentences and in different situations.

Goal

The goal of the program is oral communication or fluency, being able to speak and understand conversational language.

Activities

Daily activities, cultural knowledge activities and language games should make up the majority of time that Mentors and Apprentices spend together. Language learning should be natural and fun and should include learning to speak about culturally relevant topics and topics related to daily life.

Assessment Activities

Self-assessment is a vital tool learners can use to evaluate how much language has been learned and to identify areas that need improvement.

Language demonstrations show speakers, Elders and/or community members how you have progressed. It is important to get input on your progress from community members who are knowledgeable about the language.

Repeat

Re-set your language goals and revisit your schedule if necessary. It is important to always look for ways to improve your learning and get the most out of your time spent together.

GETTING STARTED

As you begin your Mentor-Apprentice Program, it is important to work out the details of who will be involved, as well as when, where, and how you will carry out your program. This section provides some background information for sorting out the details.

Choosing the Mentor and Apprentice

A Mentor should be:

- a fluent speaker of the language. Usually a Mentor spoke their language as a child and it was their first language. The Mentor does not have to be a language teacher. Knowing how to speak the language is all the expertise needed.
- patient and have a deep understanding of the language learning process. Language learning is not a quick process and it takes a lot of time and repetition for the Apprentice to “pick up” language.
- willing to spend a lot of time with the Apprentice speaking in only in the language.
- open to learning and using different techniques to pass on the language to the Apprentice
- willing to overcome any fears, inhibitions, or negative feelings about speaking and sharing.



Tlingit Language Mentors Ethel Makinen and Nellie Lord.

Photo by Brian Wallace / SHI



“The language that we have is a language of love, kindness and appreciation. It’s contained in our music. How we love our land, how we love our grandchildren, how we love our children, and how we love each other. And that was sung over and over and over again. And when you begin to do something over and over and over again it actually becomes something not of the intellect, but of the soul and of the spirit”

Tlingit Elder David Katzeek

An Apprentice should be:

- either a semi-speaker (knows some language) or a total beginner.
- deeply committed to learning the language
- willing and able to commit a lot of time with the Mentor speaking only in the language. In addition to the time spent together, the Apprentice will need to spend extra time on self-study listening to recordings and reviewing
- patient and have an understanding of the language learning process
- responsible for guiding the language learning process by choosing what she/he wants to learn
- willing to take risks and overcome fears of making mistakes in the language.
- interested in and committed to passing on what she/he has learned to others.

Roles and Responsibilities**Mentor**

- Mentors are responsible for assisting Apprentices in expanding their fluency by speaking only in Tlingit during language sessions.
- When teaching the language, mentors should incorporate cultural values and traditional ways of knowing whenever possible. This may include traditional songs and stories.
- Mentors should strive to be role models by practicing and reinforcing core cultural values in their own lives.

Apprentice

- Apprentices are responsible for being active learners – being on time, participating enthusiastically, asking questions (in Tlingit) to elicit the language they want to learn, and practicing before and after the language sessions as well as during. Apprentice speakers are encouraged to not respond negatively to teasing or criticism.
- Apprentice speakers are responsible for maintaining the immersion environment during, before and after the session, by speaking only Tlingit throughout, and reminding and encouraging all Apprentice speakers and Elder speakers to talk only Tlingit. This includes greetings and small talk at the beginning and end of each session.

Community Liaison

- Community Liaisons roles are helpful but not required.

Session Guidelines

For Mentors

- Remember that the purpose of the session is to speak only in Tlingit for as long as possible.
- Be gentle and non-critical with Apprentices, correcting by modeling rather than criticism.
- Try to use gestures and actions to help the Apprentice understand; be willing to repeat what you say frequently, and to understand that the Apprentice may not be able to recall and use a word until after hearing it many times.
- The Apprentice speaker will not necessarily understand or be able to respond to everything you're saying. That's OK. The only goal is for them to be "immersed" in the language.
- Apprentice speakers' understanding will not substantially increase unless you speak only Tlingit.
- If you can't think of how to respond, don't remember how you say a specific word, or don't understand the Apprentice, do not switch to English.
- Instead, in Tlingit, say any of the following:
 - “I don't know.”
 - “I forgot what it's called.”
 - “Let's talk about another one.”
 - “I don't understand you.”

Or any other response that allows you to stay in Tlingit and not switch to English.

- Try to make your answers as long as possible and in full sentences. For example, if the Apprentice holds up a picture of a baby and asks you “What do you see?” Don't just say “baby”. Say: “I see a baby. That's a cute baby. He has brown eyes. He has black hair. He looks like he is Indian,” and whatever else you can think of in Tlingit to describe the picture.

Or, if the Apprentice holds up a picture of a bear and asks you “What do you see?” Don't just say “bear”. Say: “That is a bear. He is black. Bears eat fish. My mother was Bear Clan.”

Or even better say: “That's a bear. Why are you asking me about bears? I'm not a bear. I'm a human. You need to go walk around in the woods. Maybe you will see a bear. You can ask him what you want to know.”

For Apprentices

- Remember that the purpose of the session is to speak only in Tlingit for as long as possible. During the initial learning period, depending on when the Apprentice has mastered the language for doing this in Tlingit, the team can discuss plans and for the immersion set in English, and then afterwards



discuss problems and solutions to doing it better. It is useful to have structured times where frustrated Apprentices can discuss problems, ideas, and strategies in English. However, the sooner the content area can be mastered, the sooner the need for English can be eliminated. Remind elder speakers in Tlingit at the beginning of each session to speak only in Tlingit.

- The only goal of the Apprentice is to help the Mentor speaker continue to speak Tlingit. Everything else (comprehension, production, feeling comfortable, etc.) is secondary to this goal.
- Always remind Mentor speakers in Tlingit at the beginning of each session to speak only Tlingit.
- The Apprentice, not the Mentor, is responsible for structuring and leading the session so that immersion is achieved.
- The more prepared the Apprentice is with specific activities or routines the greater the chance that total immersion will be achieved.
- The Apprentice should use phrases and questions to elicit Tlingit language from the Mentor speaker, and needs to identify in advance the specific vocabulary that will be used to help the Mentor speaker talk Tlingit.
- The Apprentice does not need to be able to understand or respond directly to everything the Mentor speaker says.



Tlingit Language Mentor Lena Farkas, right, and Apprentice Jaclyn Milton.
Photo by Brian Wallace / SHI

- The Apprentice does need to be able to continually elicit more Tlingit language from the elder speaker. The Apprentice should integrate as much as possible vocabulary that they have learned in other contexts but only if it is relevant to the specific topic.
- The Apprentice should repeat Tlingit spoken to them by the Mentor speaker as much as possible, even if they have no idea what they're saying.
- The Apprentice should intentionally limit inserting topics or vocabulary that will lead to English. If a Mentor speaker switches to English, stop and start over with something new. If necessary remind the Mentor speaker in Tlingit that the primary goal is use no English.
- If a conversation is turning into a “dead end” then switch topics or activities.

Five Methods and Approaches

The following are common methods and approaches in language teaching, adapted from the First Peoples' Cultural Council's “Language Immersion Handbook” (see References). It is not necessary to choose one approach, but it is useful to keep them in mind while carrying out your language program.

- **Immersion**

This method of language teaching surrounds (immerses) learners in the language they are trying to learn. The language is used to communicate and to teach about other subjects. All activities, including meals, stories, daily routines and group activities are done in the language. Rather than teach the language alone, knowledge, skills and activities are taught by using the language. This method is more of a way of living (completely surrounded by the language) than a way to teach.

- **Natural Approach**

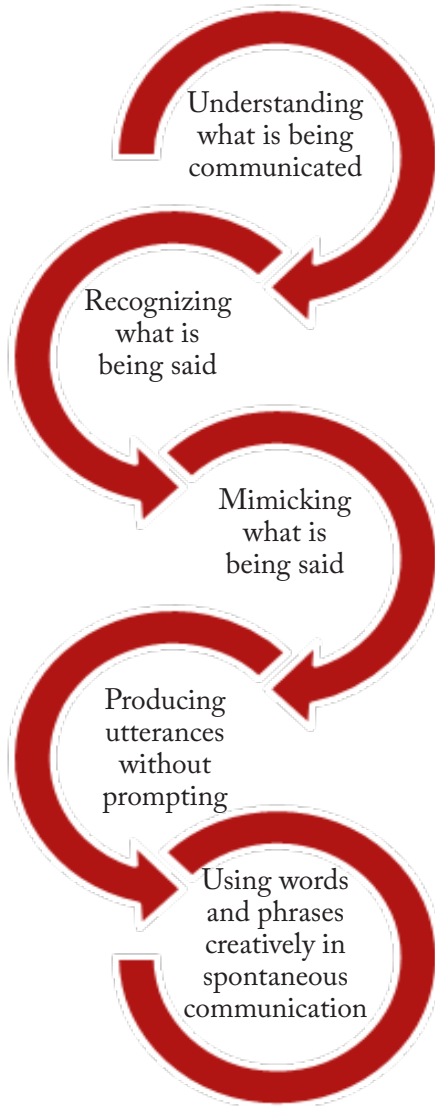
This approach is based on the idea that a second language is learned in a similar way to a first language. When babies first learn language, they are never taught about grammar or language structures; they naturally learn without any instruction. Therefore, second language learners should also naturally learn language with little or no formal language instruction. Natural approach activities include reading, conversation, language games, and regular daily activities in the language.

- **Communicative/Task-based Approach**

This approach is based on the idea that the main purpose of language is to communicate. Therefore, language learning should be focused on communicating and completing tasks



FIVE STAGES OF LANGUAGE LEARNING



in the language. With this approach, learners are not taught about the language, but instead are taught to do things in the language. For example, instead of learning weather vocabulary, a learner learns how to have a conversation about the weather.

- **Total Physical Response**

This method of language teaching is based on body movement and speech together. Body movement is related to the mind, and if body movement occurs at the same time as speech, a learner will remember the speech more easily. It can be used to teach almost anything, including actions, object names, and storytelling. For example, while the language teacher calls out actions, learners perform those actions, and will remember the actions and words together.

- **The Silent Way**

The basic idea of this approach is to allow the learner to discover, to experience and to have as many opportunities to use the language as possible. Instead of teaching, the teacher sets up opportunities for learners to learn independently. For example, a teacher could tell a story and have learners look at pictures related to the story. By doing this, learners are responsible for figuring out which words in the story go with each object in the pictures. In this approach, it is also important for the learner to make mistakes in order to learn. For example, a learner could guess the wrong name for an object several times before learning the correct name. In the end, the learner will remember the name for the object better than if the teacher had given the correct name right away.

Five Stages of Language Learning

Comprehension

- Understanding what is being communicated (through non-verbal cues, even if not the words)
- Recognizing what is being said (actual words).

Production

- Mimicking what is being said
- Producing utterances without prompting
- Using words and phrases creatively in spontaneous communication (advanced knowledge).

ORIENTATION TO THE TMAP MODEL



Set a Schedule

Decide on a schedule with your Mentor and stick to it. Find a schedule that works for both the Mentor and Apprentice, 5 -10 hours per week, for a total of 30-40 hours per month.

Remember: you don't need to stop living your normal life. For example if you choose Sunday, and you usually go for a Sunday drive, you can still go on your Sunday drive – you will just do it together, talking about what you're doing, where you're going, or what you're seeing in the language as you do it.

