

## Hul'q'umi'num' kinship terminology and system - Lecture notes

Materials are drawn from

Charlie, Sonya. 2019. *Kinship terms within the Hul'q'umi'num' territory*. MA project.

Burnaby: Simon Fraser University.

Table 1 Kinship diagram symbols










	male		deceased male
	female		deceased female
	non-gender specific		
	married		divorced
	parent-child relationship		sibling relationship

Table 2 Some Hul'q'umi'num' kinship terms

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ADDRESS	MEANING
ten		te'	'mother' (also used for 'grandmother')
men		me'	'father' (also used for 'grandfather')
mun'u	me'mun'u	mun'u	'son/daughter'

si'lu	sul'si'lu	si' sisul'u	'grandparent', 'grandparent's sibling', 'grandparent's cousin'
'imuth	'um-'imuth	'im 'imiye'	'grandchild', 'grandniece', 'grandnephew', 'cousin's grandchild'
shhwum'nikw	shhwum'ne'lukw	nikw nikwiye'	'aunt', 'uncle', 'parent's cousin'
stiwun	stutiwun	tiwun	'niece', 'nephew', 'cousin's child'

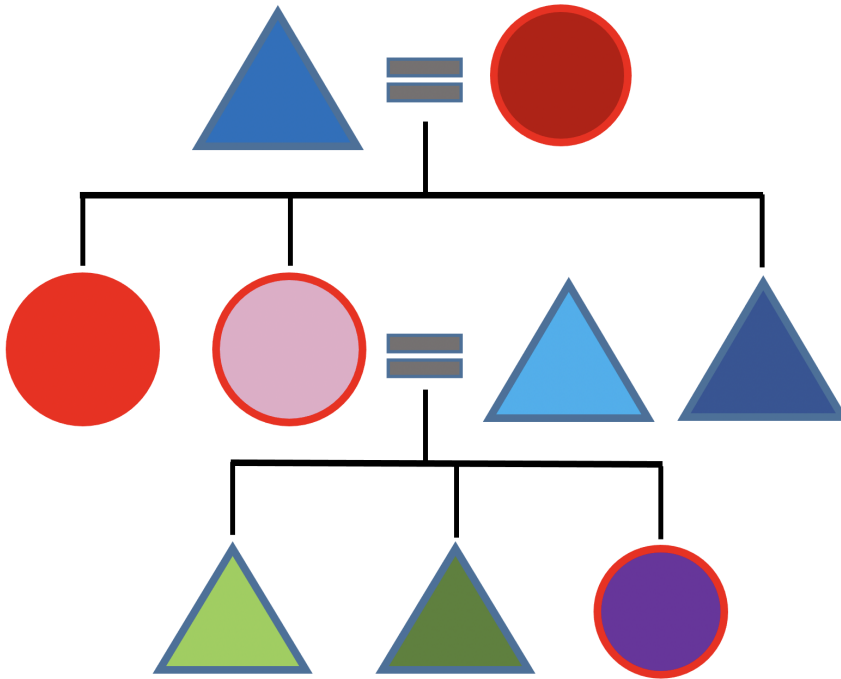
Table 3 Determiners relevant to the discussion of kinship terms

	IN SIGHT	OUT OF SIGHT	POSSESSION OF KINSHIP
MASCULINE	tthu, tu	kwthu, kwu	tthunu, kwthun', etc.
FEMININE	thu	lhu	thunu, lhunu, lhun', etc.

