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Language, Epistemology, and Cultural Identity: "*Hopiqatsit Aw Unangvakiwyungwa*" ("They Have Their Heart in the Hopi Way of Life")

SHEILAH E. NICHOLAS

Daniel Nettle and Suzanne Romaine in *Vanishing Voices: The Extinction of the World's Languages* state that indigenous peoples represent about 4 percent of the world's population but speak at least 60 percent of the world's languages.[1] They point out the reality of an ominous linguistic crisis of global proportions—languages die and continue to die, but the "trickle of extinction of the last few centuries is now turning into a flood."[2] Within the US context, they state, "Of an estimated 300 [aboriginal] languages spoken in the area of the present-day US when Columbus arrived in 1492, only 175 are spoken today, most [are] . . . possibly only one generation away from extinction."[3] Recognizing that the statistics can tell neither the "whole" story nor "all" of the stories of the world's languages, this article offers the linguistic story of the "smaller language" population of Hopi, a historically oral communal society that resides on the high plateau lands of the southwestern United States. Hopi society has not escaped the consequences of modernity increasingly evident in the declining use and functions of the Hopi language in all domains of contemporary Hopi life. The Hopi case contributes the perspective of a society whose cultural values, encoded in myriad cultural traditions that remain largely intact and continue to be practiced, mark a distinct identity. More importantly, what is revealed is that the Hopi youth have developed a strong allegiance to the Hopi way of life; they "have their heart in the Hopi way of life," or *Hopiqatsit aw unangvakiwyungwa*. The persistence of a strong Hopi identity directs a (re)focus on culture and language as a means for "recouping or reinvigorating the use of the native tongue."[4]

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INTRODUCING THE RESEARCH

"When you learn about Hopi, you learn about that balance between your responsibilities to yourself, your society, your whole world. That's how Hopis think about it. This is passed through the language," stated a community member at a 1996 public forum on the status of the Hopi language.[5] Users of Hopi, particularly older users, perceive a direct relationship between Hopi linguistic competency and the development of a Hopi moral fiber manifest in communal attitudes and behaviors of industry, self-discipline, reciprocity, respect (*naakyaptsi*, self-respect, and *tuukyaptsi*, respect for others), responsibility, and obligation cultivated through active participation in the Hopi way of life. However, the Hopi are confronted with a breach in the Hopi cultural plan visibly evident in the attitudes and behaviors of many—youth and adult alike—who are described as *qa Hopi*, or not Hopi.

A growing awareness of this breach in the fabric of the Hopi life was openly voiced at a series of public forums held from December 1996 through February 1997. The use of the Hopi language in daily conversation and communication, particularly between the older and younger generations, had diminished. Parents and grandparents openly acknowledged that they did not speak Hopi to their children or grandchildren anymore. Younger Hopi were growing up not understanding or speaking Hopi. An immediate anxiety expressed was that many Hopi youth were engaging in substance abuse, gang membership, and domestic violence—activities that violated the principles of the Hopi way of life. In addition, community members, grandparents, and parents who actively participated in traditional activities and ceremonies pointed out the lack of cultural and linguistic preparedness among Hopi youth needed to attain a deeper, spiritual level of understanding of these activities and ceremonies. From their observations, Hopi adults and elders described Hopi youth as no longer behaving humbly or having "respect for anything." Instead, Hopi youth are perceived as *tsàatsayom*, or children who have not yet attained maturity—had not learned the precepts that guide one to think maturely and, therefore, had not learned to behave in a distinctively Hopi manner; they had not yet "become Hopi."[6]

Hopi parents and elders associated such displays of immature, inappropriate behaviors with the inability of younger Hopi to understand and speak the Hopi language. More disturbing for the older Hopi was that the Hopi language as the means of passing on Hopi history and cultural and religious knowledge from young to old was severely threatened. The gravity of their concerns was poignantly captured in the words of one community member who stated, "When we begin to lose our language, we begin to lose who we are [our cultural identity]."[7]

These concerns prompted the Hopi tribe to assess the status of Hopi language fluency in the reservation communities, which subsequently confirmed a significant language shift from Hopi to English among the Hopi people. English was spoken as the primary language in at least half of the 347 households (representing 1,293 individuals) surveyed, particularly among the younger Hopi in the households.[8] The survey results also identified Western education as a significant factor in the progression of the language shift among the Hopi people.

Myriad questions surface from this linguistic situation: How is a Hopi cultural identity formed or acquired? What is the role of the Hopi language in the identity-formation process of Hopi youth? In the trend toward English monolingualism, how do contemporary youth define what constitutes a Hopi identity? What is the impact of language shift on the identity-formation process of contemporary Hopi youth? When Hopi youth are no longer socialized through their heritage language, are they still learning the culturally appropriate social knowledge of Hopi citizenship and the esoteric knowledge that will carry the Hopi people into the future? What is the pattern or process of Hopi language shift? What and where are the sites of cultural and linguistic strength and continuity?

This contemporary Hopi linguistic situation positioned Hopi youth as shouldering both the burden of language shift and loss and the responsibility for cultural and linguistic continuity. This article draws from my research, which investigated language shift among the Hopi people and, more specifically, the role of the heritage language in the contemporary lives of Hopi youth. Three Hopi youth—Dorian, Jared, and Justin, aged nineteen at the time of the study—are at the heart of the larger study that includes their parents and members of the grandparent generation. Although the participants' collective life histories confirmed that a breach has occurred in the Hopi cultural plan, Dorian's, Jared's, and Justin's cultural and linguistic experiences also affirm the strength and influence of Hopi culture—its traditions, practices, social institutions, and religion. Moreover, the accumulated experiences of three generations of Hopi not only inform the Hopi people about the shifting process pinpointing the sites of rupture and instability and subsequent impact of language shift but also bring to light two strongholds of Hopi culture and language: Hopi oral tradition and the Hopi identity-formation process expressed in Hopi as "*Hopiqatsit ang nùutum hintsakme, Hopisinoniwtingwu*," or "Participating along with others in the Hopi way of life, one becomes a Hopi."

