Kwak'wala Language Retention and Renewal
A Review with Recommendations

By **Robert J. Anthony, UVIC Faculty of Education**
Henry Davis, UBC Dept. of Linguistics
J. V. Powell, UBC Dept. of Anthropology

Summary of findings and Suggestions

This report is based on observations and consultations held in Alert Bay, meeting with members of the U'mista Cultural Society Board, the Nimpkish School Board, T'łisa̱lagi'lakw School staff, S.D. 85, and concerned members of the community. A draft of the report was circulated widely within the Kwak'wala-speaking community and this final version profits from numerous responses. Our findings and suggestions are:

1)   **Current Kwak'wala language programs are functioning moderately well in light of available resources.** Experienced and energetic, the school teaching staff give a good program despite limited contact and efforts that could be more effective with: (a) learning goals for each grade, (b) new and better use of available curriculum materials, (c) implementation of "true immersion", and (d) use of Kwak'wala phrases in all aspects of the school program. The language program at U'mista is distinct and limited, but productively engaged in fostering the development of cultural resources.

2)   Despite these programs**, it is clear that Kwak'wala is steadily being replaced by English.** School programs have not produced a single fluent speaker of Kwak'wala. Fluent speakers of the language now number less than than 200 and are, with few exceptions, elders. Other than in defined Kwak'wala teaching programs (and Big House events), the use of Kwak'wala is not fostered or even encouraged in other aspects of community life.

3)   **Without immediate community-wide changes and additional language programming Kwak'wala will become extinct.** Current Kwak'wala teaching programs will not achieve the community's objective of maintaining Kwak'wala as a spoken language. The community probably has no more than a decade to reverse this decline.

4)   **Saving Kwak'wala can be achieved through community action and personal commitment, implementing a set of <u>possible</u> and <u>affordable</u> new programs.** Suggestions for this additional programming to save Kwak'wala are provided, divided into (a) immediate, (b) 2-3 year, and (c) 5 year goals; and distinguishing U'mista, school, Band and tribal council level programming. Some new funding will be required and should be sought.

5)   **Kwak'wala is in extremis. Immediate, focused, committed action is required if the language is to be preserved. This is the "last chance".**

Introduction

This report represents the outcome of a review of Kwak'wala language use in Alert Bay, programming to maintain and revitalize the language, and community attitudes about preserving and renewing the language. The project represents an evaluative review on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Kwak'wala Language Program. Initiated by the Board of the U'mista Cultural Society, funding was sought to enable the community to determine whether current Kwak'wala programs will allow the

Kwakwaka'wakw to achieve their objective of maintaining use and knowledge of this critical aspect of their cultural heritage.

The review committee, set up and co-ordinated by U'mista, includes three members with recognized expertise:

> Dr. Robert Anthony, Prof. of Education, Univ. of Victoria, is recognized for his experience and prolific writings on issues of native education and language/culture maintenance programming and curriculum.
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> Dr. Henry Davis, Assoc. Prof. of Linguistics, Univ. of B.C., has researched, documented, and collaborated with the Lillooet (st'at'imx) bands in a language program recognized for its innovative initiatives.
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> Dr. Jay Powell, Prof. of Anthropology, Univ. of B.C., has 35 years of experience in First Nations language programs. He has written more than 40 books of native language curriculum materials in a dozen languages of the Northwest Coast area. Having worked with the Kwakwaka'wakw since 1976, his presence on the committee provides a historical perspective on Kwak'wala language programming.

Background to Thinking about Strategies to Preserve and Renew Kwak'wala

Even though the erosion of native language use was a troubling trend noted as early as the 1930s, nobody really did anything about it until the late 1960s. In general, the only response of parents, officials and educators back then was to lament the inevitable loss of that aspect of native heritage and identity. There were no funds for curriculum development or continuing educational programming; and, other than the preparation of wordlists, practical orthographies and linguistic analyses (none of which had pedagogical value) innovative curricula did not exist. Furthermore, there were very few speakers of native languages trained in the techniques of modern language education. Everywhere, native languages were simply left to an unsupported and unattended decline.

Between 1968 and 1972 this indifference changed. The first "Indian" language classes in the province happened at Skulkayn and Cooper Island, and others followed. The B.C. Ministry of Education established the First Citizens' Fund with language czar Saul Arbess providing funding to school districts for the development and implementation of language programming. Other funding sources became available.   Within a decade there was hardly a native community in the province that didn't have a language program at the school or band level. Linguists were in demand; curricula were developed; `conferences and workshops flourished. **Bands and school boards undertook the implementation of native language programs with the hope, indeed, the *expectation* that native languages could be taught to fluency in the schools**.

The Kwak'wala-speaking communities participated in this movement to attempt to take charge of the course of their cultural survival. In 1976, Gloria Webster developed a set of lessons for an adult ed. course in Kwak'wala at Alert Bay, using an orthography that she had developed and which is still used by the northern bands. School classes sprang up, at first largely using curriculum materials developed by Peter Jacobs and, later, Daisy Sewid Smith in an IPA-based writing system. In 1980-1, the U'mista Cultural Centre produced the Learning Kwak'wala texts, which came to be used north of Campbell River. **Divided by orthographies and traditional rivalries, Kwak'wala programs have developed at the community level without the consensus, economies of scale, shared insights and energies, and other benefits of tribal co-operation**.

