HOW I LEARNED THE LANGUAGE:

THE PEDAGOGICAL STRUCTURE OF THE TĂŁTĂN LANGUAGE

By

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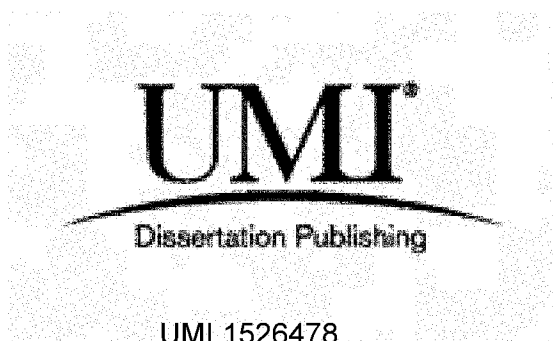
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Abstract

This thesis investigates the morphological structure of Tāłtān, a northern Athapaskan language. This thesis does not examine the morphemic properties of Tāłtān from a linguistic perspective. Instead, this thesis focuses on the pedagogical structure, which has been neglected and misunderstood in the previous research and literature, from a second language learning experience. This thesis also examines the cultural differences between Tāłtān and English, the translation language. Based on the morphemic findings, and observed behavior governing syllable structure, I argue that the Tāłtān Language is structured around the pronouns in a way that is patterned into the paradigms with a consistency that simplifies the learning process when a second language learner understand how it works. The thesis also points out how deeply the cultural understanding of the universe is embedded in the structure and nature of the language.

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Chapter 1. BACKGROUND TO THESIS

Welcome

My name is Oscar Dennis and my Tāłtān name is Hotseta (Mountain father), I am a member of the Tahltan Nation and my people are from Tlegō'īn (Telegraph Creek) and Łuwe Chon (Iskut) British Columbia, Canada. I come from the Talok'otīne tribe. I am a member of the Tsesk'iye (Crow/Raven) Clan. My parents are Mary (Brown) and James Dennis. Mary is the daughter of Hazel (Henyu) and Murray Brown. My grandmother Hazel's parents are Daisy (Edzertza) and Peter Henyu. My people are a matrilineal society and I follow my mother and grandmother's lineage. Daisy's mother is Ethe'eni and I come from her house – the Ethe'eni house. My father comes from the Tlabanot'īn tribe and he is Ch'iyone (Wolf) clan. He belongs to the Simk'alt'ede house.

Figure 1. Tahltan Territory British Columbia Canada (Albright, 1984: 9).

Introduction

This thesis presents results of research conducted in the Tahltan community of Łuwe Chōn (Iskut) on the grammar of the Tāłtān Language. It represents the results of my successful attempt to combine our oral methodology with the contemporary formal writing method in the oral study

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and preservation of my indigenous language. It also demonstrates how I learned to speak the Tāłtān language with my father as my oral teacher and in the process deciphered some of the complex grammatical structure and so surpassed/overcame the language and cultural barriers that have been preventing our language from being passed-on to second language learners.

The decision to do my thesis in this field stems from:

1. My personal interest in learning to speak my language

2. My interest in and concern with the preservation and revitalization of my indigenous language.

3. My desire to gain insight into why our language is on the brink of extinction in the midst of our ongoing (35 years) Tāłtān Language Program.

On a personal level I made a vow to myself that I will not die speaking the colonial language of my oppressor and in order for me to truly identify with my land and heritage I felt it was necessary that I speak my indigenous language.

In concern for the preservation and revitalization of my language, I wanted to digitally record and archive as much of the language as possible before the native speakers are gone and create comprehensive/pedegogical resource material for others who may be interested in learning the language as a second language.

In regards to the over-arching question of *'why our language continues to die amidst our language program',* I wanted to explore what the 'linguistic and cultural barriers' are, as I studied, rather than focus on how the 'colonial impact' (English dominance) has contributed to the demise of our language in general. I also didn't set out with that research question guiding

me, rather the question was merely an interest and the answer revealed itself naturally as I learned and explored the language orally.

In regards to the 'linguistic and cultural barriers' that are preventing our language from being passed on, I wanted to go beyond the many rationales ("Our language is not being used in the home"; "Our language is an elective and not allotted enough time in the schools for our children to catch on", etc.) and all the other obvious reasons that contribute to the problem and are commonly cited in regards to language loss in the midst of our formal language program. With the knowledge acquired in the process of learning the language as a second language and as the Tahltan Language Revitalization Coordinator, I ultimately plan to develop pedagogical resource materials that I hope will surpass the barriers that are preventing our language from being passed on to those attempting to learn Tāłtān as a second language.

However, this is not comparative research in the sense that I did not study the current method of teaching the language that is utilized in the formal education system (in the Tahltan communities) to compare it to my method of studying/learning the language. Rather, I studied the language and now speak it as a second language and through the process of learning the language I have in-depth pedagogical grammatical knowledge on the structure of the language. I use this as a means to validate that I have overcome the barriers that are preventing the language from being passed on as a second language and thus have shown that my method works in comparison to the method that is being utilized in the Tāłtān language program (where no one is learning to speak the language).

Pedagogical grammar is defined as:

> Grammatical analysis and instruction designed for second-language students. *"Pedagogical grammar* is a slippery concept. The term is commonly used to denote (1) pedagogical process - the explicit treatment of elements of the target language systems as (part of) language teaching methodology; (2) pedagogical content -

reference sources of one kind or another that present information about the target language system; and (3) combinations of process and content." (Little, D. 1994. P: 99).

It is the in-depth knowledge that I acquired in the process of learning to speak Tāłtān that I will present 'pedagogically' as my thesis.

The Current Tāłtān Language Program

With respect to the current Tāłtān Language program, it has always been and still is a part of the formal education system and it has been ongoing in the three Tahltan communities since the mid 1970's with zero results in producing one fluent speaker to date. I am one of the former students who studied the Tāłtān language, formally, between 1974 and 1978 in the mission school in the community of Iskut British Columbia. The extent of my learning the language in the formal education setting was nil and it is common knowledge in the Tahltan communities that the ongoing language program in the local schools has not produced one fluent, or semi-fluent speaker in its thirty-five years in existence in our community(s).

I confirmed this by testing former and current students informally in our community. As I became comfortable with speaking Tāłtān I spoke to family members who are enrolled in the program, and I spoke to many former and current students, in the Tāłtān language. My findings are: not one student was able to understand me and respond appropriately in Tāłtān beyond the formal greeting. Most could not understand the formal greeting. Thus, I can say with confidence the ongoing program is not successful in producing semi-fluent and/or fluent speakers and there is a desperate need for the development of a new approach to teaching the Tahtan language, an approach that surpasses the barriers that are preventing our language from being passed on, an approach that puts a major emphasis on our traditional and contemporary epistemology.

Language Revitalization

In February 2012 I was employed by the Iskut First Nations as The Tahltan Language Revitalization Coordinator. In this position, I have been privileged to work both individually and as a team member with the Iskut elders and the bright and eager minds of the colleagues (youth) with whom I am employed. In regards to language revitalization:

> In terms of positive effects, language revitalization can be the start of a process in which we begin to heal from the impacts of past losses by reclaiming our language, culture, and identity, thereby allowing our voices to become stronger and healthier. (Thompson, 2012: iv)

The development of practical comprehensive resource material is essential to language revitalization and personal decolonization, however, in the Tāłtān language practical comprehensive resource materials are at a bare minimum. According to a paper on BC Indigenous languages (Poser, 2000) Tāłtān is a poorly documented language. There is no extensive dictionary, no comprehensive grammar and few textual materials. It has only been within the last twenty-five years that a practical orthography has been developed by the Tahltan Government (Carter, 1992/1994) and the situation observed by Poser remains relatively the same.

The Rationale/Purpose of the Study

Tāłtān is severely endangered with roughly thirty native speakers remaining and all are over the age of sixty with one exception – a male in the community of Iskut who is in his early forties. The majority of the native speakers can be equally divided between the communities of Łuwe Chōn (Iskut) and Tlegō'in (Telegraph) - the Łuwe Chōn Dialect(s) and Tlegō'in Dialect. There is one dialect spoken in Tlegō'in and two in Łuwe Chōn. This means that the Tāłtān language is at risk of extinction within the next ten years unless vigorous measures are taken to develop a new approach to teaching the language and an all-out effort is taken to revitalize it.

The Łuwe Chōn Dialect has only sixteen native speakers remaining today and it can be roughly divided into two equal dialectal variants/groups, referred to as the Iskut or Tl'abānōt'īn Dialect (my father's), and the Caribou Hide or Me'ets'endāne Dialect. The distinction I make between these two dialects is based on direct accounts given to me by the native speakers with experience with both dialects. They make their distinction on some differences in vocabulary, otherwise the dialects are basically the same. Based on these numbers, it is clear that the individual dialects in the community of Łuwe Chōn are at a far greater risk of extinction than the overall language. Therefore, my rationale for this particular research is on a personal level, and for academia, to contribute to the preservation/revitalization of my father's dialect - the Tl'abānōt'īn Dialect. My goal was both to learn to become a fluent speaker of the Tl'abānōt'īn Tāłtān Dialect and to use what I learned to help Tāłtān youth to learn the language through digital media.

During my (our) study of the language I (we) was/were never taught the deep meaning and structure of the language, instead I (we) were taught the words and phrases with free translation and it was left to me (us) (the students) to figure it out on my (our) own and as mentioned earlier, there are no pedagogical resources available to rely upon for help.

Clearly there is a need for the development of practical comprehensive resource material that takes into consideration the oral teaching methodology, linguistic barriers and cultural dynamics, while at the same time utilizing the 'current adapted visual learning methodology' and 'social media' that our society has adapted to (Emails, Facebook, iTunes, podcasting, screen casting, eBooks and emagazines, YouTube etc.).

Michael Haenlein and Andreas Kaplan (2014) define social media as:

"a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated

content." Furthermore, social media depend on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify user-generated content. They introduce substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities, and individuals. Social media differ from traditional or industrial media in many ways, including quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy, and permanence. (Wikipedia, Social media. 2014)

With today's digital technology and self-publishing software, the potential to produce pedagogical resource material that is unique to the demands of our specific language and compatible with today's social media is at our finger tips. Whether the resource is providing teaching aids to learn at home, online or in the classroom, with today's technology the students from all levels can enjoy the opportunities to experience our language and culture at the tap of a screen.

Both personally and professionally, I believe that it is imperative that the current social digital mobile technologies (IPod, IPad, and IPhone) be given special attention in the development of cultural resource material(s) and the potential that these technologies offer be honored both inside and outside of the classroom. Thus, one of the objectives of the thesis is to present/develop pedagogical resource material of the Tāłtān language structure in a format that can be easily transferable to digital media. Resource material that:

• Is unique to the structure of our language and tradition.

• Overcomes the linguistic and cultural barriers that are preventing our language from being passed on to subsequent generations.

• Takes advantage of technology and the modern day social media that I myself and our children have grown accustomed to.

One of the objectives of my research was to provide Tāłtān language texts that I could use and that can ultimately be published as pedagogical grammatical interactive digital resources for second language learners, using modern digital technology. With modern technology being a major part of our current culture, I have always strongly believed that in order for our language to be taught in a manner that is most effective, it should be taught in a way where modern technology and social media are included in the process. As a researcher, student of my Indigenous language and a member of a group of second language speakers, I can personally attest to the fact that second language learners respond well to learning when the subject matter is offered to them through a medium that is a part of their everyday experience while at the same time taking advantage of the opportunities to participate in traditional cultural events.

As a child I spent many hours with my great grandfather Pete Henyu (Hale and O'Grady 1965) fishing on the Stikine River and listening to stories around the fire in the evenings in the smoke house. My great grandfather was born in 1886 and O'Grady and Hale recorded him in 1965 when he was 79 years old. I learned a lot of the language from the audio recordings between 2011 and 2014. My grandfather literally taught me from the grave through these audio

Figure 2. First Nations Of British Columbia Canada (Muckle 1998: 7).).
This map is reprinted with permission of the publisher of *The First Nations of British Columbia* by Robert J. Muckle © University of British Columbia Press 1998. All rights reserved by the Publisher.

recordings that I digitized and formatted for my iPod Touch and iPhone. This is the experience I

want to make available to the people with my father's recording when we are both long gone!

Tāłtān Language

Tāłtān is a dialect of the 'Kaskan Language Group that is spoken by the Southwestern

Dene of Northern British Columbia, Canada (Redis, 1998 – 2011). The Kaskan language has

also been historically classified as 'Nahane (Emmons, 1911), which literally means 'People of

the north'. However, it is a term that is no longer in use (Albright, 1982) in North American

Linguistic Taxonomy. The Kaskan Language is a 'south-western dialect' of the 'Northern

Athabascan Language Family' and it is broken down into three distinct tribal dialects – Kaska,

Tāłtān and Tagish (Tagish was spoken in the southern Yukon. (See Fig 1. labeled as Taku on this

particular map). The Athabascan Language family is Native North American; its geography

reaches from as far north as what is now known as Alaska and northwestern Canada, to the

western and southwestern United States and Mexico.

> The Athapaskan language family is made up of three subgroups, which are spread
> out across North America: Northern, Pacific Coast and Apachean. The Apachean
> subgroup of languages are spoken in the southwest of the United States, while the
> Pacific Coast languages are spoken along the pacific coast of the United States. The
> Northern Athapaskan languages are spoken in the northwest of the United States and
> Canada. More specifically, the Northern Athapaskan languages are spoken in:
> interior Alaska, Northwest Territories, Yukon, interior British Columbia, northern
> Alberta, northern Saskatchewan and northern Manitoba (Bob, 1999: p. 1).

The Athabascan Language family is actually a part of the larger Na-Dene Language

Family. Na-Dene is considered to be the largest language group on the North American

continent. There are four branches within the Na-Dene Language Family (Ruhlen 1998) with

many dialects within each branch. Edward Sapir coined the term 'Na-Dene' in 1915 as a result of

his classification of the Haida language, which he claimed was an Athabascan Language

(Fitzhugh and Crowall 1988; Levine 1979). Although controversial in linguistic taxonomy of

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Sapir's day, there are more recent scholars who claim to have proven that Haida is indeed related

to the Athabascan Language family. Ruhlen (1998) defines Na-Dene below:

> The Na-Dene family has four branches, three of which are single languages spoken along the coastline of western Canada and southern Alaska (Haida, Tlingit, Eyak). The fourth branch is the Athabaskan family, spread over interior Alaska and western Canada, with outliers along the Pacific coast of Oregon and California and in the American South-west (Navajo, Apache) (Ruhlen, 1998 p. 13994).

However, the balance of opinion today seems to be that Haida is not part of the Na-Dene

language family and that the words that are similar in Tlingit, Haida and Athabaskan languages

reflect borrowings over time (Moore, 2014).

Figure 3. Northern Athabascan Dialects (Arctic Athabascan Council, 2014).

Athabascan is the Anglicized Algonquian (Cree) term for Lake Athabasca in northern Saskatchewan Canada and amidst all this taxonomical controversy and questions imposed by academics as to who we really are, and how we are to be classified (the over-all classification of who we are), we Tahltan refer to ourselves simply as 'Didene' (The

people). We refer to our language, when speaking Tãhtãn, as 'dah-zake' (our tongue's tracks, or

traces of our tongue). When making reference to the translation of foreign words we say; *Dude*

oye didene k'eh which means 'How he/she call it like the people'. In English taxonomy, we refer

to our language as Tãhtãn.

Tāłtān has what are considered to be three dialectical variations, Telegraph, Dease and the Iskut (Carter 1992; Nater 1989). However, the Dease dialect is based on whether the speakers are from Iskut or Telegraph. There is a second undocumented distinct Tāłtān variant in the community of Luwe Chōn, afore mentioned, that is referred to as the 'Me'ets'endāne Dialect'. The locals more commonly refer to the Me'ets'endāne dialect, as the 'Caribou-hide Dialect' and it may be directly related to the Sekani (according to Robert Quock 1996, Angela Dennis 2012, Loveman Nole 2012, and James Dennis 2012). Me'ets'endāne is the geographical place-name for the area in the upper Stikine watershed and it means 'to be satiated with food, or a belly totally full' – implying there is a lot of game available in the area. In reference to the Kaskan language group, Albright (1984) states that the Caribou Hide Dialect resembles Sekani and Beaver, but she does not mention and/or acknowledge the Caribou Hide dialect in the community of Luwe Chōn as being the same as Beaver or Sekani.

Figure 4. Tahltan Tribal Territories within the Over-all Tahltan Territorial Boundry as depicted in Teit's unpublished notes (Cited in Albright, 1984: 10).

Tl'abānōt'īn

Tl'abānōt'īn are the Tahltan tribe who occupied the headwater of the Spatsizi, Iskut, Skeena and Nass rivers - Tl'abānōt'īn means 'people of Tl'abāna. Tl'abāna is the geographical place-name for the upper Skeena, Nass and Spatsizi watershed and it means 'headwaters that is alpine like in geography'. In the earliest

reference to this tribe by Samuel Black (1824) he refers to them as the *Tloadenni*. The proper

pronunciation for the people of this area is *Tlōgōt'īn* and/or *Tl'ōḡdene* and it can be translated as

'Long Grass People' (Jenness, 1937; Louie 2005). The social dynamics and kinship bonds of the

tribes that occupied the upper reaches of the watersheds are tightly interwoven and one cannot

speak of the occupiers of this land without speaking of the two groups as one and thus the

Tlōgōt'īn and Tl'abānōt'īn are classified as one group in Teit and Albright's work, but they are

distinct Tahltan clans who speak a variant of the Tāłtān Language. When Black made reference

to the Tlōgōt'īn he more than likely was referring to the two groups who are interwoven through

kinship and marriage.

From an outsiders perspective, the understanding of the social structure of the Tahltan is

meager as Emmons (1911) puts it and today it seems even more so in the literature. However,

from a Tahltan perspective our traditional social structure is clearly understood and is currently

used as the foundation for our mortuary customs and adapted political structure. Drawing from

Robert Adlam (1985) and James Teit's (1956) research Albright attempts to clarify a lot of what

she refers to as 'confusion', but in regards to the Tl'abānōt'īn it seems to create more confusion.

The confusion arises from the fact that Teit classify the tribe as Tl'abānōt'īn and Thorman

classifies the tribe as *Tlōgōt'īn* (Albright 1984:11). Furthermore, in the current Tahltan Central

Council's political structure the Tl'abānōt'īn are classified as *Tsesk'iye* (Raven), but today many

of the Tl'abānōt'īn are *Ch'iyone dātsehi* (Wolf Clan). The marriage custom of the Tahltan

dictates that: should a marriage occur with a person from outside the nation (such as the

Gitxsan/Kaska etc) the newcomer must be adopted into the opposite clan of the host/spouse. In

the case of my father's matrilineal Gitxsan ancestor, she married a Tl'abānōt'īn man (Raven).

This placed her socially within the Tl'abānōt'īn tribe as a Ch'iyone (Wolf) and all her decedents

including my father (my chief informant) are Ch'iyone. The Tl'abānōt'īn and the other Tahltan

tribes (*Tālok 'ot 'īn/Talodene*) were always marrying beyond their tribal borders and as my elders

put it 'they did it to bring in new blood.'

Chapter 2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

The minimal comprehensive practical resource material that exists in the Tāłtān Language is utilized at home and in the classrooms, but it is outdated in terms of today's social media, technologies and teaching methodologies, and as mentioned above it is unsuccessful in its intent to pass on the language. Besides the interactive Tāłtān Language Lessons website (Dennis & Dennis 2012) the only published practical comprehensive texts available today for the study of the language are: 'Basic Tahltan Conversation Lessons' (Carter, 1992); 'Tahltan Children's Illustrated Dictionary' (Carter 1994); Kuji K'at Dahdahwhesdech (McIlwraith 2003); A Grammar and Dictionary of the Language Spoken by the Tahltan on the Stikine River British Columbia. (Palgrave 1902); Tahltan Native Studies (Clark, Nd). Clark and Palgrave's texts are inconsistent with the current Tahltan Orthography and the work by Palgrave appears to be quite a bit different from the Tāłtān language spoken today (it deserves further in-depth investigation). Furthermore, the content of Carter's publication and McIlwraith's "Kuji K'at Dahdahwhesdech" is inconsistent in translation and Carter's work is also full of cultural inaccuracies.

According to Tahltan Elders and concerned community members, Tahltan culture is highly misunderstood by the non-Tahltan researcher(s) and the younger generation, and the use of oral narratives and language is continually declining and being replaced by English and the visual formal learning process and today's modern digital social media.

Comprehensive Resource Material

Working within the Tahltan Language Program and as a student of the language, I realize the extent to which lacking comprehensive/pedagogical resource material has contributed to the demise of the language and how the language faces unique challenges at every level of cultural

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change and adaptation. In my literature research on the available practical resource material,

mentioned above, I noticed that much of the language was translated incorrectly (freely) and this

is particularly apparent in the 'Children's Illustrated Dictionary' developed by Carter (1992), the

'Dahdahwhesdech' produced by (McIlwraith, 2003) and the Tahltan Native Studies developed

by Karen Clark (nd). These textual materials are used as the main pedagogical language resource

and although it is valuable, in an environment where no other comprehensive literature exists, we

need material that is consistent in translation and cultural accuracy. Carter (1992/1994),

McIlwraith (2003) and Clark's (nd) fieldwork was conducted in the three Tahltan communities

with native speakers of the Tāłtān language and Carter also relied heavily on Hardwick's (1984)

research.

I use the word 'incorrectly' here very carefully and use it synonymously with 'free

translation', because in many cases the 'free translation' provided is incorrect in literal meaning

and cultural accuracy. This is no fault of the researcher; rather it is the perspective and/or use of

incorrect/free translation of the informant and/or the translator that creates the problem.

Barriers to Understanding the Language and Culture

After becoming familiar with the Tāłtān language it became clear these inconsistencies

were largely caused by the grammatical differences between English and Tāłtān, and by the

radically different cultural perspectives of the researchers and informants, most especially in the

manner in which the researcher and the informant interpreted language – visual vs. auditory /

written vs. oral. These differences, and the preconceptions brought to their studies by previous

researchers profoundly influenced the outcomes of their work, and not for the better. For

instance, in the children's dictionary Carter translates 'ya tl'ūle' as 'Rainbow', but 'ya tl'ūle'

actually means literally'Sky rope' - culturally it has nothing to do with 'bow'. In Tāłtān,

'Rainbow' would be 'Chā deṣ'an', but we don't call it rainbow we call it sky-rope and it should

be translated accurately for cultural purposes. Carter also translates 'tleyh' as 'lard' - but tleyh

actually translates as 'heated grease from animal fat'. Lard is a commercial product introduced

by the Europeans. Although it is similar when it is in the cooking pot and is perhaps the most

common form of grease used today, there is a huge cultural difference in the symbolic meaning

of 'lard' and 'heated animal fat' that must be acknowledged in any serious study of the language.

