

## 'iyus mumun'lh:

# What we are learning about our kids' pronunciation as we teach them hul'q'umi'num'





#### BACKGROUND:

- Hul'g'umi'num' (Salish: Southeastern Vancouver Island, BC Canada) is relatively well-documented with academic- and community-oriented materials.
- Activism has led to early immersion home-based and school-based programs for language reclamation and revitalization.
- Our goal is to understand the developmental trajectory of hul'g'umi'num' child pronunciation acquisition, to support parents and educators.

#### RESEARCH OUESTIONS:

- 1. At what age can we expect bilingual English/ Hul'g'umi'num' children to produce specific sounds?
- 2. What is the relationship between adult model pronunciations and children's pronunciation?

#### HUL'O'UMI'NUM' SOUND INVENTORY:

 Contains many consonants that are not in English: ejective stops (e.g. p'), uvular consonants (e.g. g), coronal fricatives & affricates (e.g. lh /\f/, tth /tθ/).

### METHODS:

- Caregiver recorded lists of words and phrases spoken by themselves and repeated by four children (3;5-3;10, 3;8, 7;3, and 7;10 years old).
- Final corpus: 362 word tokens, 1075 consonant tokens, transcribed from recordings in Praat.
- · For each consonant, we computed the frequency in the adult and child pronunciations, and age of first production using Google Sheets.
- · For phonemes in Hul'q'umi'num' but not English, we consulted acquisition literature for other languages sharing those/similar consonants to predict when children might first produce them. (Fig. 2)

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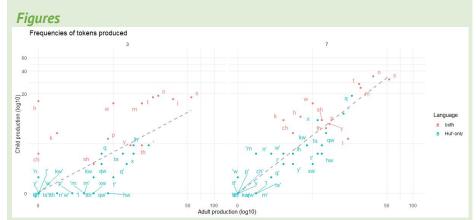


Figure 1. Comparison between caregiver (x-axis) and child (y-axis) production frequencies for Hul'q'umi'num' consonants.



Figure 2. Comparison of age of first production between Hul'g'umi'num' data and predictions based on isiXhosa and O'egchi' data in Pascoe (2016), Maphalala et al. (2014) and Wagner & Baker-Smemoe (2013).

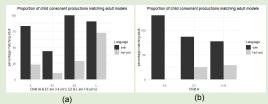


Figure 3. Proportion of kids' to adult model's sounds (black: both English and Hul'q'umi'num'; grey: Hul'q'umi'num' only); (a) all four participating kids; (b) child A only at 3;5, 3;7, and 3;10

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

- Kids generally mirror their model: sounds more frequent in model's speech are also more frequent in children's speech
- Sounds that occur in both English and Hul'g'umi'num' (red) are more frequent than ones that occur in Hul'a'umi'num' only (blue) (Fig. 1)
- Some sounds (e.g., /ch/, /h/, /k/, /w/) are over-represented in 3 year olds' speech, as expected from cross-linguistic productions (gliding (w), debuccalization (h), stopping (k)( Grunwell (1981))(Fig. 1)
- /g/, /gw/ and /g'/ are produced by 3-year-olds (surprising to adults) (Fig. 1)
- Glottalized sounds are rarely produced by kids and adult models (Fig. 1)
- /t'/ and /ch/ occur earlier and /hw/ and /xw/ occur later in Hul'g'umi'num' than predicted based on cross-linguistic research (Fig. 2)
- By 7 years old, exposure to Hul'q'umi'num' influences proportion of Hul'q'umi'num' only sounds produced by kids: L is exposed to Hul'g'umi'num' more regularly than E2 and has a much higher proportion of Hul'g'umi'num' only sounds (Fig. 3a)
- In a span of 5 months (3:5 to 3:10), A went from saying no Hul'g'umi'num'-only sounds to saying 30% of those she heard (Fig. 3b)

Limitations: few children variable-auality recordinas: word lists not identical between all children/ages: task (elicited word lists) not representative of natural speech.

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