Over the last two decades there have been occasional outbreaks of enthusiasm and opportunity in the form of Kwak'wala teacher training, curriculum development and funding for additional positions and new technologies. But, in truth, and it's a time for truth, the history of Kwak'wala renewal has largely been an account of teacher burnout, student stagnation, and community disillusion in which everybody just gave the whole responsibility for language maintenance to the schools. And **school programs have been unsuccessful in teaching the students to speak Kwak'wala fluently; and the fluent speakers have grown older and fewer; and there is now little incentive to learn the language because it is seldom used outside the *gukwdzi* ('bighouse').**

This is not an indictment of teachers or students or administrators or parents or linguists. The Kwakw<u>aka</u>'wakw are, of course, not the only native group in the province to discover how difficult it is to reverse the momentum of language loss. In fact, every native group in B.C. has failed in this regard. But, in failing, we have learned a great deal about what succeeds: co-operation, immersion, imaginative new departures, even the value of economic inducement to learn and use the language. For some groups, those with only a handful of aged speakers left, it is possibly too late to capitalize on these new understandings. Luckily, for the Kwak'wala-speakers there is still time**. This history of the attempt to maintain and revitalize Kwak'wala provides the background that readers can use in reflecting on what hasn't worked up to now. It also suggests some of the resolutions regarding co-operation, commitment, responsibility and programming that will be important in undertaking the worthwhile and possible effort to keep Kwak'wala alive**.

The Issue of Community Commitment

An important aspect of this review was to investigate community sentiment and opinion as to the value of maintaining Kwak'wala. A community meeting was held in the Big House meeting area with a turnout in excess of 80. Twenty people spoke on the issue of Kwak'wala maintenance and loss. They unanimously stated their individual feelings, sometimes with great emotion, on the value of preserving Kwak'wala as a spoken tongue. These statements make it clear that the community strongly supports language renewal programs and encourages undertaking dramatic efforts to assure against the irretrievable loss of this aspect of their cultural heritage. Examples of their statements are:

- o Language is key to our culture. Thoughts and words go together, therefore language preservation is crucial.
- o The pride in our language is not there anymore.
- o The language requires priority for funding: otherwise it gets put on the back burner.
- o We can make it happen if we are committed!
- o We're always looking for a perfect vehicle. It's never going to be perfect. We have to start! We have to get going! We may not have the money; so get going anyhow!
- o When you want to learn anything, you put your whole mind to it!! That's what we have to do as individuals and as a group.
- o I kept my language because 99% of the time I heard it spoken around me. The language belongs in the cradle. We heard it when we went to sleep and when we woke up. That's what we have to do again.
- o I sit alone night after night. Nobody comes by. I'd really like to see us interacting more with one another. I think if we're going to speak Kwak'wala, to keep the language up, we're going to have to speak more to one another. We're one big family here!
- o As band councilors, we need to learn Kwak'wala.
- o Staff development should include mandatory language training.
- o We need a "Phrase of the Week" distributed in the school and throughout the community.

o   We need an ongoing language program: we can't start and stop.
o   Kids (today) feel threatened when the language is used with them.
o   When my daughter was born, I wanted her to hear Kwak'wala first, so what little I know I said to her when she was born.
o   Build a village, bring all the children there and speak nothing but Kwak'wala.
o   We have to get serious here. We can't pussyfoot around anymore.

Based on this affirmation and re-iteration of the commitment of the community to maintenance of the Kwak'wala language as a spoken idiom, we encourage careful consideration of the following recommendations.

Recommendations

There are many jurisdictions (individual & family, school, cultural society, band council, tribal council) that will have to assume responsibility if the Kwakw<u>a</u>ka'wakw are to commit themselves to a program for Kwak'wala language renewal. In presenting our recommendations we have tried to relate particular recommendations to a jurisdiction which has expressed a desire to provide leadership in the renewal process and which has the appropriate resources and authority to provide the needed leadership.

The recommendations in this proposal; are organized to reflect the shared responsibilities of several overlapping jurisdictions, that is:
(a) U'mista Cultural Society,
(b) the Chief and Band Council,
(c) the School Board and T'lis<u>a</u>lagi'lakw School staff,
(d) councils at the tribal (or multi-band) level, and
(e) individuals and families

Each of these organizations has a commitment to language renewal and has resources to contribute to this end. The attached chart summarizes the recommendations we offer to each constituency. This chart reflects one way of distributing the responsibility for planning and acting upon initiatives to support language renewal. The recommendations outlined on the chart are a starting place --- one possibility for organization. We realize that, depending upon the personalities and outside political climate at the time, other distributions of leadership and responsibility may be more appropriate, workable or desirable. Our intentions are as follows: The main purpose for the following suggestions is to illustrate how the entire community can (and *must*) be involved. A secondary objective is to exemplify how various community constituencies can (and *should*) take different roles in encouraging or even pressuring people to use Kwak'wala. A final goal is to emphasize that, because the community is involved at every level, no single agency and no single individual can be held more responsible than anyone else**. Language renewal is a broad challenge which can only be accomplished through a broad cooperative effort of the entire community**.

