

# The Híłzaqv Language Mobilization Partnership: Collaboration on BC's Central Coast

*Ǵvúí* (Rory Housty) & *Mark Turin*

5th International Conference on Language  
Documentation & Conservation 2017  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa



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Approximately 35 Híłzaqv fluent speakers and 25 ‘understanders’ (numbers from Klemtu are not known)

**LOCATION: Bella Bella / Wáglísł̓a**

Amalgamated in Old Bella Bella (Q̓íc)

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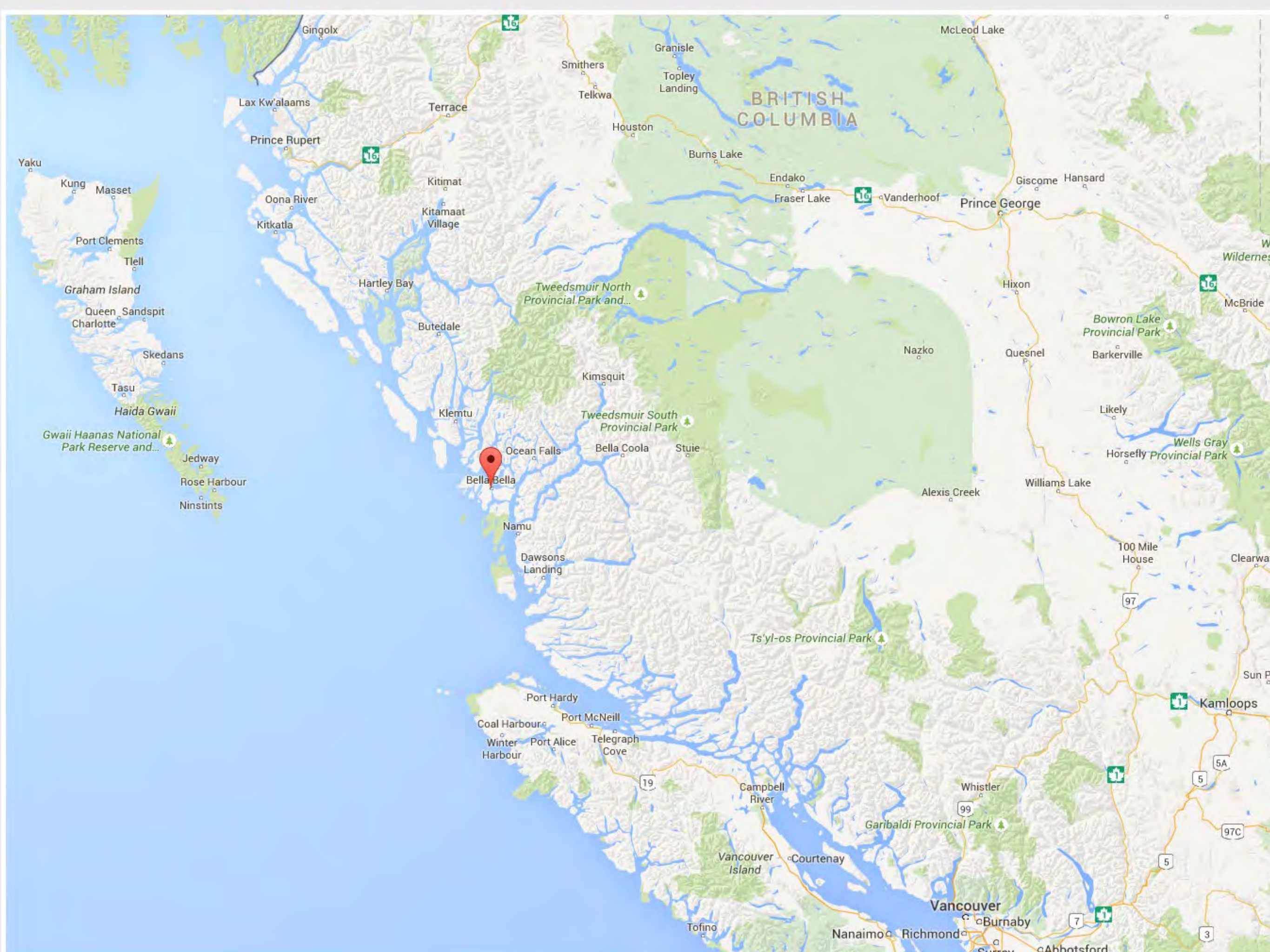
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Bella Bella or Wáglísł̓a is the main Hítzaqv̓ village