Using determiners on kinterms

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| a. 'i 'u 'uw' 'a'mut <b>lhun'</b> ten?<br>'Is your mother home?'        | d. 'i 'u 'uw' 'a'mut <b>kwthun'</b> si'lu?<br>'Is your grandfather home?' |
| b. 'i 'u 'uw' 'a'mut <b>kwthun'</b> men?<br>'Is your father home?'      | e. 'i 'u 'uw' 'a'mut <b>lhun'</b> shhwum'nikw?<br>'Is your aunt home?'    |
| c. 'i 'u 'uw' 'a'mut <b>lhun'</b> si'lu?<br>'Is your grandmother home?' | f. 'i 'u 'uw' 'a'mut <b>kwun'</b> shhwum'nikw?<br>'Is your uncle home?'   |

Figure: Some kin relations in immediate families



## Generational and reciprocal kinship terms

Table 4 Reciprocal Hul'q'umi'num' kin terms for three or more generations

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ADDRESS	MEANING
sts'a'muqw	sts'a'lum'uqw	ts'a'muqw	'great-grandparent/child', etc.
'ukwiya'qw	'ukw-'ikwiya'qw	'ukwiya'qw	'great-great-grandparents/children' etc.
tth'up'i'a'qw	tth'utth'ip'i'a'qw	tth'up'i'a'qw	'great-great-great-grandparents/ children' etc.

tth'up'i'a'qw	great-great-great-grandmother
'ukwiya'qw	great-great-grandmother
sts'a'muqw	great-grandmother tens thunu sil'u
si'lu	grandmother tens thunu ten
ten	mother thunu ten
'een'thu	me
mun'u	daughter
'imuth	granddaughter
sts'a'muqw	great-granddaughter
'ukwiya'qw	great-great-granddaughter
tth'up'i'a'qw	great-great-great-granddaughter

### Relative age and sibling terms

Table 5 Hul'q'umi'num' kinship terms for siblings

SINGULAR	PLURAL	ADDRESS	MEANING
shhw'aqw'a'	shhw'a'luqw'a'	shhw'aqw'a'	'brother/sister/cousin'
'elush	'ul-'elush	none	'brother/sister/cousin of the opposite sex'
shuyulh	shushiyulh	shuyulh	'older brother/sister/cousin (w/ older linking relative)'

sqe'uq	squle'uq	qe'uq	'younger brother/sister/cousin (w/ younger linking relative'
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The term *shhw'aqw'a'* 'brother, sister, cousin' is a general term and its plural *shhw'a'luqw'a'* can be used when you are talking about more than one sibling or cousin. When using Hul'q'umi'num', you can use this one word for acknowledging or introducing a group of your siblings or cousins. This word is also used as a general word for immediate family and relatives.

In addition, there is one term *'elush* that is used by a person for a sibling of the opposite sex. The word *'elush* is the term used for the sister or female cousin of a man or the brother or male cousin of a woman. The diagram below shows that the female ego can call both her siblings *'elush* and both the brothers can call the female ego their *'elush* but the brothers cannot call each other *'elush*. They would have to either use the term *shuyulh* or *sqe'uq*.<sup>1</sup>

Age matters for some sibling terms, for example, the terms *shuyulh* and *sqe'uq*. The term *shuyulh* 'older sibling, cousin' in Hul'q'umi'num' is used when someone is talking about their older brother, sister, or cousin, and *sqe'uq* for a younger one. So I would call my older sibling *shuyulh* and she would call me *sqe'uq*. For Hul'q'umi'num', the ancestral lineage, not age, determines whether a cousin is considered older or younger. A person who is your *shuyulh* can be younger than you in years but is considered older than you because your parent is younger than theirs. So if my father has an older sister, her children will be to me *shuyulh* even if I was born before them. And I am their *sqe'uq*.

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<sup>1</sup> This term can be used directly and indirectly. You can say it to someone or someone can say it to you but you cannot say it meaning of your own sibling (referring to them, possessive, e.g. Ruby's mom would ask her where her *'elush* is).