Central to these recommendations is the establishment of a committee of elders who are knowledgeable about the language and culture. This **Kwak'wala Steering Committee** would serve to guide, advise and support all of the suggestions in this report and others as they arise. This representative body of language and culture experts is crucially important for any of the suggestions contained in this report. It would inappropriate to give such a committee wide *responsibilities* for the course and management of Kwak'ala revitalization without giving them sufficient *authority* to effectively undertake their mandate. An example of such a committee was set up through the Sch. Dist. 85, called the Kwak'wala Ni'no<u>g</u>ad, the 'Kwak'wala wise ones'.

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These recommendations are arranged according to a time line. **It is our belief that the current situation with regard to language restoration requires urgent action**. For that reason we have listed some suggestions to be undertaken immediately and completed within the next year. In proposing these short term goals, we have been conscious that immediate action could be encumbered by a lack of resources. So we have tried to avoid suggesting measures for immediate implementation which would require the appropriation of additional funds or the addition of personnel. Beyond the initial stage we have identified an intermediate phase to be undertaken and completed within three to five years and . These mid and long-range suggestions necessitate the re-deployment and acquisition of additional resources.

It is important to recognize that unless significant measures are undertaken in addition to the current language programming it is likely that Kwak'wala will cease to be a living language within a very few years. Kwak'wala is at a critical stage. The nature and extent of additional language renewal measures will determine the character of the future use of Kwak'wala. To illustrate this we would like to characterize four possible levels of language renewal: **ritual use, ceremonial use, vernacular use and functional language use**. Each of these levels will ultimately require different programmatic tactics and energy, but the recommendations in this report will be necessary for any of these levels of fluency.

Ritual language use refers to the most limited level of language retention. Ritual language involves the memorization and use of a few hundred words generally restricted to the names for foods, places, kinship terms and possibly counting and some common community objects like fishing gear. Other ritual language features are the memorization of songs. At this ritual level of use conversations would generally be in English with some Kwak'wala words thrown in. The occasional use of Kwak'wala words in otherwise English conversations would signal that the speaker is Kwakw<u>a</u>ka’wakw.   This is a very limited use of the language and would result in the near extinction of Kwak'wala. On the other hand, a school-based program of 60 - 100 minutes per week is only capable of achieving this low level of language retention. Even if the school-based program were improved with additional material and teacher training chances are that while the extent of the ritual use of the language could be extended, higher levels of language use would not likely result.

Ceremonial language use is more extensive than ritual use. Ceremonial use goes beyond ritual use in that the language use includes speaking in longer stretches than just inserting a few words. Ceremonial use involves speaking in sentences and longer stretches of speech. For example, speakers might be able to exchange short greetings, including small talk about the weather or a little teasing before switching to English. Ceremonial use could also include speaking a rehearsed speech such as making a two minute "graduation speech", blessing before eating, welcome oration, or a memorized statement for use in the Big House. So while the speaker does use Kwak'wala more extensively than for ritual use, this use is always rehearsed, not spontaneous, and involves the repetition of memorized passages. When spoken to, speakers at this level would only understand what is said to them about a limited range of topics. Ceremonial language use could be attained through an extended school-based program, such as doubling the current instructional time, or through a limited immersion program where Kwak'wala is used for up to half the time for 3 or 4 years.

Vernacular language use involves the use of Kwak'wala for sustained conversation. For example, two speakers could have a conversation about almost any topic of daily life and generally be able to have social visits all in Kwak'wala. A speaker at this level of fluency would understand conversation about most topics. At a vernacular level the Kwak'wala spoken could be extensive but it would involve the simplification of language forms and, although spoken freely, it would not be the quality of language now spoken by elders. Vernacular language proficiency is

only possible through sustained immersion in the language, that is using the language in a Kwak'wala only environment for several hours a day over 5 to 9 years. Vernacular language users are fluent, they would be able to speak with one another without hesitation. But because their language interaction is mostly with other learners who have a level of fluency like themselves, their language may include some errors in usage or pronunciation.

Functional language use is what is generally thought of when referring to language renewal. It means a community of speakers who freely and frequently speak Kwak'wala in a wide array of situations and about almost any topic. The language is used accurately and pronunciation is not marked by any English accent. At a functional level some speakers would even be fluent in the "high" language of the Big House. Kwakwaka'wakw who achieve a vernacular fluency could continue their language learning and become fully functional by having the opportunity for intensive 1:1 interaction with a highly fluent elder. To achieve functional proficiency the language would need to be used not only in an immersion situation with other learners, but also to speak with fluent elders in an immersion situation.