“Bella Bella” comes from *płbálá* meaning ‘a narrow or flat point of land’

Population of Heiltsuk community members:  
1,600 (on reserve) & 1,000 (off reserve)









# Heiltsuk Territory within British Columbia



## Legend

-  Heiltsuk Territory
-  BC

0 137.5 275 550 Km

Date: 2/23/2017  
Author: Kevin Starr - HIRMD GIS



*Old Bella Bella - McLaughlin Bay*





Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bella\\_Bella,\\_British\\_Columbia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bella_Bella,_British_Columbia)



**Table 4: Measures of Endangerment**

**Source: Report on the Status of B.C. First Nations Languages  
First Peoples' Cultural Council, 2014.**


B.C. First Nations Language	Measure of Endangerment <sup>1</sup>	Number of Fluent Speakers <sup>1</sup>
Gitsenim̓x	Endangered/Severely Endangered	1,219
Tsilhqot'in	Severely Endangered	943
Dakelh	Severely Endangered	688
Nisga'a	Severely Endangered	435
Hul'q'umi'num' / Halq'eméylem / həŋqəmiŋəm	Severely Endangered	278
Nsyilxcən	Severely Endangered	255
Secwepemctsin	Severely Endangered	249
Státimcets	Severely Endangered	173
Nedut'en	Nearly Extinct	161
Dane-Zaa (Cᑭ ᑭ)	Nearly Extinct	151
Nłeʔkepmxcín	Nearly Extinct	151
Kwakwala	Nearly Extinct	148
Wetsuwet'en	Nearly Extinct	131
Nuučaanuł	Nearly Extinct	115
Āenaksialakala / Āaʼislakala	Nearly Extinct	80
SENĆOTEN / Malchosen / Lekwungen / Semiahmoo / T'Sou-ke	Nearly Extinct * 3 dialects of this language group are sleeping	60
Tāłtān	Nearly Extinct	50
Dene K'e	Nearly Extinct	45
Nuxalk	Nearly Extinct	40
Ḳaad Kil / Ḳaaydaa Kil (Haida)	Nearly Extinct	39
Sṃalgyax	Nearly Extinct	38
Hailhzaqvla	Nearly Extinct	32



# Community-Directed Language Work


The Heiltsuk Cultural and Education Centre (HCEC) was established in 1980 & is located within the School. The Centre serves as a “Memory Bank” of the Heiltsuk:

# Mandate



**The Heiltsuk Cultural Education Centre - Mandate**

**Since 1980, the mandate and goals of the Centre have been to serve the interests and concerns of the Heiltsuk Band that:**



**a permanent record of Heiltsuk history, language and cultural traditions and achievements be preserved and passed on to successive generations, and that specific programs be undertaken to foster appreciation for and awareness of the revitalization and further development of cultural traditions.**

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**The Heiltsuk Cultural Education Centre**  
P.O. Box 880  
Bella Bella, British Columbia V0T 1Z0  
Tel (250) 957-2626, Fax (250) 957-2780

[Main Page](#)  
[Mandate](#)  
[Program Areas](#)  
[History](#)  
[Where?](#)  
[Contact Us](#)  
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[Links](#)

Source: [www.hcec.ca](http://www.hcec.ca)

# Community-Directed Language Work

The Heiltsuk Nation initiated extensive language research and documentation in 1973.

The HCEC has language and cultural archives.

The archive houses hundred of hours of language cassettes, reel to reel and video recordings.

Through its Heiltsuk Language Studies program, the Heiltsuk Cultural Education Centre seeks to continue to support the documentation and revitalization of the Heiltsuk language, and has assisted in creating and compiling extensive resources.

# Community-Directed Language Work

1) Developing a practical orthography (alphabet) for writing down the Heiltsuk language; 2) recording and analyzing words in order to produce comprehensive word lists, bilingual dictionaries, and taxonomies; 3) analyzing and identifying the basic structure of the Heiltsuk language; 4) recording an extensive body of oral traditions, narratives, and discourses, and transcribing and translating these into English;

Assisting and promoting the understanding and interpretation of Heiltsuk culture through linguistic analysis of information recorded or transmitted in Heiltsuk;

Promoting and assisting in the development of Heiltsuk language instruction programs;

Maximizing use of available and emerging technologies to promote the preservation of and access to Heiltsuk language materials.