This article provides an in-depth "on the ground" look at the Hopi language shift—"becoming accustomed to speaking English"—through the lenses of the study participants who represent the youth, parent, and grandparent generations.[9] The article also gives attention to Hopi oral tradition and the Hopi identity-formation process in order to articulate the link among language, epistemology, and identity, spotlighting *what* of the traditions, practices, and religion remain salient and *why* they remain salient.

I maintain that Hopi oral tradition is the "total communicative framework"—manifest in ritual practices, religious ceremonies, and cultural institutions; symbolism; song words and phrases; prayer; and teachings.[10] Hopi oral tradition is the "transmission mechanism" through which the Hopi people continue to be enculturated with the cultural knowledge, history, ethics, and values of their communal society.[11] The Hopi language is maintained through these traditional conventions. Thus, practiced—*language as cultural practice*—it serves to remind, reinforce, and keep the concepts of the Hopi way of life and messages from the past indelible in the minds of the Hopi people. Moreover, it is through active participation and involvement in the Hopi way of life that an emotional commitment and allegiance to the ideals of the Hopi way of life is formed: a process I call *affective enculturation.* The affective aspect of the Hopi identity-formation process is one that transcends and supports (re)acquisition of the Hopi language. Thus I claim that this relationship and the ongoing salience of cultural practices embodied in oral tradition encourage and tangibly support youth in relearning their heritage language as a fundamental part of their contemporary everyday lives and identities.

CONTEMPORARY HOPI SOCIETY

Hopitutskwa—Hopi Lands

The Hopi are the westernmost of the Puebloan groups. They reside on a portion of their aboriginal lands designated by the 1882 Executive Order as the Hopi Reservation in the northeast part of the state of Arizona on and around the three southernmost fingers of the Black Mesa region. The current reservation boundaries encompass 1.6 million acres of their aboriginal lands (see fig. 1).[12] A geographical, linguistic, and cultural enclave within an enclave, the Hopi Reservation also lies within the larger Navajo Reservation that, in turn, lies within the boundaries of three southwestern states (Arizona, New Mexico, and Colorado) and the larger US society.

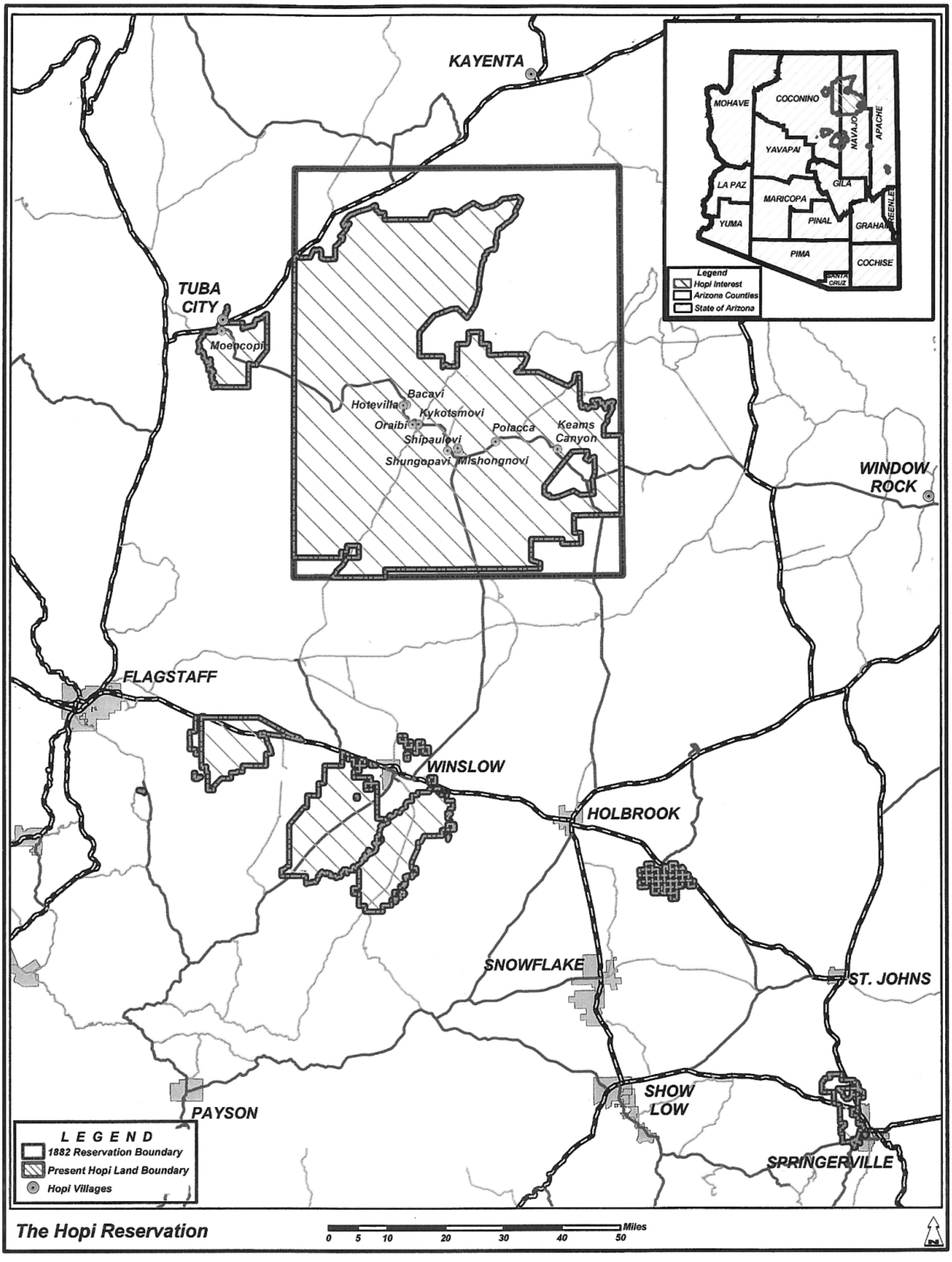
Hopisinom—The Hopi People

The Hopi people number about twelve thousand, of whom more than seven thousand reside in and around twelve villages situated across three mesas.[13] The remaining five thousand live off the reservation in various rural and urban areas across the United States as well as in foreign countries. Hopi, a matrilineal society, traces and carries clan descent through the mother's totemically named clan. Traditionally, the residential unit included the extended family, but today Hopi households are largely comprised of nuclear family units.