I also found the same inconsistencies in the accounts of Hale and O'Grady (1965) who worked

with Pete Henyu, my matrilineal grandfather. My field data indicate that they made serious errors

due in part to an English bias in free translations, and as a consequence of language barriers

(Standard English dialect vs. Tahltan Dialect and Tāłtan vs. English in general) and the inability

of the informant to transfer 'implicit' and 'tacit' cultural knowledge that exists within their native

language to the researcher. "However we define culture most anthropologists agree that it has to

do with those aspects of human cognition and activity that are derived from what we learn as

members of society. Keep in mind that one learns a great deal that one is never explicitly taught"

(Monaghan & Just 1:09:05-:22). In regards to the uniqueness of culture and language and the

explicit, implicit and tacit knowledge contained within a given language National Geographic

Explorer in Residence Dr. Wade Davis (2003) states:

> Language is not just a body of vocabulary, or a set of grammatical rules. Language
> is a flash of the human spirit. It is a vehicle in which each particular culture comes
> into the material world. Every language is an old growth forest of the mind, a
> watershed of thought and an eco-system of possibilities. (Davis, TED 2003, video:
> 320-339).

It wasn't until I began understanding the Tāłtān language and had developed the insight to

cross-reference words, phrases and concepts with my indigenous cultural knowledge that I was

able to truly understand Davis's statement and see the inconsistencies in the current practical resource material from this perspective.

Based on introspection, during the process of learning the language, I would say that the Tāłtān language is too complex, distinct in its grammatical structure, and culture specific to allow for a meaningful free translation into a template that is biased in favour of an English perspective too rely on free translation from an English perspective/bias. It is the very complexity of the language, its syntax and vocabulary, not to mention its culture specific points of reference, that creates barriers for researchers and all those, native and non-native alike, attempting to learn to speak Tāłtān as a second language. In regards to the cultural (implicit) differences in perspective Carter (1994. p. 190) translates "Dugi dzenes edesłige (11) eseł khaye ahuja." as "Today I'm eleven years old." This does not mean 'I am eleven years old.' In fact the phrase says nothing about getting old or being old or even having any age at all. Rather it literally says 'Today eleven winters with me occurred/happened'. Although the concept is relatively the same, there is much more to this than age. There are cultural/implicit connotations that are not being considered in the free English translation, such as the fact that our statement on our concurrence with the winter is not even one of 'survival.' We don't say 'I survived with eleven winters' from the perspective of arrogance, or complaint. Instead we say 'I occurred with eleven winters.' With winters being the harshest period in our experience on the land we use it as the reference point in our yearly cycle and ultimately as our chronological marker for our life span. This traditional cultural perspective exemplifies our co-existence with our environment, which contradicts the Euro-centric perspective on old age - a huge cultural difference in comparison. Carter also makes a mistake in the spelling (interpretation) of 'with me' in this simple sentence. He spells it as 'eseł' when the correct spelling/pronunciation is es'eł.

Furthermore, the Tāłtān language is dynamic in the sense that it lives in four dimensions and we have an object marker for 'time' and 'environment' that brings the former and the latter 'holistically together' with our conscious experience in a way that is non-existent in English. In a discussion with Ishkadi/Reginal Dennis (2014) I questioned him on whether the environment from a Tāłtān (language) perspective had a 'personality' and a 'consciousness' and he said: "Well of course it does, it goes without question. In our language I always felt that it does. It is evident in the object-markers /Ho/ and /k/ we use for our environment" (Dennis Reginald, 2014 dialogue analysis).

We use the object-marker (covered later) that he is referring to in many different ways that have no equivalent in English. If we are to translate words and phrases that are totally different in cultural meaning (tacit knowledge) and we cannot cross reference them to our first language (English), we provide incorrect translation which contributes to the barriers that are preventing our language from being learned as a second language.

Of course the work that others have carried out on our language and culture is valid and relevant to their research intentions and some of it has been useful for our oral learning practices. But ultimately, and thinking in terms of the validity of their 'anthropological ethnographic imperial presentation' it doesn't serve our purpose well. In other words, scientific linguistic knowledge, generated by poor translations and cultural inaccuracies, does little to assist us in our struggle to save our endangered language. While it is legitimate to argue that a literal translation of the Tāłtān terms is useful for language learning, there is also some utility in using a translational equivalent that is in common use in English as an index for the Tāłtān term. For example, Carter use a term like "rainbow" in the English to Tāłtān side of the dictionary because English speakers know the term, whereas they would be less likely to look under 'sky rope' (yā

tl'ūle) to find the equivalent Tāłtān expression. We know that translational equivalents aren't

really equivalent or even literal translations, they are just references that give the standard

English term. This isn't a change that Carter necessarily needs to make, but it is something to

keep in mind that different sorts of translational equivalents are used for different purposes. This

referencing of the English equivalents doesn't mean they are wrong or incorrect (or right or

correct), just used for different purposes, but what I am saying is this difference in cultural

perspective must be addressed in translation for Tahltans studying Tāłtān as a second language

for cultural accuracies.

In regard to cultural relativism Monaghan & Just (2013) write:

> Among the moral, philosophical and political consequences of the immergence of the concept of culture has been the development of a doctrine of 'cultural relativism'. We start from the premise that our beliefs, morals, behavior even our very perception of the world around us are the product of culture learned as members of the communities in which we are reared. If as we believe, the content of culture is the product of the arbitrary historical experience of a people then what we (non-Indigenous western researchers) are as social beings is also an arbitrary historical product. Because culture so deeply and broadly determines our worldview it stands to reason that we can have no objective basis for asserting that one such worldview is superior to another, or that one worldview can be used as the yardstick to measure another. In this sense cultures can only be judged relative to one another and the meaning of a given belief for behavior must first and foremost be understood relative to its own cultural context. That in a nut shell is the basis to what has become to be called 'cultural relativism.' It is important to understand that many anthropologists, especially in the United States, regard 'relativism' not as a dogma, or an ideological desideratum, but at heart as an empirical finding. This has been most prominently expressed in the work of the anthropological linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf who use linguistic data to show categories such as time, space and number are given in different ways by different languages. Leading Sapir to state; that in learning language we learn a world. Thus, when reporting on a cloud burst speakers of English are likely to say 'it is raining', but what is the 'it' that is raining? We say 'it is raining' because we are predisposed by our language to think of events in the world in terms of direct effects of specific causes. In contrast an Indonesian would report 'adahodgen' (there is rain). Rather than cause and effect, the Indonesian expression predisposes its speakers towards seeing the world as flowing together of things and events. (Monaghan & Just 2013. Audiobook 1:41:50 -1:44:17)

Similarly, in Tāłtān we say 'Cha nadetl'īt' and Carter (1994) translates this phrase as 'it's raining'. When pressed on why (cause and effect) it was raining so hard during a thunderstorm my informant (father) reported "E diji k'indetah ya-tū ishjilt yekat'e łan chā nadetl'īt (The thunder bird fly around and tore up the sky-water that's why the rain is really falling/dumping etc) - a whole different worldview on 'raining' and the 'cause and effect' of raining. Monaghan and Just (2013) go on to say that "taking to an extreme the view of relativism that consigns the members of different cultures to utterly different worlds would make all translation impossible including the translation performed in ethnography" (Monaghan & Just 2013,1:41:18 -1:44:31). But that is not what I am saying, rather I am saying that care must be taken in the pedagogical presentation of research done on our endangered language. More specifically translations should be accurate to the way we use our language in our culture. More specifically we should be using literal translation rather than free translation that adds verbs like "are" 'am' and "does" in a way they are not used in Tāłtān. Furthermore, Tāłtān and English grammar are completely different and free translation does not transmit our language accurately.

In McIlwraith's (2003) text publication there are many misleading translations. The first is in the title – it is transcribed as "Kuji K'at Dahdahwhesdech" whereas it should be transcribed as 'Kuji K'at Dah Dah-dodesdech', which is translated as '*Now, already about, you* (plural) I told' (meaning, 'Now, I already told you (plural) about it'). In the title the word '*Dah*' (about) and the pronoun '*Dah-*' (you plural) are transcribed as being connected, but they are actually separate words in Tāłtān.

Also within the text of Track 13: 'Naghādene' (Interlinear Translation) (Kuji K'at Dahdahdowesdech 2003) there are many incorrect translations. For example the second sentence is translated as:

'E   nagha   denezā' ts'ih łige edone iht'īnh'.
'That wolverine person from   one boy   got from/born to'

but there are major mistakes in the translation. First of all, *'denezā'* does not mean person it

means 'man'. Secondly, Robert Quock didn't say *'ts'ih'* (from), rather he said *'tseh' (before)* and

'tseh' is a contraction (covered on p: 88) of the word *'khas·tseh'* (before). This is evident in the

audio 13: Nagha Dene (Interlinear Translation) (2003) where Robert's wife Jenny translates the

language accurately. Thirdly, *'edone'* doesn't mean 'boy' it means 'child' and fourthly, *'iht'īnh'*

does not mean *'got from/born to'* it means 'she have/has'. (Although Tāłtān does not have

gender specifics I use *'she'* here, because it is a given that we are talking about a woman. Even

though we don't have gender specifics in Tāłtān when I refer to a woman (in the 3rd person) I

translate it in my head as gender specific, because I am still coming from an English bias and I

can't get past this habit). Below is the correct translation:

'E   nagha   denezā' tseh łige edone iht'īnh'.
'That wolverine man   before one child she have' (She had one child before the wolverine man).

This fact is further supported later in the story when the child in question refers to Nagha

Dene as *'es-lah'* (in-law). In Tāłtān one refers to a step parent in this term, because in essence the

step parent is married to a relative and technically/biologically is not a parent. This reflects the

Tāłtān language/traditional worldveiw.

There are many mistakes made in this work (by the translators) and, although it is a

valuable piece for the advanced student, it took some major work for me to make sense of this

piece as a second language speaker.

Cultural Knowledge

My indigenous (tacit) cultural knowledge provided me with insight into a world beyond what the average non-Tahltan researcher was able to see and I believe it is this knowledge that makes my analysis and interpretation so much more dynamic in understanding my indigenous language.

In some respects, linguists and other experts can and have scientifically deconstructed and analyzed our language, from an academic linguistic (prescriptive) perspective with great success and it is much appreciated, but from a practical viewpoint their practical knowledge is somewhat handicapped by 'cross-cultural barriers'. I on the other hand have been raised in the community of Łuwe Chōn and Tlegō'īn British Columbia with my grandparents (Elders), including my great grandfather Pete Henyu (Hale and O'Grady 1965), who learned English orally as a second language and this gives me an advantage in understanding the cultural context in which Tāłtān and English co-exist.

This privilege gives me a deep understanding of how our ancestors applied Tahltan cultural concepts and Tāłtān linguistic and grammatical rules to English in the process of learning it as a second language and thus creating a distinct Iskut and Telegraph English dialect, which I speak and understand alongside the standard Canadian English dialect.

It is this overall understanding that contributed to my colleagues (Ishkadi and Tl'ō'oks) and me breaking through the conflicting barriers so we are the first to independently learn our language as a second language. (I use colleagues in the sense that there is a group of us who studied and learned the language independent of one another following a similar methodology and we are the first to learn the language as a second language – this groups us together). I must add that even with this in-depth cultural knowledge, the cultural generation gap between our

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informant(s) and us was/is a huge problem since the Elders weren't/aren't able to transmit the literal meaning of the utterances to us the majority of the time. Once I caught onto the language it was very apparent that even the simplest translations were incorrect many times and in my recorded data there are many times when I would correct the mistakes in simple translation.

Written vs. Oral Differences

When questioned on the literal meaning of words and phrases our informants were unable to understand our questions. I speculate the misunderstanding is due to differences in the way we interpret language. The Tāłtān native speakers learned the language orally (without writing) and they have been trying to teach students (myself included) who are adapted to the western formal visual learning process from an oral perspective (which is not dependent upon writing) and the two are incompatible. As a result of their mode of learning (oral) my teacher and his compatriots do not visualize language in the same way in which I did, and I was asking them questions about the structure of the language from my visual writing perspective. They simply could not grasp the questions or transmit their implicit and/or tacit knowledge in a way that I could understand because of the two different ways of knowing.

It appeared that our informants (Elderly native speakers in general) were not able to visualize language the way we (those adapted to the formal learning process) visualized language (in writing), because of the cultural differences in the way we learned language (in the western formal setting) as opposed to how they learned it (through living it and observation and the oral tradition). Our informants/teachers were merely astonished at the simple questions I asked in regards to the literal meaning of the syllables (morphemes) that made up the phrases they were teaching (which were based on my ability to see language in writing). For example, when I

asked; "What does the /ēs/ in the word dēsaɬ mean?" they could not understand the question. (Dēsaɬ means "I'm gonna walk" and /ēs/ is the 1ˢᵗ person future tense – "I am gonna"). It was as though they couldn't see the language.

I further tested this by informally addressing the questions that I wanted answered in regard to language structure, and my informant(s) could never visualize the language for its individual parts. Sometimes they went so far as to laugh and shake their heads in utter amazement at what they considered very stupid questions and they told me so. It took over fifteen months before I finally made a breakthrough in getting them to understand what I was asking.

By the time they began understanding the visual questions I was seeking answers to (after fifteen months) I already had a fair understanding of the structure and in-depth meaning of the language and I was able to demonstrate to them what individual parts (phonemes and morphemes) of the phrases meant. (A phoneme is a basic unit of a language's phonology, which is combined with other phonemes to form meaningful units such as words or morphemes – in Tāɬtan both carry meaning within the phrase). Their ultimate understanding of our questions, in respect to the literal meaning of the phrases, came about by accident. In this regard here is an anecdote worth mentioning: One afternoon while my colleagues and I were having tea with our informants Loveman Nole (their Grandfather) and James Dennis (my father) I held up the tea pot to my father (James) and asked "Yan-tea?" which means, in the Iskut English dialect: "Do you want tea?" He said yes and I followed up by asking him if he heard what I said and he replied, "You ask if I want tea." I then said, " No, I said – Yan tea" and I proceeded to write it on a white board to demonstrate the Iskut English dialect. When I wrote the phrase Loveman looked at it and said, "It mean 'take it inside", and he translated the phrase according to its morphemic

components. I then explained to them that they just answered the question I have been asking for fifteen months. To be clear /yanti/ (take it inside the dwelling) has nothing to do with 'wanting tea'. Rather, 'yan-tea?' is the Iskut English dialect for 'Do you want tea?' they sound the same, but carry different meanings in the two languages.

The Iskut English Dialect

In the community of Iskut there is a distinct English dialect that is spoken as a first dialect by most of the people in the community. Some could switch between the standard Canadian dialect and the Iskut dialect, but the elders know this dialect as their first and only form of speaking English. Prior to the imposed western formal education system my ancestors learned English orally as a second language and in the process they applied the grammatical structure (object, subject, verb) and linguistic characteristic (rules) of their indigenous language to English. They passed on this distinct form of speaking English to their descendants (Iskut Elders) and they in-turn passed this dialect down to the subsequent generations.

For instance in Iskut it is not uncommon to hear the older generation(s) rearranging the grammatical structure of English and applying linguistic characteristics of their first language to sentences in this way:

1. Standard English: Who are you talking to?

2. Iskut English: Who to you talk? (Who are you talking to?)

3. Tāłtān: Me ts'odīnde (Who to you talk?).

As you can see the Iskut dialect (example 2) is the literal grammatical translation of the Tāłtān language (example 3). Furthermore, in Tāłtān there is a tendency to drop syllables (contraction) from words when forming sentences and the same tendency applies when we speak

the Iskut English dialect as example 2 demonstrates, albeit in this particular case we drop whole words rather than just syllables as we do in Tāłtān (that's because in Tāłtān morphemes are equivalent to English words). In Tāłtan we can reconstruct the sentence using the full words like this: Mēda ts'i' ho-dīnde (Who to you talk?). However, when we place it into context:

1. we drop the /da/ from the word /meda/ (who).

2. Then we drop the two articulations (vowel and glottal) from the word /ts'i'/ (to) resulting in /ts'/.

3. Then we drop the /h/ from the verb-phrase /ho-dīnde/ (You are talking)

4. and overall we come up with: Me ts'odīnde (Who to you talk?).

As a fluent speaker of the Tāłtān language you must learn how to drop articulation and/or syllables (contraction) from phrases to bring rhythm to your speech.

Our ancestors applied other linguistic rules to English words when adopting these words into the Tāłtān language and the Iskut English dialect. For instance in Tāłtān, three (3) consonant clusters are not tolerated (Nater, 1989) when the cluster follows a long vowel. (They are tolerated following a short vowel – dis̲ts'et = I fall/fell). This rule applies when we use the Tāłtān adapted word /partner/. When we use this word either in English and/or Tāłtān the intolerance rule is triggered and we come up with the Tāłtān adapted word /pāne/. In this case the first thing we do is elongate the letter /a/. This triggers the intolerance and we drop the central articulation /t/ from the word medial cluster. Then we drop the /r/ from the middle and the end of the word, because the /r/ is non-existent in our language and we end up with the word /pāne/ which means friend. We also alter English phrases by turning them into word-phrase when speaking the Iskut dialect. For instance, we change the phrase 'On account of' to 'Onnacana' and retain the same English meaning. We also change 'I am going to go to' to 'Um-gōn-go' etc.

In Iskut there are many example of English words and phrases that have been adapted to the dialect following rules from the Tāłtān language and the above are merely a few examples to get the point across.

Objective

In Tāłtān there are no single verbs or adjectives per se, rather in Tāłtān verbs and adjectives are contained in what is referred to as word-phrases. In linguistics they are referred to as verb-phrases. Verb-phrase is a morphologically complex word, because they can be built on many words (adjective, nouns etc) and are not necessarily restricted to verbs. The verb-phrase in Tāłtān can be made up of object, prefix, prefix aspect, tense, subject and stem and/or classifier. Below is an example of a transitive verb-phrase, which is built on a noun, broken down (morphemically) to demonstrate its literal meaning.

This particular verb-phrase literally means: 'I am gonna tie them together with a rope', but it was translated as "I'm gonna tie them together" by my informant. Although this appears to be fine, there are subtleties that could be missed if one didn't take into account that the phrase was built in a time when 'hide ropes' were the only form of cordage available. In today's world we could 'tie' with electrical cords, extension cords, stripped plastic, stripped cloth etc., and many different types of rope like things. If we didn't know that rope was built into this word-phrase we could mistakenly use it in the wrong situation. I also use the English verb-phrase/slang 'gonna', because in Tāłtān we cannot use 'going to do'. In Tāłtān, 'going to' would imply that one was traveling from point A to B - therefore I can't say 'I am going to tie.' In some cases Tāłtān verb-phrases are very specific.

Ken·le·hu·dĕs·tl'utl

Tie   together   them   I'm gonna   rope
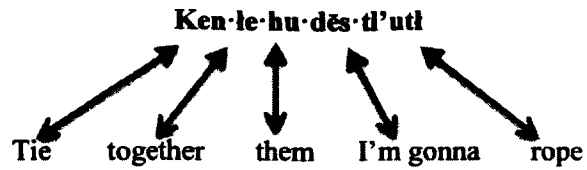
Ken - to tie

le - from the word **le·dū** meaning to come together or join

hu – 3rd person, plural and the object (The ones being tied)

Dĕs – 1st person, future tense, singular and subject (One who's gonna do the tying)

Tl'utl – Rope (noun) the material that is used to tie with.

I describe later how I used digital media to record my father speaking the language and how that led to my appreciation of the structure and deep ecological foundation of our language.

First I describe what had been recorded about our language to date.

Chapter 3. METHODOLOGY

I began re-studying the Tāłtān language orally in the Tāłtān community of Łuwe Chōn (Iskut British Columbia) on September 01, 2011 within the paradigm of an Indigenous methodology. I use indigenous methodology in this particular case to mean: indigenous knowledge with specific contextual knowledge assumptions emerging from a particular tribal knowledge base. As a fellow Tahltan, I use it in parallel with Thompson's (2008) definition as she defines her research as: "incorporating an Indigenous methodology, as shared among many Indigenous peoples" (as cited in Margaret Kovach, 2010), but based upon the contextual specifics of her Tahltan tradition.

However, I take it bit further in the sense that my study of the language (fieldwork), with my father was very specific - I followed the cultural specifics of our 'oral tradition' and did all my fieldwork and analysis without writing.

Oral Tradition

I began my study of the Tāłtān language with the full understanding that we (Tahltan) have adapted to the visual learning methodology of the formal education system, which is dependent on writing, but I believed I could take the oral teaching method used by my father (informant) and combine it with writing (thesis/pedagogical material) in a way that would pay homage to our oral tradition, in this modern era, using modern technology.

I use the term 'oral' in this particular context to mean: not being transmitted in written form. In regards to the traditional teaching methodology of the Tahltan Teit (1912-1915) writes:

> Children learned through observation and were also taught by their elders. Mothers generally taught their girls and the maternal uncles were chief instructors of the boys. Some fathers, however, did considerable teaching of their sons.

However, very little serious [formal] teaching was done until children reach the age of puberty. The fathers, mothers, uncles sometimes lectured the children on behavior etc., and gave them information generally in answers to questions. (Teit, 1912-1915. P.111-112)

Tāłtān, like all Na-Dene languages, is an oral language transmitted from one generation to

the next by verbal communication and my main informant James Dennis (my father) who was

born in 1934, spent his first twenty years as a nomadic hunter in a Sub-Arctic environment. He

learned Tāłtān and English traditionally and simultaneously - he learned to speak both languages

without writing and/or any form of grammatical knowledge from an academic written

perspective and his method of teaching the language followed his oral tradition. The term

'tradition' is used in this particular context to mean:

Culture as a whole; any established way of doing things whether or not of any antiquity; the process of handing down practice, ideas or values; the products so handed down, sometimes with the connotation of being 'old' or having arisen on some sense 'natural' and non-polemical. (Finnegan, 1992. p. 37)

Thus, I use the term 'Oral Tradition' in a historical non-theoretical sense to mean: any kind

of unwritten tradition passed down for thousands of years from one generation to the next

through demonstration and/or through word-of-mouth. I use this definition due to the fact that

the Tāłtān language had no form of writing prior to the development of the Tāłtān Orthography

by Leer (1985) and Carter (1991). (See Appendix 1 for Tāłtān Orthography).