Figure 4 Kinship chart: *shuyulh*

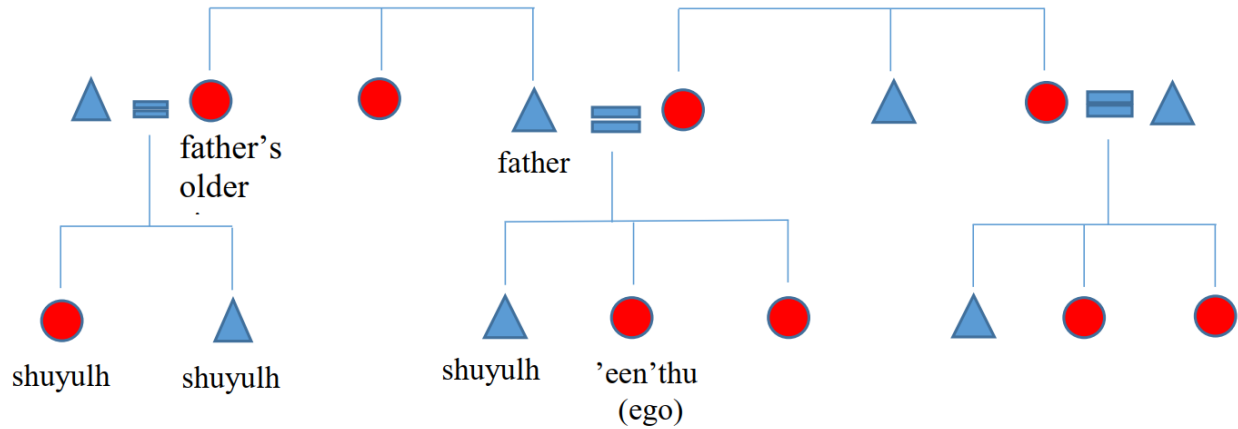
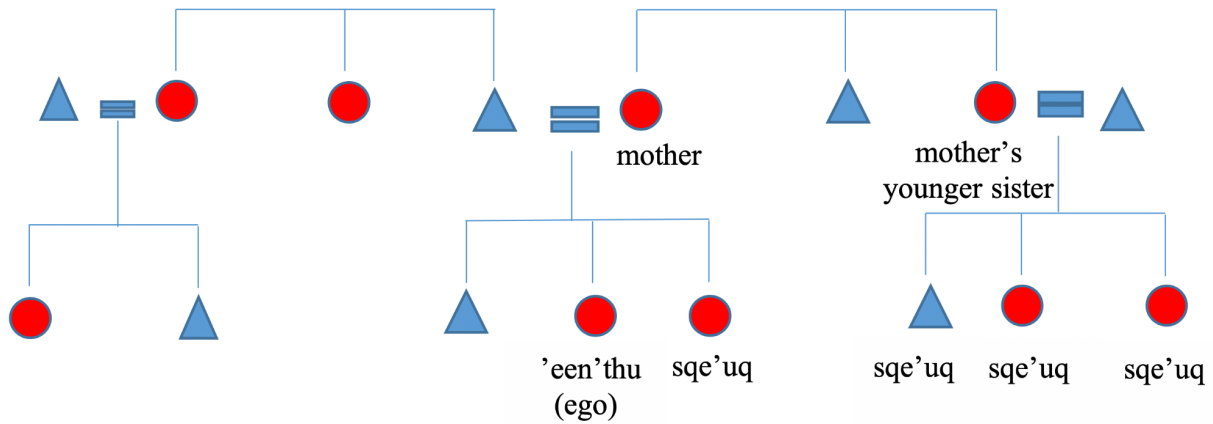


Figure 5 Kinship chart: *sqe'uq*



For cousins, you go back one generation to determine relative age. For second cousins, you go back two generations. If my grandmother has an older brother, and his grandchildren are younger than me, I still call them *shuyulh* and they call me *sqe'uq*.

The plural term, *shushiylh*, can be used for all of your older siblings and cousins, on all sides of the family, and the term *squle'uq* for the younger ones. The plural of the general term *shhw'a'luqw'a'* can be used when you are talking about a mixed group of siblings and cousins, some older and some younger.

