

The Hopilavayi Summer Institute
A Tribal Model of Assistance for
Ancestral Language Teacher Preparation
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The Hopi community/tribe is one of Arizona's 22 federally recognized tribes. As the westernmost of the Puebloan peoples in the U.S. Southwest, the Hopi continue to reside on a remote portion of their aboriginal lands in northeastern Arizona and speak Hopi, a Uto-Aztecan language. Of the enrolled population of just over 14,000, about 7,800 are permanent residents who live in or near 13 established villages or small communities (personal communication, Hopi Tribe Enrollment Office, 2019).¹ Some of the Hopi villages are among the oldest continuously occupied settlements on the North American continent. This remoteness has helped to preserve much of the culture in its traditional form. Thus, many of today's Hopi youth come to know the sociocultural world of Hopi as their first world, which includes village life and active participation in Hopi cultural traditions and institutions that continue to be practiced. They are also well-experienced with the mainstream world through on-reservation Euro-American education systems, technology (television and internet) and off-reservation excursions. Nevertheless, despite being immersed from birth in the Hopi world, many of today's Hopi youth are not acquiring the Hopi language as a first or second language. Rather, a societal-wide trend toward English monolingualism has raised serious concern for the Hopi people. Parents and grandparents openly acknowledge that they no longer use the Hopi language to interact with their own children and grandchildren. The consequence is that English is the *first* language being acquired by Hopi youth in the home. Such diminishing intergenerational transmission of the Hopi language is especially troubling. These concerns, expressed at a series of public forums (January 1996 - January 1997), prompted the Hopi Tribe to conduct a community survey regarding the vitality of the Hopi language. The 1997 Hopi Language Assessment Project (HLAP), conducted with grant funding from the U.S. government's Administration for Native Americans (ANA), confirmed a significant language shift from Hopi to predominantly English in the households surveyed (346 households representing 2,947 individuals).² Schools were cited as a significant factor in the wide-spread language shift from Hopi to English.³ However, the 1997 HLAP final report revealed that language maintenance as well as language preservation efforts at the individual, community, and tribal levels have been ongoing.⁴ A second ANA grant award in 1998 led to the development of the Hopi Language Education and Preservation Plan (HLEPP) that subsequently established the Hopilavayi (Hopi Language) Project under the umbrella of the Hopi Culture Preservation Office (HCPO).⁵

The Hopi Tribe Hopilavayi Project—Hopilavayi Summer Institute

The implementation period, 1998-2001, of the Hopi Language Education and Preservation Plan (HLEPP) focused on providing assistance for existing Hopi language programs targeting the eight tribal Head Start centers, one school-based program, as well as two village-based community programs. In addition to increased community awareness, development of Hopi language instructional materials, a Head Start Hopi Language Curriculum, and a culminating reservation-wide language summit, a significant outcome of HLEPP was the establishment of "the Hopilavayi (Hopi Language) Project within the Hopi Culture Preservation Office" (The Hopi Cultural Preservation Office 1998, 43).

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From 2003 to 2010, the Hopilavayi Project turned its attention to Hopi language teacher training to support school-based Hopi culture and language programs. Subsequently, the annual Hopilavayi Summer Institute (HSI) became the venue for realizing this goal.⁶ My role in the initial Institute program design was informed by a professional development project I conducted at a local K-6 school in spring 2004 (discussed later) and my long-term experience with the established and nationally and internationally known American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI), housed in the College of Education at the University of Arizona, Tucson (see <https://aildi.arizona.edu>). The central features of the Institute design included a tribal-university partnership, college or professional development credit for coursework, and four-weeks of on-site implementation. Key partners in this endeavor included HCPO, the Language, Reading and Culture Department (LRC)⁷ at the University of Arizona's College of Education (UA/COE), the University of Arizona Continuing Education University (UA/CEU), and Hopi Day School. Hopi Day School, located in the village of Kykotsmovi, housed the Institute every summer and granted use of essential instructional equipment and technology. The Hopilavayi Project provided financial support for Institute participants accepted through an application process.⁸ The four-week, intensive program of coursework took place during the month of July to accommodate the June calendar of Hopi cultural ceremonies and events. The core courses included: Introduction to Indigenous Language Revitalization, the Oral Immersion Approach to Hopi Language Teaching, an Oral Immersion Practicum, Hopi Language Curriculum and Instructional Materials Development, and Hopi Language Literacy Development. From 2004-2008, Emory Sekaquaptewa (Hopi research anthropologist at the University of Arizona) and I were the primary Institute instructors teaching Hopi Language Literacy and Oral Immersion respectively.⁹ Each summer, new courses were developed to scaffold on the participants' developing skills in oral immersion methodology, Hopi language literacy, the use of technology, as well as professional development needs for school-based and community-based language teachers. My own dissertation research (Nicholas 2008) is an in-depth, intergenerational look at Hopi language shift and vitality through the lived experiences of three Hopi youth, their parents, and members of the grandparent generations. It also examined factors leading to and the pattern of language shift as well as the salient aspects of language vitality. This research was integral to course development.

In the ensuing discussion, I consider how the Hopilavayi Summer Institute (HSI) provided critical *forms of assistance and support* to the Institute participants comprised of community members employed as para-educators (teacher assistants) (see Hermanson and Hoagland 2002; Ernst-Slavit and Wenger 2006), certified Hopi teachers in the local schools, Head Start teachers as well as community members. Most of the Institute participants attended out of *personal* desire and were para-educators wanting to more effectively carry out their language teaching responsibility in school-based Hopi language programs, certified teachers to create spaces for the Hopi language in their own classrooms, and community members to work with youth in their village communities. Here, I underscore the fact that not only was *tribal funding* a significant form of assistance to these Institute participants, but one that also strongly conveyed *tribal support* for their attention and commitment to the Hopi language at their respective teaching sites. Moreover, the Institute space as a form of assistance and support "allowed in-depth consideration and *exploration* of factors that influence policy implementation" (Stritikus 2003, 37; italics added) at the ground level to create a policy-to-practice connection.