Prior to the introduction of writing, brought to us by our colonizers, children were not

formally educated (reading and writing) as we understand the process today, rather all teaching

was carried out either through verbal communication (explicit), intuition (tacit) and/or participant

observation (implicit) (Emmons, 1911). I choose oral methodology, because:

1. It was my informants natural way to teach and my traditional way to learn

2. I wanted to practice and preserve our tradition and

3. I wanted to find an interface between the formal (contemporary) and oral (traditional) ways of knowing and combine it with modern digital technology.

Being true to our oral tradition, I did not take any written notes throughout the process of my research and study of the language, rather all my cultural, linguistic and comprehensive knowledge of the Tāłtān language was acquired through our oral tradition and for this academic writing it is drawn from introspection and memory. (It's important to note here, during my undergraduate and graduate course work I never took notes at class lectures and seminars since I found taking notes was a distraction).

Traditional Tahltan Worldview

All cultures, or people within various cultures, perceive and conceptualize their environment from a specific perspective. This perspective is usually referred to as their worldview. The worldview can be conceptualized as very closely corresponding to the definitions of culture and cognitive map. A worldview is made up of the principles we amass to make sense of everything around us - our world. The young people of any particular generation/culture learned these principles through specific means, which include, traditions, customs, values, legends, stories, myths, family, community, and examples set by community adults and leaders (Kawagley, 1995). Once a worldview has been established the individual is able to identify him or herself as a part of a unique group of a collective consciousness. Thus, the worldview permits the possessors to make sense of their surroundings, fashion artifacts to fit this surrounding, generate behavior, and understand their experiences within their universe.

The worldview is a collection of coping skills, or devices that may or may not work depending on the situation, or it may have been effective in the past but not in the present, or the

present worldview may be imposed and thus, conflict with traditional worldviews creating conflict and chaos.

Although worldviews consist of a complex interaction between various aspects of culture, my focus here is on the role our traditional worldview played in my oral study of the language. More specifically, I am focusing on how the traditional oral characteristics of the Tahltan worldview still exists and how it shapes our social interaction and my study of my indigenous language.

Respect and Peaceful Co-existence: Its Impact on How to Say What You Say

There is great diversity among indigenous peoples of North America; there are broad ranges of customs in the social and political realms, a complex variety of spiritual beliefs as well as hundreds of languages.

> Nevertheless, we share a common bond that make it possible to speak of a 'Native American' political tradition: commitment to a profoundly respectful way of governing, based on a worldview that balances respect for autonomy with recognition of a universal interdependency, that promotes peaceful coexistence among all the elements of creation. There may be 500 different ways of expressing these values, but in our singular commitment to them we find what is perhaps the only pan-Indian commonality. (Alfred, 1999: xvi)

The Tahltan are no exception. In describing the Tahltan, Emmons (1911) wrote:

> Honesty is so characteristic of the nature of the Tahltan that they do not look upon it as a virtue, they are mild and peaceful, few White men who hunt with them, leave them without the deepest appreciation of their many excellent traits of character. (Emmons, 1911:26).

Regardless of the vast cultural differences and geographic space between the Tahltan of the west and the Kanien'kehaka (Mohawk) of the east, we both share the concepts and process of what the Kanien'kehaka call 'the Kaienerekowa - the great law of peace' (Alfred, 1999: xvi), and what the Tāłtān call āh'i: when referring to behavior and activities that push or break the

boundaries of the profound respectful way of governing ones every day existence in relations to others and their surroundings.

One of the most profound phenomena that exists in the Tāłtān language has to do with regard to ones emotions and/or state. In Tāłtān it is a given that a person can never know another's emotions, or general state of being. One of the most profound things we observed in our study was/is that our informants have a psychological barrier that prevents them from infringing upon another even in the slightest manner - it surfaced when we were working on adjective forms. For instance when we asked our informants to say 'I am tired' they would say it as a statement, but when we asked them to say 'you are tired' they would say it, but they would pose it as a question. No matter how we rephrased our request to have them simply state 'you are tired' they would say it as a question. This occurred when we asked them to say you are sleepy, you are angry, you are happy etc., it would always be posed as a question. I have become accustomed to this phenomenon and I work with and around it. You can make direct statements such as 'ejidīndatł (you are gonna hunt) etc. if he/she is going hunting and that's fine. You could make the statement directly even if he/she is not going hunting. It's ok to make this assumption, but you cannot make an assumption about anothers emotions or state of being, because technically no one can know anothers emotion and/or state. For instance I can look at someone and see that technically his brow is hanging low in what I can assume is worry, but I cannot really say with certainty that this is the case. It could be loneliness, fear or just plain concentration etc. This asking about someone's state by our informants seems different and culturely deeper. It is not a subjunctive. A subjective in English would be "I suggest you be careful." This not the same thing. We attribute these phenomena to the fact that coexistence was such a major part of the lifestyle that infringing on

another was strictly forbidden. When pressed on why they would not say it except as a question, it was as though they did not understand the inquiry. These values play a fundamental role in relationships I developed with my informant(s) and my community.

My Tahltan Perspective Framework

Traditionally, the Tahltan were a nomadic people, and their lives, like everything around them, holistically revolved around the ebb and flow of the Sub-arctic seasons. Their educational modality was carefully developed around history, oral traditions, mythology, the observation of natural processes, plants, animals, styles of subsistence and the use of natural materials to make tools. Like most indigenous people they sought a respectful, harmonious, cyclical integration with their environment and all life, including the natural, human and spiritual realms. All of this was made conceivable through stories and illustrative examples, which influenced the development of an elaborate subsistence-based worldview with specific cultural guidelines regarding the ways in which the person is to relate to the world. Emmons (1911) states that history, legends, myths and stories were generally known to all, but they were specifically the domain of certain elders who taught them to children about the fires at night. A few days later when the children were asked to recite the stories; the most adept students were chosen and given a thorough education as keepers of the oral history and narratives. Although this is true of the history and some of the oral narratives, everyone was educated by observing and through specific oral narratives that were recited whenever the need arose. Thus, all Tahltan were familiar with the oral mythology that shaped their morals and ethics and all were connected through a collective holistic consciousness that influenced their way of knowing, their way of doing and being, their collective action and their relationship with the environment.

In regards to the social interaction between indigenous people living within the boundaries of extreme climate variations Brian Fagon (2010) states:

> Hunting, gathering plants, fishing and every other activity, even gathering firewood was part of a multi-tasking, which could not only save a life, but also sometimes bring extra food to the table. The food quest for historic northern societies was no mechanistic [reductionist] process, nor would it have been for a Cro-Magnon band. Working in the field required both ingenuity and improvisation. Repairs to weapons were a constant reality. Re-lashing an antler spear point, sharpening a flint knife, cutting a new wooden shaft from a nearby tree at a moment's notice, these were routine tasks. Beyond regular fixes, everyone relied on an ability to improvise inculcated into them from birth. The classic and off-quoted example is that of Arctic hunters who have been known to use frozen meat to replace sled runners, or even serve as a complete emergency sledge. All the resources of the natural environment were to hand. Solution to even quite complex problems came from a flexible, can-do mindset when there were no limits or conventions. No one worked alone, for cooperation when hunting, plant gathering or traveling was fundamental to Cro-magnon life just as it had been in every Arctic society. Everyone labored together and helped one another even with the most trivial tasks. Not for the asking of thanks, but because the entire fabric of life was based on reciprocity - mutual obligation. Everyone shared the spoils of a hunt and cooperated in an emergency. This ability to cooperate was essential in a high-risk environment where reacting well to sudden temperature shifts could mean the difference between life and death. All of these qualities would have served the Cro-Magnon's well in a world where climate change was often rapid, winters were severe and periods of warmth and abundance were usually short. (Fagon, 2010. Audiobook, Chapter 8. 42:40 – 44:35).

As children growing up in a Tahltan community rooted in tradition, we were taught to adhere to the can-do-mindset, multi-tasking, ingenuity, improvisation and the morals and deeper meanings of these qualities. Through the oral narratives which were associated with everything that we did we were taught to be just as careful in thought as well as action, so as not to injure another person, animal, the natural world, or disturb the spiritual realm. In hunting, trapping and fishing we were taught to abide by specific ethical guidelines. We were taught not to think negatively about anyone, animal and/or anything, because thinking was an essential component of the manifested reality and should we think negatively it could result in negative consequences.

We were taught the universe was an extension of our mind and vise-versa and it was a holistic power that must be respected. The relationship between the so-called external world and the internal psyche is a continuous seamless process and it is reflected in our language (this is covered below p: 34). We were taught never to make negative gestures towards another, be it plant, animal or person, especially animals, for we were so closely related that transformation between animals and humans were common occurrences.

As children, our behavior was always monitored, whether positive or negative there was always an adult, an older sibling, or peer there to remind us that this was either out of line, or good behavior and it would be followed with a story reaffirming these points. As we were being educated, everything had a story to back it up and it served its purpose in shaping our perspective in relations to our education, society and environment. The account that I give below ~~immediately~~ shows how my grandfather took me out for the day, away from my grandmother and all other distractions, to ground me in my universe.

As an eight year old, I can recall walking along the beach in the early morning fog of Eddontenajon Lake with my grandfather. Eddontenajon is nestled securely in the Iskut Valley at the headwaters of the Iskut River near our community. My purpose for being there was to spend time with my grandfather and his purpose was to educate me.

After walking for a couple of hours we ended up at a huge boulder with a small spruce tree growing in a slight depression on top of the boulder. He found a comfortable place to sit and he gestured for me to sit beside him. After catching his breath he began in English. "You see this rock? We call it little boy rock (esk'iye tsedle tsehi). We call it that because a long time ago a little boy lived in our village. This little boy lost both his parents and although the people treated him special he couldn't recover from his grief. So he came here and entered the water. He dove

into the water here," he said pointing to an area in the water near the rock. "When he surfaced he had transformed into a black bird that looks like the raven. You see this rock with the tree growing on it? The tree represents the little boy. That is why we call it 'Little Boy Rock.' And this lake, we call it 'Eddontenajon'. It means 'A child's trail here, or a child went here and left a trace'. It refers to this location where the boy entered the water. The bird that he transformed into, we call 'Tū Tsey' which means 'water cry'. You see we call him that, because the bird cries for two reasons. The first being that he never recovered from the loss of his parents and the second is he can't get lift-off in flight without a gust of wind assisting him so he cries for wind. One day Tū Tsey was swimming about hunting for fish when Raven came by and said to him. "You and I look practically identical, what say I paint you real beautiful and you do the same for me?" Tū Tsey couldn't be bothered and refused, but Raven was persistent. Finally, Tū Tsey gave in and said "Ok, but you must paint me first." Raven proceeded to paint Tū Tsey and when he was done he instructed Tū Tsey to look at his reflection in the water. Tū Tsey went to the water's edge and peered in. He was beautiful, his eyes were a piercing red and his body was covered with beautiful white spots like the snow spots on that mountain," said my grandfather pointing at the huge mountain across the lake from where we sat. "Then raven said, 'Ok it's your turn to paint me.' Tū Tsey began painting Raven and he did an excellent job, even better than what Raven had done for him. When he was done he instructed Raven to go to the water's edge and look at himself. Raven did as instructed, but instead of being pleased he was disappointed and demanded that Tū Tsey repaint him. He did this three times and finally Tū Tsey became frustrated and took the black paint and spilled it over Raven's body from head-to-toe and he ran to the water and swam off. When Raven looked at himself he was real angry and began cursing Tū Tsey. He looked up and saw Tū Tsey laughing and said 'For this you will never be able to

walk on dry land. Your legs will always be set so far back that you will never be able to use it as I do.' To this day Tū Tsey cannot walk on land and he cannot run on the water like the other waterfowl. Rather he needs wind for up-lift when taking off in flight. That's why when you hear Tū Tsey crying across the lake, he is crying for wind and/or he is crying for his parents. And you see that mountain with the white snow spots running along its flank with the two pillars jutting upwards into the sky? Well the pillars are Tū Tsey's beak. We call that mountain Tū Tsey gudah, which means Tū Tsey's beak. You see all of this," he said as he swung his hand across the expanse of our field of vision, "Dah-nenhe łani koneline (our land is very desirable/beautiful). The water, the mountains, the rocks, the animals, the trees and you, are all one, we are all one."

This sense of place is extraordinarily powerful whereas features of our landscape are named to encode stories with powerful moral lessons. It's stories like these that shaped my traditional holistic perspective and today, for example, when I hear the term 'Tu Tsey', visual images that were developed in me as a boy of the fog on the lake, the rock, the name of the lake, the legend of the boy, the story of the birds painting one another, the mountain (Tū Tsey Gudah) that dominates our community and the eerie sound of Tū Tsey (water-cry) flashes through my mind and I relate to the creature and the land on an intimate holistic animate level that can never be captured when I use the simple English term for the bird, which is 'Loon'. Rather when I hear or say 'Loon' I see the bird and the word 'loon' type-written in black font from a reductionist perspective that classifies birds to stand alone - a perspective that separates me from the whole.

From a Tahltan perspective, everything is endowed with life whether it is of flesh and blood or not. That is why in Tāłtān we have a pronoun for the environment/universe which is represented by the articulation /k/ (pronouns are marked in blue font covered later). In Tāłtān when we say desirable/beautiful we say 'oneline' (it's desirable/beautiful), but when we refer to

ourselves and/or others as desirable/beautiful we add the personal pronouns /s/ and /n/ and we

say 'sone·line' (I'm desirable), or 'noneline' (you're desirable). When we make reference to the

land in this context we say "dah-nenhe koneline" (our land is beautiful). We give the land a

personal pronoun that is equal to ours (people) because, in our traditional worldview, we look

upon our universe as a living, breathing entity that has a vibrant personality, which is reflected in

the various weather conditions, seasons and cosmos. Furthermore, the environment is an

extension of our being, in which our conscious mind is merely a servant. This concept is best

expressed in the expression "Es-dih yige koneline" (Under my conscious mind my cognitive

landscape is beautiful). The significance of this expression is; we use the personal pronoun

subject-marker /k/ to describe the beauty of our sub-conscious cognitive landscape as if it were

separate from us, and a holistic part of the physical landscape upon which we walk. The

difference in reference to our minds in this regard is that when we normally refer to our other

body parts we use the possessives. The personal pronoun /k/ is usually restricted to the use with

the environment. However, from a holistic perspective we also use it to describe the contents

(cognitive landscape) of our being.

There is a close relationship between our natural environment and the contours of our mind

that's steeped in holism. No one who understands our relationship with the universe can doubt

the complexity and sophistication of the perspective framework from which we approach our

universe. This dramatic perspective adds a totally different element to our traditional existence

that differs quite drastically from the western perspective in which I am writing. Our imagination

and our beliefs that we live out in our lives surrounded by the living forces of the supernatural

world in the midst of a landscape imbued by spiritual holism profoundly shaped my universal

outlook and it is from this continued perspective (traditional oral methodology) framework that I carried out my study of the language and did my "fieldwork" with my father/teacher.

Chapter 4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

The research for this project covered two phases: The first phase required that I learn to speak Tāłtān as a second language and the second phase involved the research that I completed to write my thesis. To learn the language I studied using the conversational method with my informant/father in the Tahltan community of Luwe Chōn (Iskut).

The investigation to compile the information I needed to complete the second phase of my research stemmed from both primary and secondary research in a qualitative format. The primary source includes the digital data recorded during my fieldwork; and the comprehensive pedagogical knowledge I developed during the process of learning the language (in the first phase of the project).

The secondary source includes archival data (church records, log books, reports, diaries), unpublished linguistic data and audio taped linguistic material that were collected and prepared by other ethnographers going back in time as far as Teit's wax cylinder recordings of 1912. The secondary sources also included sample linguistic teaching material from other Na-Dene languages such as 'The Navajo Verb' (Falz 1998) and other online sources that I came across over the years that helped me gain a further understanding of the basic pedagogical principles of the Na-Dene Language structure.

Data Collection Techniques

When I returned to the study of my Indigenous language it was exciting for me to learn that the digital Apple technology had advanced to the point where I could utilize current digital technology (IPod Touch, iPhone, iPad) and various digital applications (iTunes, iBook Author)

in both field research, analysis and the presentation of my final results as a medium to learn the language and to teach the language to second language studiers. Furthermore, the technology simplified my fieldwork and language learning process.

With the Apple iPod Touch, iPhone and the kendiTech Voice Memo and iTunes application, I felt that for the first time I had the technology in one gadget, at my finger tips, to capture our language, study it and present it in a format that could teach our language inside and outside of the classroom while utilizing the simplicity of the social digital media (Facebook) that was a part of our everyday social experience. What was even more profound, we carried the technology in our pockets for other reasons beyond research and/or studying. Therefore, I decided to use the iPod touch and/or iPhone in the recording of my field data. I used it in the study of my language and ultimately I will use it to teach the language.

The Apple iPod touch and iPhone are the portable devices that I carry, personally, for communication (phone) and/or to access the Internet (Facebook, podcasts, eBooks, YouTube etc.). I also use it as my camera and my music library so it was only natural that I used either one of these devices to record my everyday interaction with my informant.

As a non-speaker of the Taltan Language my first job was to learn the language. I decided the best and least invasive way to gather linguistic data, to study, was to live in the same household with my informant/teacher and use the most portable device I had at my disposal. Therefore, I moved into my father's (informant's) home and spent many hours asking him to 'repeat' in Taltan the English words, phrases and sentences we were using on a daily basis. I digitally recorded the data with the Apple iPod Touch and/or the iPhone, using the 'Voice Memo' app developed by KendiTech, over a period of twenty-two months. (Today I continue to live with my informant/father and my research and digital recording and archiving of the

language is ongoing). With this method I recorded and learned the core conversational pieces associated with everything that we did on a daily basis on the reserve in northern British Columbia. Before I began this process I understood some of the language but I was not a speaker. Therefore, my (our) informant(s), my colleagues and I validated the linguistic data that follows through dialogue analysis.

Technology and the Speech Environment

In the community of Iskut, where I did my research, the language is seldom used. Even at elders' gatherings the language is spoken rarely. When it is used it is interspersed with English with English being the dominant language.

To learn a language one must develop both the 'speech production' and the 'speech recognition' of the broca's area in the brain. In the twenty-eight months that I studied the language I never heard a full conversation in the Tāłtān language. Even my informant/teacher(s) never spoke Tāłtān in our daily conversations. As mentioned above my dad spoke English and I asked him to repeat the words, phrases and sentences in Tāłtān so I could record Tāłtān and the loose English translation simultaneously. Even today, when I speak Tāłtān, my informant only responds in English - our conversations are always carried out with me speaking Tāłtān and my informant responding in English. However, this is not to say that full conversation doesn't happen in the home and I covered all areas of interaction between native speakers. There are a couple of women (teachers) who use the language in public most of the time with each other and there are elderly couples that use the language a huge percentage of the time in their homes. The fact is, as a researcher and a second language learner, I never had the opportunity to interact with all the speakers on a regular basis, because I rarely saw them in the same place at the same time.

When I saw them at gatherings they spoke English the majority of the time even when I spoke to them in Tāłtān. Without a speech environment, my 'speech production' and 'speech recognition' became grossly unbalanced. (This is also true of the other students who are studying the language).

Learning language is a natural process for a child, but learning to speak a second language after puberty and as an adult is a learning adaptation that requires the physiological rewiring of specific areas of the brain. Language is very complicated and it involves everything from hand and body gestures to facial expressions, but the aspects mostly involved are the 'Speech production' and 'word recognition' (broca's) areas of the brain. It is these particular areas that we need to develop (rewire) in the process of learning to speak Tāłtān fluently as a second language. These areas develop independently of each other and an individual can lag behind in one area depending on the situation he or she finds themselves in. That is why, in reference to a second language, you can sometimes hear a person say: "I can understand it, but I can't speak the language." What they are actually making reference to, on a cognitive level, is that they have one area (speech production) under-developed and the other area (word recognition) over-developed in comparison. (My mother understands Tāłtān, but does not speak fluently. She is currently an advanced student of the language and we assist each other in our study).

To communicate fluently in a particular language one needs to develop both 'speech production' and 'speech recognition' and in an environment where we were learning to produce speech, by studying the digital recordings, but was not hearing the language being spoken in its natural setting our 'speech recognition' suffered and even the simplest words that we learned to produce was difficult to understand when spoken. I remedied the problem by creating an artificial speech environment that was compatible with the modern digital Apple gadgets

mentioned above.

To do this, I took all my digitally recorded data (thousands of words combined as phrases and sentences) and:

1. Transferred it to the Roland CD-2*i* SD/CD digital recorder in the sequence according to the chronological order in which I recorded it,

2. Burned a copy to Compact Disc (CD) and archived it for future reference,

3. Edited the raw data down to only the sound bites of the Tāłtān and English translation and segmented the sound bite (entries) into memos of thirty-five entries each (I called the thirty-five word segment 'memos' because I recorded the language using the Voice Memo app),

4. Formatted it in mp4,

5. Burned the edited version(s) to Compact Disc (archived the hard copies),

6. Uploaded it to iTunes on my Mac desktop computer and archived the entire data on computers and iCloud.

7. From my desktop computer/iTunes, I downloaded the data to the iTunes app on my mobile Apple devices (iPod, iPad and my iPhone).

Once I had the language on my mobile device, I either listened to it with headphones, speakers or I synced the device to my car entertainment system and allowed the device to play the whole library in chronological order. I also had the option to allow the device to choose (shuffle) words, phrases and sentences at random. This method proved very effective as an artificial speech environment where a primary speech environment is non-existent. With the Apple technology I had access to the language/artificial speech environment (1,000's of words)

wherever I went. I did this repetitively until I was able to recognize the meaning of the words I had learned to produce.

Once I had prepared and formatted the data for iTunes my informant signed a release (see Appendix 2) allowing the Tahltan Revitalization Program to archive the recorded data and make it available to the Tahltan Nation membership as a secondary source to orally study the language and/or for academic research purposes.

I feel that we are extremely fortunate in this era of language loss to have the opportunity to utilize every day technology to pass on the knowledge and talents of the remaining Tā̄ltā̄n language speakers in our community. While delivering a teaching method that could surpass what the students would be learning in a classroom, we finally have a chance to make a dramatic difference in the revitalization of our language using modern day technology. Given the circumstances, it is my belief that the most effective way to pass on our language today is to utilize the Apple iPod, Ipad, IPhone and the various Apple applications (iTunes, iBook) that are readily available.

Data Analysis

Without the interference of writing and/or grammatical knowledge in my informant's first language (mentioned above) he taught me strictly from the oral tradition and I was able to study the language holistically. From this perspective, I learned that the language is encoded with patterns that make the verb-forms and paradigms very predictable.