# Community-Directed Language Work

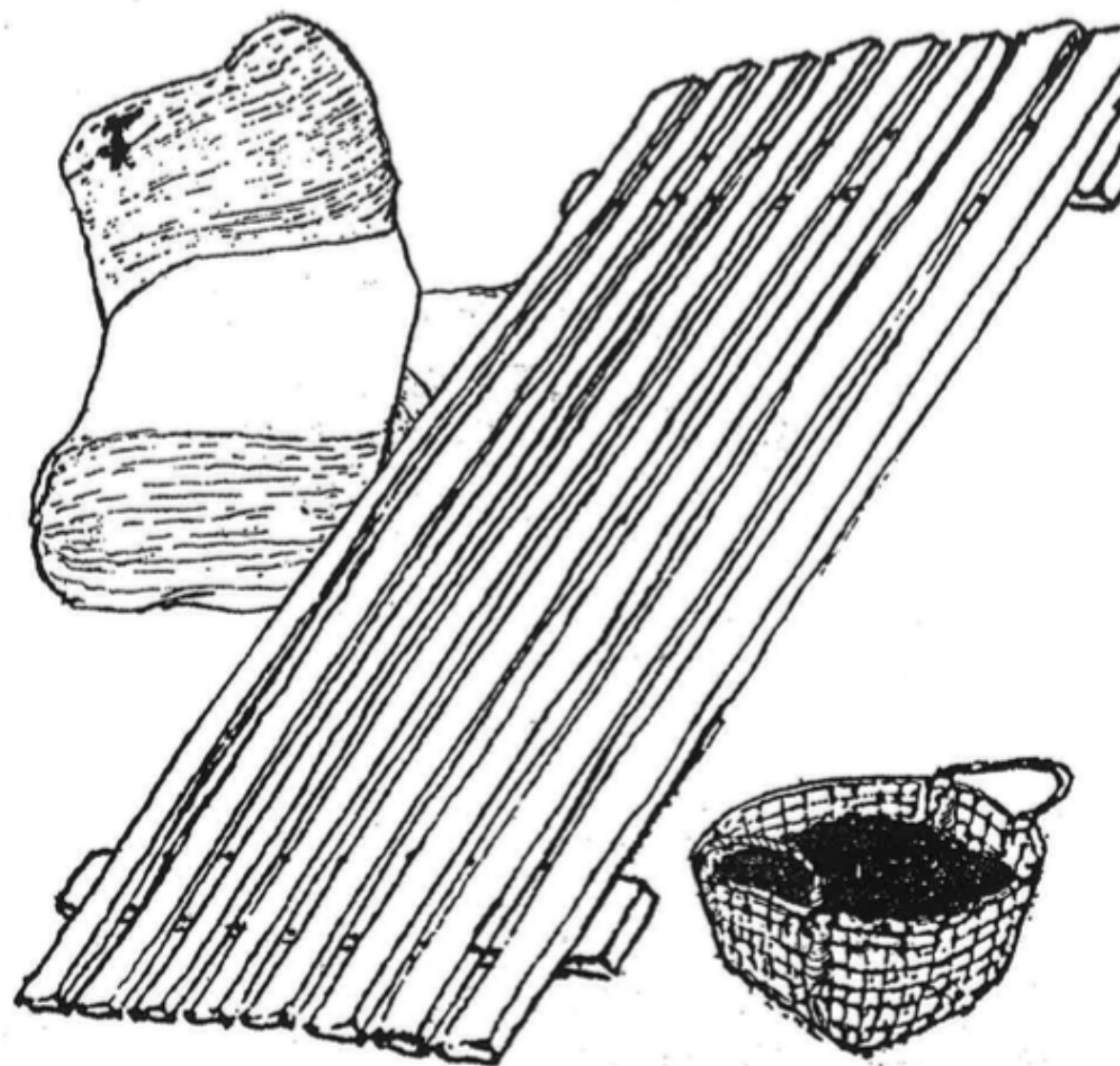
Dutch linguist Dr John Rath was invited to the community in 1973.

He stayed for over a decade working with elders, school staff, and Heiltsuk linguists whom he trained in orthography and collaborated with to produce a large body of bilingual texts, dictionaries and grammatical descriptions.