I begin with a discussion of Hopi language teaching using Fenimore-Smith's (2009) metaphor of "uncharted territory." This metaphor articulates the pre-

existing conditions that positioned Hopi community members as primary but reluctant language advocates (Brown 2010) and shows how the Hopi language was marginalized within the school context. Next, I draw from pre- and post-surveys completed by Institute participants, participant coursework, Institute reports (2009-2010), and surveys completed by language learner participants as well as parents and community members who attended the 2010 HSI closing event to highlight three significant outcomes of the Oral Immersion Approach (OIA) to Hopi language teaching implemented in the Institute space. First is the *Tsaami'wisqam-Kyeekelt*, or the Hopi perspective of the Mentor-Apprentice approach to the language teaching practicum. In the Hopi language *tsaami'wisqam* describes those individuals “showing and guiding” others, in this case, the *kyeekelt*, apprentices who are in the process of developing skills in the formal teaching of language; they are likened to young sparrow hawks learning to fly in preparation to leave the nest. Although the Institute participants were adult speakers of Hopi, teaching Hopi was a novel experience for all participants. Thus, the Hopi perspective of ‘mentor and apprentice’ recognized the linguistic proficiency of both mentors and apprentices but also distinguished the apprentices as individuals needing more time and support in learning to apply their proficiency to the formal teaching of the language. Second was the community oral immersion event, *Hopinaatuwpi*, “Self-[re]discovery through the Hopi language.” The *Hopinaatuwpi* (2005-2010) was instrumental in demonstrating the essentiality of a practicum component in teaching an ancestral language and the effectiveness of the *Tsaami'wisqam-Kyeekelt* teams in implementing the *Hopinaatuwpi*. Lastly, the *Hopi Children's Word Book*, a teaching resource conceptualized from these Institute experiences was developed by a team of five Institute participants. These participants demonstrated both a personal and professional commitment to the Hopi language and capacity for Hopi language literacy development. The team piloted the *Word Book* as co-instructors at the 2009 Institute. The *Word Book* was subsequently published by the UA/BARA Hopi Literacy Project.¹⁰ I conclude with a discussion of the empowering impact of the *professionalization* experiences in the Hopilavayi Summer Institute space (Hornberger and Swinehart 2012) where the Hopi language and culture were privileged and provided the means for Hopi language teachers to increase their own cultural capital (Wenger et al. 2004) albeit, as involuntary language teacher-advocates.

Heritage Language Teaching: “Uncharted Territory”

From our research and information gathering, we learned that [the Hopi people] are aware of our Hopi lifestyle changes, and they are aware that we are losing our language. Even though most people are aware, they seem to be waiting for someone else to take care of the problem. Now that the Hopi Tribe has issued a mandate that all schools will teach the Hopi language, school administrators are still not sure how this mandate is to be carried out... They too, are waiting for someone to tell them how the program is to be implemented. (HSI participant 2009)

The above statement succinctly articulates that while tribal school-based initiatives assert a positive language shift toward “recouping or reinvigorating the use of the native language” (King 2001, 12). Hopi language teaching in formal school spaces was, in fact, “uncharted territory” (Fenimore-Smith 2009; see also Wenger et al. 2004). More importantly, this Institute participant alludes to a newfound comprehension of the role language teachers assume in this unmapped landscape (Yazzie-Mintz 2018). Suina (2004) points out that although Native teacher assistants have had a visible presence in the schools since the mid-1970s,

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their instructional responsibility in the area of language revitalization is a more recent phenomenon. As such, development in this area has not been well-defined nor well-established. This means that critical and essential *preparation and planning*—curriculum development, classroom and instructional materials, teaching guidelines, defined grade levels for instruction—for effective and successful implementation including *negotiation* for classroom spaces, furnishings, and schedules have not been in place.

Moreover, the 1997 Hopi language survey report identified additional issues of concern challenging community-wide consensus in confronting language shift through the schools: (a) distinct demographic profiles of each of the 12 Hopi villages reflecting differences in dialect and varying degrees of language loss and needs; (b) diverse educational systems in the operation and management of reservation schools: grant, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE),¹¹ public, and private; (c) the prevalent ideology that only Hopi people be allowed to learn the language as it is a birth and clan right; and (d) the expressed goal of language revitalization as that of maintaining the Hopi language as a conversational and thus, an oral language. Compelling questions were also raised on the issues of teacher training and certification, resources and funding, cultural and linguistic content, cultural restrictions, dialect, orthographic standardization, and the role of schools in language revitalization possibilities (Nicholas 2005).

Nevertheless, policy implementation of Hopi culture and language programs has been primarily assumed by Hopi community members already employed as bilingual para-educators or teacher assistants (TAs) in the schools. TAs are proficient speaker-users of Hopi and active participants in Hopi cultural life—the context of/for Hopi language use. Thus, they have an inherent knowledge of the traditional Hopi cultural and linguistic curriculum—the Hopi “funds of knowledge” (González et al. 2005)—fundamental to heritage-language teaching.