The Hopi people continue to live much as their ancestors did, tending to fields of corn, squash, beans, and melon as well as participating in the ceremonies that remain integral to the Hopi way of life. Each village community functions as a socially and ceremonially autonomous unit and continues to carry out traditional cultural activities that revolve around a rich ceremonial calendar (see fig. 2). Modernity and change have come to the Hopi and are evident in the incorporation of Western education and forms of governance as well as a cash economy. The tribal government and schools are the primary employers on the reservation, but a large percentage of Hopi people are skilled carvers, potters, silversmiths, basket makers, and weavers who enjoy lucrative incomes from the sale of their crafts. Local businesses—trading posts/gas stations, restaurants, and one hotel—and a medical facility also offer employment.

Hopitsaatsayom—Hopi Youth

Many of today's Hopi youth are born on the Hopi Reservation and grow up in their village communities throughout their childhood, adolescence, and


KAYENTA
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WINDOW ROCK
FLAGSTAFF
WINSLOW
HOLBROOK
SNOWFLAKE
ST. JOHNS
SHOW LOW
PAYSON
SPRINGERVILLE
MOHAVE
COCONINO
NAVAJO
APACHE
YAVAPAI
LA PAZ
MARICOPA
GILA
GREENLEE
YUMA
PINAL
GRAHAM
PIMA
COCHISE
SANTA CRUZ
Legend
Hopi Interest
Arizona Counties
State of Arizona
LEGEND
1882 Reservation Boundary
Present Hopi Land Boundary
Hopi Villages
The Hopi Reservation
Miles
0 5 10 20 30 40 50
N

Figure 1. *The Hopi Reservation.*

young adult lives. Raised among their immediate and extended families, youth participate from birth in the myriad activities associated with Hopi cultural institutions—baby namings, initiations, weddings, social dances, the tradition of planting corn by hand, and religious ceremonies—that continue to be practiced in contemporary Hopi life.

Most youth attend one of seven elementary schools located in or near the village communities and transfer to the Hopi junior-senior high school for grades seven through twelve.[14] The construction of the junior-senior high school, which opened on 2 September 1986, marked the end of the mandatory boarding school era that took Hopi youth far away from home and family.

Increased mobility and access to technology have given contemporary Hopi youth greater accessibility to the mainstream world. Regular family and school excursions to neighboring towns and cities (many have also traveled to foreign countries) in addition to media and technology, especially television and the computer, have greatly broadened the exposure of Hopi youth to mainstream American and global cultures. This is in remarkable contrast to the schooling experiences of their parents and grandparents who had limited knowledge and access to the larger society prior to leaving the reservation in order to attend distant boarding schools. Consequently, contemporary Hopi youth are highly aware of and experienced with mainstream, even global, society. Most will likely venture into the wider society for varying durations of time, but others will choose to remain on the reservation.

A BREACH IN THE HOPI CULTURAL PLAN: "BECOMING ACCUSTOMED TO SPEAKING ENGLISH"

"Some of us who didn't go off to school still speak a lot of the Hopi language. Now the younger generation . . . speak English only . . . but this isn't their fault. They had to attend school for whatever reason."[15] This comment from a December 1996 forum on the status of the Hopi language established a picture of Hopi language shift as a societal-wide and intergenerational process of becoming "accustomed to speaking English" in order to benefit from Western education, participate in the wage economy, and pursue coexistence as a means of cultural survival. Thus, formal Western education was a significant factor in the shift from Hopi to English initiated in the classroom and subsequently brought into the home and the heart of family life. However, the process of Hopi language shifting and maintenance was unique to each family household. This was evident in the varying degrees of Hopi language competency and use among the three young adults—Dorian described herself as a nonspeaker of Hopi; Jared understood and spoke some Hopi; and Justin described himself as a fluent speaker of Hopi.

Such variation in proficiency has created additional tensions between the older users of Hopi and the younger, largely nonuser generations of Hopi. The comment "How are you Hopi if you can't talk [Hopi]?" made by an older Hopi speaker to one study participant points out the resultant tensions.

In the following section, the study participants, their parents, and members of the grandparent generation describe and express both a personal