He also developed many self-instructional booklets accompanied by audio tape recordings. Dr. Rath's gave classes for local Heiltsuk linguists and Heiltsuk Language teachers.



# LQSDIAXI



Heiltsuk Language Programme  
1988

This booklet contains an illustrated Heiltsuk text on the gathering and processing of seaweed. The text can be listened to on the accompanying cassette tape. A Heiltsuk-English vocabulary with grammatical notes is included opposite each page of text.



## VOCABULARY

"3" is short for "he," "she," "it," "they," "him," "her," or "them."

The superscript <sup>1</sup> means "close to the speaker or writer."

The superscript <sup>2</sup> means "close to the one(s) being talked or written to."

The superscript <sup>3</sup> means "close to neither the speaker nor the one(s) being talked or written to."

# Letter from William Freeman, October 1972

Klentu, B.C.

Oct. 12th. 1972.

Cecil Reid,  
Chief Councillor,  
Bella Bella, B.C.

Dear Sir:

Thanks for the use of the book and I enjoyed it tremendously. I am very much interested on the history of our people and reading the diary of Dr. Tolmie was like rolling back the time to 130 years ago with his on the scene report of the native ceremonies and rituals and some of it I heard about by word of mouth, but I was somewhat disturbt with the way he shot down crows. I am sure Dr. Henderson wouldn't do such a thing. No wonder there's no crows there at Bella Bella.

I and David Stevens hope to publish the first edition of the heylldzekw language from the works of Dr. Erits Kordlandt here last summer. This should be done by our own people or original inhabitants of this region. I now have in my possession stories and texts of Bella Bella from the Resource Repository for B.C. Indian Languages and Cultures, Provincial Museum, Victoria. The stories and lengends are good, but the vocabulary section is all mixed up with the Kwakiutl language. This is from the works of Dr. Franz Boas and anthropologist who visited the Bella Bella people at the old town back in 1884 and his last visit there at Bella Bella was in 1924 and his informant and interpreter was Willie Gladstone. Dr. Boas' one mistake was grouping us together with the Kwakiutl and saying that we are a branch of the



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tribes. I'll be very happy to do my little part in the work to stabilize our language because doing away with our language and culture is nothing short of cutting our own throats.

I am enclosing a sample sheet of the dictionary we hope to compile to an indexed dictionary form. I am,

Yours truly,

*William Freeman*

William Freeman.

wf/f.  
att; sample  
sheets of  
forthcoming  
heyldzekw-  
dictionary.



# Hílistis Society



Source: Native Brotherhood, 1981 Convention.



# Community-Directed Language Work

The Bella Bella Community School (BBCS) instituted Heiltsuk Language Instruction as a formal part of school curriculum in 1978, and has focused on curriculum development, Heiltsuk Language teacher certification and the pursuit of effective language teaching strategies.



Source: Rory Housty, 2017.





Two grade 9 students in the Bella Bella Community School racing to look for the picture of a sound that their teacher had called out from the Heiltsuk Alphabet Chart.

Credit: Liz Wilson, BBCS Teacher.  
January 2017.