In the case of Hopi TAs, the realities and complexities of assuming the additional role of language and culture teacher were borne solely by these community members who already occupied marginalized positions (with ‘uncertified’ status) in the context of the school environment. Wenger et al. (2004) fittingly describe these employees as “linguistic and cultural specialists with little cultural capital” (104); there is little recognition of the enormity of their task. Essentially, these individuals were: (1) designated the responsibility for implementation of both the tribal policies as well as the school’s program for heritage language instruction in formal school spaces; and (2) expected to assume the de facto tasks of curriculum and instructional materials development as well as delivery of instruction with minimal to no assistance or professional development. Also remaining largely unrecognized is that because these bilingual-bicultural specialists possessed the cultural funds of knowledge and the linguistic abilities fundamental to heritage-language teaching, they occupied their positions as the only staff who could contribute to a culturally responsive pedagogy (Wenger et al. 2004). Hence, these bilingual para-educators were principally “on their own” (McCarty et al. 2012, 53) in this uncharted territory of heritage language teaching. The HSI, then, became the “ideological and implementational space” (Hornberger 2002) for Hopi language teachers to redefine and empower themselves toward re-asserting their role as “caretakers of the language” (HSI participant 2009), and thus reclaiming their inherited responsibility and integrity as language and cultural transmitters for their community’s children.

These factors and issues encompass a broad array of language planning concerns that may underlie the ambivalence and reluctance among Hopi language teachers to view themselves as language advocates.

Hopi Language Teachers: Reluctant Language Advocates

If we have it [Hopi language] written in our curriculum; if we just see it on paper saying we need to do this in the school, then there's no objection [from the community]. (Nicholas 2005, 42)

The above journal entry of a Hopi teacher assistant / language teacher alludes to an underlying apprehension in assuming this externally 'assigned' (inherent in the school language policy/job description) responsibility. The apprehension emerges when the relative status of an individual is incongruent with the interpretation and expectations of the role and tasks the individual is to perform. There is a further link to the community perception of the individual's qualifications for the task—recognition of certain individuals “as the ultimately qualified reservoirs of aboriginal skills” (Medicine 2001, 75); a source of apprehension often pointedly conveyed by community members as in the following vignette:

During a presentation of the activities of the HSI program to the members of a non-profit community organization board, I (author) referenced the participants using the Hopi term, *lavay'a'yam*, “those tasked to attend to the language.” During a meeting break, one board member asked me, *who* [as a recognized cultural authority] had tasked us with this role/responsibility. I was quick to understand his point of linguistic distinction and posed his remark to the Institute participants. This remark, well-taken, was addressed and changed to reflect the fact that we had willingly assumed the responsibility as *Hopilavaynaa'aya tiwqam*, “those who have tasked ourselves to attend to the Hopi language.”

In contrast, Suina's (2004) study of six Pueblo Native language teachers (NLTs) presents the case of a tribally initiated and funded public school Native language program. The Pueblo NLTs described themselves as “handpicked” by their tribal council to perform this specific service on behalf of the people based on good standing in the community, speaking fluency and active involvement in cultural practices. The NLTs viewed their appointment as both “an honor...[and] an affirmation of one's skills and generosity” (Suina 2004, 296), and they were assured of both tribal and community support. In turn, the NLTs held themselves accountable, first and foremost, to the tribal council who funded the program, to the community, and to “[their] ancestors and [their] children” (Suina 2004, 287). These NLTs understood that they were entrusted with a responsibility to “safeguard their language and culture outside the Pueblo setting...even within the confines of less than fully accepting school settings” (Suina 2004, 296).

Nevertheless, the Pueblo NLTs noted varying degrees of parental, community, and tribal leadership support. Moreover, in-school dynamics and educational trends continued to position the Pueblo language as a low priority academic subject and NLTs on the periphery of program development. These dynamics significantly impacted their in-school status and thus, interactions with colleagues, administrators, and parents regarding the place of the Native language in the school. One NLT in Suina's study contended, “We're the stepchild of the school. We're way in the back [physical location within the school] and when something comes up we're the first [classes] to get cancelled, and they don't even tell us” (Suina 2004, 292). In effect, such attitudes and positionings constitute acts of disempowerment that diminish the role of community members as language teachers, thus making them reluctant to act as language advocates (Brown, 2010).

Re-positioning Hopi Bilingual Teacher Assistants as Language Policy Actors

Ironically, the *absence* of a well-defined curricular structure affords Native/Hopi language teachers a high degree of independence and autonomy with regard to decision-making about materials, methods, and interaction procedures with students (Wenger et al. 2004). As such, “they function as central policy actors in the broader context of school as well as in their immediate classrooms... [and] simultaneously reproduce and challenge existing language ideologies in the school environment” (298). By repositioning Native/Hopi language teachers (N/HLTs) “at the heart of language policy” (Ricento and Hornberger 1996, 417), we can draw attention to the ways they use the school and classroom spaces—semi-autonomous spaces—to make room for their community languages “within the confines of less than fully accepting school settings” (Suina 2004, 292). I draw on Brown’s (2010) ethnographic study of the reinscription of the Võro language (a lesser used language in Estonia) into schools in what she describes as a highly decentralized and voluntary regional language program. I see the Estonian case as exemplifying the Hopi context.

Brown (2010, 301) defines the concept of *reinscription* as denoting efforts to incorporate previously excluded or ignored languages “back into the general sociocultural context of the school” emanating from the ideology that the “overt presence” of the local language has important symbolic value. Moreover, Brown asserts that reinscription is “a form of appropriation”—the reinscribing efforts manifest in explicit (a formal shift to use of the language as a primary medium of instruction) or covert (teacher decision to use the language in the classroom) forms. In the Estonian case, Brown describes contemporary Võro language instruction as centered “firmly in the realm of options and available choices” and offering language instruction as an elective during the school day or as an after-school class (2010, 303, emphasis added). This has been the case for Hopi. Hopi language teachers have decided, sometimes in concert with school administration, but more often independently, the format and place for language instruction in the school. Thus, like the Võro language teachers, Hopi language teachers reinscribed the language into the formal school environment in deliberate ways. Similarly, critical decisions regarding reinscription strategies were primarily guided by the personal position of the language teacher “rather than by any larger commitment to, or strategy of the language ‘movement’” (Brown 2010, 308). The *voluntary* nature of reinscription opportunities acted as the driving force for the Hopi language teachers to look outside of the school for *assistance* in learning about appropriate *reinscription practices*; the Hopilavayi Summer Institute provided the venue.