Sample schedules

Sample Schedule #1: Evenings and one weekend day per week

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Week 1				2			6	8
Week 2				2			6	8
Week 3				2			6	8
Week 4				2			6	8
Total								32

Sample Schedule #2: Evenings Only

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Week 1			3	3	3			9
Week 2			3	3	3			9
Week 3			3	3	3			9
Week 4			3	3	3			9
Total								36

“Our ancestors are always with us when we use our language. We were taught the importance of maintaining our identity—and being Tlingit—through our language. Our ancestors live through us today when we speak our own language.”

Tlingit Elder Paul Marks



Sample Schedule #3: Weekends Only

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Week 1	4						4	8
Week 2	4						4	8
Week 3	4						4	8
Week 4	4						4	8
Total								32

Sample Schedule #4: Lunch hours with some evenings & weekends

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total
Week 1		1		2		1	5	9
Week 2		1		2		1	5	9
Week 3		1		2		1	5	9
Week 4		1		2		1	5	9
Total								36

Set Language Goals

- Language goals can be related to topics that the Apprentice would like to learn about. The Apprentice is responsible for coming up with language goals for the time spent with the Mentor each month and long-term over the course of a year with the help of a work plan. It is important for the Apprentice to discuss the language learning goals with their Mentor and revise them as necessary.
- Language and culture are interwoven. When setting your language learning goals remember that language is used in all day-to-day activities which make up a culture. For example the food, clothing, art, songs, dance, family, friends, relationships, and spirituality. Your language learning goals can be related to any of these topics, or anything else relevant to your life.



Sample Language Learning Goals

The Apprentice needs to think about why he or she wants to be a part of the Mentor-Apprentice Program.

Internal Language Learning Goals

- Teaching my children and grandchildren
- Maintaining my Native identity
- Reconnecting with the land

External Language Learning Goals

- Ensuring the continuation of the language
- Strengthening families
- Restoring/strengthening Native values

It is also a good idea for the Mentor to put some thought into his or her own goals. What does she or he want to pass on in the language? What do they hope to accomplish by mentoring an Apprentice in the program?



Philip Albers Sr. leads a brainstorming exercise about learning goals during an immersion session.

Photo by Brian Wallace / SHI

Create a work plan

At the beginning of each month, the Mentor-Apprentice team should develop a work plan together for the entire month. The may also be done annually to set long-term language goals.

Developing a work plan will allow you to develop both short-term and long-term language goals for what the Apprentice would like to learn.

To guide your planning, think about the following questions:

- What kind of topics do you want to learn about? The learning must be natural to you and where you live.
- What do you want to learn in the next 20 hours?
- What kinds of activities can you do together that will help accomplish your goals?
- Are there other language/cultural experts in the community you would like to involve?
- Set specific language learning objectives or outcomes and try to be as specific as you can in planning your monthly activities. During your activities, you will learn new words and practice using them in full sentences.
- Learn about cooking, in the kitchen, eating and food. Have a meal together.
- Learn about housework such as doing laundry, washing dishes and cleaning.
- Learn about basketball phrases.
- Learn about hunting, cleaning and processing meat.
- Learn to talk about your family. Learn to talk about the history of your relatives and how you are related to them.
- Learn about cultural protocols and community gatherings.

These are samples of general language learning goals to get you started. Your goals should be tailored to your desire to learn the language and how you want to use it.

Keep your work plan realistic—challenge yourself but, do not try to do too much.

Unplanned or unstructured immersion

Do not feel like you need to plan every last minute of time you spend together. Sometimes the most powerful and memorable moments are those that happen spontaneously.

To view the sample work plans Sealaska Heritage Institute Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice teams completed annually, see Appendix B.

Length of immersion sessions

- **Language sets:** Immersion sets are short sessions, or conversations in the language. In the beginning phases of language learning it is often difficult for language learners to stay in the language for very long due to limited vocabulary. The goal is to stay in the language for as long as possible even if it requires non-verbal communication to convey the meaning.
- **Language Sessions:** Longer sessions of several conversations or topics strung together.
- **Immersion intensives:** Intensives are a half to full day of immersion activities together or in small groups where the goal is to abandon English entirely.
- **Immersion retreats:** Immersion retreats are several days of language immersion activities.

Other things to consider

Language goals

- Basic language instruction



Tlingit Language Immersion Retreat in Sitka in 2015.

Photos by Jasmine James / SHI

- Increasing fluency
- Training the trainer
- Supporting dormant speakers

Location

- Classroom
- Public setting
- Campground

Themes for immersion sessions

- Harvesting and preserving subsistence foods
- Song and dance
- Arts and crafts
- Traditional beliefs and ideologies
- Oral traditions
- Traditional laws
- Traditional training for strength of mind, body, spirit



Tlingit Language Mentor Paul Marks and Apprentices Joshua Jackson, right, and Devlin Anderstrom take part in a drummaking activity during a Language Immersion Retreat in Sitka.

Photo by Jasmine James / SHI

10 POINTS FOR SUCCESSFUL LEARNING

The following guideline is designed to help Apprentices who want to learn Tlingit. Every time you meet your Mentor, try to speak Tlingit. Set up an arrangement with relatives and friends to speak and learn Tlingit. Carry your “Beginning Tlingit” text with you and a notepad to record new words.

Here are 10 points for successful language learning, adapted by Rosita Worl from “A Manual for the Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program” by Leanne Hinton with Matt Vera.

1. Leave English behind

During the period that you are with Mentor speakers, strive to communicate only in Tlingit, try not to use English at all. Expect to have difficulties at first since you will not be able to understand or communicate.

You can enhance communication through gestures and actions and facial expressions.

Point to objects or pictures and ask your Mentor to say it in Tlingit.



Kassandra Eubank-Littlefield, left, and Tlingit Language Mentor Ethel Makinen.

Photo by Brian Wallace / SHI



“Even though it’s a struggle, don’t give up. Don’t give in. And try to use the language as much as possible.”

Apprentice Devlin Anderstrom,
Shagaaw Éesh

VOCABULARY:
MEAL-TIME PHRASES

Are you hungry?

I éet gé yaan uwaháa?

I'm hungry.

Xáat yaan uwaháa.

I'm not hungry.

Tlél xáat yaanwuhá.

I'm thirsty.

Xat shaawakúx.

What are you cooking?

Daa sáwé gees.ée?

I'm cooking fish.

Xáat áyá gaxas.ée.

Put it on the table.

Nadáakw káa yan tí.

It's time for breakfast.

S'ootaat atxá gaawú áyá.

It's lunch time.

Sitgawsáan atxá gaawú áyá.

It's dinner time.

Xáanaa atxá gaawú áyá.

Wash your hands.

I jín na.óos'.

Let's eat!

Gatooxaa!

Basic questions

Learn how to ask things in Tlingit. Learn how to ask, "What is this?" "What is that?" (Remember, there are different words that translate into English as "this" or "that" depending on how far away something is or what kind of thing it is.)

Ask, "How do you say _____"? (Table, chair, door, box, etc.)

Other questions to learn how to ask might be, "What are you doing?" or "What am I (or what is s/he) doing?" or maybe "Tell me a story."

Reminding each other

An important thing for the Tlingit Language Apprentice to learn early is how to communicate an idea: "Now say that in Tlingit."

Whenever a Tlingit Language Mentor says something in English, ask that it be re-said in Tlingit.

If you lapse into English, get right back into Tlingit

Think of English as a habit you are trying to break. Some of us have gone to weight-loss programs where the staff says, "If you go off this program and binge, don't think of yourself as awful, don't decide you can't do it and give up; just put it behind you and get back on the program again." Do the same for Tlingit.

2. Make yourself understood with non-verbal communication

Use actions

If you are learning Tlingit, you can help your Mentor understand what you are trying to communicate even when you don't know the words. More importantly, research suggests that we learn much better if we learn words embedded in actions.

Use gestures and facial expressions

Point to things you are talking about, do facial expressions that illustrate what you are talking about.

Use pictures and objects

If you have the things around you that you are talking about, you can use them to help convey your meaning. Use books and magazines and talk together about what you see in them.

3. Learn in full sentences; learn in conversations

Even if you are trying to learn specific words, the real lesson comes through learning words in sentences and conversations in Tlingit.

For example: If you are trying to teach the word for "door," don't just say "door," and don't use English to translate the word or explain it. Instead, speaking always in Tlingit, say things like "This

is a door.” “Where is the door?” Say, “Now I am going to open the door. Now I’ll close the door.” “Close the door.”

Extend communication further: using gestures to help in your communication, say “It’s hot in here! Let’s open the door.” Then, “Now, knock on the door.” When he or she knocks, say “Come in!”

It is very important for the Apprentice to hear a word or sentence many times before she or he learns to recognize it, and then to say it.

Through varied sentences, including commands, along with the physical activities elicited by the commands, the Apprentice hears a given word (in this case “door”) many times in different contexts, and will be able to pick out that word in the future when she or he hears it, and later on be able to use it in his or her own speech.

The Tlingit Language Apprentice should focus on learning to recognize and understand the words and sentences. Being able to actually say the words and sentences will naturally follow.

4. Aim for real communication in your language of heritage

Try to do everything in Tlingit. Once the Apprentice can do some basic communication, don’t start your sessions with your Mentor by saying in English “What shall we do today?” Say it in Tlingit. If you need a break say, “Let’s have some coffee” in your language, not in English.

5. Remember that language is also culture

Tlingit language is not just a translation from English. Learning Tlingit also means learning about Tlingit customs and values and appropriate ways of behaving.

For example, learn how to do gestures appropriately in Tlingit culture. The Apprentice should learn how to ask various questions, such as, “What’s this?” or “What are you doing?”

While storytelling is a good activity for learning Tlingit, specific clans own some stories. Learn about the stories and which clans own the stories.

There is a great deal of vocabulary embedded in traditional ways of life. Doing traditional activities such as participating in ceremonies, or traditional food-gathering, or the making or using of objects such as tools, weapons, cooking utensils will be important for language learning.

Sometimes, the Mentor and Apprentice may not know how to do these things; in that case, maybe you can go to someone else together for help. Or maybe no one knows these things anymore; in that case, reading some of the old ethnographies might be useful to



Taking part in traditional activities such as food-gathering and cooking can be important for language learning.

Photo by Jasmine James / SHI



**VOCABULARY:
INTRODUCTIONS**

What is your name?

Wáa sá iduwaasáakw?

My name is K'oox.

K'oox yóo xat duwasáakw.

What is his/her name?

Wáa sá duwasáakw?

Her name is Kaa Háni.

Kaa Háni yóo duwasáakw.

What moiety are you?

Daakw naax sá isitee?

I am Eagle moiety.

Ch'áak' naax xat sitee.

I am Kaagwaantaan.

Kaagwaantaan áyá xát.

I am from the Clay House.

S'e Hítdáx áyá xát.

I am a child of Leeneidí.

Leeneidí yádi áyá xát.

Where are you from?

Goot'á kwáan sá wa.é?

I am from Chilkoot.

Lkoot kwáan áyá xát.

Where do you live?

Goox' sá yéi iyatee?

I live in Juneau.

Dzántik'i Héenix' yéi xat yatee.

learn about both vocabulary and traditional cultural practices.

6. Focus on listening and speaking, rather than writing and grammatical analysis

Writing and grammar have important uses, but you don't need to focus on these to learn to speak a language. Language learning in classrooms is sometimes only about writing and grammar, but people almost never learn how to speak a language fluently when writing and grammar are the focus. So we urge you to focus on listening and speaking. Remember these points:

- The Apprentice can learn the grammar of Tlingit unconsciously, simply by hearing it and using it. That is how children learn grammar, and despite what we have been told in the past, adults can still learn new languages the way children learn their first language. You don't have to know what a "relative clause" is to use one.
- Although writing things down is nice for reviewing words, you only really learn them by hearing them and saying them many times. Mentors and Apprentices need to make sure that vocabulary items are used in conversation over and over for a long period of time; that is the way they will be learned.
- A better memory aid is to have the words and sentences you are trying to learn recorded (see #8) to allow you to practice pronunciation.
- Writing also tends to make us insert English into the



Mentor Selina Everson, left, and Apprentice Jessica Chester take part in a Tlingit spelling bee during an immersion retreat in Sitka in 2015.