Once I realized the language was encoded with patterns I questioned: *Would these sequential repetitive grammatical patterns within the language simplify the learning process if I thoroughly understood how to use them in my approach to learning?* To answer this I shifted my

approach from studying the language from a 'rote based learning methodology' to an approach

that put the emphasis on the patterns in written form and I encoded the data and began dialogue

analysis and triangulation with my informant and others who are studying Tāłtān as a second

language. I then began cross-referencing words and phrases with the previous data/audio

recorded by Ishkadi (Reginald Dennis) and Tl'ō'oks (Ryan Dennis) (Tahltan Language Archive

2012-2014), Carter, (1992, 1994), McIlwraith (2003) and Hale and O'Grady (1965) from the

perspective of the patterns.

On the basis of my data and my analysis of the previous linguistic audio recordings carried

out by the other researchers I concluded that; *yes indeed, the language is encoded with ingenious*

sequential predictable grammatical patterns. Once I understood the sequence of the patterns

(object, subject, verb etc.), I went back to my oral study and utilized the predictability in my

approach and it sped up the learning process considerably. Switching to the written format to

map out the patterns in my head then switching back to oral methodology is what I perceive as

combining the traditional and contemporary ways of knowing (covered below).

Interpretation

When I began learning the patterns I noticed that there were vast differences between the

structure of English and Tāłtān languages. The main thing that stuck out very clearly is that the

Tāłtān language is built around *verb* and *adjective* in a totally different way in comparison to

English (First language/translation language).

In Tāłtān there are no verbs and adjectives per se, rather in Tāłtān we have what is referred

to, from a grammatical perspectives, as *verb* and *adjective-phrases* and the *subject* and *object-*

marker are embedded within the phrases in a much different way in comparison to English. That

said I kept in mind that this is not a comparative study, but considering that English is the translation language it is only natural that I compared the two languages in order to orient myself in my learning. Furthermore, I noticed that in Tāłtān the '*paradigms*' are also encoded with ingenious sequential grammatical patterns that make the learning process very predictable as well and the '*singular and plural subject-markers*' that are used in the *adjective* and *verb-phrase* are consistent with those used in the paradigms. Everything seemed to be patterned around the subject and object-markers.

Once I accumulated a huge vocabulary and recorded field-data in the Tāłtān language I understood that I needed to find a step-by-step process that would take me from the simplest linguistic concept to the most complex grammatical patterns. So I mapped out the structure of the language, in writing, from the simplest pedagogical principles (possessives) to the most complex form (Transitive verbs) with the main focus on the grammatical positioning of the embedded *subject* and *object markers*. In Tāłtān the structure follows a grammatical sequence of: object, subject, verb or adjective, or stem/root/classifier.

Below is an example of a 'postposition phrase' and an 'intransitive verb-phrase form' with the 'subject and object-markers' color coded in blue and mapped out in written format to demonstrate how I did this. It also demonstrates the subject-marker /Ho/ which means 'three dimensional space plus time - equals four dimensional space. (/Ho/ does not have an English equivalent).

Verb-phrase:

> Me-k'e dists'et – I fell on him (The Me- represents the 3rd person and the s represents 'me' the 1st person and ts'et is the stem = fall.)

> Es-k'e dints'et – You fell on me (The es- represents the 1st person and the n represent 'you' the 2nd person and ts'et is the stem = fall).

> En-k'e dits'et – He fell on you (The En- represents 'you' the 2nd person and the *lack of* the 'm' that is

typically before the stem that represent the 3rd person is absent and it's the absence of a marker that represents the him/her)

Ho-k'e dists'et – I fell on the Ho (The Ho- is a subject-marker for the three (3) dimensional space plus time in which I fell. It has no English equivalent. The closest definition we can give in English is the word 'there". But we can only say; it's *sort of like* the English word 'There'. The s represents 'I or me' the 1ˢᵗ person - the person doing the talking/falling.)

Or you can also alternate the subject-marker /Ho/ with a noun. (Chair – noun).

Example:

Chair–k'e dists'et – I fell on chair (In this case the chair takes the place of the 3rd person and the s represents 'I' the 1st person. This being said, things can also be referred to with the possessive 'me', but only in the case in which you can point at the object, etc).

My insights into how the subject and object-markers are patterned and embedded directly into the word-phrases, led me to conclude that it's the study of the grammatical structure, from the perspective of the patterns (which are built around the subject and object markers), that could allow me to maintain an aspect of our oral tradition in the practical study of our language while taking advantage of our adaptation to visual (writing) learning process. What I mean by this is: I mapped out the patterns on paper and once I became cognitively familiar with the predictable patterns I went back to studying the language orally and I took full advantage of the insight to speed up my learning. For instance; when I began my research I would study each verb-phrase within a form, word-for-word, but once I had the patterns cognitively mapped I would learn whole forms by simply applying my knowledge of the predictable grammatical nature to a single phrase of that particular form and the predictability would give me the proper pronunciation and grammatical structure of that whole form without having to study every piece from a rote learning methodology.

Furthermore, it is the 'difference' in how our language is constructed around the *subject and object-markers* that is creating the barrier when attempting to learn and/or teach the

language from an English first language/cultural perspective/bias, or free translation. The over-all construct of the language is simply too different to teach using free translation.

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Chapter 5. BASIC TĀŁTĀN LANGUAGE STRUCTURE

Strictly speaking from a grammatical Eurocentric perspective, Carter (1994)
acknowledged the differences between Tāłtan and English as minimum. In this respect he says:

> The most notable difference is that the Tahltan verb contains more information than
> the English verb. In fact, the Tahltan verb approximately parallels a simple English
> verb phrase, including information that English pronouns would normally provide.
> Thus the word *nes'in* means I see, not just *see*, and *mekones'in* means *I'm looking for
> it* rather than just *looking*. The second major difference between Tahltan and English
> is that where English has prepositions such as *in, for, on* etc., Tahltan has
> postpositions. This simply means that postpositions come after the word they relate
> to, not before as in English (Carter 1994. p: iv emphasis added)

Although he is right, from a Tahltan cultural perspective I would take it further and say the
grammatical structure of the Tāłtān and English languages are very different, therefore, English
must be looked upon as merely a translation tool. Expecting to translate Tāłtān word-for-word,
orally, from an English perspective/bias creates mistranslations. Expecting to understand Tāłtān
word-for-word from an English perspective can be misleading in that the first language, English,
can mistakenly be considered the reference point from which the second language, Tāłtān, is to
be understood. In other words, we falsely assume that the second language, Tāłtān, has the exact
same meaning and concepts, as English, but both languages are completely different in structure
and worldview. One of the simplest examples would be that in Tāłtān we do not have gender
specifics – that is to say, we don't have the term for 'he' or 'she,' rather we simply refer to such
as the 'third person' and one must get used to this fact when coming from English as the first
language in which there are gender specifics. In other words, from a Tāłtān perspective, we do
not see others in terms of their gender. Rather, we see them simply as another person – a major
difference in worldview, in comparison to English, and the grammar reflects this difference.

In the past the elders learned English as a second language and it was not uncommon to
hear an elder refer to a female with the term 'he' rather than 'she'. In this case the elder was

doing the reverse - they were thinking in Tāłtān and applying the non-gender grammatical concept to English.

Aside from the cultural differences, Tāłtān and English grammar are completely different in that Tāłtān nouns, verbs and adjectives are constructed in what Carter (1994) refer to as word-phrases, whereas by comparison the same phrases in English are a combination of words. Furthermore, in English, sentences are made up of words whereas in Tāłtān sentences are constructed with words and word-phrases. Also in Tāłtān we don't have 'he' or 'she', 'I'm', 'I am', 'we're', 'they're', 'does' etc., and we don't use 'are' or 'is' the same way as English. Therefore, I do not use these words in my translation. When we think in English, or try to translate word for word, we put words into our translation that do not exist in Tāłtān and it creates confusion and it hinders our progress.

Word-phrases

Word-phrases are morphemes combined to make words that are actually phrases from an English (1st language) perspective. In some cases it takes more than a few English words to translate one of the more complicated Tāłtān word-phrases.

In Tāłtān, the morphemes (syllables) that make up a word-phrase, in some cases, are taken from whole words and used as prefixes, and although they are contracted (contraction will be covered later) when used as prefixes, they are equivalent to the words from which they are derived. This phenomenon also applies when contracting words in sentences – the contracted words retain their meaning even if one syllable is used rather than the whole word. My informant says the words are cut down (contraction), when used in a sentence, so as to keep the language 'rhythmic', or to create a flowing sound. (Sometimes he would create phrases and although they

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make sense he would discard them as wrong simply because they do not have rhythm. I've also

seen other experts do the same).

In English we change the meaning of phrases by changing words and in Tāłtān we

change the meaning of word-phrases by changing morphemes (syllables). For example in

English when we say: *"He is going"* it is considered a phrase. To change the meaning of this

phrase we simply change the word 'He' to 'She', or 'I' (subject) and it becomes *"She is going"*,

or *"I'm going"*. In comparison, in Tāłtān this phrase is actually a word-phrase and the 'I', 'you'

and/or 'him/her' (Subject/object-marker) is contained within the phrase. Example: dēs·ał (I'm

going). To change the meaning of this phrase to *'you are going'* you must change a part

(morpheme) of the word-phrase. More specifically, you must change the pronoun subject-marker

/s/ to an /n/' (singular, 1st grammatical person to a 2nd person pronoun/subject-marker) to say:

dīn·dał (you're going).

Understanding the usage of the object and subject-marker personal pronouns, which in

my oral opinion has been developed on a simple basic theme and patterned throughout the whole

structure of the language, is the fundamental element that must be learned as a second language

speaker.

The subject and object-markers, pronouns are patterned within the word-phrase forms

and from an oral learning methodology it is best to envision them to be progressive from simple

to complex. However, there is nothing complex about the way in which it works; rather it is

relatively simple when we keep our focus on the progressive nature of the grammatical structure

which uses the pronoun patterns as the foundation on which the language is built. It is the

progressive nature of the grammatical structure, as I envision it from an oral perspective, which

will be the focus of the rest of this thesis.

Format of the Tables

The written format (tables) that I use, from here on out, to demonstrate the progression from simple to complex is my best depiction of how I envision the language holistically from an oral learning perspective. The key points that must be understood from this perspective are:

- The whole Tāłtān language is built around the subject and object-markers. As an oral learner and a second language speaker I learned that it is better to learn how this works before moving on to the practical study of the language.

- I do not see the language in terms of written grammatical rules. Rather I see the language holistically as patterns that are based on the subject and object pronoun-markers. I only use grammatical terminology, principles and framework to communicate my oral knowledge. Grammatical analysis is secondary to my ability to speak Tāłtān as a second language.

- Although I see the language in my mind's eye as organized patterns, I don't see it orally in graphs the way I demonstrate it for this text. Rather, I envision the patterns without the graphs as Appendix 3, 4 and 5 demonstrate.

- I encoded the patterns in my mind and the written form is an attempt to convey how I see it to an academic audience.

- Orally I see the paradigms holistically as associated word-phrases patterned together from simple to complex, rather than the classification of verb, noun and adjective-phrase paradigms.

- I studied the language orally with no grammatical principles guiding me. Rather, it was a natural oral learning process that slowly switched from a rote learning methodology to a method that emphasized the patterns as a technique to simplify the learning curve.

- I use literal translation, because, as mentioned before, free translation does not work well. For instance in the tables you would see translations like this: Dene ja sini – '*Dene is I/me*', rather than '*I am Dene*' In Tāłtān we don't have words like 'I am', 'you are' etc. Using words that do not exist in our language creates confusion. I use free translation to give a portrait of the language in its true essence.

The format for the following presentation is my best attempt to capture how I envision the language in my mind's eye from an oral traditional perspective.

Terminology

In order to understand Tāłtān it is not necessary to understand grammatical and/or linguistic terminology and concepts, but to simplify the second language learning process during dialogue analysis it was crucial that we knew at least some of the terminology in order to communicate the structure of the language.

Here we will cover a couple of the terms we must become familiar with for communicative purposes, but most of the terms that we will be using will be defined within the body of the main text so as to use the context as hands-on examples.

Articulation: An 'articulation' is an individual sound produced in a spoken word. Example: the letter /p/ at the end of the word 'stop' is an articulation represented by the letter /p/.

Form: A meaningful unit of language – here we will use it to refer to word-phrase groupings such as: Soneline (I'm beautiful/desirable), noneline (you're beautiful/desirable), and moneline

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(he's/she's beautiful/desirable), These are the 'singular forms' for the adjective-phrase 'beautiful'. Forms also have plurals and dual in Tāłtān.

Paradigm: A linguistic paradigm is the complete set of related word forms associated with the same contextual meaning.

Pronouns and Grammatical Person

In Tāłtān there are three types of pronouns: **subject** (*I, he, she*), **object** (*me, you, him*), and **possessives** (*his, mine, yours*) and each has their respective plural and dual forms. Possessives denote possession and are mainly used with nouns and the subject/object pronouns are used to replace personal nouns within sentences. There are 1st, 2nd and 3rd grammatical personal pronouns. For instance in English:

- 'Me' is the 1st person pronoun.

- 'You' is the 2nd person pronoun.

'He/she' is the 3rd person pronoun.

In the sentence *I saw Jane, and I spoke to her*, the pronoun /I/ takes the place of the person speaking (1st person) and /her/ takes the place of *Jane*, (3rd person) respectively. A pronoun is a word that replaces the noun for subject, object, or possessive.

(1)   Personal Pronouns

	Personal Pronoun	Translation	Noun	Trans-lation	Tāłtān object and subject Pronoun usage.
1st Person					
Plural	sini	*Me/I*	dene	Person	Dene ja sini (Person is me/I)
Plural	dakwuni	*us*	dene	Person	Dene ja dakwuni (Prsons is us).
2nd Person					
Singular	nini	*you*	dene	Person	Dene ja nini (Person is you)
Plural	dakwuni	*You (2+)*	dene	Person	Dene ja dakwuni (Person is you)

3rd Person					
Singular	dedini	*That person*	dene	Person	Dene ja dedini (Person is that person)
Plural	he-dedini	*Them (2+)*	dene	Person	Dene ja he-dedini (Persons is those people)
Collective	didene	*The people, or Indigenous*			Duda oye didene k'e (How you call it like the people)
Enviro	Ho-	*Four (4) dimensional space.*			Ho-ts'i' dēsał (There to, I'm gonna walk)

From an oral perspective I see the 1st person and 2nd person singular form as the same word. The only difference is the first articulation, which in essence is the personal pronoun for you /n/ and me /s/ (see p: 61). Also the 3rd person singular '*dedini*' and plural '*he-dedini*' are the same word. The difference is that the plural has a pronoun prefix /he/. Also if you look closely at the collective form '*didene*' (the people) and the 3rd person singular '*dedini*' (that person) it is merely an interesting switch of the vowels /e/ and /i/ — *didene* and *dedini*. From an oral perspective I saw this as patterns that I took advantage of to speed up my learning.

Hardwick (1984) refers to the object-marker /Ho-/ linguistically as the 'areal marker', but from a cultural perspective it is more than simply a geographical marker — the English word 'there' is an areal marker. Although I use 'there' in the translation (above), my informant(s) could not use 'there' as an English translation for /ho-/.

In Tāłtān, /ho-/ is a pronoun-mark for 'four-dimensional space' - three dimensional space plus time equals four dimensions. If I was to say: *Uwe ts'ih kedi kime ho-ts'i' dēsał.* (I'm gonna go to, always-from-purchase-house/store, or I'm going to the store), /Ho-/ would conjure up images beyond the fact that I am going within the area of the store. Rather, /ho-/ conjures up a feeling that includes the universe that we exist in — it includes everything that is happening here, including the statement that I am making about going to the store, it includes the time and space between here and the store, plus the time it will take to return and it includes what's happening at the store right now, what will happen when I get there and what will continue to happen when I leave and come back. /Ho-/ is a feeling of the 'whole' that life exists as — this is the closest I

could come to describing how my informant explains it. One of the simplest examples is the word *denestl'ets* which means black. The words *ho-denestl'ets* is freely translated as dark, but it actually means the /ho-/ is black — the four dimensional space is black at this time.

The first time I fully understood /ho-/ I was at a huge community picnic and was sitting with a few elderly men discussing the language. As we sat there engrossed in their teaching, an elderly lady passed us on her way to the bathroom. As she was walking she unexpectedly stepped into a depression in the terrain and lost her balance. As she was falling she rapidly sidestepped and barely regained her balance. As she struggled to right herself she hollered 'k'as den ho-k'e diṣ·ts'ediiiiii......', which is freely translated as "I almost fall doooooown........!" It was then that I understood that her close call occurred within the /ho-/ and her near fall occurred alongside everything else that was happening at the picnic, which was taking place within the /ho-/ and the phrase had nothing to with down. However, at the same time I understood the ground she was about to fall onto was within the /ho-/ - the planet is within the /ho-/ she wasn't about to fall down — there isn't a down *per se*.

It is important to note here that it appears that traditionally the Tahltan saw time in a different way, or perhaps it is safer to say that they didn't see time in terms of hours and minutes and this is exemplified in their term for watch — the watch is refered to as 'gaw' (drum). In Tāłtān when you ask what time (du gaw?), you are actually asking, "what drum?" The pocket watch (most likely the first sort of watch our ancestors experienced) has characteristics that are quite similar to our hand drums; first of all they have the same general shape; second they both have a face; third the watch has two hands and it takes two hands to make the drum functional and both the drum and the watch has a repetitive sound or rhythm when functional. It appears that the ancestors merely compared the two based on their character. After learning the phrase

for 'what time' we speculate that; around the time of the invention of the phrase hours and

minutes time had no true intrinsic value and the watch was merely compared to the drum.

Whenever I ask my father 'what time it is' I am totally aware that I am asking him 'what drum'

and it doesn't seem right per se coming from an English First language perspective. In one of our

conversations regarding time Tl'ō'oks (Ryan Dennis) (20014) pointed out how one of his

informants (grandmother) did not see time in the exact way that he does. Although she saw time

chronologically, she only understood the hours and not the minutes. When he told her the time he

would round it off to the nearest hour and discard the minutes. He followed up by explaining that

his grandfather (informant) compared her method to telling time traditionally – by the sun.

Possessives and Grammatical Person

The possessives are the 'my/mine', 'yours' and 'his/her's' concept. The possessive is a

grammatical construct used to denote a relationship of possession, or ownership. For example:

'my' is a possessive in the phrase 'my car'.

The 'grammatical person' is the grammatical distinction between participant(s) in a

conversation and/or event; typically the distinction is between the speaker, the addressed and the

other(s). They are represented as 1st, 2nd and 3rd person perspectives.

(2)   Possessives and Grammatical Person

	Possessive	Translation	Tāltān Noun with Possessive
1st **Person**			
Singular	es-	my	es-pane (my friend)
Plural	da-	our (2+)	da-pane (our friend)
Singular	ede-	myself	ede-gah sadesdih (Myself for I'm proud)
2nd **Person**			
Singular	en-	you	en-pane (your friend)
Plural	da-	you (2+)	da-pane (our friend)
3rd **Person**			
Singular	me-	his/her	me-pane (His/her friend)

Plural	hu-	their (2+)	hu-pane (Their friend)
4th Person			
Singular	de-	his/her	John de-pane (John's friend)

The fourth person is used in the case where we are talking about a third persons

possession in which the fourth person, our object is identified to stand-alone. Example: John de-

pāne (John's friend), or John de-la'e (John's hand). John is the 3rd person and his friend is the

fourth person, his hand is the fourth object etc. The possessives cannot stand-alone; therefore

they are represented with a hyphen (es-) to denote this fact. The possessives are used as object

pronouns when it is used with some classes of transitive verb-phrases (covered later). They are

also used as pronouns to denote the object when used to create postpositional word-phrases,

which are used in sentences with intransitive verb-phrases. Postposition-phrases are the smallest

and most basic word-phrase (see below). Also, notice how the possessives are actually the first

articulation(s) of the personal pronouns above in Table 1, page 55.

The Possessive and Postposition

In English we have prepositions and in Tāłtān we have postpositions. This means in

Tāłtān the postposition comes after the word they are related to rather in front of them as it is

done in English (Carter, 1994). In Tāłtān the possessive also behaves like a pronoun when it is

combined into a word-phrase with a postposition as the root. The example sentence uses an

intransitive verb-phrase (covered later) to demonstrate how the postposition is combined with the

possessive (object) to create a postposition-phrase.

(3)   The Possessive and Postposition

	Possessive	Postposition	Translation	Possessive postpositional phrase
1st Person				
(Singular)	es-	gah	for	Es-gah sadindih (Me for, you're proud)
(Plural)	da-	gah	for	da-gah sadindih (Us for, you're proud)

Singular	ede-	gah	for	Ede-gah sadesdih (Myself for, I'm proud)
2ⁿᵈ Person				
(Singular)	en-	ts'i'	to	En-ts'i dēsał (You to, I'm gonna walk).
(Plural)	da-	ts'i'	to	Da- ts'i dēsał (You to, I'm gonna walk).
3ʳᵈ Person				
(Singular)	me-	duga	for	Me-daga kan·dīndał (For him, you go get)
(Plural)	hu-	duga	for	Hu-daga kan·dīndał (For them, you go get)

The above example is a perfect demonstration on how Tāłtān sentences are constructed with word-phrases as opposed to how English sentences are constructed with words. In this case we combine two types of word-phrases (postpositional and intransitive verb-phrase) to make a sentence. This is a perfect example of why free English translation does not work as an effective translation tool for Tāłtān.

Chapter 6. BASIC PATTERNS

The personal pronoun-markers for adjectives, nouns and verbs-phrases are represented in a different way in comparison to English. As a marker the personal pronouns are represented by a morpheme rather than by words. The way I envision it orally and progressively is that all pronouns (possessives, noun, verb and adjective-phrases) are built on the following most basic articulations.

Basic Personal Pronoun-marker

In the progression from simple to complex, I envision these simple pronouns to be the starting point of the patterned theme that runs throughout the language – these pronouns are the foundation on which the Tāłtān language is built. All the personal markers that follow the patterned progressive theme, that I orally envision to run throughout the language, are based on three articulations; they are represented by the letters /s/, /n/, /m/ (singular) and the so-called 'inanimate' pronoun marker which is represented by the letter /k/. These singular personal pronoun-markers are used in two ways: they can be attached at the beginning of a word-phrase (object, or subject), or they can be inserted word medially (subject). The inanimate marker /k/ cannot be inserted word medially and it is only used as a personal pronoun prefix for the environment.