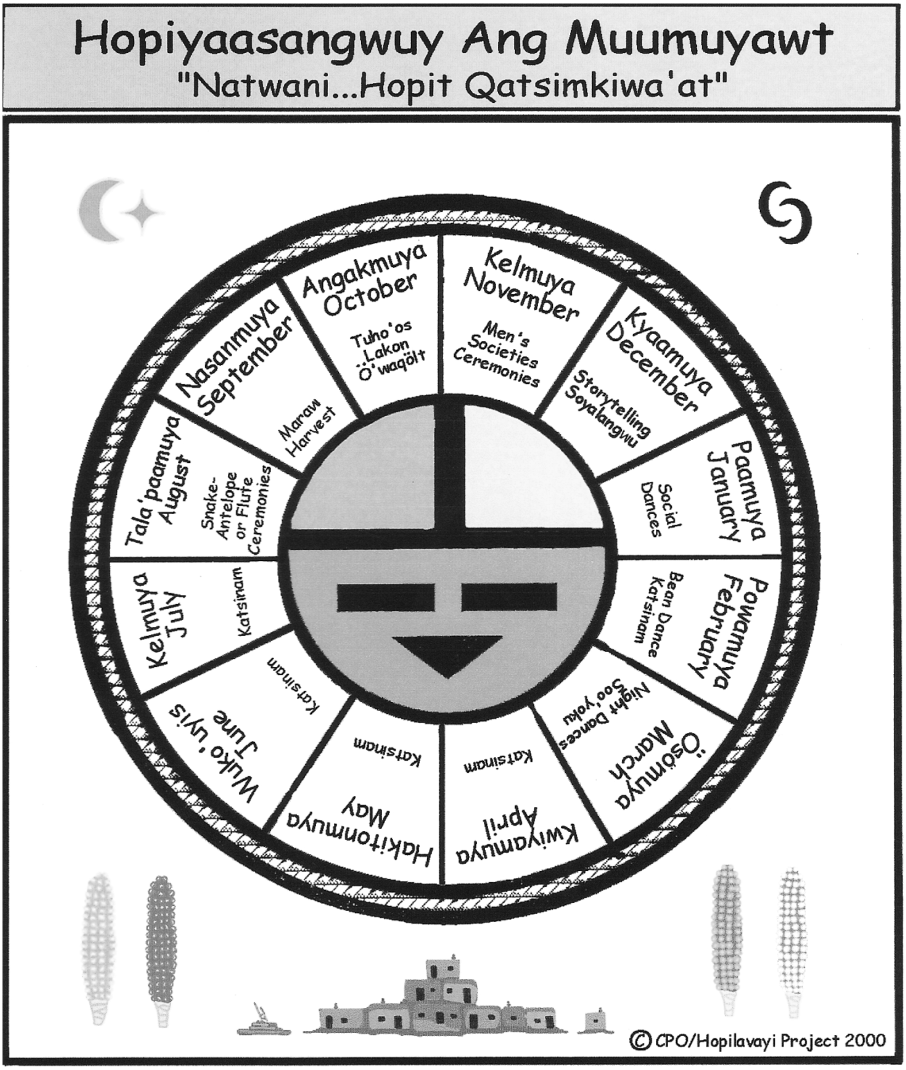
Hopiyaasangwuy Ang Muumuyawt
"Natwani...Hopit Qatsimkiwa'at"
Angakmuya October
Tuho'os ..Lakon Ö'waqölt
Kelmuya November
Men's Societies Ceremonies
Kyaamuya December
Storytelling Soyalangwu
Paamuya January
Social Dances
Powamuya February
Bean Dance Katsinam
Ösömuya March
Night Dances Soo'yoko
Kwiyamuya April
Katsinam
Hakitonmuya May
Katsinam
Wuko'uyis June
Katsinam
Kelmuya July
Katsinam
Tala'paamuya August
Snake-Antelope or Flute Ceremonies
Nasanmuya September
Maraw Harvest
©CPO/Hopilavayi Project 2000

FIGURE 2. *The Hopi ceremonial calendar. Compliments of the Office of CPO/Hopilavayi Project, 2000.*

and collective Hopi perspective of language shift associated with Western schooling, which remains deeply embedded in their memories.

Hopi Youth: "In kindergarten, [we] just dropped the Hopi language"

Dorian, Jared, and Justin each recalled that Hopi was the primary language in the home; thus Hopi was the first language each heard and started to acquire in early childhood. Dorian stated, "They [significant caregivers] speak to you in Hopi and you're able to speak back, at least to some point,

’cuz you’re still learning words. . . . I understood what they [family members] were saying.” In addition, rather than attending preschool, Dorian was left in the care of a babysitter who spoke to her exclusively in Hopi. Jared recalled being surrounded by the Hopi language in his maternal and paternal family environments, and Justin’s early childhood memory was that of learning the language associated with planting corn by hand.

However, each also remembered an abrupt linguistic shift upon entering school. Dorian said, “Before you go to school, that’s how they [family members] speak to you, in Hopi . . . but when you go to school, it’s like it [Hopi] just stops ’cuz you’re expected to learn English.” Justin recalled the same, stating, “I would mostly speak it [Hopi] until I got into school [Head Start]. . . . In kindergarten [we] just dropped . . . the Hopi language.”

The impact of the Western education assimilation program was manifest in how Jared, Dorian, and Justin described their personal facility with their heritage language. Jared stated, “I can mostly understand it [Hopi], but . . . if someone asks me a question . . . I wouldn’t know how to respond back in Hopi.” Dorian’s response to the question, “Have you ever been asked, ‘Do you speak Hopi?’” was accompanied with an uncomfortable laugh. She replied, “Yes, some.” When asked how this question made her feel, she answered with some difficulty stating, “I don’t know. It makes [she paused and then restarted] . . . ’cuz you know, most [tribal] people say if you don’t speak the language, then you’re not of that tribe.” Justin’s reply to the same question was that his Hopi fluency level was at “about 75 percent.” These statements speak volumes about how the Hopi people were coerced into accepting the agenda of schools—to teach Hopi youth to live like the white man—as a means of peaceful coexistence with the Euro-American and, subsequently, economic and cultural survival. This view of Western education can be traced back to the 1890s when generations of Hopi were subjected to compulsory Anglo-American education programs with the goal of assimilation.

The following memories of the grandparent generation conjure up a time when their Hopi world was experienced exclusively through the Hopi language. It was through the Hopi language that their memories were elicited and expressed.

Grandparent Generation: *Itam Kwiikwivit’toti*—“We became proud [arrogant].”

Marie (estimated age 65), Clara (age 82), and Vivian (estimated age 72) were the grandparent participants of the study (pseudonyms). Vivian is Dorian’s paternal grandmother. Dorian’s and Justin’s maternal grandmothers passed away just prior to the start of the study. Marie was recruited as an alternate participant representing the grandparent generation from Justin’s maternal village, and Clara represented the same from Jared’s maternal home village.

Marie’s description of the current status of the Hopi language pointed to a fundamental emotional and perhaps a psychological shift in attitude—shyness, bashfulness, and possibly shame—toward the Hopi language, use of the Hopi language, and predominance of English in everyday Hopi life.

"Our languages are mixed together. We are now interjecting English into our Hopi. Therefore, we are speaking a truly different language. And then we are no longer accustomed, it seems, to speaking the Hopi language. It appears as though we are shy, bashful [to speak Hopi]. . . . If we were not like that, we would be holding on to it."