The Oral Immersion Approach to Hopi Language Teaching

Although I am a fluent speaker of the Hopi language, I have yet to learn more in the writing area and how to approach teaching the language. (HSI participant, 2009)

As community members active in the cultural life of Hopi, these individuals possessed the cultural knowledge—essentially the Hopi “curriculum” as a result of *living* Hopi—and as Hopi language speaker-users, they also possessed the means to convey this knowledge to Hopi youth. However, the above statement by an Institute participant conveys an understanding that *teaching* the language in the formal setting of school requires more than a speaking proficiency; a speaking proficiency is enhanced by formal training and leads to effective instruction. The HSI experience, then, provided participants with essential knowledge about

and practice with research-based language teaching methodology, specifically, the Oral Immersion Approach to language teaching as a foundational *form of assistance*.

The focus on oral immersion was informed by a professional development project conducted at a local K-6 elementary school in the spring of 2004 (McCarthy and Nicholas 2014). This project provided groundwork for language teacher education planning, premised on the following:

1. The vitality of the Hopi language continues to reside in Hopi cultural traditions, institutions, and ceremonial practices. Hopi thus remains primarily an oral language. Although a writing system exists, Hopi as a written language is not widely used.
2. Para-educators/paraprofessionals (teacher assistants) responsible for language teaching are crucial resources for language reclamation. However, they need an effective approach to teach the language to children.
3. Student voices are essential to understand what to do and how to proceed. Student responses to a school survey emphasized the desire to “talk”: “I want to talk, to know how to talk in Hopi.” “We should talk Hopi every day.” “*Talk to us in Hopi and see if we understand.*”
4. Youth identified the program goal—assistance in becoming speaker-users of Hopi (McCarthy and Nicholas 2014, 122-123). In particular, poignant yearnings to speak Hopi were motivated by and expressed in the following survey responses: “to make my mother proud,” “to speak to my So’o” (grandmother);” and “to understand what goes on in the kiva” (underground chamber where many ceremonial activities are carried out).

In turn, the Hopi language teachers, who were also parents and grandparents of many of the children attending this school as well as community adults and elders, wanted community youth to have respect for the Hopi way of life. Respect is understood as emanating from an understanding of the core principles and values implicit in Hopi cultural and linguistic practices. “Teaching” Hopi language, then, required that such principles and values be made explicit to the youth because, as Emory Sekaquaptewa stated, “Language is not separate from the practice of culture. Language is one of the ways culture is understood” (Emory Sekaquaptewa, personal communication, March 24, 2004). The overall goal became that of helping community youth become good Hopi citizens first, which would then ensure that they will become good citizens of the world. Hence, privileging the traditional Hopi curriculum carried out in the daily and ceremonial Hopi way of life guided this work and resonated with the Hopi perspective that “language lives in the context of culture—in the course of daily activities, in social institutions; words have meaning within these contexts” (Emory Sekaquaptewa, personal communication, April 20, 1999). Accordingly, the language lesson topics and language learner activities were developed and centered on the ongoing cultural activities occurring daily in Hopi homes and villages and those revolving around the annual ceremonial calendar. The task at hand became applying the methodology of oral immersion, coupled with deliberate attention to the core Hopi principles embedded in the language, to the teaching process. This was compelled by the goals of producing speaker-users of Hopi and good Hopi citizens.

Oral Immersion Core Principles and Methodology

The following is an excerpt from the 2004 HSI course description titled, “Hopi Language Teaching Methods & Curriculum Development”:

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Participants in this course will be introduced to the field of indigenous language revitalization focusing on effective teaching methodology in the immersion approach... Maintaining and/or revitalizing “living” languages is central to the “immersion” approach... This approach has been widely implemented, researched and proven to be effective in producing speakers of community languages in the school setting.

Lessons learned from the immersion program models for the Arapaho (Head Start), Maori (adult), and Navajo (elementary school), including key principles of immersion teaching techniques gleaned from the literature, (e.g. Hinton 2001; Supahan and Supahan 2001) were used to assist participants in identifying language lesson topics in language lesson planning. A long-time Japanese resident on Hopi was invited to provide our first immersion experience in an unfamiliar language. One participant in her reflection paper wrote:

He did such an excellent job that I was repeating Japanese phrases in my sleep throughout the night. He used a number of immersion methods effectively. These included a lot of active participation, modeling, repetition, and the use of gestures and body language. His choice of props enhanced a lesson that came from something real in his culture... He also freely shared that we must teach our language if we want to save our culture. Even though we are constantly reminded of that task, it is good to hear it from someone of a different culture. (July 22, 2004)

The culminating course assignment involved delivering a lesson plan utilizing the immersion techniques outlined on the AILDI micro-teaching form titled “Immersion Demonstration Feedback.” Each participant was expected to: speak clearly (enunciate sounds/syllables with appropriate pace and voice level), model natural dialogue (use complete sentences), use repetition, utilize appropriate visual aids and props; use complementary body language and facial expressions, interact with language learners, support and encourage language learners, engage uninvolved learners, use comprehension checks, and demonstrate preparedness. Presenters were rated as having used each strategy “always,” “sometimes” or “no” (not at all).