Summary Chart:

Leadership	immediate action	3-5 years	long term goals
U'mista	• continue to record, archive and preserve oral language and other archival functions. • complete the language CD for Kindergarten and other projects to make language and culture available. • make "living Kwak'wala" more apparent in the centre: encourage Kwak'wala use by employees (greeting guests and answering the phone in Kwak'wala) • include a language column in the Newsletter and focus as much on the USE of Kwak'wala as the recording of the language. • continue the Big House singing and dancing group & the hymn translation project and other song programs, and • become increasingly Kwak'wala activity oriented: *e.g.* ethnobotany walks, Kwak'wala choir, bingo, etc.	• develop language video/audio tapes selected from the language archive to assist language learners. • extend the CD ROM project to include CDs for grades 1-6. • develop phrase books for soccer and other games played by community teams • develop a project to prepare a dictionary and practical teaching grammar. • seek funding for a dynamic Kwakwala activity staff. •	• work with the tribal councils to develop broadcasts on Kwak'wala radio or Community Cable in Kwak'wala • distribute a community newspaper in Kwak'wala • all Big House activities are conducted entirely in Kwak'wala
Chief and Council	• develop a community language renewal plan. • collaborate with U'mista and the school to establish a position of Community Language Facilitator who would advise about instructional materials and methods	• establish a teacher education program such as the Developmental Term Standard Certificate in conjunction with UBC, UVic or SFU. • extend adult language education material beyond the basic level.	• Band meetings are conducted in Kwak'wala

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	• Appoint a committed counsellor charged with Kwak'wala initiatives. • develop required classes of functional kwak'wala for band employees. • Institute job-requirements involving Kwak'wala use. • Encourage "Phrase of the Day" and other programs. • Consider Kwak'wala signage on reserve and in the broader community. • Support bilingual bingo.	• distribute and implement language phrase books for playing soccer, volleyball, bingo and other recreation. Support Kwak'wala-using sport teams and events.	
School	• re-organize the preschool program into an immersion (Nursery+K) and (1+2) • on-going instructional support and training for immersion teachers. • develop a plan to hire a curriculum developer and support teacher • encourage all school staff to use basic Kwak'wala including intercom announcements • consider measures to encourage the use of Kwak'wala in the schoolyard and gym. • develop Kwak'wala nicknames for students to use in school.	• extend the immersion program through grade 4 • a plan to recruit and support developing speakers to become language and culture teachers • complete a sequence of language performance standards for K through grade 10 • use technology money to develop language games in Kwak'wala	• Kwak'wala language immersion extended through grade 10
Tribal Council	• establish a **Kwak'wala Steering Committee** to function as a language authority for all matters pertaining to Kwak'wala language and culture. • include restitution for language renewal in treaty talks. • Investigate resources and sources of support for additional programming and personnel.	• organize a summer Rediscovery program where young people have an opportunity to experience their language and culture.	• establish a language immersion Big House

U'mista Cultural Centre

As the cultural society and centre of the Kwakw<u>a</u>ka'wakw, U'mista has a well-established role in recording and preserving the knowledge and language of the Kwakw<u>a</u>ka'wakw. Over the years, they have been the venue for courses, workshops, activities, summer programs, and grant-supported cultural

projects. Umista has an important role to play in any community commitment to develop and implement Kwakwala preservation schemes…in the effort to turn around Kwak'wala's slide to extinction.

Immediate goals:

Documentation: Future restoration of the language will rely on U'mista's facilities and archives. The continuing documentation of Kwak'wala is a critical responsibility. Their archives will help fill the void which is resulting from the continuing loss of knowledgeable elders. In the short term it is essential that this recording and archiving continue. There are a number of language issues that remain to be recorded:

    (1) There is still no dictionary of Kwak'wala that is complete, emphasizes colloquial usage, does not avoid slang usage and includes example phrases showing how words are used in the language.

    (2) The usage of "popular culture" has, by and large, gone unrecorded. Focusing on the usage of elders in an attempt to record the "classical" Kwak'wala usage of the old people, nobody has written down the expressions of contemporary usage which would catch the attention and interest of young people. If we hope to encourage teenagers to use Kwak'wala, we need to provide them the equivalent of phrases such as "Sweet, dude!" "wicked mamas" and "majorly unzipped."

    (3) More useful that vocabulary lists in language acquisition are phrases, sentences, and songs. Hymns are a part of the recent tradition of the Kwakw<u>aka</u>'wakw and interesting and important to keep alive, as U'mista is doing. It would attract a different and important audience if the cultural centre also made available a xeroxed leaflet with a Kwak'wala version of a rap about being The Best, or a team cheer or fight-song.

U'mista could, with some imagination and energy, and a bit of financing, include activity sessions and workshops to start a set of mini materials (one folded sheet each)…the Kwak'wala-word-of-the-week. How DOES one say the <u>fun</u> things in Kwak'wala?