I refer to the 'inanimate' in English as 'so-called' because from a Tahltan traditional perspective there is no such thing as 'inanimate' (covered later). From a Tahltan perspective, everything is endowed with life whether it is of flesh and blood or not. That is why in Tāłtān we have a pronoun for the environment/universe which is represented by the articulation /k/ and /ho/. (The pronoun /k/ has been covered on page 37-38).

Intransitive and Transitive Phrases

In Tāłtān there are intransitive and transitive phrases. Intransitive phrases are phrases that only contain the subject within the phrase - intransitive phrases cannot be used in transitive form. For example *noneline'* (you beautiful/desirable) is an intransitive phrase – the /n/ at the beginning of the word represents the subject, whereas a transitive phrase has both object and subject pronoun markers built into it. For instance *en-dodēsditł* (you I gonna tell) is a transitive phrase. The phrase does not make sense without the object and the *subject being* a part of the over all phrase and the object and subject markers can transition back and forth to change the concept. In other words, the object can switch places with subject - *en-dodēsditł* (you I gonna tell) and *es-dodīnditł* (me you gonna tell). Transitive phrases have the ability to transition the subject and object pronoun marker back and forth within the phrase. Whereas the intransitive phrase cannot transition the object and subject pronoun markers within one phrase because it doesn't have the object marker built into it as a transitive phrase has.

Basic Intransitive Phrase

I refer to this particular pattern as the 'basic paradigm', because I envision the singular pronouns of this paradigm (pattern) to be the 'basis' and most simplistic representation of the personal pronoun subject-marker. As a beginner I orally learned the singular forms to this paradigm before learning the plural form; therefore I envision it without the plurals to be the starting point of the progression from simplistic to complex. (To see the plural forms go to Appendix 5).

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(1)   Basic Intransitive Phrase

Desire - līne (noun stem)	Translation	Phrase	Phrase	Translation	Dangerous - jit (noun stem)
Environ	*Land's beautiful*	nene konelīne	nene konejit	*Land is danger*	Enviro
1ˢᵗ person					1ˢᵗ person
Singular	*I'm desirable*	sonelīne	sonejit	*I'm dangerous*	Singular
2ⁿᵈ person					2ⁿᵈ person
Singular	*You desirable*	nonelīne	nonejit	*You dangerous*	Singular
3ʳᵈ person					3ʳᵈ person
Singular	*She desirable*	monelīne	monejit	*She dangerous*	Singular

The noun-stem /-līne/ literally means 'desire', but today it is freely/incorrectly translated in English as 'beautiful'. In Tāłtān being desirable implies that whatever it is that is being described as desirable is desired based on its esthetic value – in other words beauty is a given to being desirable.

Basic Transitive Phrase

Below is a demonstration of the stem /-line/ used in transitive form with the noun-phrase /eneslīne/, which means 'I desire'. Eneslīne is freely translated, as 'I want' by Carter (1992). From a cultural perspective I see this as incorrect, because desire involves a deeper wanting.

(2)   Basic Transitive Phrase

Desire - līne (noun stem)	Adjective-phrase	Translation
1ˢᵗ person		
Singular subject	bede eneslīne	Food I desire
Singular object & singular subject	neneslīne	You, I desire
Singular object & plural subject	menesidlīne	Her, we desire
Plural object & singular subject	heneslīne	Them, I desire
Plural object & plural subject	henesidlīne	Them, we desire
2ⁿᵈ person		
Singular subject	bede enlīne	Food you desire
Singular object & singular subject	senlīne	I, you desire

Singular object & singular subject	menalīne	Her, you desire
Plural object & singular subject	henlīne	Them, you desire
Plural object & plural subject	henalīne	Them, you (2) desire
3ʳᵈ person		
Singular subject	bede enelīne	Food, he desire
Singular object & singular subject	senelīne	Me, she desire
Singular object & singular subject	nenelīne	You, she desire
Singular object & singular subject	menelīne	Him, she desire
Plural object & plural subject	hi-yenalīne	Them, they desire

Notice how the 3rd person form does not have a subject pronoun marker. It is the 'lack thereof' that dignifies the 3rd person. From an English perspective I found it very intriguing that it is the nothingness that makes up the something.

Basic Intransitive Pattern Two

I refer to this particular paradigm as 'basic intransitive pattern two', because I envision this paradigm (pattern) to be the next level of complexity in the progression from simple to complex. From an oral perspective I envision the pronoun patterning, /s/, and /n/ from the previous pattern to be the basis for basic pattern two and the overall pattern (singular and plural) to be based on the personal pronouns from page 52 and 53. This is sequential.

(3)   Basic Intransitive Pattern Two

	Translation	Adjective-phrase		Adjective-phrase	Translation	
Cold - dli (Stem)						**Hot - zetł** (Stem)
Environment	*It's cold*	hosdli		hoszetł	*It's hot*	**Environment**
1ˢᵗ person						**1ˢᵗ person**
Singular	*I cold*	sesdli		seszetł	*I hot*	Singular
Plural	*We cold*	sidli		sizetł	*we hot*	Plural
2ⁿᵈ person						**2ⁿᵈ person**
Singular	*You cold*	sindli		sinzetł	*you hot*	Singular
Plural	*You cold*	sadli		sazetł	*you hot*	Plural
3ʳᵈ person						**3ʳᵈ person**
Singular	*he cold*	sedli		sezetł	*he hot*	Singular
Plural	*they cold*	hesdli		heszetł	*they hot*	Plural

	Translation	Verb-phrase		Verb-phrase	Translation	
Hear – ts'ek (Stem)						**Yawn – kǎs** (Stem)
1ˢᵗ person						**1ˢᵗ person**
Singular	*I hear*	dists'ek		diskās	*I yawn*	Singular
Plural	*we hear*	sits'ek		sikās	*we yawn*	Plural
2ⁿᵈ person						**2ⁿᵈ person**
Singular	*you hear*	dints'ek		dinkās	*you yawn*	. Singular
Plural	*you hear*	dats'ek		dakās	*you yawn*	Plural
3ʳᵈ person						**3ʳᵈ person**
Singular	*he hear*	dets'ek		dekās	*he yawns*	Singular
Plural	*they hear*	hedets'ek		hedekās	*they yawn*	Plural

	Translation	Adjective-phrase		Adjective-phrase	Translation	
Big – chō (root)					**heavy – ukitł** (root)	
1ˢᵗ person						**1ˢᵗ person**
Singular	*I big*	is-chō		us-kitł	*I heavy*	Singular
Plural	*We big*	isi-chō		usi-kitł	*We heavy*	Plural
2ⁿᵈ person						**2ⁿᵈ person**
Singular	*You big*	in-chō		un-kitł	*You heavy*	Singular
Plural	*You big*	ih-chō		ah-kitł	*You heavy*	Plural
3ʳᵈ person						**3ʳᵈ person**
Singular	*He big*	i-chō		u- kitł	*He heavy*	Singular
Plural	*They big*	uhu[1]-chō		uhi-kitł	*They heavy*	Plural

The above singular and plural pronoun pattern and positioning (before the stem) is the basic pattern that is used word medial for subject pronoun-markers in all transitive and intransitive word-phrases. (For a more complete list of patterns associated with this particular paradigm see Appendix 3).

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[1] The 3ʳᵈ person personal pronoun is represented by a /Hu/, /hi/ or /he/. Which one is used is determine by rules that are irrelevant to the thesis.

Chapter 7.   PATTERN ONE

Intransitive Phrase

I envision the intransitive phase to be the next level in the progression from simple to complex, because the basic pronoun subject-markers from 'pattern one' are utilized in a slightly different way with this paradigm – I see it as a little bit more complex than the basic forms. However, the pronoun subject-markers are used fundamentally the same way and the pattern of singular, plural, 1st and 2nd person etc. remains consistent with the previous forms. (A linguistic rule alters the 3rd person plural, but that is irrelevant here).

Below are both a verb and noun-phrase demonstrated together to accent how the personal pronoun is patterned within the form to maintain its consistency with the previous patterns and how simply replacing a part of the stem changes its overall meaning. For example, although this is a different paradigm, the singular and plural, 1st, 2nd and 3rd personal pronouns are the exact same subject markers that are used above (Table 1, page 61 and 62). The subject markers remain consistent throughout the language and as an oral learner I kept my focus on the pronoun markers.

From an oral learning methodological perspective understanding the simplicity of how the manipulation of a simple morpheme (subject), within the paradigm/pattern, changes the overall meaning of the phrase simplifies the learning curve.

(1)   Intransitive Phrase

Present Tense	Translation	Adjective-phrase		Verb-phrase	Translation	Present Tense
State - t'ē (stem)						Do – t'īn (stem)
1st person						1st person
Singular	my state	as·t'ē		ast'īn	I do	Singular
Plural	our state	asit'ē		asit'īn	we do	Plural
2nd person						2nd person
Singular	your state	ant'ē		ant'īn	you do	Singular
Plural	your state	ahat'ē		ahat'īn	you do	Plural

3rd person						3rd person
Singular	*his state*	at'ē		at'īn	*he do*	Singular
Plural	*their state*	ahit'ē		ahit'īn	*they do*	Plural

In the above example you can see how changing a part of the stem changes the meaning and how the first part of the form remains consistent with the pattern. Below are more examples of the above paradigm manipulated slightly to further demonstrate how simple alterations change the overall meaning of the form. Pay particular attention to how the overall structure and the pronouns remain consistent with table 1.

(2)   Present Tense and Future Tense

Present Tense	Translation	Verb-phrase		Verb-phrase	Translation	Future Tense
Have - t'īni (stem)						**Do – t'īn** (stem)
1st person						**1st person**
Singular	*I have*	ist'īni		ost'īn	*I gonna do*	Singular
Plural	*we have*	I̲sit'īni		o̲sit'īn	*we gonna do*	Plural
2nd person						**2nd person**
Singular	*you have*	int'īni		ont'īn	*you gonna do*	Singular
Plural	*you have*	aht'īni		oht'īn	*you gonna do*	Plural
3rd person						**3rd person**
Singular	*he have*	it'īni		ot'īn	*he's gonna do*	Singular
Plural	*they have*	ihit'īni		ohit'īn	*they gonna do*	Plural

As you can see, to change the form do' (on the right – table 1 and 2) from 'present tense' to 'future tense' we simply replace the first articulation /a/ with an /o/. (There are other ways to mark future tense – covered later on pages 85 to 87). Also the example 'have' (Left example on table 2) is also simply a slight alteration of the form – in this case we simply change the first articulation to an /i/. As a second language learner I took advantage of the patterns to simplify the learning process. The fluent speakers of our language are so good at manipulating the subject pronoun-markers and the over all pattern they aren't even consciously aware of what they are doing - it is second nature to them. Therefore, they could not teach and/or see it from this perspective.

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Pattern one is strictly an intransitive-phrase and it is used when one is making reference directly to the subject. The intransitive forms contain only the subject-marker word medial. In Tāłtān the subject-marker pronouns are always inserted directly before the stem or root within the word-phrase.

Intransitive Verb-phrase and Postposition-phrase

As mentioned above, intransitive phrases contain only the subject pronoun-marker (word medial) within it. To use these forms as a 'transitive concept' we must combine two phrases in which the object-marker is always contained within a separate phrase (postposition-phrase covered on p: 52-53). Also, to change this phrase from 1st person to 2nd person and/or singular to plural you would have to manipulate the two phrases independently of each other.

(3)   Intransitive Verb-phrase and Postposition-phrase

	Verb-Phrase	Translation	Postposition-phrase (singular)	Tāłtān Postposition & Verb-phrase
1st person				
(Singular)	gadestī	*I running*	en-ts'i' (you to).	En-ts'i' gadesti (You to, I'm running)
(Plural)	gadesiti	*We running*	me-ts'i' (him to).	Me-ts'i' gadesiti (him to, we're running)
2nd person				
(Singular)	gadintī	*You running*	es-ts'i' (Me to).	Es-ts'i' gadinti (Me to, you're running)
(Plural)	gadatī	*You running*	me-ts'i' (Him to).	Da-ts'i' gadati (Him to, you're running)
3rd person				
(Singular)	gadeti	*he running*	me-ts'i' (him to).	Me-ts'i' gahati (Him to, he's running)
(Plural)	gahideti	*They running*	es-ts'i' (me to).	Es-ts'i' gahideti (Me to, they're running)

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Chapter 8. PATTERN TWO

Transitive word-phrases are different than intransitive phrases in that they contain the object and subject pronoun-markers built directly into the word-phrase. Furthermore, the object and subject-markers are interchangeable – meaning they can be transitioned back and forth to change the concept of what we are communicating. From an oral perspective I envision this to be the next level of complexity and not unlike the previous examples; it has two variations that I refer to as pattern A and B.

Transitive Pattern Two - A

This pattern varies in the way in which it utilizes the object-pronoun. In the first variation the pattern (A) utilizes the 'possessives' (possessives were covered on page 53) as the object pronoun-marker at the 'beginning' of the phrase and the second (B) variation alters the possessive pattern.

(1)   Transitive Pattern Two - A

	Possessive Pronoun	Transitive Verb-phrase	Translation
dech – *told*			
1st person			
Singular object & singular subject	en	en- dohosdech	*You, I told*
Singular object & plural subject	en	en- dohosidech	*You, we told*
Plural object & singular subject	dah-	dah- dohosdech	*You (2), I told*
Singular object & singular subject	me-	me- dohosdech	*Him, I told*
Plural object & singular subject	hu-	hu- dohosdech	*Them, I told*
Plural object & plural subject	hu-	hu- dohosidech	*Them, we told*
2nd person			
Singular object & singular subject	es-	es- dohondech	*Me, you told*
Singular object & plural subject	es-	es- dohadech	*Me, you (2+) told*
Plural object & singular subject	dah-	dah- dohondech	*Us, you told*
Singular object & singular subject	me-	me- dohondech	*Him, you told*
Plural object & singular subject	hu-	hu- dohondech	*Them, you told*
Plural object & plural subject	hu-	hu- dohadech	*Them, you (2+) told*

2ⁿᵈ person			
Singular object & singular subject	es-	es- dohodech	*Me, he told*
Singular object & plural subject	es-	es- dohudedech	*Me, they told*
Plural object & singular subject	dah-	dah- dohodech	*Us, you told*
Singular object & singular subject	me-	me- dohodech	*Him, she told*
Plural object & singular subject	hu-	hu- dohodech	*Them, he told*
Plural object & plural subject	hu-	hu- dohudedech	*Them, they told*

Transitive Pattern One - B

In the following variation the personal object-marker seems different, but it is actually the possessive maker inverted – the /es/ is inverted to /se/. According to my informant this is done to keep the language rhythmic. For instance it is smoother to say se- nen-jit (you afraid of me), rather than es- nen-jit. (As a beginner the concept of rhythm didn't make sense to me, but as I advanced in the language it became clearer. However. I am still struggling with understanding how it works).

(2)   Transitive Pattern One - B

	Transitive Verb-phrase	Translation
Nes·jit – *I'm afraid*		
1ˢᵗ person		
Environmental object & singular subject	ko-nesjit	*Environment, I'm afraid of*
Environmental object & plural subject	ko-nesijit	*Environment, we afraid of*
Singular object & singular subject	ne- nesjit	*You, I'm afraid of*
Singular object & plural subject	ne- nesijit	*You, we afraid of*
Plural object & singular subject	dah- nesjit	*You (2), I'm afraid of*
Singular object & singular subject	me- nesjit	*Him, I'm afraid of*
Plural object & singular subject	hu- nesjit	*Them, I'm afraid of*
Plural object & plural subject	hu- nesijit	*Them, we afraid of*
2ⁿᵈ person		
Environmental object & singular subject	ko-nenjit	*Environment, you afraid of*
Environmental object & plural subject	ko-najit	*Environment, you (2+) afraid of*
Singular object & singular subject	se- nenjit	*Me, you afraid of[2]*

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[2] I use this form just as an example to demonstrate the consistency in the pattern. However, as mentioned above our informants were never able to say it without posing it as a question. Also, coming from an English perspective we have no problem saying it as a statement. For our informants it's as though they are unaware that they will not say it as a statement.

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Singular object & plural subject	se- najit	*Me, you (2+) afraid of*
Plural object & singular subject	dah- nenjit	*Us, you afraid of*
Singular object & singular subject	me- nenjit	*Him, you afraid of*
Plural object & singular subject	hu- nenjit	*Them, you afraid of*
Plural object & plural subject	hu- najit	*Them, you (2+) afraid of*
3rd person		
Environmental object & singular subject	ko-nejit	*Environment, he's afraid of*
Environmental object & plural subject	ko-henejit	*Environment, you (2+) afraid of*
Singular object & singular subject	se- nejit	*Me, you afraid of*
Singular object & plural subject	se- henejit	*Me, you (2+) afraid of*
Plural object & singular subject	dah- nejit	*Us, you afraid of*
Singular object & singular subject	me- nejit	*Him, you afraid of*
Plural object & singular subject	hu- nejit	*Them, you afraid of*
Plural object & plural subject	hu- henejit	*Them, you (2+) afraid of*

Collectively the intransitive and transitive patterns covered above are the basics to speaking Tāłtān. This is the most basic linguistic/grammatical knowledge one must have to begin communicating in Tāłtān. From an oral learning approach I found that knowing these patterns took me past the barrier that prevents the language from being passed on. Following are some of the more advanced linguistic information that I acquired after breaking through the linguistic barriers.

Transitive Pattern One - C

The following verb-phrase form uses the possessive as the personal object-marker and the subject-marker is consistent with the previous patterns. This form had me fooled because I thought this was a one word-phrase for quite some time before I realized it is two phrases used together as a transitive sentence. In fact it is a combination of a 'postposition phrase' combined with a 'transitive phrase'. To use this phrase as a transitive phrase you would have to use the postpostion '*en-k'eh*' (you-on) (object) *in combination with diṣts'et* (I fall/fell) = *en-k'eh diṣts'et*' (You on, I fall/fell).

(4)   Transitive Pattern - C

	Intransitive Verb-phrase	Translation
1ˢᵗ person		
Environmental object & singular subject	ho-k'e di̱sts'et	*I fell within the /ho/.* (Meaning 'I fell')
Environmental object & plural subject	ho-k'e de̱sits'et	*We fell within the /ho/.* (Meaning 'We fell')
Environmental object & plural subject	ho-k'e de̱sitl'ī̄t[3]	*We all fell within the /ho/.* (Everybody fell)
Singular object & singular subject	en-k'e di̱sts'et	*You, I fell on*
Singular object & singular subject	me-k'e di̱sts'et	*Him, I fell on*
Plural object & singular subject	dah-k'e di̱sts'et	*You (2), I fell on*
Plural object & singular subject	hu-k'e di̱sts'et	*Them, I fell on*
Singular object & plural subject	me-k'e de̱sits'et	*Him, we fell on.*
Plural object & plural subject	hu-k'e de̱sits'et	*Them, we fell on*
2ⁿᵈ person		
Environmental object & singular subject	ho-k'e dints'et	*You fell within the /ho/* (Meaning 'I fell')
Environmental object & plural subject	ho-k'e dats'et	*You (2) fell within the /ho/* (Meaning 'We fell')
Environmental object & plural subject	ho-k'e datl'īt	*You all fell within the /ho/.* (Everybody fell)
Singular object & singular subject	es-k'e dints'et	*Me, you fell on*
Singular object & singular subject	me-k'e dints'et	*Him, you fell on*
Plural object & singular subject	dah-k'e dints'et	*Us, you fell on*
Plural object & singular subject	hu-k'e dints'et	*Them, you fell on*
Singular object & plural subject	me-k'e dats'et	*Him, you (2) fell on*
Plural object & plural subject	hu-k'e dats'et	*Them, you (2) fell on*
3ʳᵈ person		
Environmental object & singular subject	ho-k'e dits'et	*He fell within the /ho/* (Meaning 'I fell')
Environmental object & plural subject	ho-k'e hedits'et	*They fell within the /ho/* (Meaning 'We fell')
Environmental object & plural subject	ho-k'e heditl'īt	*They all fell within the /ho/* (Everybody fell)
Singular object & singular subject	es-k'e dits'et	*Me, he fell on*
Singular object & singular subject	me-k'e dits'et	*Him, he fell on*
Plural object & singular subject	dah-k'e dits'et	*Us, he fell on*
Plural object & singular subject	hu-k'e dits'et	*Them, he fell on*
Singular object & plural subject	me-k'e hedits'et	*Him, they (2) fell on*
Plural object & plural subject	hu-k'e hedits'et	*Them, they (2) fell on*

The word-phrase en-k'e di̱s·ts'et is built on the phrase: de·ts'et (he falls), de̱s·ts'et (I fall),

din·ts'et (you fall) and it can be broken down like this:

---

[3] The stem for falling is enumerated as this example denotes, but this will be covered later.

(5)   Postposition

2nd person – 1st person	2nd Personal object	Postposition	Aspect	1st Personal subject	Stem (to fall)	Word-phrase
Singular object & singular subject	en- (you)	k'eh (on)	di	s̲ (me)	·ts'et	en-k'e di̲sts'et

In the above example the object-markers for the postposition-phrase are the possessives /en- and es-/. They are attached to the postposition /ts'i'/ (table 3) and /k'eh/ (table 4) resulting in en-ts'i' (me to) and es-k'eh (me on). This is a good example of the possessive being used as an object pronoun-marker.

Chapter 9. ANIMATE & INANIMATE

Animate – means Flesh and Blood.

Inanimate – means inert, or non-flesh and blood.

The Animate and Inanimate Pronoun Form in Questions

In Tāłtān there are two versions of the interrogative pronoun (demonstrated below) and they are restrictively used as an animate and inanimate form. We use interrogative pronouns to ask questions. The interrogative pronoun represents the thing that we don't know (what we are asking the question about). I envision this particular set of pronouns as basically the same word which can be slightly altered to change its meaning. The only difference between these words is: one begins with the letter /m/ and the other with the letter /y/. I see the interrogative pronoun 'who and what' as counter parts of one word.

(1)   Animate and Inanimate

	Pronoun	Translation	Interrogative Pronoun
Animate	meda	*who*	Meda at'ē (who it?)
Inanimate	yeda	*what*	Yeda at'ē (what it?)
	duda	*how*	Duda at'ē (how it?)

In English the word 'what' is used as a response when a person is addressed. For example if I were to address you in English, by calling your name, the most typical response for you would be to reply 'what?' 'What' is used in this case as a shortened version of 'what do you want?' Traditionally in Tāłtān we did this differently - the response to someone calling your name would be 'heygh!' (Hale & O'Grady 1965), which is simply a response and not 'what do you want?' However, we have adopted the word /yēda/ into our Tahltan English dialect(s) and

we now respond to an addressee with the word /yēda/ instead of 'heygh!' In essence we have Anglicized the Tāłtān interrogative inanimate pronoun /yēda/ to fit our English speaking perspective and today you can hear Tāłtān native speakers using the inanimate as a response.