Photo by Jasmine James / SHI

learning process. We are likely to write English translations besides the words and sentences in Tlingit.

- Communities that have used writing as part of language learning for a long time in the schools report that the students' written heritage language has adapted the English language structure.

However, this is not to say that you should give up all writing and grammatical analysis. Grammatical analysis may in the long run be very useful; languages might have a lot of special constructions and affixes that are hard to learn, and one might want to study these seriously and consciously.

Tlingit has a writing system and becoming competent in the Tlingit language can also include competency in reading and writing.

Remember in learning how to speak Tlingit fluently, writing and grammar are not as important as just listening and talking or talking and listening.

7. Learn through activities; 'live the language'

One question people always ask is "What do we do to learn/teach Tlingit when we are together?" Here are some of the most important things you can do.

Live daily life together

Don't think of this time together as outside of your normal patterns of living. Do you have to do the laundry? Do it, and talk about what you are doing in Tlingit. Do you want to go to bingo? Do it, but only use Tlingit. Do you want to fix your car, go to the store, plant a garden, paint your house, cook supper? Do it in Tlingit. Would you like to take a drive or a walk? Maybe you'd rather relax and watch a baseball game or the soccer World Cup on TV. Just turn the sound down and be your own announcers.

Do traditional activities (See #5)

Plan lessons together

You can also plan lessons together on a more formal basis. Think of sets of vocabulary words you would like to teach or learn. Bring pictures or objects to work with.

Remember to always embed a lesson in real sentences and communication. For example, if you are going to teach/learn the body parts, teach them as a series of commands or questions. "This is my head." "This is my shoulder." "This is my knee." Then ask questions: "Is this my knee?" "Is this my shoulder?" By the end of one lesson, students could recognize (but not yet necessarily say) the four body part terms.



Go visit Tlingit language speakers

Try to get together with Tlingit speakers as much as possible. This is relatively easy for communities with more speakers. The Tlingit Language Mentors can talk to each other, which will be a relief to them—it will be the one time when they can communicate freely and expect the other to understand. By listening, the apprentices will get good exposure to the language.

Teach what you learn

As the Apprentice, one way to increase your own language use is to teach what you have learned to someone else. Teach it to your child, or to an interested relative or friend. Many of you are already teaching in schools or in summer programs or evening classes; apply what you learn to those classes.

Have “immersion gatherings”

Some villages run culture camps, where kids or families come together in a nice place and all activities are conducted in Tlingit. If your community doesn't do that and you don't want to plan something so extensive yourself, you could just have get-togethers, where all the Mentor-Apprentice teams, and perhaps other speakers and interested people, could come together for a potluck supper or an overnight trip somewhere.

8. Create a record of your learning

Audio and video recording can be a very important aid in Tlingit language learning.

- As an Apprentice, if the elder that you work with finds it objectionable to repeat things often, you can get added practice from audio recordings. Even if the elder will repeat words often, you will probably still want added practice anyway.
- The Mentor can record all kinds of things, including stories and songs, that an Apprentice can listen to, and that the two of you can go over together for added practice.
- One way to make a practice recording would be to record the elder repeating a word or sentence up to ten times, leaving a gap of several seconds between each repetition. Then when the Apprentice plays the audio, she or he can repeat the word or sentence herself/himself during the gaps.
- Video can also be used to make practice sessions, with the added advantage that all the gesture and action we have been talking about above can be recorded.
- Audio or video can be used to make more formal lessons to teach to classes.

- In the long run, the audio and videos you make will in the future be extremely valuable to your family and community as a record of the language as it was spoken by the elders. Label your recordings well, and store them safely. Make copies for safe keeping. Keep in mind that some day you may want to deposit them in a community archive or a museum or library or university for posterity.

9. Be an active learner

The Mentor does not always have to take charge of deciding what, how, and when to teach. The Mentor is the expert who knows the language and a vast store of cultural knowledge that goes with it, but in many cases the Apprentice may know more about teaching.

The Apprentice should feel free to guide his or her own learning experience as much as it suits the relationship and the situation. As the Apprentice, you can guide the teaching by asking the Mentor questions about the language, by suggesting what sort of activity you might do on a given day, by setting up play-acting situations or asking the Mentor to tell you things like what she or he has been doing, or telling a story, etc. Your Mentor may have many ideas too, but may need to be encouraged and drawn out.

As an active learner, you can also focus on trying to understand what the Mentor thinks is important to do. Which one of you guides the learning the most will depend on the particular team; but aim for making the learning experience a true partnership.



Tlingit Language Mentor Selina Everson with Apprentices Hans Chester and Jessica Chester.

Photo by Brian Wallace / SHI

**VOCABULARY:
DANCE PRACTICE**

Listen up, turn your ears this way

Haanéi koo nayís aax

Where’s the drum?

Goosú wé gaaw

Dance for your father’s people

léesh hásh jeeyís anayl’éix

Dance to the beat of the drum

Gaaw kaax’ adutl’éix’

We’re going to sing together

Kei át gáxtóoshee wooshteen

Everybody sing together

Ldakát at geeshí wooshteen

Say it after me

Ax ítx yaa gasaay

Sing louder

Lagáaw dein atgashí

I can’t hear you

Tlél ix’é xa. áxch’

Say it again

Tsú yéi yanaka

Sing it the same way

Ch’u yéi

Sing just the vocals

Yaadachoon

End the song

A eetix yakeeshí



VOCABULARY:
GREETINGS

It's good to see you.

Yak'úi ixwsateení.

It's good to see you all.

Yak'úi yee xwsateení.

How are you?

Wáa sá i yatee?

How are you? (physically)

Wáa sás i yatee?

How are you? (emotionally)

Wáa sá i tuwatee?

How are you feeling?

Wáa sá sh teedinook?

Not bad.

Tléil wáa sá.

I'm fine.

Xat yak'úi.

Not good.

Tléil ushk'é.

10. Be sensitive to each other's needs

Personalities and cultural differences will play a big role in how you work with a Mentor or Apprentice. There may be a “generation gap.”

Remember that language teaching and learning are bound to produce frustration along the way for both Mentors and Apprentices. If you get frustrated, do something to relieve the tension—talk it out, or change the activity, or take a break.

The Mentor needs to keep in mind that language learning is a slow process, and she or he needs to be patient when the Apprentice doesn't learn something as fast as the Mentor thinks she or he should. Being overly critical or teasing someone when they make a mistake will discourage the Apprentice from using the language. Learn to correct without being judgmental.

When an Apprentice says a sentence, it may have many errors and it may sound terrible, but Mentors should complement the effort the Apprentice is making to learn.

Correct errors by simply repeating the sentence correctly. Think of a mother interacting with her toddler: the toddler might say, “Daddy goed in car!” and the mother responds, “Yes, Daddy went to town in the car!” She is correcting errors, extending the sentence further to increase the child's learning, and expressing pride in her child's language use, all at once.

The Apprentice needs to keep in mind that anything the Mentor wants to teach is of great value, even if it is not what you had in mind at the moment. Also learn what things the Mentor gets frustrated about in the language teaching process and try to find



Tlingit Language Mentor Paul Marks right, and Apprentice Ishmael Hope.

Photo by Brian Wallace / SHI



Tlingit Language Mentor Lena Farkas, right, and Apprentice Jaclyn Milton.

Photo by Brian Wallace / SHI

ways to relieve the situation. (e.g., as suggested above, does the Mentor get mad when she or he has to repeat something over and over? Record audio instead.)

If you start to get discouraged, always remember that you are doing the best you can, and you deserve to be proud.

VOCABULARY: DEPARTURES

It's time for me to go.

A gaawú áyá xwagoodí.

I've gotta run.

Kwashéex dé.

I'm leaving now.

Dé kwagóot. / Kwagóot dé.

Thank you for coming.

Gunalchéesh haat yigoodí.

Thank you all for coming.

Gunalchéesh haat yeey.aadí.

Come again.

Tsu haagú x'wán.

I'll come again.

Tsu haadéi kkwagóot.

I'll see you again.

Tsu yéi ikkwasateen.

Take care.

Jinkwát sheeltín.

Have courage.

I gu.aa yáx x'wán



IMMERSION LANGUAGE SESSIONS

“Try to put yourself in a situation where you’re around fluent speakers, and don’t be afraid to ask questions and get things wrong. Because that’s going to happen. It’s part of the learning process.”

Apprentice Devlin Anderstrom,
Shagaaw Éesh

Particularly in the beginning stages of Mentor Apprentice work, a daily structure assists both Tlingit Mentor and Apprentice speakers to increase the effectiveness of sessions by providing a consistent framework upon which to build language learning.

As you do the same types of immersion sets over and over, both Mentor and Apprentice speakers will grow more skilled in and comfortable with the mechanics of different kinds of activities. This skill and comfort with structure will make it easier to expand and change the content of sessions later on.

At the beginning of each session:

- Daily greeting and small talk in Tlingit. Add a prayer or song in Tlingit if appropriate to get into the spirit of the language.
- For example: Use greetings in your language, talk about the weather or make tea or coffee.
- Daily reminder in Tlingit to reinforce no English.
- Plan the session. Spend a little time at the beginning of each session talking about what you are going to learn that day. Discuss what kind of activity you are going to do, and talk about what kind of words and phrases you will need to learn to do that activity.

During the session:

There are three basic categories of immersion sets to use within a session:

I. Listening

- Listening activities are when the Mentor speaker is doing the majority of the talking.
- Listening activities are good for “priming” the Apprentice’s brain to do or speak in Tlingit.
- Listening activities provide an opportunity for the Apprentice to test his/her comprehension.
- Listening activities are the primary method to initially hear and recognize new Tlingit words, phrases, or forms.



A Tlingit language immersion session in July 2016 in Juneau.

Photo by Jasmine James / SHI

2. Doing

- Doing activities are when the Apprentice and/or Mentor speakers are physically engaged in learning.
- Doing activities are good for “embedding” the language in action and movement.
- Doing activities provides an opportunity to both practice culture and learn language.
- Doing activities are the primary method to link language learning to “real life” situations and activities.

3. Speaking

- Speaking activities are when the Apprentice is intentionally, actively focused on language use.
- Speaking activities are good for developing functional language use and communication.
- Speaking activities provide an opportunity for the Apprentice speaker to test his/her ability to actively use the language.
- Speaking activities are the primary method to develop conversational fluency in the language.

The development of total fluency requires use of all three types of activities. In particular it is essential that each immersion session contain a set of activities that focus on language use. It is impossible to become fluent in Tlingit without actively using the language on a daily basis.

Take a short break if needed. Discuss how the session is going. At this point the Apprentice might ask questions about what she/he does not understand.

At the end of each session:

Daily goodbye and small talk.

- To the extent your ability allows, have some closing small talk with the Mentor speaker; ask what they are doing after the session, discuss when you will see them again, etc.
- End each session by saying goodbyes in Tlingit; the last words you say when you and a Mentor speaker are parting should be in Tlingit.
- Don't linger after a session and visit in English. If you are not prepared to visit in Tlingit then say your goodbyes and end your interaction with the Mentor speaker.