Classes and workshops: U'mista includes a museum, but it is much more than a collection of cultural artifacts and information. The U'mista program of support for Big House songs, dancing, hymn singing and other aspects of culture are a continuing service and provide an important function relating to the cultural continuance of the Kwakw<u>aka</u>'wakw. To some extent it is an under-used function. But it is there and, hopefully, will be there when the community decides to participate in a committed effort to revitalize their language. Current programming should be continued and could seek the resources to be even more involved in Kwak'wala programming to attract youth. This would clearly require additional funding to expand a staff already stretched to the limit. It would also require the board to consider a broadening of focus to re-visualize U'mista as both an activity centre and archival facility in equal parts. New directions to consider include, for example:

    1) activities -- weekend ethnobotany mornings learning the Kwak'wala names for trees and plants; a community Kwak'wala choir; Kwak'wala bingo (all numbers called in Kwak'wala first and English second); Kwak'wala placenames walks or bus-loops of the island; Kwak'wala telephone etiquette practice; Kwak'wala baby-talk sessions; Kwak'wala holiday card making; Kwak'wala counting for beginners; geneology (including native names) of ancestors; card games in Kwak'wala; traditional basketry with Kwak'wala words.

    2) Courses and workshops– it is not inappropriate for a cultural centre to develop courses and activities with some pizzaz. Try, for instance, *Kwak'wala for waitresses* (one side of the menu in Kwak'wala…but it's sterile antiquarianism if the waiter doesn't know what the Kwak'wala means or is unable to pronounce it). "Courses" can be as short as two sessions: a first one to get into the Kwakw'ala material and a second class to practice it. Of course, most courses will need a pronunciation component.

Make Living Kwak'wala Focal at the Centre: It is possible to make Kwak'wala a living language at the cultural centre. Of course, it is more convenient to study and record Kwak'wala than to go to the

effort to learn and use it. But, Kwak'wala resuscitation should begin at the cultural centre. The use of Kwak'wala can progress one newly-learned phrase at a time…but it should be heard at U'mista in greetings, phrases and, ultimately, a Kwak'wala word or phrase in every English sentence. As a starting place, the prices of articles in giftshop interactions could be said in Kwak'wala first and English second.

The U'mista Newsletter currently provides a valuable service to the Kwakw<u>a</u>ka'wakw. It could serve a further role in language restoration by including a regular "language" column. The column could include Kwak'wala on every page as well as a column on Kwak'wala-in-our-lives. This column could have cartoons with Kwak'wala punchlines, etc. would not nearly approximate a language learning course, but would keep information about and in Kwak'wala readily visible for many language learners and potential language learners.

Finally, a goal of U'mista is and should continue to be the emphatic, energetic, and imaginative effort to put the language into public use as well as into the archives. It should be impossible to enter the Centre without hearing Kwak'wala and either using it or wishing that one could.

Mid range goals:

1. Increase recording and archiving activity. U'mista has a wonderful record of documenting and producing materials about Kwak'wala. Additional projects could include, as well as the comprehensive pedagogical dictionary mentioned above, a set of brief, cheap phrase books (Kwak'wala for bingo players, for fishermen, for grandparents, for cool dudes, or for soccer players (each with a tape).
2. Actively seek funding to add outgoing program and activity staff. The cultural centre can serve as a catalyst for getting Kwak'wala back into community life, but only if it has the qualified, energetic staff to do so.
3. Maintain and cultivate communication and cooperative projects with schools, the band council and tribal councils: U'mista may be able to assist in programs such as immersion summer camps, high school Kwak'wala-speaking sports teams, and multi-band Kwak'wala-intensive activities.
4. Consider the development of U'mista Pidgin. As a short-term expedient, but one that allows everyone (including staff) to use Kwakwala, consider encouraging by example that Kwak'wala words be freely used in speaking English within the centre.   It is all part of the tactics of making returning Kwak'wala to use in social situations.
5. Remember that, despite all other language initiatives, the real hope for the survival of Kwak'wala is immersion for the young. Attempt to include immersion programs in U'mista's offerings and support it in other aspects of the community's language renewal efforts.

Long term goals:

1. Activities that provide Kwakw<u>a</u>ka'wakw youth with provincial, national or international recognition for cultural activities, including the focal use of Kwak'wala. Singing and dancing groups come to mind immediately. Exchange programs allow young Kwakw<u>a</u>ka'wakw to take pride in their identity, and being able to communicate to any extent allows them to see the value and utility of knowing and using their heritage language.
2. All Big House activities in Kwak'wala.
3. Participate in mentoring programs. Mentoring programs provide funding for young adults, with demonstrated interest and success in Kwak'wala classes, to spend specific blocks of time with fluent speakers, engaging in everyday activities and communicating only in Kwak'wala. The "mentors" are contracted and paid. This program, functioning well in Lillooet and elsewhere, helps produce speakers fluent enough to be able to progress by themselves through initiating conversations with speakers. It produces younger speakers to serve as immersion workers for daycare and nursery and to be sent off for teacher training. Mentoring requires funding and care in choosing truly motivated participants.

'Na̱mgis Band, Chief and Councilors

It has been widely recognized that language renewal needs programs that get the native language out of the school. The Band Office is clearly one of the places that Kwak'wala should be heard and be expected. This brings up two considerations having to do with initiatives to revitalize dying languages. They are awkward, but need to be mentioned at some point.

1) Struggling to communicate in another language is seldom convenient or comfortable. As a result, people hardly ever put themselves to the inconvenience or discomfort of struggling to speak the other language unless they are under pressure to do so.
2) Although adults often react negatively to being pressured to do something uncomfortable, the band council certainly has the authority to promote or require the use of Kwak'wala in some aspects of "work life" in the band office as a condition of employment.