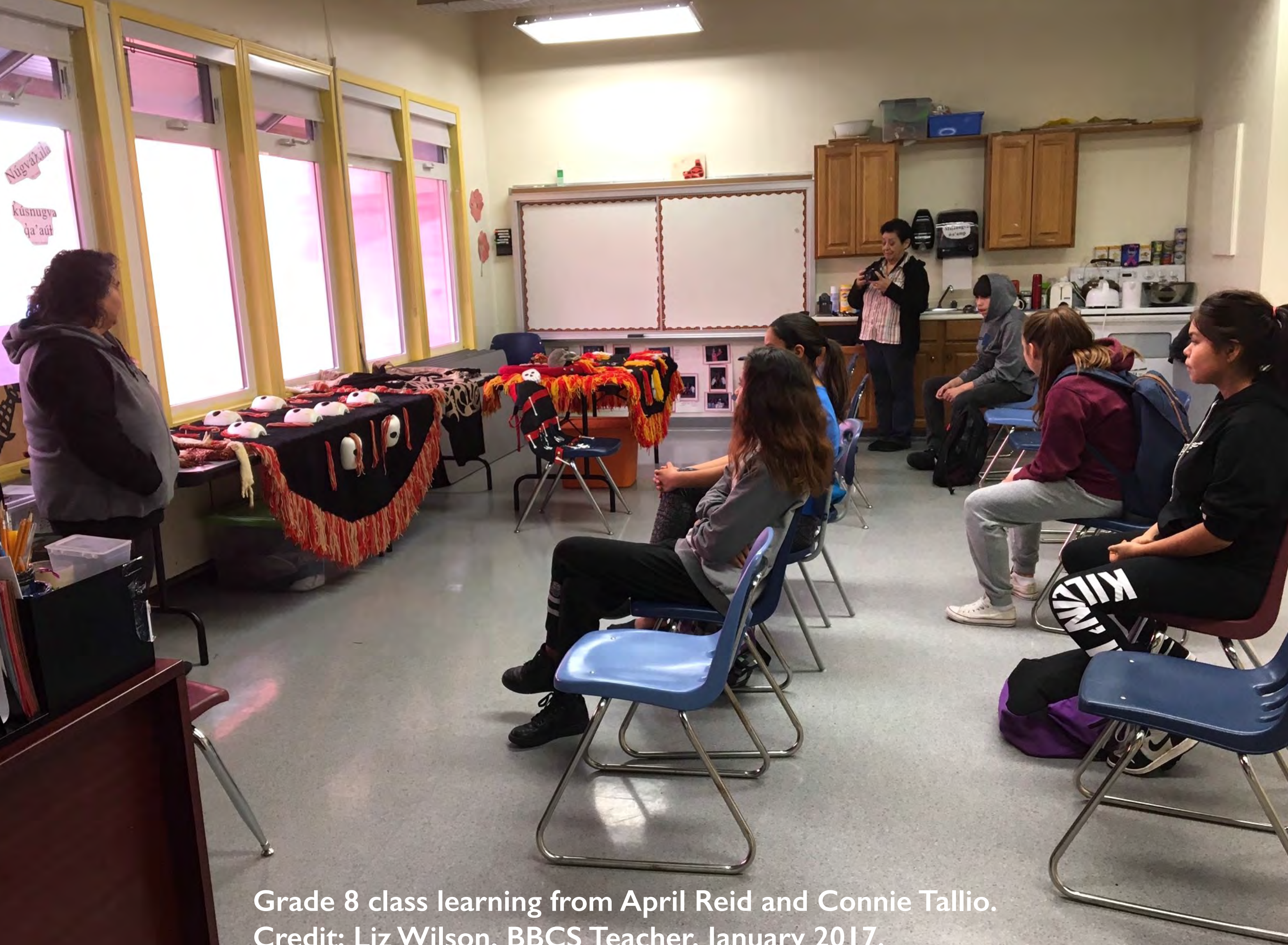


A grade 4/5 student pointing to a photo of a Heiltsuk *yímas* (hereditary chief).

Credit: Liz Wilson, BBCS Teacher.  
January 2017.