Other considerations:

- While structure is important for increasing comfort and skill with different kinds of immersion sets it does not take precedence over maintaining a "No English" environment.
- If a given activity is leading to English and/or creating an environment with minimal Tlingit then end it and move on to another one.
- If a given activity is helping to create an immersion environment filled with Tlingit language and/or positively impacting specific language learning then extend it even if that means not doing another activity you had originally planned to do.

Mentor-Apprentice Session Planning

In the beginning overcoming the challenges of maintaining an immersion environment, engaging in effective learning, and achieving growth in language acquisition requires a great deal more planning than later on when your increased language ability will allow for more fluid and natural MA sessions. Initially the more prepared you are as an Apprentice in terms of the structure, content, and specific activities for an MA session, the greater chance that a higher level of learning will be reached.

In planning your session, take into consideration the following:

- Try to use at least one of each type of activity (Listening, Speaking, Doing) during each of your sessions.
- You don't necessarily have to prepare in advance the length of the sets. This will vary depending on energy levels, content, effectiveness, and many other factors on any given day.
- You do have to prepare in advance the content areas for

your immersion sets and the specific activities you want to use to work on them.

- You should also prepare in advance the order of the immersion sets you plan to use within the daily Mentor Apprentice structure.
- You should always be prepared to move to the next activity if the one you're using is not effective.
- The immersion sets you develop will have two parts: content and activities.

Content is what you are going to learn; this could be a new vocabulary set, a specific communicative situation, an element of grammar, practicing a new learning method, etc. It establishes the goal of your learning.

Activities are how you are going to achieve your learning; these are the specific routines, games, storybooks, learning methods, etc. that will provide multiple paths for engaging in language acquisition.

- Remember in your planning that language acquisition requires comprehensible input + 1.
- Your immersion sets should include some combination of new material and old material. This could be new vocabulary but it could also be new forms, new situations, or new learning methods that utilize known vocabulary or familiar situations.
- You are trying to create a balance between the challenge of new learning and the benefit of comprehension/familiarity in maintaining and reinforcing the immersion environment. You are trying to learn by placing new material in the context of known vocabulary or familiar situations without the necessity of translation.
- Remember in your planning that language acquisition requires 20 x 20. You need to hear and use a word approximately 20 times in 20 situations for it to become a permanent part of your vocabulary. That's 400 occasions to use the word!
- Remember in your planning that Apprentice speakers will experience "plateaus" in their language acquisition.
- A "plateau" is when your immersion sets are not helping you to achieve new language learning.
- If you are entirely comfortable and not challenged by your immersion sets then you have to create new ones that help increase language acquisition.

Other considerations:

- Just because an activity doesn't work well the first time doesn't mean you should discard it entirely. It might just need revision and/or further practice for the activity to be effective.
- The most important indicator of effectiveness is that neither Apprentice speakers nor Mentor speakers switch to English.
- The second most important indicator of effectiveness is that functional communication between Apprentice learners and Mentor speakers is achieved.
- The third most important indicator of effectiveness is that language acquisition is going beyond previous levels.

Sample Immersion Language Session

Here is an example of how a language session would work in practice.

- Greetings
- Overview of today's session
- Talk about events (family and community events)
- Storytelling
 - Community event
 - Traditional story
- Let's take a break
- Review past sessions, new topics
- Evaluate session/plan for next session

PLAY GAMES IN YOUR LANGUAGE

Playing games is a great and natural way to have fun while learning and practicing new phrases in the language. Find games that you both enjoy playing and work out all of the words and phrases you need to play the game. Playing a game is a great way to break up immersion sessions, or help you stay in the language when you are stuck for conversation ideas.

Here are some examples of games you may already know how to play:

Card Games

- Poker
- Black Jack (Twenty-One)
- Go Fish
- Crazy 8s
- Gin Rummy
- Cribbage



Nellie Lord and Lena Farkas of Yakutat play Crazy Questions in Tlingit with language Apprentices during an immersion retreat in Sitka in 2015.

Photo by Jasmine James / SHI



“Get to the point where you feel uncomfortable again. Welcome the discomfort. See it as a sign that you are being challenged—and that you are venturing into new territory.”

Leanne Hinton, “How to Keep Your Language Alive”



Tléikw



Tléikw
kahínti

Sample Go Fish cards in Tlingit



Tlingit Language Mentor Paul Marks left, acts out a Tlingit word during an immersion retreat in Yakutat in 2014.

Photo by Jasmine James / Courtesy of SHI

Other Games

- Dominoes
- Charades
- Pictionary
- I spy with my little eyes...
- Hang Man
- Memory
- Twister
- Story Cubes: nouns
- Story Cubes: verbs
- 20 Questions

Language Games

- Crazy Questions
- Verb Rummy
- Tlingo
- Aadoo Sá



Tleikaa Kaa X'awóos'
20 Questions

Kaa

- Lingit ákwé?**
Is it a person?
- Kaa ákwé?**
Is it a man?
- Shaawát ákwé?**
Is it a woman?
- Wudishán ágé?**
Is s/he old?
- Yées kaa ákwé?**
Is he young?
- Yées wát ákwé?**
Is she young?
- At shí gé?**
Does s/he sing?
- Kashxeet gé?**
Does s/he write?
- Al'eix gé?**
Does s/he dance?
- At utí gé?**
Does s/he act?
- Politician ákwé?**
Is s/he a politician?
- T'ooch' kaa ákwé?**
Is s/he a black person?
- Dleit kaa ákwé?**
Is s/he a white person?
- Shakligéi ákwé?**
Is she pretty?
- Jidi dáanaa gé?**
Is s/he rich?
- Kaa k'ei ákwé?**
Is he a good person?
- Shaawát k'e ákwé?**
Is she a good person?
- Diséikw ágé?**
Is s/he alive?
- Yaa kudzigéi gé?**
Is s/he smart?

At Gutu.ádi

- At gutu.ádi ákwé?**
Is it an animal?
- Yagéi ágé?**
Is it big?

Appendix B:

- Yéi gugwéink' ágé?**
Is it small?
- Daadzi xáaw ágé?**
Does it have fur?
- Du xá ágé?**
Is it eaten (by people)?
- Du sxit't' ágé?**
Is it domestic?
- Héen taakx' ágé yéi yatee?**
Does it live in the water?
- Eekx' gé yéi yatee?**
Does it live on the beach?
- At gutoox' gé kudzitee?**
Does it live in the forest?
- Shaa daak' gé yéi yatee?**
Does it live in the mountains?
- Ax' ágé akeedlixeeetl'?**
Are you afraid of it?
- Du l'oon gé?**
Do people hunt it?
- S'agwáat yáx gé yatee?**
Is it brown?
- S'oow yáx gé yatee?**
Is it green?
- Dleey gé axá?**
Does it eat meat?

At Xaayí

- At xaayí ákwé?**
Is it food?
- Linúkts ákwé?**
Is it sweet?
- See.áax'w gé?**
Is it sour?
- Lee.éll' gé?**
Is it salty?
- I x'é gé yak'ei?**
Do you like it?
- X'aan yáx gé yatee?**
Is it red?

TLINGIT LANGUAGE GAMES

- X'éishx'w yáx gé yatee?**
Is it blue?
- Yawóos' gé?**
Is it hard?
- Lingit aanidáx at ákwé?**
Does it come from here (SE Alaska)?
- Ash is'h gé duxá?**
Can you eat it raw?
- Yawut'ayí gé duxá?**
Do you eat it hot?
- Woosaat' agé duxá?**
Do you eat it cold?
- Dleey ákwé?**
Is it meat?
- Tléikw ákwé?**
Is it berries?
- Hoon daakahididáx gé du.óo?**
Can you buy it in a store?
- Héen taatx at ákwé?**
Does it come from the water?
- Léindáx at ákwé?**
Does it come from the beach?

Additional sample games and listing of Sealaska Heritage Institute produced language games are in Appendix D.





EVALUATING YOUR PROGRESS

“If you start to get discouraged, always remember that you are doing the best you can, and you deserve to be proud. You are making a heroic commitment to a wonderful cause by working together to bring your language back out in to the air where it belongs.”

Leanne Hinton, “How to Keep your Language Alive”

The value of assessments

Assessments are important to the Mentor-Apprentice model in a number of ways:

- They are useful for diagnostic and placement purposes.
- They help project coordinators determine whether their programs are effective in increasing the language competencies of their language Apprentices.
- They measure how much language improvement language Apprentices achieve over time.
- They provide important information to the language learner about their progress in the language and about the things they can do to increase their language competency.

The most immediate uses of the language assessment are:

- To assess outcomes of the Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice Program.
- To help Mentors and administrators assess their program and curriculum
- To measure progress following a significant linguistic experience

Tlingit language Interviewers

Tlingit language panel interviewers are Tlingit language speakers, preferably the language learner’s Mentor. Language interviewers represent a critical resource to the Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice Program. The interviewer understands the principles and concepts of oral proficiency testing and the ability to apply theory to practice.

Language interviewer selection criteria:

- Proficiency in the language used for training and testing.
- Appropriate personal orientation and background for effective testing work
- Availability to travel to various testing sites at various times of the year
- Ability to conform to the technical and administrative requirements of the testing.

Things to consider when building an assessment

- Build the assessment around what the learner is learning and make them feel comfortable in the assessment setting—measure what they do know, not what they don't know.
- Large audiences or panels can be intimidating to the learner. An informal, one-on-one, 30 minute conversation, in a comfortable setting is ideal. The assessor must also explore what the learner may be learning and wants to share. There should be trust in this situation.
- The learner should know what they will be assessed on prior to the review that will measure their learning.
- Correct pronunciation is critical.
- Familiarity with different types of oratory, songs and stories helps measure a person's knowledge. Understand the *ku'èex*.
- Language or code switching is a difficult process. Even fluent speakers run into blocks.
- Translation and transcription should go from Tlingit to English, not English to Tlingit.

Self-evaluation

There are several things the Apprentice can do to evaluate her/his own progress.

- Keep a journal. Apprentices are encouraged to keep a journal with notes of the activities done and language learned.
- Keep track of your feelings about your language learning. These questions are embedded in the monthly reports.
- Make recordings. Apprentices are also encouraged to record immersion sessions, both for a record and to go back to conversations with their Mentor and as a way to review new vocabulary without requiring their Mentor to repeat themselves too much. All Apprentices received a USB recorder and journals. Audio recording on iPads and smart phones are also a readily used technique.

To view a sample self-assessment form, see Appendix C.



LESSONS LEARNED

“The Tlingit language contains an endless ocean of complexity, metaphor, and spirituality. It unlocks a relationship between people, place, and other living beings that stretches back into time immemorial. Our work, which continues upon the path that was made for us, is to ensure that it exists forever.”

X'unei Lance Twitchell
Tlingit language advocate and teacher

These notes are based on a discussion organized at the end of SHI's Tlingit Language Mentor Apprentice program.

Language Learning Activities

Feedback and suggestions

- Every school district should have Tlingit available for everyone, with the goal or objective that all students should be knowledgeable about other cultures and other languages.
- In the development of language resources, kids can learn the parables and they don't need to have it watered down. Explain why it is different in Tlingit.
- Burn-out is a serious issue; long term (3 year) commitment is big.
- Requiring a set number of hours or language study per month is not truly reflective of what is actually happens.
- Language or code switching is a difficult process. Even fluent speakers run into blocks.
- Develop high school programs to help kids learn their language. For example, kids from Hoonah participated in a Yakutat language learning class when on a volleyball trip to Yakutat; we need to do more of this.
- Learn language through songs, stories.
- Correct pronunciation is critical.
- Know types of oratory before you can measure a person's knowledge; understand the *ku.éex'*.
- Develop a statement that defines our approach and concerns about our language and how we measure our own language learning.
- Translation and transcription should be Tlingit to English, not English to Tlingit (using English structure is not OK with Tlingit language).