Even if a Kwakwa̱ka̱'wakw is earnestly committed to attempting to learn Kwak'wala, it is difficult and sometimes downright tedious to work at using the language with others who are also not fluent. But it is important to make Kwak'wala the language of some focal aspects of community life. And if it is never heard in the Band offices, it is clearly not a language of importance. It is important for band employees to overcome their hesitance to repetitively use Kwak'wala phrases such as answering the phone, greeting people, referring to locations (the washrooms, various offices by name), intercom announcements ("Lucy, line two"), days of the week, telephone lines, etc. The office can hold short, mandatory classes in Kwak'wala for the office during working time. The phrases can be learned cumulatively over time and used comfortably so that in a short period of time if there is a reason to do so…or a *need* to do so. A band council is in a position to promote (i.e. require) the voluntary use of the native tongue (one can learn and use the language voluntarily or elect to forfeit some benefit by non-compliance). And tactics are important! Of course, such a non-consensual approach may be culturally inappropriate in some First Nations communities. At some point it is needful to face that one can seek consensus until the last speaker of Kwak'wala joins the ancestors.

Whether the chief and council are prepared to impose initiatives or not, a first strategy is to appoint one member of council to serve as the Kwak'wala language chair (two is actually better, since they can share the "heat" for initiatives that may be considered inconvenient by some). This councillor should optimally serve on the Umista Board and the school board, as well, and should be in touch ewith the language co-ordinator on the tribal-level councils, and the appropriate official in the school district. This member of council should seek suggestions for Kwak'wala programming from inside and outside the community. The importance of council leadership in the effort to revitalize Kwak'wala can't be overstated. Potential initiatives could be included in a Community Language Renewal Plan. The following are but a few examples.

Immediate goals:

1. Identify a **conversation centre** where it is expected that interaction will be in Kwak'wala, for example, a specially designated table in the pool hall, a space for conversation at U'mista, or a weekly "Kwak'wala language lunch" where speakers can expect to speak their language.
2. Increase Kwak'wala **language visibility** in the community by adding Kwak'wala street signs and labels to all community buildings.
3. Investigate the possibility of organizing the community infant daycare and after-school daycare into **Kwak'wala language, parent cooperative daycares** so that these parents will have an opportunity to have exposure to Kwak'wala for 2 hours per week.
4. Initiate a "**language through recreation**" program where participants can play soccer, volleyball or other recreation entirely in Kwak'wala.
5. Develop an employment strategy which would **reward language fluency**. For example, include language fluency as a priority for all employment, offer salary bonuses for language proficiency, or paid release time to take part in language courses.

6. **Adult Education classes** in conjunction with a Post-secondary institution like NIC, UBC, UVic, SFU. These adult classes could be planned with the intention to include the "mentoring" component (see under U'mista above) whereby partially fluent members of the community would be paired with a fluent elder so that they could intensively interact over a period of 40 - 60 hours a month in order to build more functional fluency.

Mid range goals:

1. *Seek funding for increasing programming*. Community language education needs to be an on-going priority. But, in fact, few programs of any sort function without funding.
2. *Find a full- or part-time language program planner, co-ordinator and implementer*, but maintain a councillor with responsibility for Kwak'wala programming. Language programming requires the time and concentrated energy to plan, carry out and cheerlead successful programs. An important consideration, though, is that the whole budget should not be spent on the co-ordinator. Funds should be primarily spent on programs, not programmers. Faced with funding that allows either a co-ordinator or a set of programs, one should always choose the programs, eh.
3. *Co-ordinate efforts.*   Activities should complement and support the programs of the school and the cultural centre. This is no place for competition or leaving the whole matter in the hands of the school. The leadership of the Band Council is arguably the most important part of the effort to develop a program that will save Kwak'wala.
4. *Don't let up.* No matter how successful early initiatives in language revitalization are, it is possible to relax away the community's hard-earned (and expensive) momentum.
5. *Again, remember the three important words in language revitalization:* immersion, immersion and immersion. It is the children who are products of immersion programming that are the real hope for the survival of Kwak'wala. Encourage and abet immersion initiatives.

T'łisalagi'lakw School and School Board

The school is ideally suited to play a major role in language renewal. The children are in attendance and available to learn and the school personnel are the most knowledgeable about how to provide appropriate language instruction. But it is unfair and unworkable to give all of the responsibility for language maintenance to the teachers and students.

Current School Kwak'wala Program:
The current school program has skilled, trained teachers who have, for the most part, been teaching in the program for extended periods. The "Kwak'wala room" approach with students leaving their classroom for a Kwak'wala language class of limited duration has successfully given a generation of students a sufficient vocabulary of words and phrases in Kwak'wala to pidginize colloquial English with Kwak'wala expressions if it is convenient or socially useful for them to do so. This use of language as a proof of identity is an important function of usage. However, it is a limited goal. If the available graded grammatical material in the Learning Kwak'wala Series (Books 6-11) were used and developmental teaching/learning outcomes were put into place for each grade (and tested for at year end), students could achieve some facility with generating limited grammatical sentences by grade 10. Students in the higher grades seem eager for an integrated language program with higher demands (and more relevance to the communication patterns of teenage life). But this "Kwak'wala as a Second Language" approach would produce a limited form of fluency, certainly not consistent with community aspirations for their language program.