In the ensuing years, these techniques developed into the following core principles of the oral immersion approach to Hopi language teaching:¹²

- Staying in the language—Putting away English
- Maximum exposure to natural but structured language
- Lesson content: cultural knowledge, philosophy, attributes, values
- Developing a language script
- Engaging, assisting and supporting the learners’ speech production and efforts
- Using non-verbal language, realia (objects and material used in everyday life and used as instructional aids), visuals, modeling, hands-on activities
- Using “caretaker” talk (pace, pronunciation, enunciation, repetition)
- Checking for comprehension (recall, review, questioning)
- Language teaching/learning should be fun
- Using Krashen’s *i + 1* (Krashen et al. 1983)
- Team-teaching
- Know our language learners

A commitment to the use of the oral immersion principles and methodology outside the Institute space became highly dependent on a firm “buy-in” from these language instructors. Accordingly, the strategy of engaging the Institute participants in oral immersion teaching through the “demonstration language lesson” course assignment was critical. However, challenging the buy-in was the fact that in the demonstration lesson, both the instructors and the “language learner” audience were proficient Hopi speakers! The 2005 HSI addressed this quandary through the strategy of immersing the participants in Spanish, an unfamiliar conversational language for them. This strategy proved highly effective in assisting these Hopi speakers to understand and *experience* the challenges of language learning in general. More specifically, it helped Hopi speakers understand the challenges Hopi language learners face when learning their ancestral language as a second language.

Knowing Our Language Learners

Through the Spanish language immersion activity, *Habla Español*, implemented during the 2005 Institute program, like their potential Hopi language learners, the participants experienced:

- Fears
- Testing of self-confidence
- Difficulty in articulating specific sounds
- Need for pacing and enunciating
- Need for structured sentence patterns
- Need for creative repetition

One 2008 Institute participant in her post-survey wrote, “The heritage language in Spanish helped me understand how a learner feels. I was lost and saying the words was hard, so I will remember to speak slowly and be patient. Patience is important in teaching a language.”

The practice of Spanish oral immersion as a professional development strategy was instituted as an integral form of assistance in every summer program hence. Our course material included Handbook 5 of the Awakening Our Languages Series titled, *Knowing Our Language Learners* (Nicholas 2004). The Handbook illuminated the challenges of, and deepened our understanding about, learning one’s ancestral language. First, we understood that language learning is “hard work for both the speaker-teacher and the language learner” (Nicholas 2004, 2). Second, it involves taking risks because “laughing at or criticizing a language learner can stop a learner from ever trying to learn the language again” (Nicholas 2004, 3). Third, it involves hearing and using the language in natural contexts, and therefore “...we must think about new ways of ‘learning’ and ‘teaching’ our tribal languages” (Nicholas 2004). Finally, we must recognize that language learners do not come to the language-learning task “empty-handed” because, as members of a language community, “they know what sorts of things people talk about, and they know in general what kinds of verbal behaviors are appropriate for a variety of social situations and settings” (Nicholas 2004, 4).

The “buy-in” for oral immersion included putting theory into practice. Thus, the 2005 Institute centered on a practicum course design in which participants were fully engaged in the experience of “planning, development and implementation of an oral immersion language program for a two-week, four-hours a day, Hopi language ‘camp’ for community youth” as written in the course description. Collectively, participants designed the classroom conditions conducive to effective language teaching and learning. Through a consensus process, they created a

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language learning behavior protocol to teach for the first language lesson. Next, each mentor-apprentice team developed a second language lesson with activities emanating from their cultural knowledge, linguistic strengths and interest toward the overall theme for the community language event: “When one is being Hopi, one is industrious, self-respecting, respecting of others, being happy”. Oral immersion language lesson topics centered on familiar practices: sweeping the floor, shelling corn, hoeing weeds in the garden/field, planting corn, learning kinship terms for family members, and making music and dancing. Engaging in seemingly mundane everyday activities and cultural traditions were the means of internalizing implicitly learned values of industriousness, respect, fulfillment and well-being embedded in the accompanying language forms. Subsequently, the planning and preparation process led to naming the event the Hopinaatuwpi, Self-rediscovery through the Hopi language. Community language learners ranging in age from 4-26 years and representing 12 of the 13 village communities were rotated through five 40-minute sessions of Hopi language immersion (3.5 hours daily) over seven days.

Post-Naatuwpi surveys solicited feedback from language learners about the learner-centered language learning activities and language teaching strategies employed by the Institute participant-instructors. The survey responses confirmed that the oral immersion methodology was effective, engaging and fun. Parents responded with an overwhelming Yes! (32/32 responses) to the question, “Do you think attending the Hopinaatuwpi was a positive experience for your child/grandchild?” Importantly, the Hopinaatuwpi experience netted the “buy-in” for the oral immersion approach to heritage language teaching.

“It Works:” Institute Participant Feedback to the Oral Immersion Approach

At the conclusion of the inaugural 2005 *Hopinaatuwpi*, the cohort of ten language teachers exclaimed, “*Haaha! Itam kwangwa’ewtota.*” “*Whew! What an enjoyable time we had.*” Additional participant instructor reflections shared with parents through an informational flyer stated that although they worked very hard, they felt fulfilled and happy. Furthermore, participant instructors acknowledged that although their work had just begun, they could sustain the effort by working collaboratively. Through the experience of *seeing and hearing* the youth learning to use the language, they were elated and amazed at what they accomplished. In a reflection on the experience, one Institute participant wrote:

... It was a challenge for the participants of the course to teach orally in Hopilavayi for a total of three and a half hours straight each day. Approximately seventy Hopi youth throughout the reservation attended the classes for seven days. This was a very rewarding experience to have participated in the first ever Cohort of Teacher Training to be offered for teachers of Hopilavayi. (August 5, 2005)

The *Hopinaatuwpi* became an integral component in each succeeding summer program. The Hopinaatuwpi not only became an essential oral immersion teacher-training activity but also provided the venue for developing the Tsaamiwisqam-Kyeekelt (Mentor-Apprentice approach to capacity building). The goal of this was to increase the number of trained Hopi language teachers and, more crucially, to increase the number of Hopi language teacher-mentor/trainers.