Building a Simple Pronoun-phrase

Now that we understand 'me·da, ye·da and du·da' I will demonstrate how they are used to adjust the over-all meaning of the noun-phrase /at'ē/ (it or its state).

The meaning /at'ē/ depends on which of the three words it is being used with. Example:

Meda at'ē - Who it? (*Who is it?*)

Yeda at'ē - What it? (*What is it'*)

When the word /at'ē/ is used with meda or yeda it takes on the meaning of it (it remains consistent), but when it is used with /duda/ it takes on the meaning 'state of being'. Example:

Duda at'ē - How it? *(How is its state?)*

Duda Elvis at'ē - How, Elvis it? (*How is Elvis's state?*).

Duda be·de at'ē - How, food it? (*How's the state of the food?*).

Changing Concepts with the Personal Pronoun

Following is a demonstration on how the personal pronoun-markers (s and n) are inserted directly before the word-stem /t'ē/ to change its meaning. (In the following example John is highlighted in blue, because John takes the place of the 3rd person pronoun. Notice how the

phrase lacks a pronoun. The 3rd person is always represented in the phrase by the lack of a pronoun. It's the lack there-of a pronoun that marks the 3rd person).

Question:

Duda John at'ē - How John state? (*How is John's state?*). In this particular case the 3rd person is represented without a letter, because John takes the place of the personal pronoun-marker that is usually inserted before the stem /t'e/.

Answer:

John soga at'ē - John's state is good. (John represents the 3rd Person - the person being talked about).

In the above example the 1st Person is asking about John. The 2nd person would be the one spoken directly to (the one who answers) and John is the 3rd person who is being talked about.

Below is the same phrase manipulated to change its meaning by inserting the 1st and 2nd person subject-markers /n/ and /s/ before the stem /t'ē/.

Question:

Duda ant'ē - (How's your state?). Insert the possessive /n/ directly before the stem in the word at'ē and the meaning changes.

Answer:

Soga ast'ē - (Good, my state, or In other words 'I'm feeling good'). Replace the subject-marker /n/ with the marker /s/ and the meaning changes to 1st person - I am feeling good, or 'my state is good'. This is the most basic way to manipulate a word-phrase to change the meanings and concepts within the Tāłtān language. The above form, which uses the noun-phrase /at'ē/ is just one example. In my oral studies I found that the whole language is patterned around this

principle. The fundamental aspect was/is to understand how the language is structured around the pronouns - this understanding allowed me to manipulate other paradigms to change the concepts quite simplistically and it sped up my oral learning.

Chapter 10. DUALITY

Dual is a grammatical number that some languages use in addition to the singular and plural forms. Tāhtān has grammatical dual verb forms. When a verb-phrase is in dual form it is interpreted as referring to precisely two or more of the entities (animals/people) and/or a thing(s) (one, or two legs) associated with the pronoun.

In the former, we use dual terms when referring to human mobility, more precisely we use dual to emphasize the number of people moving about. For example in Tāhtān we say *dēsał* (I gonna walk), *dit'as* (we gonna walk - plural 2 people) and *didētł* (we gonna walk – 3 plus people). The plurals are in dual form and whether it is in future, present, or past tense it is the stem that denotes the numeration (number of people being referred to). In other words, we have two (dual) ways of referring to the plural form based on numbers.

In the latter case, the dual is based on a number associated with the pronoun. For instance in Tāhtān when we refer to a human walking on two legs we say *de·dał* (he/she walking) and when we refer to an animal with four legs walking we say *de·get* (he/she is walking). The stem (counter stem) denotes the number (legs) associated with the subject – thus, we have two (dual) ways of saying walk according to how many legs the subject has, or walks with, etc.

Dual Intransitive Verb-phrase

Below are the examples of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Person future tense dual form for the verb-phrase 'to walk'. 'To walk' in Tahltan can be interpreted equivalent to the English phrase 'to go'. However, in Tāhtān the stem of the phrase is much more specific. In Tāhtān the stem denotes the mode of transport and when we say 'to go' we exchange the proper word-stem(s) to specify how we are traveling etc. For instance, if I were to say I was going somewhere, the stem of the phrase

would denote whether I was to go on foot or by transport. For instance, /na·dēsał/ means I am

walking without specifying where it is I am walking to. If I were to exchange the stem to

/na·dēs·tl'eł/ it would change the meaning to 'I am going by, sled, wagon, car etc'. The prefix

/na/ denotes that I am not being specific about where I am going and this would be the closest we

could come to the free translation 'to go'. (Prefixes will be covered later). The plural forms are in

dual – they specify the number of people being referred to.

(1)　　Intransitive Dual Verb-phrases

	Grammatical Numeration	Translation	Dual Stem	Tāłtān phrase
1st Person				
(Singular)	dēsał	*I walk*		ho-ts'i' dēsał (to there I walk)
(Dual 2)	dit'as	*we walk*	t'as	ho-ts'i' dit'as (to there we walk)
(Dual 3+)	didētł	*we walk*	dētł	ho-ts'i' didētł (to there we walk)
2nd person				
(Singular)	dīndał	*you walk*		ho-ts'i' dīndał (to there you walk)
(Dual 2)	dat'as	*you walk*	t'as	ho-ts'i' dat'as (to there you walk)
(Dual 3+)	dadētł	*you walk*	dētł	ho-ts'i' dadētł (to there you walk)
3rd Person				
(Singular)	dēdał	*he/she walk*		ho-ts'i' dēdał (to there he/she walk)
(Dual 2)	adat'as	*they walk*	t'as	ho-ts'i' adat'as (to there they walk)
(Dual 3+)	adadētl	*they walk*	dētł	ho-ts'i' adadētł (to there they walk)

In Tāłtān the form for human mobility is the most advanced pattern (covered later) in

regards to the simple ways in which the meaning of phrases can be manipulated by changing a

phoneme (prefix, grammatical person and dual stem) within the phrase.

Counter Stem

In Tāłtān there are counter stems and they are used to quantify nouns without using

numerals. In this case it is taken further in that the stem also makes reference to the noun (leg)

that is non-existent in the over-all phrase. In the example below the stems /gotch/ and /get/

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actually means 'to walk', and 'to stand' but it also means ' on four legs' without making mention

to legs (noun) at all.

(1)   Counter Stems (3rd Person)

Counter Stem	Translation	Phrase	Translation	Example Sentence	Translation
-datł	*two (2) legs*	dedał	*he walk*	E dene dedatł	*The person walks*
-gotch	*four (4) legs*	degoch	*he walk*	E tli' degoch	*The dog walks*
-zet	*two (2) legs*	nazet	*he stands*	E dene nazet	*The person stands*
-gēt	*four (4) legs*	nagēt	*he stands*	E tli' nagēt	*The dog stands*

Chapter 11. CLASSIFICATORY VERBS

These stems are known in Athabaskan linguistics as *classificatory verb stems*.

Classificatory stems are used to denote mass, counting and description. They can also be called measure words and they are used to quantify the mass of nouns. In this sense they may also be called *measure-classificatory stems*. In Tāłtān these verb stem(s) classify a particular object by its shape or other physical characteristics in addition to describing the state of the object.

Mass Classificatory Stem

In Tāłtān mass classificatory are used to describe the type of mass that the object (noun) is made-up of.

(1)   Mass Classificatory Verb

Mass classifier Stem	Transla-tion	Phrase	Translation	Example Sentence
1st Person				
-tetł	animate	Litadēstetł	I'm gonna buy	Tli' litadēstetł (Dog I'm gonna buy)
-tītł	long	Litadēstītł	I'm gonna buy	Una litadēstītł (Gun I'm gonna buy)
-katł	container	Litadēskatł	I'm gonna buy	Tṣa' litadēskatł (Plate I'm gonna buy)
-chush	textile	Litadēschush	I'm gonna buy	Ech litadēschish (Shirt I'm gonna buy)
-letł	pieces	Litadēsletł	I'm gonna buy	K'unts litadēsletł (Potatoes I'm gonna buy)

In Tāłtān all of the stems, except /-chish/, are contracted when the verb-phrase is placed into context/sentence. Below is the same table with contracted stems.

(2)   Mass Classificatory Stems Contracted

Mass classifier Stem	Transla-tion	Phrase	Translation	Example Sentence with Contraction
1st Person				
-tetł	animate	Litadēstetł	I'm gonna buy	Tli' litadēste (Dog I'm gonna buy)
-tītł	long	Litadēstītł	I'm gonna buy	Una litadēstī (Gun I'm gonna buy)
-katł	container	Litadēskatł	I'm gonna buy	Tsa' litadēska (Plate I'm gonna buy)

| -chush | textile | Litadēschush | I'm gonna buy | Ech litadēschish (Shirt I'm gonna buy) |
| -letł | pieces | Litadēsletł | I'm gonna buy | K'unts litadēsle (Potatoes I'm gonna buy) |

Descriptive Classificatory Stem

In Tāłtān there are descriptive stems. They are used to describe nouns without changing

the noun. Rather they are attached to the verb-phrase as a stem.

(3)   Descriptive Classificatory Stem

Descriptive Stem	Translation	Phrase	Translation	Example Sentence	Translation
·dūs	*on belly*	dedūs	*crawl*	E dene dedūs	*The person crawls*
·t'ah	*fly*	det'ah	*bird fly*	E dzime det'ah	*The bird flies*
·bē	*swim*	debē	*swims*	E tli' debē	*The dog swims*
·lētł	*he/it floats*	delētł	*floats*	E gat delētł	*The tree floats*

Classificatory Kinship

Classificatory kinship systems put people into the over-all society kin classes on the basis

of abstract relationship rules. These may have to do with genealogy relations (son to father,

daughter to mother, sibling to sibling etc.) or they may not. Socially, in Tahltan our kinship is

based on our matrilineal system so our mother's kin are considered relatives and our father's is

not. On the other hand, if a total stranger marries into the nation, they will simply be placed in

the appropriate clan opposite to their spouse and in essence they become relatives to their host

clan. In Tāłtān we use different (dual) terms to classify relatives who are genealogically distinct

from one another, being older or younger, and in your clan or not.

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Mother, Father and Children

The relationship between mother, father and children are non-dual and each refers directly to another with a specific term. However, there is a cultural dual, which is based on the 'rule of respect' in which the children can never refer to their parents directly and/or indirectly with a possessive. However, a parent can refer to their children in possessive form.

(1) Mother, Father and Children

Ts'eskiye (crow clan)	Edli/edla (mother)			Ete'e (father)		Ch'iyone (wolf clan)	
Mothers Children	Chu' (son)	Tu'e (Daughter)		Tu'e (Daughter)	Chu' (son)	**Fathers Children**	

In Tāłtān when a parent refers to a daughter directly and/or indirectly the term remains consistent; we simply add a possessive and the word becomes the phrase *es-tu'e*. On the other hand, when a parent refers to a son indirectly the term changes to *es-chime*. *Es-chime* can also be used directly. In Tāłtān we cannot say 'my mother' or 'my father.' First of all it would be disrespectful and secondly it doesn't flow properly.

Aunts and Uncles

In Tāłtān we refer to our mother and father's brothers and sisters in dual form and they in turn do the same, but the 'rule of respect' comes in to affect with our mother's kin and we never make reference to them in possessive form. However, this does not apply when we address our father's kin. In the case of our father (different clan) we address them directly and indirectly in possessive form.

(2) Aunts and Uncles

Ts'eskiye (crow clan)	Edese (mothers brother)	Ede (mothers sister)		Es-be'e (fathers sister)	Es-tā (fathers brother)	Ch'iyone (wolf clan)

Mothers Children	daze / esaze (son) (Daughter)	Chu'/ Tu'e (son) (Daughter)		Ishye'e/es-tsi'he (son) (Daughter)	Ishye'e/es-tsi'he (son) (Daughter)	Fathers Children
Mothers Grand Children	Ts'uwe (son) (Daughter)	Chã (son) (Daughter)		Non-relatives (Different Clan)	Non-relatives (Different Clan)	Fathers Grand Children

Siblings

In Tãłtãn the dual system works similarly to the rule of respect that is used with mother, father and the mother's kin; but in this case the duality is dictated by age – older vs. younger whereas we never refer to our older siblings in possessive form. However, we can refer to our younger sibling in possessive form.

(3) Siblings

		Mother & Father	
Older siblings	Edãde (older sister)	Ediye (older brother)	
		Sibling	
Younger siblings	Es-dēdze (younger sister)	Es-chidle (younger brother)	

Cousins

In Tãłtãn our matrilineal cousins are referred to as brothers and sisters and the 'rule of respect' comes into effect when addressing our older cousins directly and/or indirectly.

(4) Cousins

Ts'eskiye (crow clan)		Mother's Sister & Brother's Children			Father's Sister & Brother's Children		Ch'iyone (wolf clan)
Older 1st cousin	Edäde (older sister)	Ediye (older brother)		Non-relatives (Different Clan)	Non-relatives (Different Clan)		Older 1st cousin
		1st cousin			1st cousin		
Younger 1st cousin	Es-dēdze (younger sister)	Es-chidle (younger brother)		Non-relatives (Different Clan)	Non-relatives (Different Clan)		Younger 1st cousin

Grandparents

In Tāłtān the duality occurs in two ways between the grandparents and grandchildren: The grandmother and grandfather refer to the grandchildren in different (dual) ways and the grandchildren can refer to the matrilineal and patrilineal grandparents in different (dual) ways. In the latter, the grandchildren can refer to the father's parents in possessive form, but they cannot do the same with the matrilineal grandparents.

(5)   Grandparents

	Tsiye (mother's father)	Tsū-tsū (mother's mother)		Es-tsū (father's mother)	Es-tsiye (father's father)	
Mothers Children	Tş'uwe (son) (Daughter)	Chā (son) (Daughter)		Chā (son) (Daughter)	Tş'uwe (son) (Daughter)	Fathers Children
Great-grand Children	Tş'uwe (son) (Daughter)	Chā (son) (Daughter)		Non-relatives (Different Clan)	Non-relatives (Different Clan)	Great-grand Children

Chapter 12. PREFIXES, AFFIXES AND SUFFIXES

Prefixes

In Tāłtān there are a group of prefixes that are used intensively with the intransitive verb-phrase to walk, to go by transport, to swim, to fly etc. This pattern was among the first patterns that surfaced during my oral learning - this is the paradigm that I used to begin mapping out the patterns (to see the mapping out process go to Appendix 3 and 4).

Below are samples of the prefixes used with the verb to walk (to go) used in the 1ˢᵗ person with the dual grammatical numeration.

(1)   Prefix

	Prefix	Translation	Verb-Phrase	Phrase with Prefix	Translation
1ˢᵗ Person					
(Singular)	k'in-	*around*	dēsał	k'in-dēsał	*Around, I'm gonna walk.*
(Dual 2)	k'in-	*around*	dit'as	k'in-dit'as	*Around, we gonna walk.*
(Dual 3+)	k'in-	*around*	didētł	k'in-didētł	*Around, we gonna walk.*
1ˢᵗ Person					
(Singular)	an-	*home*	dēsał	an-dēsał	*Home, I'm gonna go.*
(Dual 2)	an-	*home*	dit'as	an-dit'as	*Home, we gonna go.*
(Dual 3+)	an-	*home*	didētł	an-didētł	*Home, we gonna go.*
1ˢᵗ Person					
(Singular)	ti-	*outside*	dēsał	ti-dēsał	*Outside, I'm gonna go.*
(Dual 2)	ti-	*outside*	dit'as	ti-dit'as	*Outside, we gonna go.*
(Dual 3+)	ti-	*outside*	didētł	ti-didētł	*Outside, we gonna go.*
1ˢᵗ Person					
(Singular)	ni-	*to get up*	dēsał	ni-dēsał	*Up, I'm gonna get.*
(Dual 2)	ni-	*to get up*	dit'as	ni-dit'as	*Up, we gonna get*
(Dual 3+)	ni-	*to get up*	didētł	ni-didētł	*Up, we gonna get*
1ˢᵗ Person					
(Singular)	ka-	*to go get*	dēsał	ka-dēsał	*I'm gonna go get.*
(Dual 2)	ka-	*to go get*	dit'as	ka-dit'as	*We gonna go get.*
(Dual 3+)	ka-	*to go get*	didētł	ka-didētł	*We gonna go get.*
1ˢᵗ Person					
(Singular)	edēs-	*leave*	dēsał	edēs-dēsał	*Away, I'm going.*
(Dual 2)	edēs-	*leave*	dit'as	edēs-dit'as	*Away, we going.*
(Dual 3+)	edēs-	*leave*	diētł	edēs-didētł	*Away, we going.*
1ˢᵗ Person					
(Singular)	nen-	*across*	dēsał	nen-dēsał	*Across, I'm gonna go.*
(Dual 2)	nen-	*across*	dit'as	nen-dit'as	*Across, we gonna go.*

(Dual 3+)	nen-	*across*	dietł	nen-didētł	*Across, we gonna go.*
1st Person					
(Singular)	eji-	*hunt*	dēsał	eji-dēsał	*Hunting, I'm gonna go*
(Dual 2)	eji-	*hunt*	dit'as	eji-dit'as	*Hunting, we gonna go*
(Dual 3+)	eji-	*hunt*	dietł	eji-didētł	*Hunting, we gonna go*
1st Person					
(Singular)	ta-	*up*	dēsał	ta-dēsał	*Up, I'm gonna go*
(Dual 2)	ta-	*up*	dit'as	ta-dit'as	*Up, we gonna go.*
(Dual 3+)	ta-	*up*	dietł	ta-didētł	*Up, we gonna go*
1st Person					
(Singular)	łan-	*back*	dēsał	łan-dēsał	*Back, I'm gonna go*
(Dual 2)	łan-	*back*	dit'as	łan-dit'as	*Back, we gonna go*
(Dual 3+)	łan-	*back*	dietł	łan-didētł	*Back, we gonna go*
1st Person					
(Singular)	tan-	*check*	dēsał	tan-dēsał	*I'm gonna check*
(Dual 2)	tan-	*check*	dit'as	tan-dit'as	*We gonna check*
(Dual 3+)	tan-	*check*	dietł	tan-didētł	*We gonna check*
1st Person					
(Singular)	ten-	*Pull-out*	dēsał	ten-dēsał	*I'm gonna pull-out*
(Dual 2)	ten-	*Pull-out*	dit'as	ten-dit'as	*We gonna pull-out*
(Dual 3+)	ten-	*Pull-out*	dietł	ten-didētł	*We gonna pull-out*
1st Person					
(Singular)	gha-	*give to*	dēsał	gha-dēsał	*I'm gonna give*
(Dual 2)	gha-	*give to*	dit'as	gha-dit'as	*We gonna give*
(Dual 3+)	gha-	*give to*	dietł	gha-didētł	*We gonna give*
1st Person					
(Singular)	na-	*not specifying*	dēsał	na-dēsał	*I'm gonna go*
(Dual 2)	na-	*not specifying*	dit'as	na-dit'as	*We gonna go*
(Dual 3+)	na-	*not specifying*	Didēł	na-didētł	*We gonna go*
1st Person					
(Singular)	kan-	*come get*	dēsał	kan-dēsał	*I'm gonna come get*
(Dual 2)	kan-	*come get*	dit'as	kan-dit'as	*We gonna come get*
(Dual 3+)	kan-	*come get*	didētł	kan-didētł	*We gonna come get*
1st Person					
(Singular)	yan-	*inside*	dēsał	yan-dēsał	*I'm gonna go inside*
(Dual 2)	yan-	*inside*	dit'as	yan-dit'as	*We gonna go inside*
(Dual 3+)	yan-	*inside*	didētł	yan-didētł	*We gonna go inside*
1st Person					
(Singular)	te-	*lost*	dēsał	te-dēsał	*I'm gonna get lost*
(Dual 2)	te-	*lost*	dit'as	te-dit'as	*We gonna get lost*
(Dual 3+)	te-	*lost*	didētł	te-didētł	*We gonna get lost*
1st Person					

The above pattern/paradigm can be manipulated in many different ways. When we calculate the grammatical person(s) (1st, 2nd and 3rd etc.), dual, plural numeration and the counter

stem classifiers (four legs, two legs etc.), the ways in which this particular form can be manipulated in speech is in the hundreds. I speculate that the traditional nomadic lifestyle of the Tahltan influenced the ways in which this pattern can be manipulated - their constant movement upon the land is reflected in how they simplified the linguistic concept for moving about. To get an idea of the numerous ways in which this form is manipulated see Appendix 4.

Prefixes used with Counter and Descriptive Stem-classifier

In Tahltan the prefixes remain consistent when the classifiers are interchanged. Below is a prefix demonstrated with classifier-stems.

(2)   Prefix used with Counter and Descriptive Stem-classifiers

Prefix	Transla tion	Counter Stem	Translation	Phrase	Translation
K'in-	*around*	goch	*four (4) legs*	K'in-degoch	*around he walk*
K'in-	*around*	datł	*two (2) legs*	K'in-dedatł	*around he walk*

Prefix	Transla tion	Descriptive Stem	Translation	Phrase	Translation
K'in-	*around*	dūs̱	*prone on belly*	K'in-dedūs̱	*around he crawls*
K'in-	*around*	t'ah	*fly*	K'in-det'ah	*Around he/it flys*
K'in-	*around*	bē	*swim*	K'in-debē	*around he swims*
K'in-	*around*	lētł	*he/it floats*	K'in-delētł	*around he/it floats*

Affixes

From an oral speaking perspective there are two affixes that are important to know. They are the future and past tense affixes. The future tense affix appeared previously in the singular example of the phrase /dēsał/, which means 'going to walk' (see Table 3, page 60).

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Future Tense Affix

The future tense affix is the letter /d/ combined with the elongated vowels /ē/ and /ī/.

(1)   Future Tense Affix

	Affix	Phrase	Translation	Example Sentence
1st person				
Singular	dē	dēsał	*I'm gonna walk*	En-gah ts'i' dēsał (By you, to I'm gonna walk)
2nd person				
Singular	dī	dīndał	*you gonna walk*	Es-gah ts'i' dīndał (By me, to you gonna walk)
3rd person				
Singular	dē	dēdał	*he's gonna walk*	En-gah ts'i' dēdał (By you, to he's gonna walk)

Past Tense Affix

In Tāłtān there are two ways to denote past tense; the first is to change the entire verb-phrase and the other is change or insert a single articulate. For example, in the former, the present tense for the phrase *en-dodēsditł* (you, I gonna tell) is totally different than the past tense *en-dohosdech* (I told you). To learn the tenses in this case one must learn the tense forms independently, but that's not the focus here. Rather the focus is on the simpler way to denote past tense with certain phrases by simply adding an affix. With some phrases we simply need to add the articulation /y/ as the following table demonstrates. The past tense affix is represented by the articulation /y/.