The immersion program of the nursery and the "limited immersion" program of Grades K-1, are imaginative and encouraging programming. The community is lucky to have the resources to conduct these classes with an intensive Kwak'wala experience for these youngest students. The nursery program, though limited in time, is remarkably appropriate to the age of the children and an example of true immersion, with students who clearly understand the teacher and engage in classroom activities conducted in ordinary Kwak'wala . The K-1 program is a great opportunity to continue the Kwak'wala facility of students after their nursery experience. Student interest was maintained and they were clearly following. True immersion, with no English words at all, and lessons that build on the words and phrases learned in the nursery program would give students who have nursery, K and lst Grade a head start toward fluency.

Aside from Kwak'wala class, nursery, the K-l class, and a few words and phrases in the dance program, there is almost no other use of Kwak'wala in the school. Classroom teachers are not encouraged to learn and use words or classroom commands in class. Kwak'wala is clearly present in the school but segregated. And students don't use it in the gym, in the halls or on the playgrounds.

Immediate goals:

Expand True Immersion: If maintenance and revitalization of Kwak'wala as a spoken language is, indeed, to be achieved, the school is a vital aspect of the undertaking and *a commitment to language immersion is necessary*. We would suggest that the school provide regular Pro-D and staff-training in the tactics and methods of immersion for all teachers in the Kwak'wala program. It is a big step to "give up on English", and teachers need to be encouraged and made confident in the methods to immersion.

We suggest that immersion be expanded by considering the following expedient:
(a) Have the nursery teacher teach half-day total immersion nursery in the morning and half-day total immersion kindergarten in the afternoon. (Kindergarten need be taught by a certified teacher only in provincial public schools).
(b) Combine Grades l and 2 in the morning for total immersion classes. This requires that an intensive curriculum planning and development start immediately to prepare materials and activities for this morning program.

Develop Curriculum for Grade 5-10 Kwak'wala: It is clear that students in the Grade 5-10 ages need more engaging and stimulating curiculum materials. Such classes should have sequential grammatical material with pattern practice, drills, and regular opportunities to check (test) progress, especially in the Grade 8-10 groups. Besides learning patterns for generating grammatical utterances, efforts should be made to get the students to get translations to popular songs, develop raps, produce phrase-books for games and activities, translate teenage jargon and other awesome things teens enjoy saying.

Get Kwak'wala into use throughout the School: If Kwak'wala is only heard in Kwak'wala class, it will only be used there. Thus, a plan is needed to encourage that Kwak'wala be used, to the extent that it can be, in all aspects of school life. This may include, among other expedients:
o Encourage **all** school staff to use basic Kwak'wala. Contracts could be rewritten to mandate attendance at a 3-day period of language training as part of the orientation for the new school year.
o Development of a phrase book for all staff to remind them of useful Kwak'wala in the school (e.g. in play periods, classroom commands and statements, a small part of each assignment, a policy for teachers to accompany their class and participate in the language lessons, etc.).
o Have classroom teachers consult with language teachers to prepare and give lessons with Kwak'wala vocabulary and cultural material that will complement material being studied in class.

Mid range goals:

*A Curriculum Developer: E*xpansion of the Kwak'wala language program in the school must be systematic and of good quality. To this end the continuing development of a coherent curriculum and quality instructional material must be a priority. A curriculum developer should ideally be a speaker of Kwak'wala. But in addition it is crucial that the developer have well established skills as a language teacher in order to support the fluent speakers who will be teaching in the immersion and other school programs. Curriculum development for all grades and levels should be a continuing full-time occupation.. In addition, any expansion of Kwak'wala immersion will require the conversion of the curriculum into Kwak'wala, especially the curriculum described in the Ministry of Education document Shared Learnings which describes topics which are particularly appropriate for First Nations children. There are immersion programs operating on reserves in B.C. and, if the community, school or Band Council decide that they are interested in a broader commitment to immersion education, they can get in touch with: Chief Atahm School, General Delivery, Chase, BC, or

En'ow'kin Centre, RR2, Site 50, C-8, Penticton, B.C. (250) 493-7181 [Attn. J. Armstrong]

Performance standards: For all grades, assessible learning standards should be developed so that students will (a) be assured of new material in classes and avoid repetition from year to year and (b) be presented with challenging and useful Kwak'wala patterns that will allow them to create a wide range of statements.

*Teacher training***:** It is important that a program to develop additional trained Kwak'wala language teachers be either set up or that a group of prospective teachers be sent out for training. If the program is to continue successfully, it is important that teachers be available to step into gaps left by departing teachers or be ready when additional programs are implemented.

Grade 3-4 immersion: If students had well-taught total immersion daycare, nursery, and K-4, with a demanding program for Grades 5-10, they would have sufficient control of Kwak'wala to use the language socially. Thus, a mid-term goal is clearly to initiate at least half-day immersion at the Grade 3-4 level. This, of course, requires previous curriculum development (See above).