Tsaamiwisqam-Kyeekelt, Mentor-Apprentice Approach to Capacity Building

The Mentor-Apprentice, *Tsaamiwisqam-Kyeekelt* approach was implemented in the 2008 Hopilavayi Summer Institute (HSI). Attending Institute participants were identified as *mentor* or *apprentice* instructors. Mentor instructors, *Tsaamiwisqam*, “Those who are leading, guiding,” were those Institute participants who demonstrated a strong buy-in to and were skilled in the oral immersion methodology and lesson plan development. Most of these individuals had attended each HSI since 2004 and the monthly workshops offered by the Hopilavayi Project. Apprentice instructors, *Kyeekelt*, “fledgling hawks,” included those individuals who were primarily novice language teachers and/or semi-fluent Hopi speakers, or those who needed further practicum experiences with the immersion oral methodology and lesson plan development.

Implementing the approach involved teaming 1-2 apprentice teachers with one mentor instructor. The *Tsaamiwisqa* (mentor, sg.) guided the *Kyeekelt* (fledgling hawks/apprentices, pl.) in a collaborative process of developing language lessons/activities premised in the oral immersion principles and methodology toward the overall *Hopinaatuwpi* theme. The approach prioritized the *Hopinaatuwpi* event as a teacher-training process. This ensured the ideal training conditions of team-teaching: supervised mentor-apprentice instruction and a limited number (15) of language learners for each team. The *Kyeekelt* post-institute survey reactions to this experience established that teaching the Hopi language requires (1) essential and specialized training and practice, and (2) a commitment to an approach that ensures successful, effective and impactful results. Understandably, both speaker-teachers and language learners shared similar tensions and fears in the teaching-learning space—that “language learning involves taking risks” (Nicholas 2004, 3)—but also that these fears can be alleviated in a nurturing and supportive environment. One *Kyeele* (fledgling hawk/apprentice, sg.) wrote, “The first day I was more worried about how I was going to present my part of the class...[but] the kids surprised me when they learned the song very fast. It was a huge payment when I heard the students tell me the rules [in Hopi] all alone and when they were able to take the lead in our class.” Another commentary highlights the reciprocal nature of the teacher-learner/speaker-language learner relationship essential to the language learning process:

Well, my thoughts and experiences on the mini *Naatuwpi* was overwhelming for me being that this was my first time, I actually was amazed at how all our learners begin to pick up immediately, a little shy on day one, they all tried hard and put out all their effort, as far as using correct pronunciation. They pick up very quickly and on day two I could see they had much confidence in themselves... They were greeted with positive praise from teachers and *kyeele* which to me gave them a sense of belonging. Each individual was assisted with patience, love, and care. I felt this was the biggest support they had from all of us, as by day three each seem to be in a comfort zone, all classes were able to carry out what they learned pretty much on their own. And their self-esteem was very high at this point. I felt at this point we had done a great job.

Still another *Kyeele*, through her observation of the language learners, conveyed a sense of optimism in reversing Hopi language shift; she wrote, “I have become a true believer of [the] IMMERSION APPROACH. It was that within the three days of immersion and [I] saw that the students were learning the lessons so quick...[T]his was an eye-opener for me. If they can do it within 3 days, then I feel that all schools should be starting [to] produce speakers.”

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The reflections of the *Tsaamiwisqam* also revealed the challenges inherent in the process of transformative change. One *Tsaamiwisqam* wrote, “We know it works, but to persuade others is another story...It was a big challenge to get... [apprentice] teachers to...change their old ways and adopt a new...It is a lot of work but we guarantee it works.” Clearly, being identified (recognized) as a *Tsaamiwisqam*—assuming the responsibility for leading others—was simultaneously intimidating and empowering; however, “training” provided the confidence essential to accepting and undertaking the responsibility. One mentor instructor wrote, “As a *Tsaamiwisqam*, I now strongly feel that after 5 years of training and my Devotion to the Institute...[and] although there are a lot of obstacles that come with the position of a *Tsaamiwisqam*, I still felt proud of myself for sharing what knowledge I’ve gained from the years of experience.” More poignantly, in finding herself mentoring older, more fluent teachers, she further reflected:

Although I am not a fluent speaker, I felt that I had been trained well enough to challenge myself and accept the [role of] mentorship... I took the challenge knowing it wasn’t going to be easy. I was a part of a mentor team ... to older, fluent speakers ... At the beginning I felt very uneasy about the whole situation. I was in a room with speakers. “What are they going to think of me as a mentor?” was the question that was always on my mind. As time passed and the support of the statement, “Speakers of the language can speak, but not always can teach,” eased the tension and built my confidence... I have become a stronger person because of this experience.

Additionally, these individuals recognized their mentor role as multi-faceted. In the process of mentoring, they were able to observe the effectiveness of their mentorship through “immediate feedback on [their] knowledge ... through the delivery of lessons by the individuals that were assigned to [them] as apprentices.” They also became capable at “... [knowing] when to step in [while] keeping the children in mind.” “Stepping in” referred to intervening strategically and respectfully to assist *kyeekelt* in delivering the lesson in full view of the language learners.