For Clara, it was the younger generation of Hopi and specifically "educated"—those with advanced schooling—Hopi women who set in motion this "English only" behavior by placing the English language rather than Hopi in a position of prominence. However, Marie and Clara, as grandparents, conceded their role in the shifting process. Clara candidly admitted, "Because we don't talk to them in Hopi, that's why. It's the grandmothers', mothers' fault. And then they don't want to make up their mind [or realize, recognize] that they should talk Hopi to them. Now, these children and young women, therefore, have learned only English."

Marie concurred that when her children and grandchildren spoke to her in English, she responded with the same. Unwittingly, this linguistic practice imprinted the idea that the Hopi language "appears to be gone because they are accustomed to speaking like that [in English]." Marie and Vivian observed that English was the predominant language of use among their children and their grandchildren. Vivian's children (three of four) were raising their families away from the Hopi Reservation and therefore were not teaching their children the Hopi language, and now she supposed, "it's because they're town people and everybody [in town] speaks English." Clara recalled advising her daughter to increase her use of English in response to a humiliating incident suffered at school regarding her English speaking ability. In retrospect she stated, "But I should have said, '*Pay um uuHopilavayiy enangni,*'" or "[Along with English] use your Hopi language." Such language practices of this grandparent generation positioned English to become the *lingua franca* among their own children, the soon-to-be parent generation.

Retrospectively, this grandparent generation found the language shift to be quite perplexing. Marie stated, "*Noqw nuy noqw son put sùutokni,*" or "To me, one [a first language speaker of Hopi] cannot forget [her/his language]." However, she posited that for some individuals, self-pride in acquiring English proficiency may have led to a diminishing respect for the Hopi culture and language by stating, "*Ita[m] haqawat antsa put qa kyaptsi'yyungwa pu',*" or "There are some of us who in fact seem to have lost respect for and diminished within ourselves the value and integrity of the Hopi culture and language in favor of another [language]."

Nevertheless, the language shift was a lived reality. Speaking English had become the norm among all speakers of Hopi. The impact of the language shift did not exclude the elder speakers of Hopi; the evidence was apparent in the changing linguistic structure of the language and a diminishing knowledge of the specialized lexical repositories among this generation of Hopi. Vivian stated, "We [grandmothers/elder speakers] don't speak 'good' [grammatically correct] Hopi. We don't all have a good grasp of the proper Hopi language. Even I don't know everything [vocabulary/grammar] but I [still] understand when they're [the great-grandparent generation] talking." *Wuklavayi,* a language domain used by the older generations of Hopi to express the philosophy of the Hopi way of life, had greatly declined. With the elder speakers of Hopi passing on, this language domain will be lost completely.

Parent Generation: "We're living the life of a Pahaana [white person] now."

The parent interviewees are parents of the Hopi youth in this study: Dorian's parents, Anna and Doran; Justin's parents, Lillian and Marshall (pseudonyms); and Jared's mother, Charlene (pseudonym), a single parent. All were residing and employed on the reservation at the time of the study.

The cultural and linguistic life histories of each parent participant differed from that of their children. Doran and Lillian spent a large part of their early childhood and adolescent years away from the Hopi Reservation, although they were close enough to visit relatives and attend ceremonies frequently; English was their first and primary language. Hopi was the first and primary language for Anna, Charlene, and Marshall, prior to leaving the Hopi Reservation to attend boarding schools (Marshall's boarding school experience began at the early age of six or seven).

Unlike their parents, this parent generation made an early, preretirement return to the Hopi Reservation: for Anna and Charlene, prompted by the birth of their first child, and for Marshall, to carry out his religious duties. Hence these parents were raising their families in the context of Hopi life. As previously noted, each family household differed in maintaining the cultural and, particularly, the linguistic aspects of Hopi life. Moreover, each family faced a greater challenge in balancing the Hopi way of life with the Western, urban lifestyle brought to and evident on the reservation—fast paced, adhering to timelines and schedules, and incorporating wage work and professional development courses into evenings; activities that disrupt family life. Urbanization of the Hopi way of life had been occurring with each generation of Hopi leaving the reservation to experience the Pahaana way of life, bringing to Hopi new knowledge and new ways of doing things; essentially putting into practice a new way of life and language. Schools, which have become established institutions in the heart of Hopi communities, continue to stand for a way of life different and separate from the Hopi way of life, requiring a different and separate language. Urbanization and schooling also continue to initiate a move away from the Hopi language and culture.

In Dorian's family, school was the catalyst for language shift in home child-rearing practices. Anna stated:

> I spoke it [Hopi] pretty fluently 'til probably I started having my own kids. The older one, she started like that [hearing and speaking Hopi] 'cause she had babysitters and I was still talking in Hopi. But after she started school, that's when it [Hopi] really switched over [to English]. . . . [When they were babies], we talked to them . . . [with Hopi] baby talk . . . sing 'em all the songs. But then, eventually, it's just everything's in English now. I know I don't speak [Hopi] to my kids now. . . . I'll throw in a Hopi word now and then . . . but it's hard

> to do that [speak to my children in Hopi].

Essentially, Anna had positioned her children on the periphery of the intimate aspects of family life. She stated, “When I go to my mom and sister, I’ll speak Hopi with ’em. But with these two, Dorian and her younger brother, I really haven’t.” It is perplexing for Anna to acknowledge that she uses Hopi with her siblings and mother “without even giving it a thought,” but she is unable to do the same with her children: “When I’m with the kids, it [my speaking language] just switches back to English. I wish my kids were able to talk [Hopi].” Anna now uses English to convey cultural information and instruction to her children, translations that do not adequately explain Hopi concepts. These shifting linguistic practices also affected the maintenance of her own Hopi fluency, most notably in her inability to recall or pronounce words.