Creating Language Community

Feedback and suggestions

- Create shared language communities for young learners; create community to community partnerships through youth

programs that schools share.

- Schedule video conferencing events and invite a neighboring community to bring people together.
- After kids leave culturally based classrooms or programs, they are faced with a new system of learning. They need to be prepared for what it will be like when they are out of the program.
- Other schools have created space for language and culture based programs. Establish goals for children: what do we want to see in five years, as language people now. (For example: a language center in each community, language programs K-12 in schools, adult programs, etc.)
- Provide access to more speakers as lessons are being created.
- Latent speakers need to be involved.
- Transporting elders is a priority.
- Give people training on how to be in a productive team. Give specialized training for Apprentices, and the elders or Mentors.
- Visit the learning team at least three times a year to inspire and give tips and training and to support the community liaison.
- The mini immersions are a very important part of the language program. They should not be canceled if not everyone is there; hold them with whoever shows up.
- Set up a club or organization within schools like a National Honor Society so that the student learner strives to want to learn and has an incentive.
- Connect students within the same community, and within the region.
- Organize a Tlingit language festival.



Tlingit Language
Apprentices.

Photo courtesy of SHI



ABOUT IMMERSION PROGRAMS

“It is important to target the latent speakers. If they can be empowered with developing their language they will fill in the ever-impending gap that keeps getting bigger with each passing of a fluent speaker.”

Immersion session participant

About immersion

The term immersion as applied to second language learning refers to a situation where one is completely surrounded by the target language. The key elements are that the dominant language is not heard and that the target language is not translated to the students but instead meaning is conveyed through context, actions, and activities. Immersion is a natural approach to language learning and is very similar to the way children acquire their first languages. Modern research on second language acquisition shows that adults learn better when emulating the learning styles of children.

Types of Immersion

In language revitalization efforts, immersion has taken a variety of forms. Charter schools and public schools implement immersion programs where the target language is the medium of instruction for all subject areas. Mentor-Apprentice teams are another immersion-based method, where a fluent speaker teams up with a learner and they spend around 20 hours a week together, doing hands-on activities and using only the target language. Community-based programs such as immersion retreats represent another option. Retreats are organized for a specified length of time and participants agree to use only the target language during the retreats. Language-centered activities are planned and supporting materials provided.

Our programs at SHI

Sealaska Heritage Institute employs all above mentioned forms of immersion in our programs. We are currently developing curriculum for both a Tlingit and Haida immersion program at the Kindergarten through second grade level. We have been field testing these materials at the Harborview Elementary School which hosts a partial Tlingit language and culture program for grades K-5. In addition, we are able to support a small number of Mentor-Apprentice teams, and each summer we sponsor 10-day immersion retreats in two different Southeast Alaska communities.

Success stories

Immersion programs across the globe boast great success in second language acquisition and that has certainly been our experience at

SHI. Although our school-based immersion program is still in the development process, the partial immersion program at Harborview Elementary School where we have been participating has shown outstanding academic performance among its students across the board. We have seen great progress among the participants in our immersion retreats. These retreats serve to provide learners with the rare opportunity to hear fluent Tlingit language for ten days while participating in everyday activities such as preparing meals in addition to traditional food-gathering activities. The participants are then able to take language used in everyday situations home to use with their families and friends. The retreats also serve to foster new interest in the language and increase awareness in the communities about the ongoing efforts to revitalize the language.

Needs for successful immersion programs

An ongoing need for every immersion program is the development of supporting materials. Target-language input must be made comprehensible to the learner through context, so it is important to have accompanying objects, pictures, and/or games for each language-centered activity so that the interactions are meaningful to the learner and acquisition can take place.

Successful immersion programs, no matter the nature, take an incredible amount of planning and preparation. There must be fluent speakers with teacher training, eager learners, and carefully planned activities with supporting materials. The desire and support must also come from the Native community.

The hope of Sealaska Heritage Institute is that, through involvement in our language programs, members of Alaskan communities will help initiate and implement immersion retreats, Mentor-Apprentice teams, and language classes at the public schools in their own communities.

Additional programs we would like to see implemented

It is a well-known fact that children under the age of 12 acquire a second language with much more ease than adults. Therefore, it makes sense to include young children in our language revitalization efforts. Language nest programs involve very young children in daycare or preschool settings and are conducted solely in the target language. Elders are directly involved, providing the primary source of language to the children, as well as developing culturally-relevant curricula. The nice thing about language nest programs in day care settings is that there is much less work and preparation involved in curriculum development. Through these programs, children hear the language from a very early age and have no problem acquiring the



phonology. An important component of language nest programs is parent involvement. Essential are dedication to learning the language themselves and using the language at home.

The Maori language nest program in New Zealand is an example of one of the most successful models in the world. Sealaska Heritage Institute would like to see language nest programs implemented in communities throughout Southeast Alaska for Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian, as to date, our most dedicated and advanced students of the languages are adults.

Language programs beyond immersion

While immersion is the most successful technique for second language acquisition, it's not a possibility for every setting in every community. For example, successful immersion programs, especially in the public schools, require fluent speakers with teacher training. This combination of skills is very rare in many Native language communities. Time is another limiting factor. Most adult learners of Native languages do not have access to regular immersion programs throughout the year, sufficient for completely acquiring the language. Therefore, it is necessary to employ other methods for language teaching to supplement immersion programs. Examples are ongoing university-level Native language courses, community-based courses or language circles, and web-based courses and teaching materials.

As far as direct second language instruction goes, there is a long history of different teaching methods. Total Physical Response (TPR) has been a popular method since the 1960s, and one we have found especially useful with Native languages in Alaska. This method was developed by James Asher and is excellent for beginning students. Briefly, the method is based on the fact that when children acquire their first language, they do not actually produce language for the first couple of years, but they receive constant fluent input from their caretakers. Similarly, according to Asher, it makes no sense to ask a language learner to repeat words that they do not yet understand in a second language containing sounds that they cannot yet distinguish. TPR then consists of the teacher giving commands to students using the target language only, while physically modeling the actions for the students until the students understand the words well enough to physically respond without the visual prompts from the instructor. In this way, the student is given the opportunity to hear and understand the language before having to speak it. We have found TPR especially useful in teaching Tlingit to beginners, as the sound system of the language is unusually complex and difficult for beginning learners to

hear and pronounce.

Another important aspect of TPR is that it engages students in meaningful communication immediately. The teacher gives a direction to the students and the students respond by doing the action that was requested of them. The language then connects to a physical action in the minds of the students and is more easily remembered. Overall, TPR proves to be an excellent method for beginning students.

It is important to remember that language in real life is used for communication, and therefore any language teaching technique should involve real communication between the teacher and students. Among the most modern language teaching methods is the “communicative” method. This method employs activities that promote communication among the students in a meaningful way. Such activities include interviews, filling information gaps, following and giving directions, solving problems, cooperative puzzles and language games. This method makes for a very nice transition from TPR for students at the intermediate level, as it builds conversational capabilities in the target language. An example of a non-communicative language activity would be having students repeat sentences after the teacher or read out loud from a book. These activities do not promote real communication and should be avoided in second language classes.



Tlingit language Mentor Paul Marks, right, teaches Apprentices Ishmael Hope, center, and Joshua Jackson.

Photo by Brian Wallace / SHI

Four rules for language activists

1. Never ask permission; never beg to save the language.
2. Don't debate the issues.
3. Be very action oriented; just act.
4. Show, don't tell.

Darrell Kipp, from “Encouragement, Guidance, Insights, and Lessons Learned for Native Language Activists Developing Their Own Tribal Language Programs”





CONCLUSION

“Language is community. Community is one’s self, and also one’s mother, father, grandparents, aunts, uncles and children. People within a community are connected to the environment and all things. Language brings us and everything together as one.”

Tlingit Elder David Katzeek
Kingeistí

Sealaska Heritage Institute’s first pilot project established six Tlingit language Mentor-Apprentice teams in Sitka, Yakutat and Juneau. The teams faced challenges of scheduling 10-15 hours a week for language learning using the immersion technique over the course of several years. But, in the end, many of the apprentices have shown growth in language fluency and use of the language in their personal lives, communities, and, in some cases, their teaching.

Our precious elders and language mentors devoted much love and caring in working with our apprentices and vice versa. Not only were the teams learning language, but they were also building a language community, supporting each other weekly throughout the three years. It does not go unnoticed that this commitment of time and effort to each other and the love of learning the language is not measurable by data and number of hours, but by forging strong relationships and bonds that will continue to bring in new language learners who want to make the long-term commitment to language learning. The mentor apprentice model works.



Mentors and Apprentices play cards during an Immersion Session.

Photo by Nobu Koch / Courtesy of SHI

REFERENCES & FURTHER READING



Books

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“Encouragement, Guidance, Insights, and Lessons Learned for Native Language Activists Developing Their Own Tribal Language Programs,” by Darrell Kipp, 2000, Piegan Institute’s Cut-Bank Language Immersion School

“Beginning Tlingit,” by Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, Sealaska Heritage Institute. PDF online at <http://tlingitlanguage.com/media/Dauenhauer-Beginning-Tlingit.pdf>

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www.sealaskaheritage.org

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APPENDIX A

Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages

From the Alaska Native Knowledge Network, <http://www.ankn.uaf.edu/>

Guidelines for Native Elders

Respected Native Elders are the essential resources through whom the heritage language of a community and the meaning it is intended to convey can be learned.

Native Elders (and other fluent speakers) can strengthen the use of their heritage language through the following actions:

- a. Keep the heritage language alive by using it as much as possible in everyday activities and in ceremonial events.
- b. Assist younger speakers of the heritage language in expanding their fluency to deeper levels and enlist their support in passing the language on to other members of the community.
- c. Take an active role in local and regional Elders councils as a way to help formulate, document and pass on language traditions for future generations.
- d. Utilize traditional ways of knowing, teaching, listening and learning in passing on the language and help others come to understand how the language is integrated with culture, especially spiritual traditions and the rules for living a proper life.
- e. Be a role model for all generations by practicing and reinforcing traditional values and using the heritage language to maintain spiritual traditions and convey the history of the community.
- f. Assist all members of the community (especially new parents) in providing opportunities for young children to grow up hearing their heritage language spoken in the home and community.
- g. Support the use of traditional naming practices and help children and parents understand the significance of the names they are given, including the development of a family tree.
- h. Assist others to acquire the heritage language by using it on an everyday basis and serve as a mentor to those wishing to learn the language.
- i. Be tolerant and patient with language learners when they make mistakes in speaking the language and be encouraging of their efforts by telling them you are proud of them.
- j. Make traditional cultural values explicit and incorporate them in all aspects of life in the community, especially those involving the heritage language.
- k. Use traditional terms and practices of recognition, welcoming, kinship and respect when greeting and addressing others, in the home as well as in community events.
- l. Work to ensure that new words are culturally grounded in the world view of the heritage language so that it continues as a living language.
- m. Help perpetuate the heritage language and traditions by purposely teaching concepts and terms specific to particular families and locales.

Guidelines for Parents

Parents are the first teachers of their children and provide the foundation on which the language learning of future generations rests.

Parents (and grandparents) can strengthen their heritage language through the following actions:

- a. Take a proactive role in promoting the learning and use of the heritage language throughout the home, school and community.