This pool of veteran *mentor* participant-language instructors realized a successful model for capacity building. They used their developing expertise as co-instructors and mentors to assist both novice Hopi language teachers as well as colleagues along the continuum of professional development in heritage language teaching. In addition, during the 2008 HSI, five Institute participants, previously identified in 2005 as advanced in Hopi literacy, were recruited to continue the legacy of Emory Sekaquaptewa (who passed away in December, 2007), through the UA/BARA Hopi Literacy Project. The Project Team was tasked to bring to fruition his final project and vision of a Hopi Children’s Word Book.

The Hopi Children’s Word Book

The Hopi Literacy Project Team was comprised of five certified classroom teachers, paraprofessional Hopi language teachers and a Hopi artist/illustrator who collaboratively conceptualized and developed the language lessons. The initial draft versions of ten language lessons developed around familiar images of Hopi cultural characters and practices were completed in June 2009. The 2009 HSI provided the venue to both pilot the language lessons and to guide language teachers in their effective use. This venture also worked to advance those *Tsaamiwisqam* (mentors) to the position of Institute co-instructors who could offer a course in the use of the *Word Book* (WB) lessons.

The 2009 Institute course on the use of the *Word Book* was offered for professional development credit. The goals of this course were to use the WB lessons effectively and assist participants in developing additional complementary lessons from their own cultural knowledge and linguistic strengths and interests. Input from the course participants contributed significantly to final revisions. For the 2010 HSI *Hopinaatuwpi*, five WB lessons provided the content for immersion lessons targeting community language learners in the age range of 4 to 14/15 years. The five WB lessons featured the characters of the Hopi *tsuku* and the Pueblo *koshare* (ritual clowns), important cultural teachers of Hopi principles and morals. Two outcomes of the course were the development of two essential language teaching templates: (1) a language lesson planning template; and (2) an instructor observation form of language teaching steps. The WB evolved into a language teaching manual that included supporting instructional materials: poster-size images for classroom teaching; a student version of the WB, and an accompanying CD for which local speakers provided the appropriate male and female language as well as the three dialects of the Hopi language. The UA/BARA Hopi Literacy Project provided the funds for piloting the *Word Book* and the supplementary instructional materials.

Conclusion The Transformative Nature of Professionalization

The 2009 and 2010 Post Summer Research Reports on the activities and projects of the Hopilavayi Summer Institute highlighted critical outcomes. For the 2009 HSI, a second cohort of eight novice Institute attendees were comprised of certified teachers seeking Hopi language teaching training with the option to receive university or professional development credit for their participation (the first cohort were primarily paraprofessionals). Five former apprentices were now Institute co-instructors; and two veteran Institute participants, having applied their coursework toward a degree program, were accepted into the Language, Reading and Culture (LRC) master's degree program at the University of Arizona. For the 2010 HSI, ten of the 13 participants were returning attendees (age range of 25-70 years). With a focus on the practicum experience of planning and implementing two *Hopinaatuwpi* strands—(1) K-8, and (2) Adolescent/Adult (A/A)—*Tsaamiwisqam-Kyeekelt* teams provided a total of 85 hours of oral Hopi immersion (K-8, 36 hours over three weeks; A/A, 48 hours over four weeks) for community youth and adults. Moreover, the Institute hosted several guest visitors: two University of Arizona administrative faculty, the local Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) school administrators, and a University of Hawaii-Hilo graduate student. The two veteran Institute participants (noted above) received their master's degrees in May 2010.

The 2004-2010 trajectory of the Hopilavayi Summer Institute documented here exemplifies the *possibilities of sustainability* of a fully tribally and community supported Hopi language education professionalization program. This ideological and implementation space was “a place to regroup, take on new ideas, share new understandings with like-minded people who care about these issues” (Blair et al. 2003, 101). Within this space, important work had been realized that centered Hopi-specific models of linguistic and cultural pedagogy, in addition to identifying untapped local leadership potential.

Within this professionalization space, the processes of repriviling the crucial role of these bilingual-bicultural specialists in the area of Indigenous language revitalization was important. This process demonstrates that a return to both *tradition* (these language instructors as the *first* teachers of community youth), and traditions (language as cultural practice) (Nicholas 2008) speak to

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right relationships, respect, solidarity, and survival (Deloria and Wildcat 2001). The impact is deep and resonates in an Elder participant's oral reflection on a language lesson about the colors of the rainbow with the embedded Hopi perspective of this natural phenomenon. Using the Hopi language, she stated, "I'm observing our youth [during the lesson] and gauging their understanding about the rainbow, and I am recognizing that they are gaining [the] meaning of the significance of the rainbow in the Hopi world. I am so happy to see this growth in our youth."

Andean Indigenous educators in Hornberger and Swinehart (2012) put forth that asserting "local [Indigenous] semiotic systems" (41) in professionalization spaces and experiences enact transformative "perspectives on [their] linguistic practices and Indigeneity" (44). In other words, such experiences work to revitalize our Indigeneity and educational philosophies as heuristic tools with which we can challenge existing pedagogies. More importantly, the Institute participants who came together in this space not only reaffirmed their inherent responsibility as caretakers of the language, but also reasserted their commitment to the succeeding generations of Hopi, and increased their own cultural capital as expressed in the following 2010 post-institute survey comments:

All of what they [language learners] are learning is being confirmed that what we are teaching is becoming a significant part of their personal lives—a Hopi identity. We cannot underestimate the desire of our language learners to make meaning of the language we are immersing them in.

We need to prioritize helping our youth; they cannot do this alone. They have found us to be the needed help they have been seeking. Language learners are in need of a comfort zone. We as caretakers of the language can be the ones to offer this space.

We are "feeding" them with the nourishment they crave and need.