(2)   Past Tense Affix

	Past tense Affix	Present Tense Phrase	Translation	Past Tense Phrase	Translation
1st person					
Singular	y	Aneszen	*I think*	Yeneszen	*I thought*
2nd person					
Singular	y	aninzen	*you think*	yeninzen	*you thought*
3rd person					
Singular	y	anezen	*he think*	yenezen	*he thought*

The past tense affix is also used in what appears to be a vowel form and it seems to be most prevalent in the reciprocal exchange past tense phrases. It is consistent with the way the /y/ behaves in the English orthography. In English the /y/ is sometimes a consonant and sometimes a vowel. In Tāłtān the /y/ behaves the same way – sometimes it's a consonant and sometimes it's a vowel. (This phenomenon has not been recognized as of yet and the articulation /y/ has not been added to the Tahltan Orthography as a vowel).

The following two examples demonstrate how the /y/ behaves like a vowel.

(3)   Past Tense Affix

	Past Tense Affix	Present Tense Phrase	Translation
1ˢᵗ person			
Singular	y	Ech łitynichush	*Shirt, I bought*
2nd person			
Singular	y	Ech es-gynini'an	*Shirt, you gave me*

Suffixes

In Tāłtān there are three (3) cases in which 'vowels' are added to the end of the word-stem to change its communicative value. These changes occur when we:

1. Ask a question - we add a vowel suffix,

2. Take possession of nouns - we add a vowel suffix,

3. Emphasize something – we add a vowel suffix.

Although the linguistic process pertaining to how this is done is relatively complex, it is not necessary to study it in order to learn how it is done. The process of learning how to do this comes naturally and although we made reference to this phenomenon (voicing of the fricatives etc.) during dialogue analysis we did not study it. Rather, it came as a natural process. Thus I feel

it is unnecessary to cover it in-depth here. Hardwick (1984 p: 47-49) does a thorough job in

linguistically breaking down how this is done. For more info see Hardwick (1984).

(1)   Question-mark Vowel

	Question-mark Vowel	Phrase	Translation	Question Mark Vowel	Translation
2ⁿᵈ person					
Singular	a	dīndał	*you gonna walk*	De'eda dīndala	*Where you walking?*
Singular	i	int'īn	*you have*	Yeda int'īni	*What you have?*

The question-mark vowel is added to the end of the last word in the sentence and it works

similar to the way the question mark works in English writing.

(2)   Possessive Vowel

	Possessive Vowel	Phrase	Translation	possession	Translation
1ˢᵗ person					
Singular	e	la'	*hand*	es-la'e	*My hand*
Singular	a	bat	*mittens*	es-bada	*My mittens*
Singular	e	bēs	*knife*	es-bēze	*My knife*

The possessive vowel is added to the end of the noun that is being possessed.

(3)   Emphasis-vowel

	Emphasis-Vowel	Phrase	Translation	Emphasized	Translation
3rd person					
Singular	i	naẕet	*he stand*	Łani eji naẕedi	*Really, right there he stand*
	i	denestl'ets	*dark*	ho-denestl'ets	*The /ho-/ is black (it's dark)*

The emphasis-vowel is added to subtly emphasize the sentence.

Affix – prefix/suffix

In Tāłtān there is an affix that can be used as either a prefix or a suffix. This affix is the

morpheme /na/ and it is used to emphasize. In Tāłtān if you were to say /tsini/ it would simply

mean to be quiet (politely), but add the affix /na/ to the end of the word (suffix) and say /tsini-na/

the meaning changes to something like shut-up (impolitely). Or if you were to say Duda ant'e

hāhg (What you doing huh?) and the addressed does not respond you would press harder for a

response and follow-up with hāhg-na – you would add the /na/ to emphasize the question. I

searched hard for the meaning of this affix and the closest definition I got was it is a 'verbal

point' - it's sort of like pointing without using the finger (According to Robert Dennis 2014

personal conversation/dialogue analysis). The reason I consider the /na/ an affix is because it can

be used as a prefix and suffix. The phrase /na-se-ninghotł/ demonstrates /na/ being used as a

prefix.

(4)   Affix Used as a Prefix

	Verb	Translation
1st person		
Singular object & singular subject	Nanenisghotł	*You, I punch*
Singular object & plural subject	Nanenisighotł	*You, we punch*
Plural object & singular subject	Nadanisghotł	*You (2+), I punch*
Plural object & plural subject	Nadanisighotł	*You (2+). we punch*
Singular object & singular subject	Na'enisghotł	*Him, I punch*
Plural object & singular subject	Nahunisghotł	*Them, I punch*
Plural object & plural subject	Nahunisighotł	*Them, we punch*
1st person		
Singular object & singular subject	Naseninghotł	*Me, you punch*
Singular object & plural subject	Nasenaghotł	*Me, you (2+) punch*
Plural object & singular subject	Natweninghotł	*Us, you punch*
Plural object & plural subject	Nahuninghotł	*Them, you punch*
Singular object & singular subject	Na'eninghotł	*Him, you punch*
Plural object & singular subject	Nahuninghotł	*Them, you punch*
Plural object & plural subject	Nahunaghotł	*Them, you (2+) punch*
3rd person		
Singular object & singular subject	Na·se-nighotł	*Me, he punch*
Singular object & plural subject	Na·se-henighotł	*Me, they punch*
Plural object & singular subject	Na·twe·henighotł	*Us, he punch*
Plural object & plural subject	Na·hu-nighotł	*Them, he punch*
Singular object & singular subject	Na-henighotł	*Him, they punch*
Plural object & singular subject	Na·hu-nighotł	*Them, he punch*
Plural object & plural subject	Na·hu-denighotł	*Them, they punch*

Orally, I consider this form to be the most complex, because it has the object and subject pronoun-markers patterned directly within the word-phrase and the pronouns don't follow the typical pronoun patterns of the previous paradigms. In my three years of research I only found two forms that follow this paradigm/pattern. The other is the example /kenłehudēstl'utł/ used earlier. Because of the inconsistencies in comparison to the other basic patterns, I tried validating this pattern with the younger (65-70 year olds) native speakers and all of these expert speakers whom I spoke to cannot complete the plural forms of this paradigm. My informant completed the plural forms for me.

Chapter 13. CONTRACTION

In Tāłtān there are a group of word-phrases that are related in meaning and in the way in which they function. I am not sure how to classify them as a unit, but from an oral perspective they popped out to me as a pattern. These phrases seem to be using 'contraction' and are derivatives of the word /kusa/ (must be) combined with other words. This phenomenon is not confined to any group of words in particular and they include conjunctions, adverbs and pronouns etc. From an oral methodology they appear to be structured for simplicity.

(1)   Contraction

Word One	Transl ation	Word Two	Translat ion	Tāłtān Phrase	Literal Translation	Free Translation
mēda	*who*	Kusa	*must be*	Mē'eku	*Who must be?*	I wonder who's that?
yēda	*what*	kusa	*must be*	Yē'eku	*What must be?*	I wonder what's that?
de'eda[4]	*where*	kusa	*must be*	De'eku	*Where must be?*	I wonder where?
se'eh	*if*	kusa	*must be*	Se'eku	*It must be?*	I wonder if?
dāda[5]	*where*	kusa	*must be*	Dāku	*Where must be?*	I wonder where?
dūda	*how*	kusa	*must be*	Dūku	*How must be?*	I wonder how?

The above word-phrases work well with another group (pattern) of phrases that are also patterned for simplicity. Changing meaning of these word-phrases is simply a matter of exchanging the first articulation (affix). Below is an example of how we can manipulate the meaning of this phrase in five ways by simply changing the first letter of the word.

Ka'at'ē - is like it. - Me-ma ka'at'e — She is like her mother.

Ja'at'ē - Is it (*Means: it is*). — Es-kē ja'at'ē - My shoe it is.

Na'at'e   Ethocon na'at'e (Is he a white man).

Sa'at'ē - Must be it (*It must be*) — John sa'at'ē - John it must be.

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[4] The word /dē'ede/ (where) is used in regards to unfixed positions, or locations.
[5] 5 The word /dada/ (where) is used for fixed locations like in a house, lake etc.

Dza'at'ē - bad it (*Meaning: bad it is*) — John dza'at'ē. — John is bad.

Below is a demonstration of how I orally envision them as a group/pattern:

(2)   ja'at'ē Pattern

Phrase	Literal Translation	Free Translation sentence
ja'at'ē	*is it*	*Tl'i' ja'ate (Dog it is)*
na'at'ē	*is he/she*	Utso·kan na'at'ē (Whiteman is he?)
sa'at'ē	*must be it*	*Tl'i' sa'at'ē (Dog it must be)*
ka'at'ē	*like it*	*Tl'i' ka'at'ē (Dog it is like.*
dza'at'ē	*bad it*	*Tl'i' dza'at'ē (Dog it is bad)*
da'at'ē	*unknown*	*I haven't figured this one out as of yet, but I've heard it used in sentences*

Keeping the word /ku·sa/ and /ka'at'ē/ in mind, below is a demonstration of how both word phrases are used together in a sentence:

Person #1 statement: De'eku⁶ desh·ya. (I wonder where he went).

Person #2 statement: Terrace ⁷sā'at'ē (must be Terrace).

Person #2 can also say: Terrace sā deshya (Terrace, must be he went).

In the third example sā'atē is contracted. Contractions can be quite complex and they can sometimes use up to four words. These four-word combinations/contraction below (Contracted Sentence) can appear like a word-phrase, but they are actually separate words; they are a conjunction and a word-phrase combination.

(3)   Contracted Sentence

	Regular Sentence	Translation	Contracted Sentence
1ˢᵗ person subject			
Singular object & singular subject	Meda ts'i' ho–desē	*Who to, I talk?*	Me-ts'odesē
Singular object & plural subject	Meda ts'i' ho–desidē	*Who to, we talk?*	Me-ts'odesidē
Singular object & singular subject	En-ts'i' ho–desē	*You to, I talk*	En-ts'odesē
Singular object & plural subject	En-ts'i' ho–desidē	*You to, we talk*	En-ts'odesidē
Singular object & singular subject	Me-ts'i' ho–desē	*Him to, I talk*	Me-ts'odesē

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⁶ The morpheme /ku/ is actually the first syllable of the word /ku·sa/.
⁷ The morpheme /sa/ is actually the second syllable of the word /ku·sa/.

Singular object & plural subject	Me-ts'i' ho- deṣidē	*Him to, we talk*	Me-ts'odeṣidē
Plural object & singular subject	Da-ts'i' ho-desē	*Them to, I talk*	Da-ts'odesē
Plural object & plural subject	Da-ts'i' ho- deṣidē	*Them to, we talk*	Da-ts'odeṣidē
2ⁿᵈ person subject			
Singular object & singular subject	Meda ts'i' ho-dīndē	*Who to, you talk?*	Me-ts'odīndē
Singular object & plural subject	Meda ts'i' ho-dadē	*Who to, you (2) talk?*	Me-ts'o-dadē
Singular object & singular subject	Es-ts'i' ho-dīndē	*Me to, you talk*	Es-ts'o-dīndē
Singular object & plural subject	Es-ts'i' ho-dadē	*Me to, you (2) talk*	Es-ts'o-dadē
Singular object & singular subject	Me-ts'i' ho-dīndē	*Him to, you talk*	Me-ts'o-dīndē
Singular object & plural subject	Me-ts'i' ho-dadē	*Him to, you (2) talk*	Me-ts'o-dadē
Plural object & singular subject	Da-ts'i' ho-dīndē	*Them to, you talk*	Da-ts'o-dīndē
Plural object & plural subject	Da-ts'i' ho-da·dē	*Them to, you (2) talk*	Da-ts'o-dadē
2ⁿᵈ person subject			
Singular object & singular subject	Meda ts'i' ho-dedē	*Who to, he talk?*	Me-ts'o-dedē
Singular object & plural subject	Meda ts'i' hu·dedē	*Who to, they talk?*	Me-ts'u·dedē
Singular object & singular subject	Es-ts'i' ho-dedē	*Me to, you talk*	Es-ts'o-dedē
Singular object & plural subject	Es-ts'i' hu·dedē	*Me to, they talk*	Es-ts'u·dedē
Singular object & singular subject	Me-ts'i' ho-dedē	*Him to, he talk*	Me-ts'o-dedē
Singular object & plural subject	Me-ts'i' hu·dedē	*Him to, they talk*	Me-ts'u·dedē
Plural object & singular subject	Da-ts'i' ho-dedē	*Them to, he talk*	Da-ts'o-dedē
Plural object & plural subject	Da-ts'i' hu·dedē	*Them to, they talk*	Da-ts'u·dedē
1ˢᵗ person object/subject			
Singular object & singular subject	Ede-ts'i' ho-desē	*Myself to, I talk*	Ede-ts'odedesē

In the Iskut dialect of the English language we also contract phrases and the best example would either be the phrase 'Onnacana', which means 'On account of', or 'Um gon-go to Terrace, but Um nut-gon get drunk' (I am gonna go to Terrace, but I am not going to get drunk). Below are examples of mass-classifier stem contractions.

(4)   Contracted Stem

	Un-contracted stem	**Translation**	**Contracted Stem**	**Translation**
1ˢᵗ person				
Singular	łitadēslēł	*I'm gonna buy*	K'unts łitadēslē	*Potatoes I'm gonna buy*
Plural	łitadēṣilēł	*I'm gonna buy*	K'unts łitadēṣilē	*Potatoes I'm gonna buy*
2ⁿᵈ person				
Singular	łitadīntītł	*you gonna buy*	Una łitadīnti	*Gun I'm gonna buy*
Plural	łitadatītł	*you gonna buy*	Una łitadati	*Gun I'm gonna buy*
1ˢᵗ person				
Singular	łitadekatł	*I'm gonna buy*	Cup łitadeka	*Cup I'm gonna buy*
Plural	łitahedekatł	*I'm gonna buy*	Plate łitahedeka	*Plate I'm gonna buy*

Putting It All Together

Fluent speakers of the language use contractions all the time and as a beginner this can sometimes be confusing and the contraction can make the language unrecognizable. Below is an example of two (2) brothers conversing over the phone with one brother's wife and a friend sitting nearby. Let's say their names are:

Jim (brother 1), John (brother 2), Jane (wife), and Tammy (wife's friend).

Phone rings and John picks up.

John: Hāha' (hello)

Jim: Hāha'. Ediya John jani en-gah'e (Hello, my older brother John beside you?)

John Sini ja John (I is John). Meda nini (Who's you?).

Jim: En-chitl Jim ja sini (Your younger brother Jim is I)

John: Oh! Duda ant'ē (Oh! How are you?)

Jim: Soga ast'e nini k'aji (Good my state and you?)

John: Sini k'aj soga ast'e. (Me too I'm good).

Jim: Es-li'e te-degēt. Es-li'e yihn'ini (My dog ran away. My dog you seen him?)

John: Ehhh. Ah'ene k'in-degoji. Kan-dīndali (Yes. Outside he walk around. You coming to get him?)

Jim: Ehhh. K'adle es-li'e ka-dēsał (Yes, quick my dog I'm gonna get him).

John: ehh. Hēhe' (Ok bye)

Tammy turns to Jane and says: Me'ekū ts'odedē (I wonder who to he talk?)

Jane turns to her husband and asks: Me-tsodīndē (Who to you talk?)

John answers as he puts on his jacket: Es-chitle Jim ts'odesē (My younger brother Jim I talk to.)

Jane: De'ede dīndali (Where you going/walking?)

John: Uwe ts'ih kedi kime ho-ts'i' dēsał (Always from purchase house/store, to I'm walking.)

Jane: Yē daga (What for?)

John: Una łitadēsti (Gun I'm gonna buy).

John leaves, end of conversation.

This is how a typical short conversation in the Tāłtān language utilizes contraction, possessives, postpositional phrases, transitive and intransitive phrases, 1st, 2nd and 3rd person pronouns, numeration, mass classifier, prefixes, affixes, suffixes, etc. One must learn these basics to speak and understand the language.

Chapter 14. CONCLUSION

This thesis represents the results of my successful attempt to combine our oral methodology and digital recording with the contemporary formal writing system introduced by Carter (1991). It demonstrates how I learned to speak the Tāłtān language, in an environment where minimal pedagogical resource material existed with my father as my oral teacher. In the process of learning I sought out the deep cultural significance of our language and I deciphered the complex grammatical structure from an oral perspective. The understanding that I developed in the process helped me get past what I consider to be the grammatical and cultural barriers (differences) that are preventing our language from being passed on to native English speakers who are interested in learning the language, be they Tahltan or other.

The biggest differences between Tāłtān and English are the grammatical structure and the worldview and both are barriers that contribute to the demise of the language.

In Tāłtān there are no verbs and adjectives per se. Rather in Tāłtān we have what is referred to, from a grammatical perspective, as *verb, noun* and *adjective-phrases*. The *object* and *subject-marker* (personal pronouns) are embedded/patterned within the phrases. This makes it totally different in comparison to English.

In Tāłtān the '*paradigms*' are encoded with ingenious sequential grammatical patterns that remain consistent throughout the language and from an oral learning perspective it makes the learning process very predictable. The predictability is built around the object and subject-markers and from an oral perspective it pops out as a theme that runs throughout the language from simple to complex.

Although I studied the language orally, I could not get totally away from my adaptation to writing thus I mapped out the pronoun patterns in writing and I used the map as a template in my

mind to guide my oral research on how the patterns run throughout the language. Understanding how the personal pronoun-markers are patterned into the overall structure grounded me as a second language learner and this in-turn sped up the process of learning.

There is a huge difference in English and Tāłtān language and worldview(s) and this creates barriers for researchers, informants and native English speakers attempting to learn and/or teach Tāłtān as a second language. This difference in perspective is reflected in some of the inconsistencies in the translation of work by other non-Tahltan researchers and in how our language continues to die amidst our ongoing language program(s).

Aside from the total differences in worldview, the traditional Tahltan perspective includes a different teaching/learning methodology that is not compatible with the formal imposed methodology that is used today in formal education. The Tāłtān native speakers learned the language orally (without writing). They have been trying to teach students, who are adapted to the western formal visual learning process from an oral perspective (which is not dependent upon writing) and they are unsuccessful.

To add to the problem, in the Tahltan community(s) the Tāłtān language is not being spoken and this creates a huge gap in the promotion and the learning process for those studying the language. To communicate fluently in a particular language one needs to develop both 'speech production' and 'speech recognition', but in the Iskut community, where I studied, the language is not being used often enough to help in the development of speech recognition. Not hearing the language in its natural setting contributes to the rapid disappearance of our language and during my study it caused my 'speech recognition' to suffer. I addressed this problem by creating an artificial speech environment that is compatible with the modern digital gadgetry (iPod) and it was very successful in developing our (myself and my colleagues) speech

recognition.

My insights into how the subject and object-markers are patterned and embedded directly into the word-phrases and the differences in worldviews of Tahltan and English, leads me to conclude that:

- There is a structural theme patterned throughout our language and it's the study of the grammatical structure, from the perspective of the patterns that will allow us to maintain an aspect of our oral tradition in the practical study of our language while taking advantage of our adaptation to the visual (writing) learning process.

- There is a huge cultural difference between the English and Tāłtān languages and this must be considered a major element in the development of Tāłtān resource material.

- There is a need for the development of practical comprehensive resource material that takes into consideration the oral teaching methodology, linguistic barriers and cultural dynamics, while at the same time utilizing the 'current adapted visual learning methodology' and 'social media' that our society has adapted to.

To be successful in teaching and creating the mechanisms for the overall revitalization of the Tāłtān Language teachers and researchers alike must take the differences into consideration and make it an important part of their methodological approach in the classroom and in pedagogical resource development.

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Appendix 1.

Tāłtān Orthography

The Tāłtān Orthography was developed by Carter (1991) with suggestions on vowel structure and an emphasis on keeping the orthography similar to the neighboring Athabascan systems developed by Leer (1985).

The symbols that are used in the Tāłtān practical orthography are based on the principles of a phonetic alphabet. In a phonetic alphabet every sound within the language is always represented with the same written symbol. Although the English writing system is non-phonetically based, the Tāłtān system utilizes the symbols of the English alphabet, albeit with a few adjustments. For example, within the Tāłtān language the sounds 'f', 'q', 'r' and 'v' are non-existent, thus they are excluded from the Tāłtān alphabet. Also the sounds that are non-existent in English, but present in Tāłtān are added by using modified or combined English symbols. For example, the sounds at the on-set of the Tāłtān words for fish (ɬuwe) and grease (tleyh) are foreign to the English language therefore they are represented by the introduction of the modified /ł/ (l with a line through) and/or the combination of 't and the 'l' ('tl'). Overall there are 42 symbols in the Tāłtān alphabet, including a glottal, five vowels, and thirty-six consonants.

The Glottal Stop

The glottal /'/ has no English equivalent and is pronounced with a stoppage in the throat. An example of the stoppage in throat can be found at the beginning of the English word 'apple'. For more information on the Glottal see Basic Tahltan Conversation Lessons (Carter 1992), or Talhtan Dictionary (Tahltan Tribal Council 1992, 1993).

Letter	English equivalent/description	Example	Meaning
'	No English equivalent	k'aji	again

Tāłtān Vowel

Letter	English equivalent/description	Example	Meaning
a	Same as u in cup	gah	rabbit
ā	Same as au in caught	anlā	You make
e	Same as e in ten	edū	don't/not
ē	Same as e but longer in duration	bēs	knife
i	Same as ee in keep	ni'	face

ī	Same as i but longer in duration	ant'īni	you doing
o	Same as oa in oats	khoh	grizzly
ō	Same as o in go	chō	big
u	Same as oo in boot	ghu'	tooth
ū	Same as u but longer in duration	tū	water

Taltān Consonants

There are approximately thirty-six consonants in the Taltan alphabet. Following are examples of each, along with the English equivalent/description, an example word and the meaning.