- b. Provide a loving, healthy and supportive environment for each child to learn their heritage language as a natural part of growing up, making sure they hear (and speak) the language as much as possible from prenatal through to adulthood.
- c. Request the support of fluent language speakers in the community who can serve as mentors for learning and using the heritage language on an everyday basis.
- d. Seek out information on the implications of first- and second-language learning and the benefits of children growing up multilingual (contact the Alaska Native Language Center or the Alaska Native Knowledge Network at UAF for assistance.)
- e. Volunteer to support, assist and encourage the language program in the school.
- f. Make use of traditional naming practices and help each child understand the significance of the names they carry.
- g. Help children understand their family history and the heritage(s) that shape who they are and form their identity.
- h. Make use of local rituals and ceremonies to reinforce critical events in children’s lives.
- i. Read materials and sing to children in the heritage language whenever possible, including published transcripts of Elder’s conferences, traditional stories, family histories, children’s literature and songs, etc.
- j. Teach children to use traditional kinship terms in referring to members of their family and community and to understand and practice the meaning of those terms.
- k. Be an active and full participant in all aspects of a child’s upbringing, including joint learning of the heritage language (if not already a fluent speaker) as a way of demonstrating the importance of the effort.

- l. Provide opportunities for children to participate in purposeful conversation with others under supportive, non-threatening circumstances.
- m. Believe in your child’s ability to learn the language and encourage and support them in doing so (if lacking in fluency yourself, join in with the child in learning the language.)
- n. Recognize that language is a reflection of, and directly impacts, one’s world view.

Guidelines for Aspiring Language Learners

Indigenous language learners must take an active role in learning their heritage language and assume responsibility for the use of that language as contributing members of the family and community in which they live.

Language learners can strengthen their heritage language through the following actions:

- a. Take the initiative and create opportunities to listen to and speak the heritage language.
- b. Take advantage of special times and places where people come and practice their language skills, particularly in an immersion environment.
- c. Seek out a fluent language speaker who is willing to serve as a mentor and make arrangements to work with that person on a continuing basis engaged in language-intensive activities (e.g., Tanana Chiefs Conference Mentor-Apprentice Program.)
- d. Recognize the complexity of language learning and use as a way to help sustain the level of commitment needed to gain speaking fluency and the associated literacy skills.
- e. Use available media to record and listen to stories in the heritage language and practice re-telling the stories to others.
- f. Ask other speakers to participate in the



Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages continued

respectful use of the heritage language in all appropriate situations.

- g. Gather and repatriate resource materials in the heritage language from sources in the region, as well as from the Alaska Native Language Center.
- h. Be persistent in the practice of the heritage language, even when embarrassed to speak in the presence of fluent speakers.
- i. Whenever possible, spend time with an Elder speaking the heritage language and practicing proper protocol.
- j. Learn the origins and meaning of words and practices associated with the heritage language.

Guidelines for Native Communities & Organizations

Native communities and organizations must provide a healthy and supportive environment that reinforces the learning and use of the heritage language on an everyday basis.

Communities and organizations can strengthen their heritage language through the following actions:

- a. Encourage all community members to use their heritage language on a daily basis and to assist anyone interested in learning the language, especially young children.
- b. Reinforce the importance of the heritage language by incorporating traditional terminology, language and protocols in all aspects of community life and organizational practices.
- c. Begin and close all community events and gatherings with presentations in the heritage language offered by a respected Elder along with an aspiring language learner.
- d. Promote active participation of community members in all discussions related to language maintenance, including the language curriculum advisory committees established through SB 103 and seek consensus on the role of the heritage language in the community.
- e. Establish a local and/or cross-regional language commission with explicit responsibilities to provide guidance and support for all aspects of heritage language documentation and revitalization, including decisions regarding training and certification of language teachers, maintenance of traditional language patterns and development of new words and vocabulary.
- f. Support the establishment of mentor/apprentice programs in the community and region.
- g. Disseminate information on funding programs that support heritage language initiatives and offer grant-writing training and assistance for communities to access the resources available (e.g., proposal templates for specific programs.)
- h. Promote traditional storytelling gatherings that help people experience the heritage language and gain a deeper understanding of a story's meaning, along with associated dances, games and ceremonies (e.g., a weekly story night.)
- i. Promote regular heritage language programming on all radio and television outlets in the region, including local news, noteworthy events, Elder storytelling, call-in programs and translations of print materials related to life in the surrounding community and region.
- j. Publish posters on culturally-relevant themes presented in the heritage language, including statements of Native philosophy and values to be promoted in the school and community.
- k. Support the preparation of family histories in the community and biographies of those who have passed on, using traditional names and kinship terms where available.
- l. Encourage local people to pursue journalism careers and participate in the National Native

American Journalists Association to promote public awareness of heritage language issues.

m. Provide simultaneous translation equipment and services at all meetings so the heritage language can be used freely and without interruption.

n. Form strategic alliances with national and international indigenous organizations committed to the protection and revitalization of heritage languages and disseminate appropriate information to the community.

o. Assign responsibility for monitoring the implementation of these guidelines to an appropriate community organization.

Guidelines for Educators

Educators are responsible for providing a supportive learning environment that reinforces the wishes of the parents and community for the language learning of the students in their care.

Professional educators can help strengthen the heritage language through the following actions:

a. Make effective use of local expertise, especially Elders, as co-teachers whenever local language and cultural knowledge is being addressed in the curriculum.

b. Make every effort to utilize locally-relevant curriculum materials with which students can readily identify, including materials prepared by Native authors.

c. Participate in local and regional immersion camps to learn the traditional language and cultural ways and their meaning in contemporary life.

d. Obtain first- and second-language teaching endorsements (and/or A.A. and B.A. degrees) as provided by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development and UAF and implement culturally-appropriate approaches to first- and second-language teaching in accordance with the language history and aspirations of the local

community.

e. Create an immersion environment to provide a natural context for language teaching and learning.

f. Recognize and validate all aspects of the knowledge students bring with them and assist them in their ongoing quest for personal and cultural affirmation.

g. Provide sufficient flexibility in scheduling Elder participation so they are able to fully share what they know and provide enough advance notice for them to make the necessary preparations.

h. Align all subject matter with the Alaska Standards for Culturally-Responsive Schools and develop curriculum models that are based on the local cultural and environmental experiences of the students.

i. Provide assistance in instructional methodologies for heritage language teachers—language teaching doesn’t always come naturally.

j. For heritage language speakers, acquire reading and writing proficiency in the heritage language to serve as a model and to be able to assist students in developing their own literacy skills.

Guidelines for Schools

Schools must be fully engaged with the life of the communities they serve so as to provide consistency of expectations in all aspects of students lives.

Schools can help strengthen the heritage language through the following actions:

a. Make sure the language policies and practices in the school are consistent with the language aspirations of the parents and community.

b. Provide follow-through support for local language curriculum advisory committee recommendations, as well as incentives for students to participate in the heritage language programs that are offered.



Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages continued

- c. Establish an easily accessible repository of heritage language resource materials and knowledgeable expertise from the community.
- d. Set aside special times and places where students can come and practice their language skills in an immersion environment.
- e. Incorporate appropriate traditional cultural values and beliefs in all teaching, particularly when the heritage language is involved.
- f. Provide an in-depth cultural and language orientation program for all new teachers and administrators, including participation in an immersion camp with local Elders.
- g. Collaborate with Elders and Native teachers from the local community to acquire a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the local, regional and statewide context in which the students live, particularly as it relates to the well-being and survival of the local culture.
- h. Make use of locally-produced resource materials in the local language (reports, videos, maps, books, tribal documents, etc.) in all subject areas and work in close collaboration with local agencies to enrich the curriculum beyond the scope of commercially produced texts.
- i. Acquire expertise in first- and second-language teaching/learning and the benefits that accrue to children who grow up multilingual.
- j. Provide heritage language courses for students in every high school in Alaska, especially those with Native students enrolled.
- k. Implement annual awards in each school and school district in recognition of exemplary heritage language education efforts.
- l. Develop illustrated readers (such as comic books) that utilize the heritage language in conjunction with visually relevant situations.
- m. Use flexibility and make allowances for dialectical differences as much as possible in the preparation of curriculum materials and in the teaching of heritage languages.
- n. Implement the Alaska Standards for Culturally-Responsive Schools in all aspects of the educational program, including those cultural standards that pertain to heritage languages.

Guidelines for Education Agencies

Education agencies should provide a supportive policy, program and funding environment that encourages local initiative in the revitalization of the indigenous languages.

Education agencies can help strengthen indigenous languages through the following actions:

- a. Provide ample opportunities for personnel associated with heritage language education to participate in regional and statewide conferences, workshops and other events in which Native educators share their insights and practices around language learning issues.
- b. Provide administrative and funding support for local education initiatives (tribal schools, charter schools, immersion programs) aimed at immersing students in their heritage language as the language of instruction in school.
- c. Provide support for curriculum materials development in any area where heritage language programs are being implemented (including computer-assisted Native language translation capabilities and literacy support.)
- d. Provide the necessary waivers from existing regulatory requirements to insure that students being taught in their heritage language are not disadvantaged in any way, nor are they discouraged from continuing in a heritage language program of instruction through the highest grade-level available.
- e. Implement appropriate long-term assessment processes for immersion and other heritage

language programs.

- f. Provide support for training heritage language and ESL teachers for all schools, as well as appropriate orientation to language issues for existing teachers, administrators and others associated with the schools.
- g. Provide current resources and relevant research data to assist schools and districts in developing effective heritage language programs that also contribute to the overall educational achievement of the students.
- h. Utilize the expertise associated with the regional Native educator associations and the Alaska Association of Bilingual Educators to provide guidance in language education policies and programs.

Guidelines for Linguists

Linguists should assist local communities in the development of appropriate resource materials and teaching practices that nurture the use and perpetuation of the heritage language in each respective cultural community.

Linguists can help strengthen heritage languages through the following actions:

- a. Identify and utilize the expertise in participating communities to enhance the quality of linguistic data gathering and use caution in applying external frames of reference in its analysis and interpretation.
- b. Contribute appropriate linguistic expertise on language teaching, learning, policies and planning in ways that are compatible with the heritage language aspirations of Native communities.
- c. Provide encouragement and support for Native students interested in teaching their heritage language and/or becoming linguists.
- d. Provide support, training, resources and technical assistance to language initiatives on-site in local

communities so that maximum heritage language revitalization can be achieved.

- e. Help prepare linguistic materials and templates of basic planning documents that are of direct benefit to indigenous people in their heritage language efforts.
- f. Assist in the development and use of linguistically appropriate computer software and fonts that facilitate electronic composition and communication in the heritage languages.
- g. Assist in the conservation and preservation of heritage language materials, including appropriate media and storage facilities.

Guidelines for Media Producers

The producers of mass media should assume responsibility for providing culturally-balanced materials and programming that reinforce the use of heritage languages.

Media producers can help strengthen indigenous languages through the following actions:

- a. Utilize a panel of local experts rather than a single source to corroborate translation and interpretation of language materials as well as to construct words for new terms.
- b. Encourage the use of the local languages in multimedia materials in ways that provide appropriate context for conveying accurate meaning and interpretation, including an appreciation for the subtleties of story construction, use of metaphor and oratorical skills.
- c. Provide opportunities for Elders to share what they know in the local language and to have that knowledge represented in multimedia materials in a manner that retains its original meaning.
- d. Prepare curriculum resource materials that utilize the local language so as to make it as easy as possible for teachers to draw upon the local language in their teaching.



Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages continued

General Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered to support the effective implementation of the guidelines for strengthening indigenous languages.