## Terms of birth order

*Table 6 Terms for birth order*

eldest brother, sister or cousin	sun'tl'e' / sun'tl'e'tun
older brothers, sisters and cousins (pl.)	seen'tl'e' / seen'tl'e'tun
youngest younger brother, sister or cousin	sa'suqwt / su'asuqwt
youngest brothers, sisters and cousin	sula'suqwt

The term *sa'suqwt* is for the youngest sibling, as illustrated in the following example:

nilh **sa'suqwt** tthu Paul 'u tthu shhwa'luqw'a's kwthunu men.

*Paul is the youngest out of my dad's siblings.*

In the Hul'q'umi'num' view of the animal kingdom, the term *sun'tl'e'* is used for the creature that is considered the senior sibling in various families of creatures.

*Table 7 Hul'q'umi'num' kinship terms referring to animals*

yuxwule <sup>2</sup>	Bald Eagle is the <i>sun'tl'e'</i> of the birds.
spe'uth	Bear is the <i>sun'tl'e'</i> of the fur animals.
kwewe'uts	Elk the <i>sun'tl'e'</i> of the game animals.
q'ullhanamutsun	Orca is the <i>sun'tl'e'</i> of the mammals.
kw'a'luhw <sup>3</sup>	Dog salmon is the <i>sun'tl'e'</i> of the fish.
shwuhwa'us	Thunderbird is the <i>sun'tl'e'</i> of the fierce creatures.

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<sup>2</sup> This is because it is used for spiritual purposes.

<sup>3</sup> This is because it has the sharp teeth, and chases away the other fish, and also helps take care of our rivers.

xpey<sup>4</sup>

The red cedar tree is the *sun'il'e'* of the trees.

## Blended families

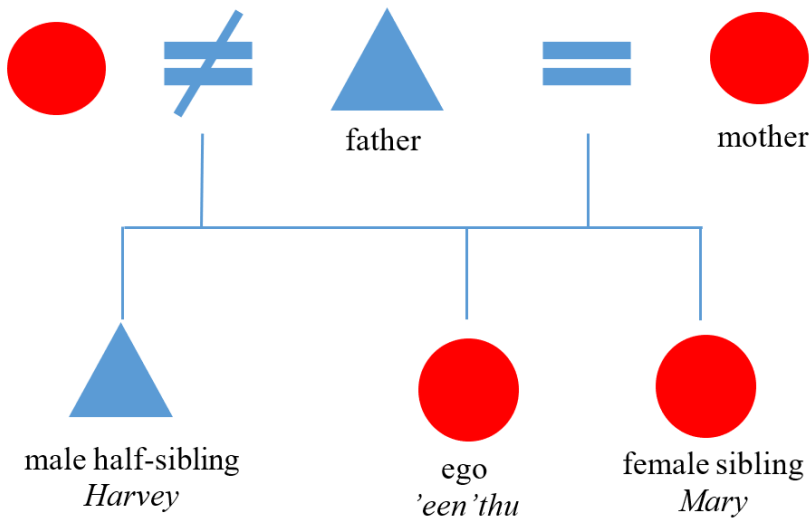
In the Hul'q'umi'num' language, there is a term that refers to people that come from the same parents.

'uqw'i'tul / qw'uqw'i'tul

brother or sisters (direct lineage)

The term *snuts'uwyulh* is for a half-sibling; *snul'ts'uwyulh* is the plural. The root word is *nets'* 'different'. This is not a direct reference term. The (progressive) verb form is *hiin'ts'uw'yulhtul'* 'being half-siblings to each other'.

Figure 6 Kinship: half-sibling



nilh nu snuts'uwyulh kwthu Harvey.

*Harvey is my half-brother.*

'i tst hiin'ts'uw'yulhtul', kwthu Harvey 'i' 'een'thu.

*We are half-siblings to each other, Harvey and me.*

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<sup>4</sup> This is because we use this as soon as we are born, throughout our whole life, and when we die.



'i tst qw'uqw'i'tul, lhu Mary 'i' 'een'thu.

*We are full blood siblings to each other, Mary and me.*

## In-laws

Some in-law terms are formed by prefixing *sh=* to the beginning of a kinship term. See the following chart.