Multi-Band or Tribal Level Councils

A *Kwak'wala Steering Committee* is a fundamental requirement for language renewal. Their role would be to help with the translation of signs and other contemporary usage. One of more members who can write Kwak'wala with confidence is an important issue. It is proposed that this steering committee be organized at the Tribal Council level in order to facilitate representation from the entire Kwakwaka'wakw region. This group could be involved with issues such as:

- Coordination of all language renewal activities for all jurisdictions;
- share knowledge about language usage and terminology;
- advise about language use and cultural practices;
- review of all language curriculum and material for appropriateness;
- consult with SD 85 about language instruction in their schools;
- receive reports from administrative bodies about progress on language renual initiatives;
- advocate for language and cultural renewal as part of the treaty negotiations

Mid term goals:

Authentic opportunities to use the language in a natural way is essential for renewal. that is why it is so important to have an occasion like Rediscovery Camp where young developing learners of Kwak'wala can have a natural opportunity to use the language with one another and with elders. Participation in such an initiative has to be voluntary and that is why the organization of Kwak'wala Immersion Rediscovery be coordinated at the Tribal Council level. In this way interested participants from many villages will have the opportunity to participate.

***Long term goal*:**

Establish a language immersion Big House (somewhere in the tribal territory) in conjunction with an on-going Rediscovery camp to provide for immersion interaction between young people with developing fluency and highly fluent elders.

Individuals and Families

Up to this point we haven't discussed issues that relate to the role and responsibility of individuals and families in Kwak'wala revitalization activities. Clearly, though, this is where the ultimate responsibility for learning and using Kwak'wala rests. Cultural centre, band level, school and tribal-level programs set the stage for language renewal by teaching the language and by encouraging that the language be used in social settings. But, unless individuals actually exert themselves to learn and use the language, progress will not happen. Language programs alone do not cause a language to survive. Individuals do.

There are several issues to mention briefly, so that the individual Kwakwa̱ka'wakw and program developers can consider them:

1) Speaking one's heritage language is actually fun, as long as one has a chance to learn the words and phrases involved. Voluntary Kwak'wala classes have a history of being poorly attended in Alert Bay and elsewhere. Such classes are an opportunity to get comfortable with useful phrases. Attending classes is really a pre-requisite to starting to use Kwak'wala.

2) Getting better at using a language requires, quite simply, daring to try to say things and learning from mistakes. In a way, it amounts to being willing to make mistakes and to resort to the simple patterns of children's language usage. Beginning speakers have to dare to make mistakes; fluent speakers have to good-naturedly help and respond. Rather than laugh at ungrammaticalities or mispronunciations, if one simply responds by repeaing what the speaker was trying to say, the new speaker is encouraged and taught. It will take a lot of putting up with babytalk and helping out beginning speakers to bring Kwak'wala back to life.

3) It goes without saying that such programs as Kwak'wala renewal, which involve numerous units within a coastal native community, will predictably result in factionalism that polarizes rival social and family groups. As a Nimpkish elder who shall go unnamed suggested, "Saving our language has to be one area where the Hatfield and McCoy mentality doesn't apply. Hopefully the community will recognize and avoid such potentially counter-productive issues before they can distract each other from their goals.

4) It is important to emphasize that contributions to the language vitality and the cultural life of the Kwakwa̱ka'wakw are work. Teachers, mentors, program personnel and other contributors will have to be paid. Language revitalization is an expensive objective. On the other hand, learning to speak and use an language is a personnnal commitment. Sometimes one even has to pay for the opportunity.

5) Be grateful when language programs impact you or your family's life. Any time Kwak'wala occurs it is a gift. It would even, frankly, not be unpleasant to see kwak'wala graffiti on village walls! Support your local language revitalization. Struggle to use it in your home. Do your part. And be grateful for those who do their part!.

Summary

This review provides a profile of Kwak'wala use in Alert Bay after more than twenty years of school classes and other programs to maintain the language. The current school programs equip students to recognize and produce a set of vocabulary items and phrases that give them a portable symbol of group identity, and therefore serve one important function of language. These programs are hampered however, by limited classroom contact time or incomplete immersion with no other regular chance to hear or use the language in daily life. It is clear that they will never result in student fluency nor will they reverse replacement of Kwak'wala by English and ultimate extinction.

We found clear indications that the Kwakwaka'wakw are willing to expend energy and resources to keep their heritage alive. In this report, we have outlined a set of short and medium-term undertakings and programs that will serve as a starting place for thoughtful planning of a co-ordinated effort at the individual, school, cultural society, band and tribal levels. It's a starting place for thinking. It is based on what we have learned from thirty years of half measures with regard to native language renewal programs.

Reversing the trend towards the loss of Kwak'wala is too important and too critical an issue to wait. If maintenance of Kwak'wala is truly a value to the community, the resources must be obtained and committed to enable requisite programs. As far as Kwak'wala is concerned, it is really now or never…immediate action or irretrievable loss.