Doran, a second-language learner of Hopi, stated:

> I never really learned Hopi. When I was growing up . . . it was never really encouraged for me to learn Hopi. I would hear it and I would understand a few words but when a conversation really actually started, I never understood what was going on. . . . My mom always talked English; she never talked Hopi to us. She would go home and she would talk Hopi to her brothers and her parents and to the older people but when she talked us, she would turn to us and she would talk English. . . . My uncles, both of them, talked English to us. One [uncle] more or less talked broken English, but he spoke English to us.

However, Doran’s case also points out the continuing role of language in contemporary Hopi society. Several factors compelled Doran to learn Hopi when he returned to the reservation: He rekindled his participation and involvement in the kiva activities; as a family counselor, he could better serve the grandparents who were raising their own grandchildren and were most comfortable discussing intimate issues in Hopi; and in order to pursue an interest in the tribal political arena it was required that he develop a Hopi language proficiency. Doran estimated that it took him five years to develop a basic understanding of what was being said but not the ability to speak Hopi, “so I would just talk English,” he stated. At the time of the study, he described himself as a speaker of Hopi after approximately sixteen years of self-learning. Despite this accomplishment, Doran acknowledged that he remained limited in expressing the deeper levels of Hopi thought to a Hopi audience or of accessing the same in the religious realm; he conveys the cultural knowledge he has relearned to his children by using English.

Charlene, whose first language was Hopi, described an unconventional start at an early age, four or five, to learning English. Accompanying her adoptive mother to work at the village day school, she was permitted to sit in the classroom of older Hopi youth while they were being schooled. Consequently, Charlene was exposed to the English language and instruction very early. The teacher’s use of visuals helped her “pick up” English quickly. Ironically, her participation in class ended abruptly because her enthusiasm for learning became a distraction, and she was outperforming the older students! When she reached school age, Charlene's memories of schooling reflected the same humiliating experiences suffered by other Hopis because of her use of Hopi: "They were still . . . trying to keep us speaking English. If we did [use Hopi], they would put soap in our mouth. . . . They would cut them in half and put them on our tongue and we had to sit like that for a whole hour. . . . Either that or we get swatted on our hands or behind our knees."

Later, Charlene recalled, "When we went off [the Hopi Reservation] to high school, we all kind of lost out on that [the Hopi language]. It just seemed like it just kind of drifted off [out of use]." Distant boarding schools brought together youth from many tribes, but English quickly became the common language of intertribal friendships and marriages. English bonded Charlene to her Tewa, Shoshoni, and Nez Perce friends as well as her first husband, a member of a different tribe. Later, English remained the language of use in her home in a subsequent relationship with a city-raised, non-Hopi-speaking "full [blood] Hopi." Moreover, Charlene's attempts to establish Hopi as the language of her home were undermined by her mother, who "just started in, talking English to them, and that didn't help." Describing her current Hopi language proficiency, Charlene stated, "I speak it, but I can't really express myself in Hopi anymore and I really feel bad about that too because it reflected on my kids."

Marshall was thrust into the white man's world when he was sent to Utah with two older siblings to attend school. He stated, "I had just finished second grade. I didn't know I was going until I got on that bus with them [sisters], and at the top of the hill, I turned and [saw] my village go [disappear behind the hill]. That's when it hit me that I'm going away and so I cried all the way up to Utah." Finding himself in a bewildering situation did not end with the realization of leaving home, instead it was just the beginning of a more confusing experience called "schooling." Marshall quickly understood the subtle messages that using the Hopi language was unacceptable, and remarkably, at the age of six or seven, he quickly adapted to the situation. He recalled, "I had to make that change where I had to shut my Hopi tongue off completely and then *pay pas Pahan'yu'a'a'ta* [just be speaking English]. . . . I wasn't exactly told but then just by the actions [facial expressions, body language, I knew] I wasn't to speak any Hopi. I couldn't anyway because I didn't have anyone to talk to. So then I just got accustomed to speaking English."

Marshall made summer visits to the Hopi Reservation and eventually made a deliberate choice to make a permanent return to Hopi and position his ceremonial responsibilities at the forefront of his life: "I chose to be Hopi again. . . . I started to learn [about] my initiations." (He graduated from a high school located closer to the reservation.) The linguistic aspect of his reentry into Hopi life was anything but smooth yet was strongly influenced by the belief instilled in him by his clan uncles that he was destined to work on behalf of the Hopi people in the ceremonial realm of Hopi life; he accepted and embraced his "destiny."

As a parent, Marshall applied this strong conviction to practicing cultural traditions including making Hopi the language of use in his home. He was adamant that parents "need to be involved in the cultural doings"—learning the culture is "*practiced* [emphasis mine] in the household . . . taught down from the grandfather to the father and to the sons and nephews . . . instilling the respect for . . . the meaning of things," he explained. This is one's parental duty (conduct owed) and obligation (socially imposed responsibility) to one's children because "*I'pi—itaahimuningwu, Hopihiita, taawi; i'uuyi—itamuy tsaami'mani,*" or "All these things—our [cultural] possessions, Hopi things [like] songs; my corn—will lead us along [toward our destiny]." As such, Hopi tradition also dictates the use of the Hopi language. He supports and encourages all attempts his children and wife make in using Hopi, and he has been rewarded. In particular, he took great pride in stating that Justin uses Hopi in their kiva activities. "It goes right here [pointing to his heart] and [I realize that] I'm doing something at least," he asserted. He also maintained that learning the language "should always be in the home."

This parent generation described a linguistic shifting process from predominantly Hopi to English driven by the essentiality of English and schooling for the Hopi to participate in and benefit from the mainstream world. Embracing this ideology led to a significant breach in the cultural and linguistic structure including the family and community dynamics of Hopi society. However, these families/households demonstrated that Hopi cultural and linguistic continuity remains rooted in practicing culture, or in practicing living Hopi.