*Table 8 Some Hul'q'umi'num' terms for in-laws*

kinship term	in-law
si'lu <i>grandparent</i>	shsi'lu <i>grandparent-in-law</i>
sts'a'muqw <i>great-grandparent</i>	shts'a'muqw <i>great-grandparent-in-law</i>
'imuth <i>grandchild</i>	sh'imuth <i>grandchild-in-law</i>
stiwun <i>niece or nephew</i>	shtiwun <i>niece or nephew in-law</i>

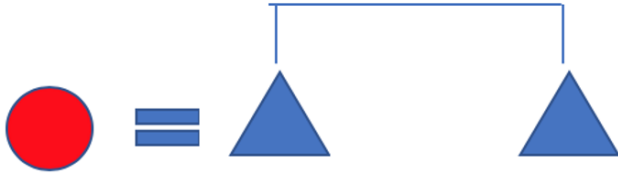
But there are also terms that refer specifically to in-laws, and I will detail ones that relate to siblings-in-in law here.[1]<sup>5</sup>

The term *smetuhwtun* is used for brother-in-law and sister in-law that includes the husband's sibling (10), the wife's sister (11), the husband's brother's wife (12), and the wife's sister's husband (13).

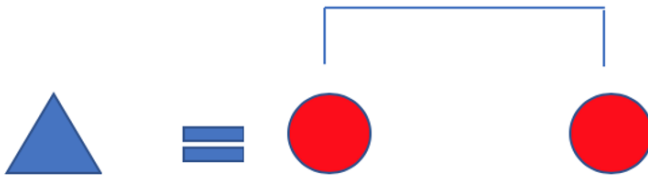
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<sup>5</sup> Thank you to Ruby Peter, Donna Gerdts and Thomas Johnny for collaborating in the research on sibling-in-laws.

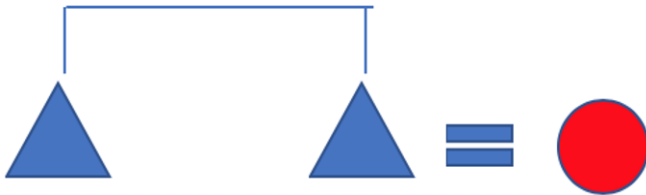
(10) woman's husband's brother = *smetuhwtun*



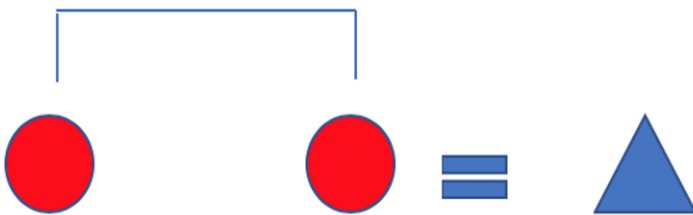
(11) man's wife's sister = *smetuhwtun*



(12) husband's brother's wife = *smetuhwtun*



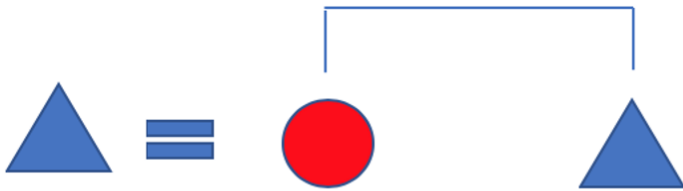
(13) wife's sister's husband = *smetuhwtun*



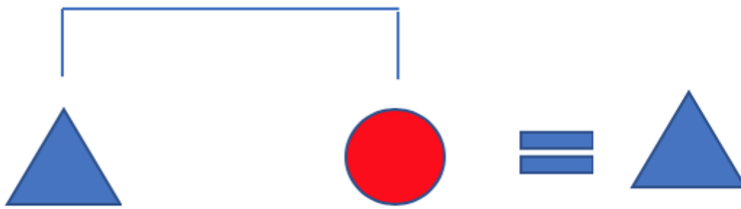
The plural form of *smetuhwtun* is *sme'ultuhwtun*, and the address form is *metuhwtun*.