Letter	English equivalent/description	Example	Meaning
b	Same as b in big	bede	food
ch	Same as ch in church	chime	son
ch'	Same as ch but done with glottal	ch'iyone	wolf
d	Same as d in did	de'e	give it here
dl	No English equivalent	dlū'ān	flu, he caught
dz	Same as ds in pads	dzā'at'ē	bad, it
dẓ	No English equivalent	dẓeł	mountain
g	Same as g in good	gah	beside
gh	Same as g but a softer sound	ghah	because
h	Same as h in head	hodedē	she/he talks
j	Same as j or dg in judge	kuji	now
k	Same as k in keep	kadīnya	you go get
k'	Same as k but done with a glottal	k'aji	again
kh	Similar to k but softer in sound	khadi	hurry

Letter	English equivalent/description	Example	Meaning
l	Same as l in large	la'	hand
ł	No English equivalent	łagu	stop it/quit
m	Same as m in mother	meneslīn	I like
n	Same as n in not	nin'ān	you put it
nh	No English equivalent	ninh'īn	look!
p	Same as p in pup	es-pāne	my friend
s	Same as s in see	soga	well
s̱	Same as th in thin or s in sin	s̱indah	sit
sh	Same as sh in shoot	deshyā	(s)he went
t	Same as t in tell	tū	water
t'	Same as t but done with a glottal	ast'ē	I am feeling
tl	No English equivalent	tli'	dog
tl'	No English equivalent	tl'ā	after
ts	Same as ts in cats	tsīni	be quiet
ts'	Same as ts but done with a glottal	ts'ots	blow fly
ts̱	No English equivalent	ts̱ē	rock
ts̱'	Same as ts̱ but done with a glottal	ts̱'adi	sweetheart
w	Same as w in wash	washman	police
y	Same as y in yes	yēda	what/how
yh	No English equivalent	tleyh	grease
z	Same as z in zoo	in-zike ost'ini	let me help you
ẕ	Same as th in then	ẕuł	empty

Appendix 2

THE TAHLTAN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION PROGRAM
PO Box: 90
Iskut, British Columbia
V0J 1K0

   In consideration of the work the Tahltan Language Revitalization Program is doing to collect and preserve material of value for the study of our Tahltan Language past and present in the Łabonot'ln Area (Łuwe Chōn). I would like to deposit with them for their use the items represented by the accession number(s) given below.

   These audio recordings and the accompanying transcripts are the result of one or more recorded voluntary interview(s) with me. Any reader, or researcher should bear in mind that he/she is reading a transcript of my spoken, not written, word and that the audio recording(s), not the transcripts, is the primary document.

   It is understood that the Tahltan Language Revitalization Program will allow the Tahltan membership to download edited copies of the digital audio(s) and read the transcripts and use them in connection with their research and/or for other personal and educational purposes of interests.

   It is also understood that the Tahltan Language Revitalization Program will, at the discretion of the Director/Coordinator, allow any qualified scholar(s) to listen to the tapes and read the transcripts and use them in connection with their research and for other educational purposes. It is further understood that no copies of the tapes or transcript will be made and/or nothing may be used from them in any published form without the written permission of the Tahltan language Revitalization Program.

Signed: _James Dennis_   Date: _Jan 4/2014_

Understood and agreed to:

Interviewer: _____   Date: _Jan 4 2014_

Coordinator: _____   Date: _Jan 4 2014_

Accession number (s):
VM-1, VM-2, VM-3, VM-4, VM-5, VM-6, VM-7, VM-8, VM-9, VM-10, VM-11, VM-12, VM-13, VM-14, VM-15, VM-16, VM-17, VM-18, VM-19, VM-20, VM-21, VM-22, VM-23, VM-24, VM-25, VM-26, VM-27, VM-28, VM-29, VM-30, VM-31, VM-32, VM-33, VM-34, VM- 35, VM-36, VM-37, VM-38, VM-39, VM-40.

1st Person
(Singular) I'm old -   Ses·jan
(Plural) We old -   Si·jan

2nd Person
(Singular) You old -   Sin·jan
(Plural) You old -   Sa·jan

3rd Person
(Singular) He's old -   Se·jan
(Plural) They old -   Hes·jan

Note the consistency in the pattern for the animate, inanimate and
plurals and possessives.

Stand – zet (Stem)

1st Person
(Singular) I stand -   Nas·zet
(Plural) We stand -   Na·si·zet

2nd Person
(Singular) You Stand -   Nan·zet
(Plural) You Stand -   Na·da·zet

3rd Person
(Singular) He Stand -   Na·zet
(Plural) They Stand -   Na·ha·zet

Note the consistency in the pattern for the plurals and possessives.

Scared – jit (Stem)

1st Person
(Singular) I Scared -   Nes·jit
(Plural) We Scared -   Nesi·jit

2nd Person
(Singular) You Scared -   Nin·jit
(Plural) You Scared -   Na·jit

3rd Person
(Singular) He's Scared -   Ne·jit
(Plural) They Scared -   Hene·jit

See – 'In (Stem)   Present Tense

1st Person
(Singular) I See -   Nes'In
(Plural) We See -   Nesi'In

2nd Person
(Singular) You See -   Nin'In
(Plural) You See -   Na'In

3rd Person
(Singular) He's See -   Ne'In
(Plural) They See -   Hene'In

Sleep – tetl (Stem)

1st Person
(Singular) I Sleep -   Nes·tetl
(Plural) We Sleep -   Nesi·tetl

2nd Person
(Singular) You Sleep -   Nin·tetl
(Plural) You Sleep -   Na·tetl

3rd Person
(Singular) He's Sleep -   Ne· tetl
(Plural) They Sleep -   Hene·tetl

Note the consistency in the pattern for the animate, inanimate and
plurals and possessives.

Put Out – ·tses (Stem)

1st Person
(Singular) Fire I put out -   Kon në·tses
(Plural) Fire we put out -   Kon ne·si·tses

2nd Person
(Singular)Fire you put out -   Kon nïn·tses
(Plural) Fire you put out -   Kon na·tses

3rd Person
 (Singular) Fire he put out -   Kon ne·tses
(Plural)Fire they put out   Kon he·ne·tses

Note the pattern for the plurals and possessives are consistent.
However, in the 1st person singular the linguistic rule of
'intolerance to three (3) consonant cluster word medial' (following
a long vowel) changes the 1st person possessive to appear like the
regular 3rd person possessive.

Cry – tseyh (Stem)

1st Person
(Singular) I Cry -   Nes·tseyh
(Plural) We Cry -   Nesi·tseyh

2nd Person
(Singular) You Cry -   Nin·tseyh
(Plural) You Cry -   Na·tseyh

3rd Person
(Singular) He's Cry -   Ne·tseyh
(Plural) They Cry -   Hene·tseyh

Note the consistency in the pattern for the animate, inanimate and
plurals and possessives.

Stand – zet (Stem)

1st Person
(Singular) I stand -   **Nas·zet**
(Plural) We stand -   **Na·si·zet**

2nd Person
(Singular) You Stand -   **Nan·zet**
(Plural) You Stand -   **Na·da·zet**

3rd Person
(Singular) He Stand -   **Na·zet**
(Plural) They Stand -   **Na·ha·zet**

Know – dih (Stem)

1st Person
(Singular) I know -   me'es·dih
(Plural) We know -   me'eʂi·dih

2nd Person
(Singular) You know -   men·dih
(Plural) You know -   ma'a·dih

3rd Person
(Singular) He know -   ye'e·dih
(Plural) They know -   hi·ye'e·dih

Note the inconsistency in the pattern for the 2nd person plural. The reason being that this form has to stay consistent to the 2nd person plural 'a'.

Tied Up – ·tl'un (Stem)

1st Person
(Singular) Dog I tied-up -   Tl'i' kē·tl'un
(Plural) Dog we tied-up –   Tl'i' kesi·tl'un

2nd Person
(Singular)Dog you tied-up -   Tl'i' kēn·tl'un
(Plural) Dog you tied-up –   Tl'i' ka·tl'un

3rd Person
(Singular) Dog he tied-up -   Tl'i' kes·tl'un
(Plural)Dog they tied-up   Tl'i' ke·he'es·tl'un

Note the pattern for the plurals and possessives are consistent. However, in the 1st person singular the linguistic rule of 'intolerance to three (3) consonant cluster word medial' (following a long vowel) changes the 1st person possessive to appear like the regular 3rd person possessive. Also, notice in the 3rd person 'the three (3) consonant cluster word medial' is tolerated following a short vowel. To accommodate the intolerance the 1st person and 3rd person forms are switched.

Smart – yan (Stem)

1st Person
(Singular) I smart -   hush·yan
(Plural) We smart -   ho·shi·jan

2nd Person
(Singular) You smart -   hon·yan
(Plural) You smart -   ha·yan

3rd Person
(Singular) He smart -   hu·yan
 (Plural) They smart -   hū·hu·yan

Note the consistency in the pattern for the plurals and possessives. However, the 3rd person plural repeats the 3rd person plural albeit elongated.

Appendix 4.

The text below is actually the first document that I produced to map out the pronoun structure of the patterns that are embedded in the language.

Linguistic Pattern

The concept of 'going' is based on the root word 'desa' - Change the prefix and the meaning changes! The prefixes can be applied to 'past and present tense' in the same manner to change its meaning. (See right column for present-tense application) These prefixes can be applied to 2nd person and 3rd person as well

1st PERSON Future Tense

VERB dĕ·sal – I gonna walk
    di·t'as - We walk (2 people).
    di·detl – We walk (3+ people)

K'in-dĕ·sal – I'm walking around
K'in-di·t'as – We're walking around (2 people).
K'in-di·detl – We're walking (3+ people).

Na-dĕ·sal – I am going
Na-di·t'as – We are going (2 people).
Na-di·detl – We are going (3+ people).

An-dĕ·sal – I am going home.
An-di·t'as – We are going home (2 people).
An-di·detl – We are going home (3+ people).

Ti-dĕ·sal – I am going out.
Ti-di·t'as – We're going out (2 people).
Ti-di·detl – We're going out (more then 2 people).

Ni-dĕ·sal – I am gonna get up
Ni-di·t'as – We are gonna get up (2 people).
Ni-di·detl – We are gonna get up (3+ people).

ka-dĕ·sal – I am going to get
ka-di·t'as – We're going to get (2 people).
ka-di·detl – We're going to get (3+ people).

kan-dĕ·sal – I am going back to get
kan-di·t'as – We're going back to get (2 people).
kan-di·detl – We're going back to get (3+ people).

Ho-ts'i' dĕ·sal – I am going to there
Ho-ts'i' di·t'as – We are going to there (2 people).
Ho-ts'i' di·detl – We are going to there (3+ people).

Edĕs- dĕ·sal – I am going away
Edĕs – di·t'as – We're going away (2 people).
Edĕs – di·detl – We're going away (3+ people).

Nen- dĕ·sal – I am going across
Nen- di·t'as – We are going across (2 people).
Nen- di·detl – We are going across (3+ people).

Eji- dĕ·sal – I am going hunting
Eji – di·t'as – We're going hunting (2 people).
Eji – di·detl – We're going hunting (3+ people).

Ta- dĕ·sal – I am going up.
Ta- di·t'as – We are going up (2 people).
Ta- di·detl – We are going up (3+ people).

San- dĕ·sal – I am gonna turn back
San- di·t'as – We are gonna turn back (2 people).

San- di·detl – We are gonna turn back (3+ people).

Tan- dĕ·sal – I'm gonna check ....
Tan- di·t'as – We're gonna check .... (2 people).
Tan- di·detl – We're gonna check .... (3+ people).

Ten- dĕ·sal – ·I'm pulling out
Ten- di·t'as – We're pulling out (2 people).
Ten- di·detl – We're pulling out (3+ people).

Gha- dĕ·sal – I am going to give
Gha- di·t'as – We're going to give (2 people).
Gha- di·detl – We're going to give (3+ people).

Lan- dĕ·sal – I am coming back
Lan- di·t'as – We're coming back (2 people).
Lan- di·detl – We're coming back (3+ people).

Lan-ĕs·dal – I am back
Lan-si·t'as – We are back (2 People).
Lan-si·detl - We are back (3+ People).

Las-al – I came (Present Tense)

1st PERSON (Plural) Present Tense

STEM   dŭ·t'ăsi – Let's go (2 people)
      dŭ·deli– Let's go (3+ people)

K'in-dŭ·t'ăsi – Let's walk around (2 people)
K'in-dŭ·deli– Let's walk around (3+ people)

Na- dŭ·t'ăsi – Let's go (2 people)
Na- dŭ·deli – Let's go (3+ people)

An- dŭ·t'ăsi – Let's go home (2 people)
An- dŭ·deli – Let's go home (3+ people)

Ti- dŭ·t'ăsi – Let's go outside (2 people)
Ti- dŭ·deli – Let's go outside (3+ people)

Ni- dŭ·t'ăsi – Let's get up (2 people)
Ni- dŭ·deli – Let's get up (3+ peopleN

Ka- dŭ·t'ăsi – Let's go get (2 people)
Ka- dŭ·deli – Let's go get (3+ people)

Kan- dŭ·t'ăsi – Let's go back get (2 people)
Kan- dŭ·deli – Let's go back get (3+ people)

Ho-ts'i'- dŭ·t'ăsi – Let's go to (2 people)
Ho-ts'i'- dŭ·deli – Let's go to (3+ people)

Edĕs- dů·t'ãsi – Let's go away (2 people)
Edĕs- dů·deli – Let's go away (3+ people)

Nea- dů·t'ãsi – Let's go across (2 people)
Nen- dů·deli – Let's go across (3+ people)

Eji- dů·t'ãsi – Let's go hunting (2 people)
Eji- dů·deli – Let's go hunting (3+ people)

Ta- dů·t'ãsi – Let's go up (2 people)
Ta- dů·deli – Let's go up (3+ people)

Lan-a·t'ãsi – Let's go back (2 people)
Lan-a·deli– Let's go back (3+ people)

Tan- dů·t'ãsi – Let's go check (2 people)
Tan- dů·deli – Let's go check (3+ people)

Gha- dů·t'ãsi – Let's go give (2 people)
Gha- dů·deli – Let's go give (3+ people)

2ⁿᵈ PERSON Future Tense

VERB Dĭn·dã – You walk
Da·t'as - You walk (2 people).
Da·de·detl – You walk (More then 2)

K'in-dĭn·dãl – You're walking around
K'in-da·t'as – You're walking around (2 people).
K'in-da·detl – You're walking around (3+ people).

Na- dĭn·dãl – You're going
Na-da·t'as – You're going (2 people).
Na-da·detl – You're going (3+ people).

An- dĭn·dãl – You're going home.
An-da·t'as – You're going home (2 people).
An-da·detl – You're going home (3+ people).

Ni- dĭn·dãl – You're getting up
Ni-da·t'as – You're getting up (2 people).
Ni-da·detl – You're getting up (3+ people).

Ti- dĭn·dãl – You're going out
Ti-da·t'as – You're going out (2 people).
Ti-da·detl – You're going out (3+ people).

ka- dĭn·dãl – You're going to get
ka-da·t'as – We're going to get (2 people).
ka-da·detl – We're going to get (3+ people).

kan- dĭn·dãl – You're going back to get
kan-da·t'as – We're going back to get (2 people).
kan-da·detl – We're going back to get (3+ people).

Eji- dĭn·dãl – You're going hunting
Eji-da·t'as – You're going hubting (2 people).
Eji-da·detl – You're going hunting (3+ people).

Nen- dĭn·dãl – You're going across
Nen-da·t'as – You're going across (2 people).
Nen-da·detl – You're going across (3+ people).

Ho-ts'i' dĭn·dãl – You're going to
Ho-ts'i' da·t'as – You're going to (2 people).
Ho-ts'i' da·detl – You're going to (3+ people).

San- dĭn·dãl – You're gonna turn back
San-da·t'as – You're gonna turn back (2 people).

San-da·detl – You're gonna turn back (3+ people).

Tan- dĭn·dãl – You're gonna check traps
Tan-da·t'as – You're gonna check traps (2 people).
Tan-da·detl – You're gonna check traps (3+ people).

Ten-dĭn·dãl – I'm pulling out
Ten-da·t'as – We're pulling out (2 people).
Ten-da·detl – We're pulling out (3+ people).

Gha- dĭn·dãl – You're going to give
Gha-da·t'as – We're going to give (2 people).
Gha-da·detl – We're going to give (3+ people).

Lan- dĭn·dãl – You're coming back
Lan-da·t'as – You're coming back (2 people).
Lan-da·detl – You're coming back (3+ people).

Lan- an·dãl – You came back
Lan-an·t'as – You came back (2 people).
Lan-an·detl – You came back (3+ people).

Lan- dãl – You came back.

3ʳᵈ PERSON Future Tense

VERB dĕ·dãl – S/he walk
Ada·t'as – S/he walk (2 people).
Ada·detl – S/he walk (3+ people)

K'in- dĕ·dãl – He/she's walking around
K'in-da·t'as – They're walking around (2 people).
K'in-da·detl – They're walking around(3+ people).

Na- dĕ·dãl – He/she's going
Na-ada·t'as – They're going (2 people).
Na-ada·detl – They're going (3+ people).

An- dĕ·dãl – He/she's going home.
An-heda·t'as – They're going home (2 people).
An-da·detl – They're going home (3+ people).

Ni- dĕ·dãl – He/she's getting up
Ni-hada·t'as – They're getting up (2 people).
Ni-hada·detl – They're getting up (3+ people).

Ti- dĕ·dãl – You're going out
Ti-heda·t'as – You're going out (2 people).
Ti-heda·detl – You're going out (3+ people).

ka- dĕ·dãl – He/she's going to get
ka-heda·t'as – He/she going to get (2 people).
ka-hada·detl – They're going to get (3+ people).

kan- dĕ·dãl – He/she's going back to get
kan-heda·t'as – He/she going back to get (2 people).
kan-hada·detl – They're going back to get (3+ people).

Eji- dĕ·dãl – He/she going hunting
Eji-hida·t'as – He/she going hunting (2 people).
Eji-hida·detl – He/she going hunting (3+ people).

Nen- dĕdãl – He/she's going across
Nen-heda·t'as – They're going across (2 people).
Nen-hada·detl – They're going across (3+ people).

Ho-ts'i' dĕ·dãl – He/she's going to
Ho-ts'i' ada·t'as – They're going to (2 people).
Ho-ts'i' ada·detl – They're going to (3+ people).

San- dĕ·dăl – He/she's gonna trum around
San-heda·t'as – They're gonna turn around (2 people).
San-hada·detl – They're gonna turn around (3+ people).

Tan- dĕ·dăl – He/she gonna checl trap
Tan-heda·t'as – He/she gonna checl trap (2 people).
Tan-heda·detl – He/she gonna checl trap (3+ people).

Ten-dĕ·dal – I'm pulling out
Ten-hede·t'as – We're pulling out (2 people).
Ten-hede·detl – We're pulling out (3+ people).

Gha- dĭn·dăl – You're going to give
Gha-hede·t'as – We're going to give (2 people).
Gha-hede·detl – We're going to give (3+ people).

Lan- dĕ·dăl – He/she's coming back
Lan-hede·t'as – They're coming back (2 people).
Lan-hede·detl – They're coming back (3+ people).

Lan- a·dăl – He/she's coming back
Lan-a·t'as – They're coming back (2 people).
Lan-a·detl – They're coming back (3+ people)

VERB   Dĭn·yă – You were at
                      Da·t'as - You were at (2 people).
                      Da·detl – You were at (More then 2)

K'in-dĭn·dăl – You're walking around
K'in-da·t'as – You're walking around (2 people).
K'in-da·detl – You're walking around (3+ people).

Na- dĭn·dăl – You're going
Na-da·t'as – You're going (2 people).
Na-da·detl – You're going (3+ people).

An- dĭn·dăl – You're going home.
An-da·t'as – You're going home (2 people).
An-da·detl – You're going home (3+ people).

Ni- dĭn·dăl – You're getting up
Ni-da·t'as – You're getting up (2 people).
Ni-da·detl – You're getting up (3+ people).

Ti- dĭn·dăl – You're going out
Ti-da·t'as – You're going out (2 people).
Ti-da·detl – You're going out (3+ people).

ka- dĭn·dăl – You're going to get
ka-da·t'as – We're going to get (2 people).
ka-da·detl – We're going to get (3+ people).

Eji- dĭn·dăl – You're going hunting
Eji-da·t'as – You're going hubting (2 people).
Eji-da·detl – You're going hunting (3+ people).

Nen- dĭn·dăl – You're going across
Nen-da·t'as – You're going across (2 people).
Nen-da·detl – You're going across (3+ people).

Ho-ts'i' dĭn·dăl – You're going to
Ho-ts'i' da·t'as – You're going to (2 people).
Ho-ts'i' da·detl – You're going to (3+ people).

San- dĭn·dăl – You're gonna turn back
San-da·t'as – You're gonna turn back (2 people).
San-da·detl – You're gonna turn back (3+ people).

Tan- dĭn·dăl – You're gonna check traps
Tan-da·t'as – You're gonna check traps (2 people).
Tan-da·detl – You're gonna check traps (3+ people).

Ten-dĭn·dal – I'm pulling out
Ten-da·t'as – We're pulling out (2 people).
Ten-da·detl – We're pulling out (3+ people).

Lan- dĭn·dăl – You're coming back
Lan-da·t'as – You're coming back (2 people).
Lan-da·detl – You're coming back (3+ people).

Lan- an·dăl – You came back
Lan-an·t'as – You came back (2 people).
Lan-an·detl – You came back (3+ people).

Lan-dăl – You came.

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Appendix 5.

Basic Intransitive Phrase

Below are both the singular and plural forms for the Basic Intransitive Phrase. The reason for this is the example in the main body does not have the plurals whereas this one does for your perusal.

	Translation	Phrase	Phrase	Translation	
Desire - line (noun stem)					Dangerous - jit (noun stem)
Enviro	*Land's beautiful*	nene kone·līne	nene kone·jit	*Land's danger*	Enviro
1st person					1st person
Singular	*I'm desirable*	sone·līne	sone·jit	*I'm dangerous*	Singular
Plural	*we desirable*	hone·līne	hone·jit	*we dangeroous*	Plural
2nd person					2nd person
Singular	*You desirable*	none·līne	none·jit	*you dangerous*	Singular
Plural	*you desirable*	hone·līne	hone·jit	*you dangerous*	Plural
3rd person					3rd person
Singular	*Girl's desirable*	t'ede one·līne	t'ede one·jit	*girl's dangerous*	Singular
Singular	*she desirable*	mone·līne	mone·jit	*he dangerous*	Singular
Plural	*they desirable*	hu-yōne·līne	hu-yone·jit	*They dangerous*	Plural

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Appendix 6.

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 Yours sincerely,

Roy L. Carlson
MANAGING EDITOR
SFU Archaeology Press

Figure 1.   Tahltan Territory. Page 1.

Figure 4.   Tahltan Tribal Territories. Page 11.