HOPI ORAL TRADITION AND THE HOPI IDENTITY-FORMATION PROCESS OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE HOPI WAY OF LIFE

Dorian's assertion, "I live Hopi, I just don't speak it," as well as the concern of the older generation of Hopi expressed in the question, "How can you be Hopi if you can't speak it," frame the discussion surrounding the Hopi ideology that by "participating along with others in the Hopi way of life, one becomes Hopi." Participation in the Hopi way of life is not contingent on a proficiency in the Hopi language. Rather, by birthright and beginning at birth, the Hopi individual embarks on a journey of becoming and being Hopi—forming a Hopi cultural identity. The Hopi clan/kinship system is the mechanism that defines the individual's place and role in terms of conduct and obligation to others within and beyond the immediate family in the secular and religious domains of Hopi life. Active participation and involvement in the Hopi way of life is the "process" by which one comes to an understanding of her or his role in the community and fulfilling the expectations of this role according to long-established cultural standards. This understanding was publicly reiterated in January 1997 at a public forum on the status of the Hopi language by a Hopi elder who stated, "If you are Hopi, you will never forget your culture because you know who you are, and you . . . know what your responsibilities are [to your family, community, people, and the world]."[16]

Participating in the sociocultural interactions, routines, and sites of Hopi traditions and practices, Dorian, Jared, and Justin gained varying degrees of competency in these socially defined contexts. Their collective experiences elucidate the principles and ethics essential to developing a distinctly Hopi identity because "words have a home in the context of culture—in the course of daily activities, in social institutions—they have meaning within these contexts."[17] Such words affect and influence the individual. Hence, in spite of the fact that, as Dorian stated, "Most of the time when you're growing up, it's English [that is used]," each of the youth participants internalized the "expected ways of thinking, feeling, and acting" rooted in corn as a way of life.

The Hopi Theory of Life: Planting Corn by Hand

According to the Hopi emergence story, the words "*Pay nu' panis sòoya'yta,*" or "I have only the planting stick," were spoken by Màasaw, Guardian of the Hopi Fourth World, at the time of humankind's "emergence" into the Fourth World. The words encapsulate the Hopi life plan, Hopivötskwani, a covenant made with Màasaw to undertake the life-sustaining practices associated with the growing of *qaa'ö,* or corn, by hand in desolate but preordained lands. Inherent in the metaphor of corn as a way of life is the struggle for survival requiring a deep, abiding faith, humility, self-discipline, cohesion, and an unwavering adherence and commitment to the fulfillment of the covenant. The following teaching from Hopi oral tradition conveys this understanding: "*Itam it hìita ane tumalat qatsit namortota. Yaw son haq Hopit qatsiyat sòosok aw su'taqewni,*" or "We [as a people] chose this difficult life of hard work and struggle [at emergence]. It is said that no others would willingly commit to this way of life."[18]

How the Hopi people determined to uphold this covenant constitutes their "identity, religious beliefs, ritual practices, and their daily engagements and concerns" and finds expression through the ritual practices, religious ceremonies, cultural institutions, song words and phrases, prayers, teachings, and symbolism that are practiced today.[19] Hopi oral tradition embodies the concepts of corn as a way of life, or *natwani*— the principles of reciprocity and humility, and the destiny (spiritual fulfillment and immortality) of the Hopi people.

In effect, the practice of growing corn by hand as a way of life, or practicing reciprocity and humility, teaches people how to live in harmony with others and contribute to the pursuit of life's fulfillment and spiritual immortality on behalf of the whole group. These principles are central to maintaining the cohesiveness of Hopi as a communal society, defining for them "how to be a people—in heart, thought, behavior, and conduct . . . concepts of a socioculturally structured universe."[20] Thus language as cultural practice makes a direct connection among language, epistemology, and the cultural communal ethic.

Natwanta: Practicing Making a Living, Practicing Faith

The Hopi distinguish two kinds of "practices" associated with the planting of corn by hand: *natwani* (noun), the practices of making a living, farming, and *natwanta* (verb), the practice of faith through ritual, a self-testing. Essentially, the practice of planting corn by hand is a secular and religious ritual practice, hence the expressions "planting is a religious duty" or "planting is an act of faith." The secular activity of planting emphasizes learning the skill of farming as developing self-sufficiency at the personal and collective level; planting corn by hand as work and self-discipline; and the use of the planting stick, or *sooya*, as humility.

Thus work, or *tumala*, especially that done by hand, emerges as perhaps the most important of Hopi concepts. "For the Hopi, all practices of life for Hopi well-being are work"—hoeing in the field, performing rituals, personal sacrifice, and self-discipline.[21] This concept is expressed often in daily discourse by using these Hopi words: "*Hak tumalay akw mongvastingwu, maqsontangwu*," or "One, by means of his/her work benefits from it, experiences the benefits of hardship." The reminder is that one gains spiritual growth and fulfillment through hard work and faith. In 1991 Loftin wrote, "Hard work embodies the spiritual essence of the Hopi way, chosen in the primordium by their ancestors. Through work, the Hopi people share a sense of identity with their mythic forefathers."[22] *Natwani* becomes the metaphor for the work ethic and attaining *qatsitwi*, the "know-how" for making a living. Justin stated that he was born and raised to be a Hopi farmer. His father and male relatives modeled this staunch commitment to the planting tradition explicitly. It is the way of life for a Hopi farmer, a difficult life that requires one to work hard and thereby acquire a strong work ethic. Justin perceived himself as having acquired this work ethic: "I'm a hard working person, 'cuz that's the way I was brought up. . . . I'm still doing that [working hard]."

The *sooya* symbolizes a life of humility and becomes the instrument by which the Hopi farmer tests his faith to the utmost in order to ensure life by one's own hands supported by faith. Further, as a personal endeavor, to use the *sooya* allows one to participate in the ways of the Hopi ancestors, or *hisat.sinom*; to work the earth with a reverence emanating from a perception of earth as *itangu*, or our mother, commanding proper thoughts and feelings toward a "relative"; and essentially to experience a return to and "reactualization" of the time at emergence—a reminder to the Hopi people of their petition and subsequent acceptance of the life plan set out for them by Màasaw.[23] This is reiterated by Justin: "[Hopi farming is about] how to plant with a [planting] stick, on your own instead of having somebody else doing it for you. . . . Way back then, that's how we survived—[by] planting the corn. We ate from what we planted and that's what kept us alive [physically and spiritually]."