While *smetuhwtun* is more general and more closely resembles the meanings entailed by English 'brother-in-law', there are other more specific terms for in-laws in Hul'q'umi'num'. The term *shkw'ilhuw'* is another word for brother-in-law and refers specifically to a man's wife's brother. Besides meaning brother-in-law, this term also refers to parents-in-law.

(14) man's wife's brother = *shkw'ilhuw'*



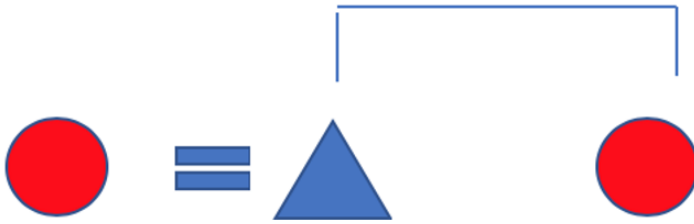
(15) man's sister's husband = *stsuwtelh*



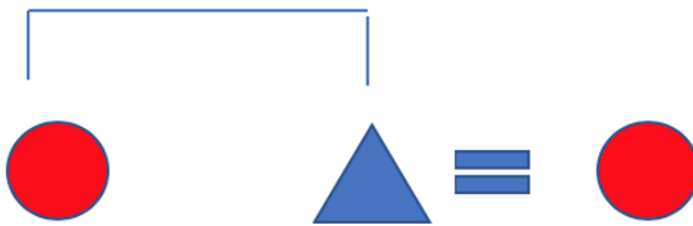
The term *stsuwtelh* also falls under the English term 'brother-in-law' but specifically refers to a man's brother-in-law through his sister. This is illustrated in the example above. The plural form is *stsi'wutelh*. The address form of *stsuwtelh* is *tsuwtelh*. Besides referring to brother-in-law, this term also refers to children-in-law.

Additionally, there is a more specific term for sister-in-law. The word *shhw'elush* refers to a woman's husband's sister/female cousin or her brother's or male cousin's wife. The diagram below shows an example of a woman's husband's sister.

(16) woman's husband's sister = *shhw'elush*



(17) woman's brother's wife = *shhw'elush*



The plural form of *shhw'elush* is *shhw'ul'elush*. In the case above, both females can call each other *shhw'elush*. It can be shortened to *'elush* or *shhw'el* as a form of endearment. The plural form of *shhw'elush* is *shhw'ul'elush*.

## Words for the deceased

In Hul'q'umi'num', deceased family members are referred to by adding the past tense suffix =*ulh* to the kinship term.<sup>6</sup>

Table 9 Hul'q'umi'num' terms for the deceased

father	men=ulh
mother	ten=ulh
husband or wife	sta'lus=ulh
grandparent	si'lu=ulh

<sup>6</sup> In addition, remote forms of the determiners can be used for deceased people. For example, deceased males can be referred to using *kw'*, for example, *kw'nu m-en-ulh* or *kw'nu men* for 'my late father'.

great-grandparent	sts'a'muqw=ulh
great-great-grandparents	'ukw-'ukwiya'qw=ulh
great-great-great- grandparents	tth'utth'ip'i'a'qw=ulh
parent(s)	shtun'ni'=ulh
son or daughter	mun'u=ulh
first-born (retains status even after death)	stsuli'lh=ulh
aunt or uncle	shhwum'nikw=ulh
niece or nephew	stiwun=ulh

There are also special words for “aunt/uncle” and “niece/nephew” when the linking relative passes away. An aunt or uncle is termed *shmuthi'elh*, to the children of a deceased sibling. Similarly, the kinterm referring to the niece or nephew, the children of their deceased sibling, is referred to as *swunmeylh* / *swunumeylh*.

## References

Charlie, Sonya. 2019. *Kinship terms within the Hul'q'umi'num' territory*. MA project. Burnaby: Simon Fraser University.