1. The regional Native educator associations shall sponsor an annual Academy of Elders bringing together Native educators and Elders in an immersion camp setting to help the teachers acquire fluency in their language for use in their teaching.
2. Native language specialists through the regional Native educator associations (including Elders) shall develop guidelines for assessing fluency and/or levels of proficiency in heritage languages for use in various contexts.
3. Regional tribal colleges shall provide a support structure for the implementation of these guidelines and the teaching of the heritage languages in each of the respective regions.
4. Federal and state funding support for indigenous language initiatives shall be expanded and all Native language funding should be administered through, or in partnership with, Native-controlled entities.
5. An Alaska Native publishing house shall be established to promote and support the publication of Native language materials.
6. The Alaska Native Language Center shall establish regionally-based affiliates in each major linguistic region to provide more direct local access to and involvement in the Center's programs and services.
7. The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development shall provide incentives to school districts for the implementation of the SB 103 advisory committee recommendations.
8. School districts shall provide opportunities and incentives for all new teachers to participate in a language and cultural orientation program

appropriate to the area in which they will teach.

9. School districts shall require a cross-cultural specialist endorsement for all personnel with responsibilities that impact the cultural well-being of the students and communities they serve.
10. The guidelines outlined above shall be incorporated in university courses and made an integral part of all teacher preparation and cultural orientation programs.
11. SB 103 advisory committees shall be provided with knowledgeable assistance on the interpretation and application of the guidelines outlined above.
12. An annotated bibliography of resource materials that address issues associated with indigenous language learning shall be maintained on the Alaska Native Knowledge Network web site.



APPENDIX B

Sample Mentor-Apprentice forms



G

Bridging Challenges to Fluency through Partnerships:
A Tlingit Mentor Apprentice Language Program.

Mentor-Apprentice 20-hour Report

Please complete and submit this form after each 20 hours of language immersion work per month.

Mentor Name: _____ Apprentice Name: _____

Date: _____ Report #: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Log (20 hours)	
<i>This is a summary log. Please also keep a detailed journal of all your mentor-apprentice activities.</i>	
Date(s):	# of hours
Activities/Topics Covered:	
Comments:	
Date(s):	# of hours
Activities/Topics Covered:	
Comments:	



Mentor-Apprentice 20-hour Report

<i>Date(s):</i>	<i># of hours</i>
<i>Activities/Topics Covered:</i>	
<i>Comments:</i>	
<i>Date(s):</i>	<i># of hours</i>
<i>Activities/Topics Covered:</i>	
<i>Comments:</i>	
<i>Date(s):</i>	<i># of hours</i>
<i>Activities/Topics Covered:</i>	
<i>Comments:</i>	
<i>Date(s):</i>	<i># of hours</i>
<i>Activities/Topics Covered:</i>	
<i>Comments:</i>	
<i>Date(s):</i>	<i># of hours</i>
<i>Activities/Topics Covered:</i>	
<i>Comments:</i>	
<i>Total # of hours for this report (minimum 20)</i>	_____



Sample Mentor-Apprentice forms continued

Mentor-Apprentice 20-hour Report

<i>Team Self Evaluation (20 hours)</i>
<i>Summarize the highlights and accomplishments of your time together.</i>
<i>How did these 20 hours go? (Productive, quiet, intense, boring, frustrating, etc.)</i>
<i>Did you participate in any other community language programs? Please list the activities and describe your participation.</i>
<i>What are your goals for the next 40 hours?</i>

Mentor-Apprentice 20-hour Report

Monthly Immersion Hour Summary (20 hours)			
<i>All hours must be eligible according to the approved budget. Payments will not be disbursed until the monthly report is submitted to the SHI by the last Friday of each month.</i>			
<i>Dates</i>	<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Details</i>	<i>Subtotal</i>
	<i>Mentor</i>	_____ hours X \$_____ per hour	
	<i>Apprentice</i>	_____ hours X \$_____ per hour	
	<i>Administration</i> Leveraged funds for Community Liaison. Please report here.		
	<i>Evaluation Panel</i>		
<i>Total hours for this report</i>			_____

Please initial: Mentor Speaker _____ Apprentice _____



Sample Mentor-Apprentice forms continued

D. VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR

- _____ 1. I know a lot more words, but usually use the wrong prefix/suffix, or wrong order.
- _____ 2. I still sometimes use the wrong word or get the order wrong, but less often.
- _____ 3. While I still make mistakes with words or grammar, I usually catch myself.
- _____ 4. Though not perfect, I think I get most things right in everyday conversations.

E. PREVIOUS LEARNING EXPERIENCES: i.e. CLASSES, PREVIOUS LEARNING EXPERIENCES, PREVIOUS TEACHERS IN THE TLINGIT LANGUAGE.

F. ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT YOUR LEARNING THAT WE NEED TO KNOW TO HELP YOU.

GUNALCHÉESH





Sample Mentor-Apprentice forms continued

Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice Program Work Plan Project Year Three (1 August 2015–July 31, 2016)

Please complete a detailed work plan for the 260 hours you will completed this year. On the form attached, please outline your planned activities and goals.

To guide your planning, think about the following questions:

- What are your language learning goals for the 260 hours? What are your goals for each 20 hours?
- What do you want to learn? The learning must be natural to you and where you live.
- What kinds of topics do you want to learn about? i.e. fishing, cooking, hunting, family etc. You can spend *at least* 20 hours of immersion on each topic.
- What kinds of activities can you do together to help accomplish your goals?
- Are there other language/culture experts in the community you would like to involve?
- Based on your work so far, what can you improve, expand and continue to work on?
- Based on your work so far, what do you need to practice more? What do you need more help with?

Be as specific as you can. For example, you may go on trips by car or on the bus, visit hunting grounds, cook meals together, or work with a different language expert. During your activities, you will learn new words and practice using them in phrases.

If you require assistance in developing your work plan, please do not hesitate to contact the Sealaska Heritage Institute Staff:

Jasmine D. James, Language and Youth Project Manager
jasmine.james@sealaska.com, (907) 586-9264

Jackie Kookesh, Education Director
jackie.kookesh@sealaska.com, (907) 586-9229

Tlingit Mentor-Apprentice Program Work Plan Project Year Two *(August 1, 2015 - July 31, 2016)*

Complete this section at the beginning of the year. Please work as a team to outline your planned activities and goals for each 20 hours. Use additional pages if needed.

Work Plan: What activities will you do together to accomplish your language learning goals?	Language Focus: What language will you learn from each activity? i.e. words, phrases, language skills etc.	Hours: How many hrs will you spend on each activity?	Date: When do you expect to complete each activity?	Details and Comments: Give details on each activity. Please provide comments about your activities and language learning.

APPENDIX C

Sample assessment forms

Oral Assessment Interview

Sealaska Heritage Institute

STUDENT _____ INSTRUCTOR _____ DATE _____

MATERIALS

- 3 seasonal rounds posters
- Clan family tree poster
- Paper
- Pencil
- Colored pens
- Book
- Paper plate
- Spoon

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE TEST ADMINISTRATOR

- Ask each question no more than 2 times
- Do not use give hints when asking the student test questions
- Give directions for each section in English, but conduct the assessment interview in your heritage language only
- Indicate the score for each question according to the key below

KEY TO SCORING

Comprehension

0 = didn't understand the question

1 = understood the question

Production

0 = didn't respond / responded incorrectly

1 = responded correctly with one word or simple phrase

2 = responded correctly with a complete sentence

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT

- Answer in a complete sentence whenever you can. For example, if I ask you 'do you understand me?' try to reply with 'yes, I understand you' rather than just 'yes'.
- If you understand the question but cannot respond in your heritage language, then respond in English to show that you understood the question.

SECTION I

1.0 TPR and Simple Questions

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT:

In this section, I will be giving you directions and asking you questions. Please follow the directions and answer the questions as best you can.

	Heritage language	<i>English translation</i>	Comp	Prod
1		<i>Stand up</i>		
2		<i>Sit down</i>		
3		<i>What time is it?</i>		
4		<i>Raise your hand</i>		
5		<i>Lower your hand</i>		
6		<i>Point to the door</i>		
7		<i>Touch the floor</i>		
8		<i>Where do you live?</i>		
9		<i>Point to the wall</i>		
10		<i>Pick up the pencil</i>		
11		<i>Write your name on the paper</i>		
12		<i>Hand me the paper</i>		
13		<i>Is this table black?</i>		

1.1 Poster #1 Questions (Use Poster #1 – Fish Processing)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT:

In this section, I will ask you questions about this poster. Please answer the questions with complete sentences whenever you can.

	Heritage language	<i>English translation</i>	Comp	Prod
14		<i>What is she holding?</i>		
15		<i>Is the weather good or bad?</i>		
16		<i>Is she wearing a hat?</i>		
17		<i>Is the woman sitting or standing?</i>		
18		<i>Who is wearing glasses?</i>		
19		<i>Is he swimming or dancing?</i>		
20		<i>Is she cutting bread?</i>		
21		<i>Is the cat eating berries or fish?</i>		
22		<i>Is this a woman?</i>		

Sample assessment forms continued

23		<i>How many black bears do you see?</i>		
24		<i>Is he laughing or crying?</i>		
25		<i>Is it cold?</i>		
26		<i>Who is rowing?</i>		
27		<i>Is the spoon big or small?</i>		
28		<i>Is it raining?</i>		
29		<i>Is this a smokehouse or a store?</i>		
30		<i>What is this? (point to firewood)</i>		
31		<i>Is this person old or young?</i>		
32		<i>Is the man running?</i>		
33		<i>Who is pointing?</i>		
34		<i>Do you see 3 killer whales?</i>		
35		<i>Where is the boat?</i>		
36		<i>Do you see a mt. goat?</i>		
37		<i>Is this a man or a woman?</i>		
38		<i>Where is the eagle?</i>		
39		<i>Is s/he happy?</i>		
40		<i>Is he working or playing?</i>		
		Total Score:	/40	/60

SECTION II

2.0 TPR

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT:

In this section, I will be giving you directions. Please follow the directions as best you can.

	Heritage language	<i>English</i>	Comp	Prod
1		<i>Pick up the red pen and the black pen</i>		
2		<i>Put the red pen on the book</i>		
3		<i>Put the black pen next to the book</i>		
4		<i>Put the plate under the chair</i>		
5		<i>Put the plate on the table</i>		
6		<i>Put the spoon on the plate</i>		
7		<i>Pick up the brown pen and draw a head on the paper</i>		
8		<i>Pick up the green pen and draw three eyes in the head</i>		
9		<i>Pick up the red pen and draw his mouth</i>		
10		<i>Pick up all the pens and put them in the bag</i>		

2.1 Poster #2 Questions (Use Poster #2 – Family Scene)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT:

In this section, I will ask you questions about this poster. Please answer the questions with complete sentences whenever you can.

	Heritage language	<i>English</i>	Comp	Prod
11		<i>Is Grandpa telling a story?</i>		
12		<i>What is Grandma weaving?</i>		
13		<i>Is there a deer in the water?</i>		

Sample assessment forms continued

14		<i>Did the child fall asleep?</i>		
15		<i>Where are the child's boots?</i>		
16		<i>Is there a beaver on the drum?</i>		
17		<i>What is grandma wearing?</i>		
18		<i>Is Grandma weaving?</i>		
19		<i>Is there snow on the roof?</i>		
20		<i>Is the child sitting on a pillow?</i>		
21		<i>Is everybody listening to Grandpa?</i>		

2.2 Poster #3 Questions (Use Poster #3 – Berry Picking / Net Mending)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT:

In this section, I will ask you questions about this poster. Please answer the questions with complete sentences whenever you can.