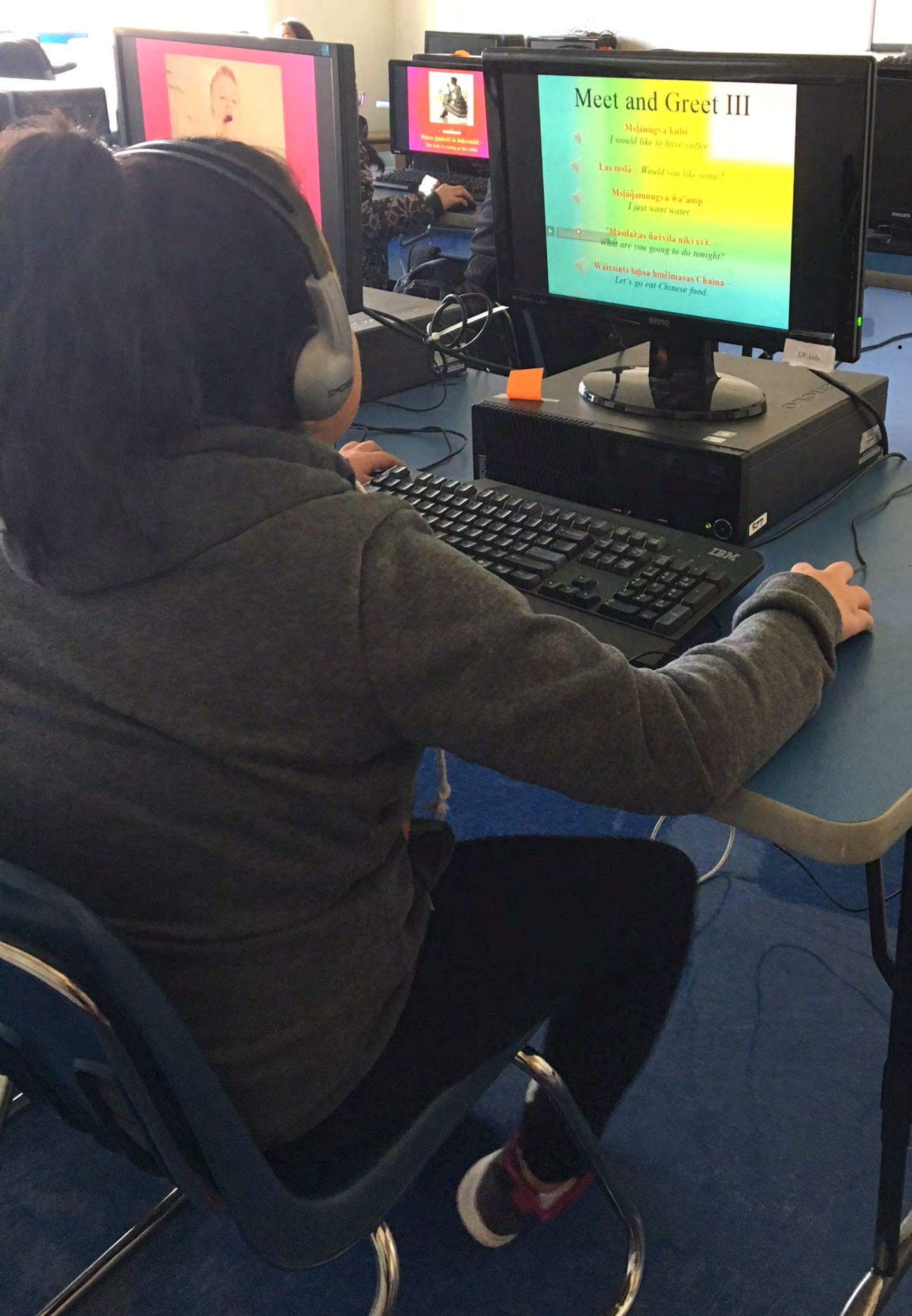






Grade 8 class learning from April Reid and Connie Tallio.  
Credit: Liz Wilson, BBCS Teacher. January 2017.





Once a week, grades 2-9 go to the BBCS computer lab during language class and work through PowerPoint presentations with images and embedded recordings, and repeat each word or phrase after hearing the speaker pronounce it. This helps to reinforce what the students are learning in the classroom. To date, they work from 14 PowerPoint presentations.

Credit: Liz Wilson, BBCS Teacher. January 2017.

# Community-Directed Language Work

Heiltsuk College : Adult Híłzaqv Language Class

Sásm̓ House : Language Nest

QQS Projects Society : Koeye Camp

Youth on land where they learn language, culture & history

Heiltsuk Radio : in early planning stages....





**Rory sharing a Language and History lesson on the land in Heiltsuk Territory, Koeeye Camp.**

**Credit: Jess Housty, QQS Projects Society, 2015.**



William Housty, HIRMD Board, Chair sharing traditional place names and important local history with children on the land in Heiltsuk Territory, Koeye Camp. Credit: Rory Housty, 2016.







Heiltsuk youth singing and dancing in traditional big house on the land in Heiltsuk Territory, Koeve Camp.  
Credit: Rory Housty, 2016.



# UBC-Bella Bella Partnership

Through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2016, the Heiltsuk Cultural Education Centre, Bella Bella Community School and UBC's First Nations and Endangered Languages Program are partnering in an effort to collaboratively create new opportunities for speaking, writing and reading the Híłzaqv (Heiltsuk) language by expanding and deepening existing community language revitalization and cultural documentation in a digital environment.

The partnership brings together students, staff and faculty in Vancouver and Bella Bella by providing spaces to productively combine academic and community goals.