Epilogue

At the conclusion of the 2010 HSI, language teacher participants invited adult language learners to their final debriefing of the summer's program. I recall the question posed to us by a young mother, "Is this the only and last time you will work with us?" Our response to her and everyone present was sorely inadequate, which was that the sustainability of the program was not in our hands. As it turned out, 2010 would be the "only and last time" we would work with community youth and, in particular, these young adults, to provide them the "nourishment they crave and need"—their ancestral language, Hopilavayi. This memory reveals the heartrending reality that actualizing the possibilities of sustainability remain the paramount challenge to the language revitalization efforts in the Hopi context.

Moreover, at the time of this writing, the Hopi people find themselves in the midst of two concurrently occurring historic events in Hopi history: the global pandemic and the transition to self-determination in education. To "look forward" in response, respectively, to these events, necessitates an urgent and reflexive "look back" (Genesee and Snoek, this volume) to Hopi history and tradition so as to proceed on the proper path of following the "Hopi way," a path that has, over centuries, proven to be the exemplar of sustainability. The message to heed is expressed as follows: "*Haqàapiy yaw qatsi qatuvostini, hak yaw pas sù matsinen, sùuput namortamantani.*" "It is said, that in a time when life becomes tested, one has to be very discerning in order to choose the right way [the Hopi way]"

(E. Sekaquaptewa, personal communication, October 25, 2000). This chapter on the Hopilavayi Summer Institute and its history of implementation, 2004-2010, serves as documentation of its “existence” as a site in which inaugurating processes for envisioning possibilities of/for cultural and linguistic sustainability founded on the accumulation of the Hopi experience from time immemorial are chronicled for future consideration.

Notes

- ¹ Contemporary population numbers do not include non-Hopi/non-Indian residents who are employees of tribal entities—schools, health care facilities, or other enterprises—nor those who are not enrolled in-married individuals.
- ² The Administration for Native Americans (ANA) was established in 1974 through the Native American Program Act (NAPA). ANA serves all Native Americans and promotes self-sufficiency for Native Americans through discretionary grant funding for community-based projects, and training and technical assistance to eligible tribes and native organizations. See: www.acf.hhs.gov/ana/about/what-we-do.
- ³ By the mid-1990s, Hopi tribal resolutions placed the responsibility for culture and language teaching with the schools codified as goals in Section VIII, Areas of Cultural Preservation and Protection in the Hopi Tribal Consolidated Strategic Plan of 1995. However, there is little to no documentation of tribal-school collaboration regarding the implementation and outcomes of these tribal language policies.
- ⁴ Earlier works in Hopi language projects demonstrated a focus on Hopi literacy, linguistic study and language preservation: The Hopi-English co-authored bilingual publications of Hopi myths and animal tales by German-American linguist Ekkehart Malotki with a number of Hopi individuals (1977-2004); *Lessons in Hopi* (1978) by Milo Kalectaca with anthropologist and linguist Ronald Langacker, *Aspects of Hopi Grammar* (1978), doctoral thesis by La-Verne Masayesva-Jeanne, and the *Hopi Dictionary/Hopiikwa Lavàytutuveni: A Hopi-English Dictionary of the Third Mesa Dialect* (1998), the seminal work of Hopi research anthropologist, Emory Sekaquaptewa with Malotki, published by the University of Arizona. Sekaquaptewa’s work extended to outreach Hopi literacy projects in local and reservation high schools, and university courses. More recent attention to culture and language projects from community non-profit organizations include KUYI, the local radio station which is incorporating the Hopi language in its broadcast programming, and language materials development by Mesa Media, Inc.
- ⁵ The 1998 Hopi Language Education and Preservation Plan establishing the Hopilavayi Project was approved by Hopi Tribal Council Resolution H-022-98. The Hopilavayi Project was moved from the HCPO to the Hopi Tribe’s Department of Education and Workforce Development in 2018.
- ⁶ The 1998 Hopi Language Education and Preservation Plan Objective: Provide training in language instruction and in Hopi literacy for teachers and parents (The Hopi Cultural Preservation Office 1998, 48).
- ⁷ The initial 2004 Institute program of coursework was offered through the American Indian Studies Program (AISP), University of Arizona.
- ⁸ The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA), Inc., established in 1975, is a non-profit organization comprised of 21 Arizona Tribal Nation membership. Since 1988, the ITCA played an instrumental role in establishing the Arizona Inter Tribal Trust Fund as part of the Arizona-Florida Land Exchange Act. The Act stipulates that all the money proceeds from the land exchange of the Phoenix Indian [Boarding] School property are to supplement Tribal education. Funds from this have been distributed to 19 Arizona Tribes whose youth attended the

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Phoenix Indian [Boarding] School. The Hopi Tribe is a recipient. See: www.itcaonline.com. Additional funds to support Institute participants were awarded by the non-profit Hopi Education Endowment Fund (HEEF).

- ⁹ Emory Sekaquaptewa (1928-2007) was instrumental in the research and 1998 publication of the *Hopi Dictionary/Hopìikwa Lavàytutuveni: A Hopi-English Dictionary of the Third Mesa Dialect*. The dictionary contains about 30,000 entries, along with pronunciation guides.
- ¹⁰ The Hopi Literacy Project was an applied program within the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (BARA) at the University of Arizona. The Project developed a literacy-development approach to Hopi language preservation and revitalization. The overarching goals of the Hopi Literacy Project was to provide Hopi literacy lessons—use of the writing orthography and the fundamentals of Hopi syntax—described in the Hopi Dictionary, and to enhance the Hopi literacy skills for Hopi teachers who possessed oral skills in the Hopi language.
- ¹¹ All seven of the Hopi Tribe's elementary schools are now Tribally Controlled Schools under the Tribally Controlled Schools Act, Pub. L. No. 100-297; the conversion period occurring from 1991-2014.

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