	Heritage language	English	Comp	Prod
22		<i>How many people are picking berries?</i>		
23		<i>What frightened the boys?</i>		
24		<i>Who is the otter looking at?</i>		
25		<i>What is the bear doing?</i>		
26		<i>Is the boy on the dock seining?</i>		
27		<i>What is at the top of the totem pole?</i>		
28		<i>What are the men working on?</i>		
29		<i>Are there any children dancing?</i>		
30		<i>Why is the boy happy?</i>		
		Total Score:	/30	/50

SECTION III

3.0 Introduction

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT:

Please introduce yourself in your language, providing as much information as you can. After your introduction I will ask you some questions about yourself.

(Check all fields covered in introduction)

1	Name	
2	Moiety	
3	Clan	
4	Father	
5	Grandparents	
	Total Score: (Production)	/5

3.1 Questions About Student Introduction

	Heritage language	<i>English</i>	Comp	Prod
1		<i>What's your name?</i>		
2		<i>What moiety are you?</i>		
3		<i>What clan does your father belong to?</i>		
4		<i>What clan does your mother's father belong to?</i>		
5		<i>What village is your family from?</i>		
		Total Score:	/5	/10

Sample assessment forms continued

3.2 Family Tree Questions (Use Family Tree)

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT:

Please use this chart to answer the following questions. If you don't understand the relationships represented on the chart, please ask.

	Heritage language	English	Comp	Prod
1		How many children do Hazel and Walter have?		
2		What moiety is Walter's wife's father?		
3		Who are George's nephews?		
4		Who are Erma's grandchildren?		
5		Who are Jessica's maternal uncles?		
6		Who is Henry's older brother?		
7		Who is John's daughter?		
8		Who are Hazel's nieces?		
9		What is the name of Stacey's younger sister?		
10		What is the name of Paul's younger brother?		
11		Who are Stan's maternal aunts?		
12		Who are David's sisters?		
13		Who are Vivi's brothers?		
14		What clan does Danny's paternal uncle belong to?		
15		Who are Lisa's paternal aunts?		
16		What house does Lisa belong to?		
17		What clan does Mike belong to?		
18		What moiety is Rose?		
19		Who belongs to the ____ House?		
20		Who belongs to the ____ Clan?		
		Total Score:	/20	/40

SECTION IV

4.0 Short Story #1

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE INSTRUCTOR:

Fill in the following story in your heritage language, using the English translation as a guide.

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT:

In this section, I'm going to tell you a short story. Please listen carefully and answer the questions following the story.

John wanted to cook potatoes and half-dried fish for dinner.

He went to the store to buy potatoes.

The store didn't have potatoes.

John went home and ate pilot bread for dinner.

	Heritage language	<i>English</i>	Comp	Prod
1		<i>What did John want to cook for dinner?</i>		
2		<i>Where did John go?</i>		
3		<i>What did John want to buy at the store?</i>		
4		<i>What did John eat for dinner?</i>		
5		<i>Why did John eat this for dinner?</i>		
		Total Score:	/5	/10

Sample assessment forms continued

4.1 Short Story #2

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE INSTRUCTOR: *Fill in the following story in your heritage language using the English translation as a guide.*

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE STUDENT: *This time I will tell you another short story, ask you some questions about the story and then ask you to retell the story.*

Mary was walking along the riverbank.

She saw a brown bear.

The bear caught a fish in the river.

An eagle came and stole the fish from the bear.

The eagle ate the fish.

	Heritage language	<i>English</i>	Comp	Prod
1		<i>What was Mary doing?</i>		
2		<i>What did Mary see first?</i>		
3		<i>What did the brown bear catch?</i>		
4		<i>Who took the fish from the brown bear?</i>		
5		<i>Who ate the fish?</i>		
		Total Score:	/5	/10

For the Retell portion of the assessment, the teacher should assess whether the meaning of each sentence from the above story is conveyed.

KEY TO SCORING

- 0 = didn't convey the meaning of the sentence
- 1 = partially conveyed the meaning of the sentence
- 2 = accurately conveyed the meaning of the sentence

	<i>English</i>	Prod
1	Mary was walking along the riverbank.	
2	She saw a brown bear.	
3	The bear caught a fish in the river.	
4	An eagle came and took the fish from the bear.	
5	The eagle ate the fish.	
	Total Score:	/10

OVERALL SCORE:

COMPREHENSION /105

PRODUCTION /195





APPENDIX D

Sample language games

Phrases for Go Fish, provided by Yarrow Vaara

Shuffle the cards.

Woosh xoox' yakajél wé x'úx'k'u.

Deal the cards.

Kaa jeedé natsóo wé x'úx'k'u.

Are you going to play cards with us?

Haa een ágé x'ux'k'u kakgeetsoon?

How many do you have?

X'oon sá i jeewú?

Put your pairs face up on the table.

Yá kindéi i woosh yáayi nadáakw káx' yan tí.

Do you have any _____ ?

_____ gé i jeewú?

Yes. Here, take them.

Aaá. Ná.

No, I don't have any _____.

Tléik', tlél ___ ax jee.

Go fish!

Ast'eix nakúx!

Ast'eix nagú!

Whose turn is it?

Aadoosá áwé déisk'?

Aadoo sá eet kuwahaa?

It's my turn.

Xat áwé déisk'.

Ax eet kuwahaa.

It's your turn.

Wa.é áwé déisk'.

I eet kuwahaa.

It's his/her turn.

Hu áwé déisk'.

Du eet kuwahaa.

You're slow!

Ilichee yákw!

Ask him/her.

Du x'anawoos'.

S/He's kicking our butts!

Haa tóok áwé yaa akanaltséx!

I won!

Ya xwadlaak!

You won!

Ku yée yadlaak!

He / she won!

Ka yaa wadlaak!

Is it mine?

Ax aayí ágé?

Let's play again.

Tsu ashkanaxtool yát.

Do you want to play again?

Ash koolyát gé tsu i tuwáa sigóo?

Lingít Games for Children

Lingít Language Interns Workshop July 2004
Sealaska Heritage Institute

The following material was developed or shared by participants during the workshop. Participants in the workshop included: Bessie Cooley, David Katzeek, Loddie Jones, Roy Mitchell, Yarrow Vaara, Linda Belarde, Roby Littlefield, Kassy Eubank, Vivian Mork, Jessica Chester, Mary Folletti, Rose Natkong, Virginia Oliver, Paul Marks, Greg Brown, Keri Edwards, William Andrews.

Games

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Taan, Taan, Kéet | Played like Duck Duck Goose |
| 2. Yee kaayakijéidi daatnaay.á | Musical Chairs |
| 3. Aagaanéesheex | Capture the Flag |
| 4. Aadóo Jeewú sá wé | Who has the...? |

Taan, Taan, Kéet

Modeled after 'Duck, Duck, Goose'

This game can be used to teach a number of different animal names. Before playing the game, use pictures or stuffed animals to teach students the two animal names. Use TPR at first, having students either point to, or touch, the pictures or stuffed animals.

Vocabulary:

Taan	'Sea lion'
Kéet	'Killerwhale'
Koojúxwaa yáx gaxtookee.	'Let's sit in a circle.' (plural)
Koojúxwaa yáx gaykí.	'(Y'all) Sit in a circle!'
Kuna.áakw xat yisháadi	'try to catch me'
Nayshíx!	'run!' (plural)
Ganú!	'sit down' (singular)
Wa.é déis.	'Your turn'

Sample language games continued

Yee kaayakijéidi daatnaay.á*Musical Chairs**Sing to the tune 'London Bridge'*Preparatory commands:Yee kaayakajeyitx'í aax gayla.á. *'Pick up your chairs.'*Woosh duwaak yigin yila.á yee kaayakajeyitx'í.Words to the song:Yee kaayakajeyitx'í daat nay.á. *'Walk around your chairs.'*Yéi áwé. *'That's it.'*Game commands:Tliyéix'! *'Stop!'*Yóo áayax yeenaak. *'Turn around.'*Kúx kei nay.áat. *'Go the other way.'*Tláakw déi. *'Quickly'*Kagéinax. *'Slowly'*Gaykí. *'All sit.'*Eesháan, Ee yawduwadlaak. *'Poor thing, you were beaten!'*Tléix' kaayakajeyit aax gasatí! *'Take one chair away!'*Wéix' akaa ganú! *'Sit on it over there.'*

Aagaaneesheex

Resembles 'Capture the Flag'

Rules:

Ss form two lines facing each other, with the flag in the middle. Ss are assigned numbers so that the Ss on opposite teams which are facing each other have the same number. T calls out the commands and the pair whose number is called each race in to the middle to try to capture the flag first and run back behind the line on their side of the court. If the S with the flag is tagged by the S on the other team before he makes it behind he line, he loses.

1		1
2		2
3	*flag*	3
4		4
5		5

Commands:

Tléix'-x isiteeyi agaa neesheex!	'Run for it if you are One'
Du eet shí	'Tag him/her'
Du yeet shí	'Tag them'
Ayaawadlaak	'She/he made it'

Roby's Version from Sitka

Scarf in the middle of the gym, 2 teams number off, caller says

-x yee siteeyí at gáa neesheex. 'If you are #___, run get it.'

Geesheex, tléix' yisitee. 'Run if you are #___.'

Neil yáx xwaadlaak. 'I made it home!'

__ ijee yéi dateeyí, __ dei naysheex. 'If you have a __, run to the __.'

OR,

__ yeejeex' yéi teeyí __ dei naysheex. (Marsha Hotch, Klukwan)

__ -x yee siteeyí, __ gáa neesheex. 'If you are a __, run get a __.'

Neesheex	'Run'	Kúx dayéen yaagagú	'Walk backwards'
Neeshk'én	'Jump'		
Sagóo yáx yaagagú	'Skip'	Or Kúx dak'ool'in yaagagú	(Johnny Marks)
Yaagagú	'Walk'		

Sample language games continued

Xat isixán gé?

Modeled after 'If you love me honey, give me a smile.'

One person is chosen to start the game. This person chooses someone and says to them 'If you care for me, give me a smile'. That person has to reply "I care for you, but I just can't smile" three times. If the person saying this smiles, s/he is 'it'

Ax daa toowú ee oowú ax yáx at shuk.

'If you care for me give me a smile'

I daa toowú xaa oo tléil ku adé kwaa shugu yé.

'I care for you, but I just can't smile'

At xwashúk *'I smiled'*

At iyashúk *'You smiled'*

At uwashúk *'S/he smiled'*

Tléil at xwashuk *'I didn't smile'*

Tléil at yishuk *'You didn't smile'*

Tléil at wushuk *'S/he didn't smile'*

Wa.é áwé déisk' *'It's your turn'*

Sá goot kaa *'Choose someone else'*

Aadóo Jeewúsá

Who has it?

Provided by Vivian Mork

This game is great for teaching vocabulary. Begin by teaching the students the target vocabulary using TPR. To play the game, form a circle with the students' chairs, using one less chair than the number of players. Each student is given an item (colored paper, stuffed animal, or any vocabulary item). The person without a chair begins the game by standing in the middle of the circle and saying: *Aadóo jeewú sá wé _____ ? Gaydanáak!* 'Who has the (vocabulary item)?' 'Stand up!' All students with that item stand up and switch seats. The person in the middle tries to get a seat as well. Whoever does not get a seat becomes the caller in the middle for the next round.

Koojúxwaa yáx aa yéi nayoo wé kaayagajeit	'Put the chairs in a circle'
Aadóo jeewú sáwé ____	'Who has the ____?'
Gaydanáak	'Stand up'
Áa gaa giya nuguyé gaa kushée.	'Find a seat'
Nagú	'Go'
Wa.é áwé déisk'	'It's your turn'
Wa.éch kaa shukak jáa yáa kusook'	'You lead the game now'