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# UBC-Bella Bella Partnership Project Team

**Frances Brown** (Heiltsuk Language Program Coordinator, Bella Bella Community School)

**Jennifer Carpenter** (Culture & Heritage Manager, Heiltsuk Integrated Resource Management Department; Director, Heiltsuk Cultural Education Centre, Bella Bella)

**Janice Gladish** (Principal, Bella Bella Community School)

**Rory Housty** (formerly Resource Centre & Research Assistant, Heiltsuk Cultural Education Centre, Bella Bella, now Heiltsuk Language Program, Waglisla Adult Learning Centre/Heiltsuk College, Bella Bella)

**Robyn Humchitt** (Digitizing Technician, Heiltsuk Cultural Education Centre, Bella Bella)

**Rex Slett** (Language and Culture Special Project Liaison, Heiltsuk Cultural Education Centre, Bella Bella)

**Chester Lawson** (Elder, retired educator & teacher, Heiltsuk Hereditary Chief)

**Pam Brown** (Curator, Pacific Northwest, Museum of Anthropology & Heiltsuk community member)

**Kim Lawson** (Reference Librarian, X̱wi7x̱wa Library, UBC & Heiltsuk community member)

**Gerry Lawson** (Coordinator, Oral History and Language Lab, MOA & Heiltsuk community member)

**Lisa Nathan** (Assistant Professor at School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, UBC, & Coordinator of the First Nations Curriculum Concentration)

**Aidan Pine** (App / Web Developer, UBC Alumnus)

**Mark Turin** (Associate Professor of Anthropology & Chair, First Nations & Endangered Languages Program, UBC)



# UBC-Bella Bella Partnership Class Visit



Some members of the Hítzaqv Language Mobilization Partnership  
Credit: Mark Turin, Saunders Island, July 2016.



# Hítzaqv Writing System

11

## Exercise 7

Here is how you capitalize word-initial λ, κ, κ', ±, m, n, l.

small letter	capital letter
λ	Λ
κ	Κ
κ'	'Κ
±	±
m	'M
n	'N
l	'L

Now try the following sentences.

- |                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Lálabiκaki.  | 8. 'Másbikakili. |
| 2. Kílabiκaki.  | 9. 'Másilili.    |
| 3. Kílabiκalái. | 10. 'Másilili.   |
| 4. 'Másilili.   | 11. 'Másilili.   |

## Hítzaqv Unicode Keyboard

Please click one of the links below to download the current working version of the Hítzaqv Unicode keyboard for your operating system. A folder will then download with installation files and instructions.



[Mac](#)



[Windows PC](#)

## Híłzaqv Orthography Converter

The Online Heiltsuk Orthography Converter was designed by Aidan Pine to support community members and partners who use & Heiltsuk Duolos & Heiltsuk Times fonts (non-Unicode) and wish to work in a cross-platform digital environment. The Online Heiltsuk Orthography Converter accepts text from & Heiltsuk Duolos & Heiltsuk Times and converts into Unicode, and vice versa. Please click on the image below to access the free online converter tool.

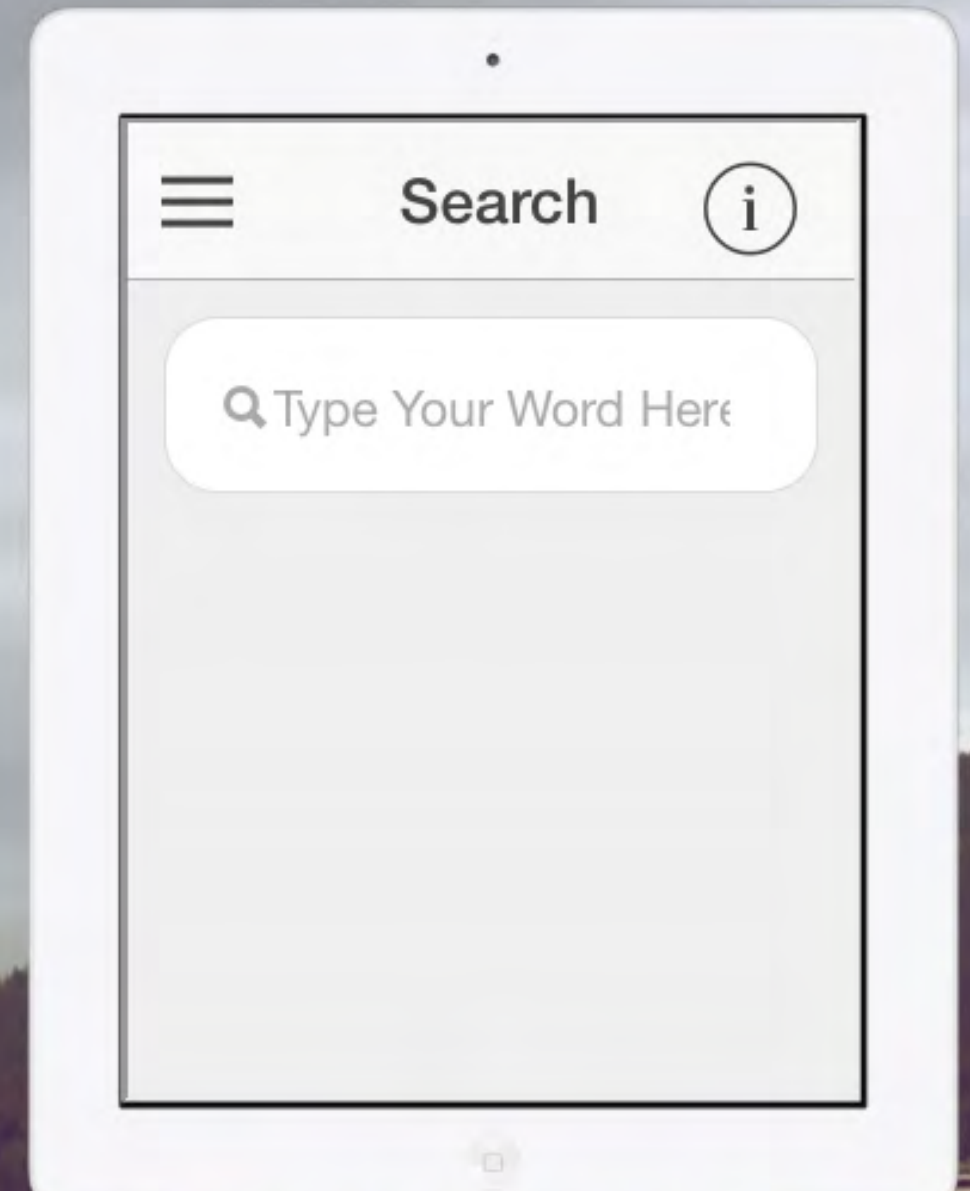






Waldayu Mobile

Welcome to the online  
**Hítzaqv** dictionary.



Hello! Welcome to the demonstration version of the Online **Hítzaqv** Dictionary. We acknowledge that the data used in this online program has been sourced from Version 2.1 of the Digital Heiltsuk-English Dictionary © 2007 Heiltsuk Cultural Education Centre, which was commissioned by the HCEC and developed by the linguist John Rath and Heiltsuk staff with financial assistance obtained through the Aboriginal Language Initiative (ALI) from the Province of British Columbia's First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council. The





**Rory Housty** @rhousty · 7 Oct 2016

mśláṇugva táukvs kvúbi - I want a strong coffee

🌐 Translate from Czech



**Rory Housty** @rhousty · 7 Oct 2016

qáqáwaṭaṇugva abúkvas qs ġáġm'utí núsa - I am listening to the mother of my later grandmother tell a story.



**Rory Housty** @rhousty · 13 Oct 2016

In English- t/y everyone for taking care of our sea/land (after this horrific [#oilspill](#)) today. I'm grateful u All [@WilliamHousty](#) [@hdirector](#)



10



4



**Rory Housty** @rhousty · 13 Oct 2016

Núgva ġiáxsiṣauḷa akqṇ ágva qṇ císła'aqvs qṇts wáṣ'úisaṣv la kṇqlayáṣv wálanugvas súqvs qíqṇsu [#Heiltsuk](#) [#NathanEStewart](#)



1



6



3





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1



6



3





**Rory Housty** @rhousty · 6 Oct 2016

aíkuǎvs n'ála la k'vqłayaǎv

 Translate from Vietnamese





**Rory Housty** @rhousty · 6 Oct 2016

aíkuǎvs ńála la k'vqlayaǎv

 Translate from Vietnamese



0:08





# Gíaxsiǎ, Wúgvṃi luǎv Skápṇsila

# TCIF



<http://heiltsuk.arts.ubc.ca>

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Our participation in this conference was made possible thanks to Professor Marianne Ignace's SSHRC Partnership Grant: *First Nations Languages in the Twenty-first Century: Looking Back, Looking Forward*. #895-2012-1029. We are grateful for this support.