The ritual practice of planting is also applied to the developing sense of commitment to and preparation for the economic responsibility—self-sufficiency at an individual level—to one's family as a husband and father. Justin stated, "You can talk to the plants; they're just like your children. So, [you tell them] 'Just be strong as you're growing up. Don't let anything bother you.' And they'll hear you." Although Jared is not active in the planting tradition, planting corn as a symbol of a Hopi man's economic responsibility was instilled early in his mind: "That's the man's role you know," he stated and assured that he will resume this responsibility "especially if I get married." Loftin described *natwani* as embodying the notion of self-practice, "a worldly reflection on one's self-practice and conduct" in reference to the successful growth of "crops, children, or other fruits of personal effort; if they turn out well they accrue to the individual's virtue" in ethical terms.[24] Mary Black in *Maidens and Mothers: An Analysis of Hopi Corn Metaphors* articulated a concise description of the relationship a Hopi farmer has to his corn children and extended to human children:[25]

> A symbiotic and complementary relationship is seen to pertain to corn and humans. Young plants are cared for as children by people; if they are properly cared for, encouraged and prayed for, they are able to mature. . . . Their lines of life are carried on in the ears of corn, some which become poshumi [seeds] for the next germination cycle. The rest become "mother" to the humans who cared for them —in the literal sense of actual nourishment. . . . The nourishment and energy received from corn in turn allow the humans to continue to care for the young plants . . . thus the life cycle of corn and humans complement one another and repeat through the ages.

Neither can survive without the other. Using "nurturing" words that offer counsel, advice, support, and encouragement, for example, "*Uma hapi ö'qalyani. Uma qa tsaakwiwyungni. Uma kyaktaytotini; su'qawyani,*" or "You [my corn children] desire to be strong. You are not to wither. You have a speedy growth; be confident," makes evident the integral role of language in the "proper care" of one's children. Justin stated that he uses these words of encouragement in tending to the corn in his family's field. Song lyrics also convey these messages. An elder Hopi woman recalled this practice vivid in memories of her childhood:

> *Hisat taataqt pasve taatawtinumyangwu, ispi uuyiy songawnen tiitavtotangwu. Haalaykyaakyang amumi unangtavi'yungngwu.*
>
> At that time, the men at their fields, would go along singing, because, in effect, they were taking care of their plants [as if they were children]. With much happiness, they were tending to them [the corn children].

In turn, one's female kin give reciprocal attention and commitment to the corn, harvesting and storing the corn brought from the fields: "They'll [grandmother, mother, aunts] clean [it], and then they'll take it off the cob, [and then] we'll save it or we'll boil it," stated Justin. This attention is extended to the woman's role in the preparation of traditional food made from corn—*nöqkwivi*, or hominy; *piiki*, or blue corn wafer bread; *somiviki*, or sweet, blue corn tamale; *kutuki*, or parched corn; and other corn dishes served during ritual performances and ceremonies. An elder Hopi woman explained,

> *Nöösiwqa pas hiikya'ta. Taaqa hiita aniwnaq, put ak itam itaaqatsiy ö'qalyangwu. Hak sinot qa iingyalngwu, pante, hak songawnen naa'ingyalngwu. Itam sunan sinom.*

> Food is of great value. When a man grows his foodstuff, by means of that, we strengthen our lives. Therefore, one should not exclude or reject the company of [guests at mealtime], if one does so, one essentially rejects oneself. We are all one people.

Inherent in this statement is a reference to the emergence of the people, or all humankind, into the Fourth World, hence, the protocol of extending an invitation to partake of the food prepared to all those who come to participate as audience members in the ritual performances and ceremonies; all are to partake of the bounty. This comprehension extends to the spirit world and resonates in Helen Sekaquaptewa's memories of sweet corn fresh from the steaming pit, ready for consumption as told to Louise Udall in *Me and Mine: The Life Story of Helen Sekaquaptewa.* She says, "The harvesting and all aspects of life had religious significance. [When the morning star reached the right position in the sky,] it was time to open the pit. While the steam poured out, [the elder] called loudly to the gods and their spirits to come and partake of this food, repeating the invitation four times—from the east, the south, the west, and the north. Being spirits, the gods eat of the vapor from the corn."[26] The preparation of food by the women is also likened to that of Mother Earth who provides substance, or *soona*, to all; we nurse from our mother, she is the provider of life, a mother to all. In turn, like Mother Earth, Hopi women are revered for their life-giving abilities.

Natwani also refers to the practice of ceremonies, practices that symbolically stand for "practicing life," or "*Itam natwantotangwu*": "We, by custom, are 'practicing,' or 'rehearsing' life." Because ceremonies also serve to remind and prompt the Hopi conscience, "participation" involves a strong conviction that there is a spiritual return to the remote past that is lived again. If one is able to project her- or himself into this realm, a solid connection to and a profound understanding of the past as significant and relevant today as well as for the future is attained. This religious task, conducted in faith and humbleness, constitutes the religious ethic. Therefore, the myriad of cultural practices, including ceremony, is referred to as *natwani* because the Hopi people continue to "practice" what has been done in actuality in Hopi history. In effect, planting corn by hand not only sustains but also continues to convey and uphold the integrity of the Hopi plan of life, or Hopivötskwani. This is reiterated in the following statement from Hopi oral tradition: "*Haqàapiy yaw qatsi qatuvostini, hak yaw pas somatsinen, sùuput namortamantani,*" or "It is said, that in a time when life becomes difficult [complicated], one has to be very discerning in order to choose *the right way* [the Hopi way]."[27]

Thus, Justin, "brought up" to carry out the male duty of planting corn by hand, has been demonstrating being Hopi, and rightfully asserts, "I'm Hopi." Further, his cultural and linguistic socialization into Hopi society remain largely unaffected by the language shift from Hopi to English that surrounds him. Jared's life history, which included resisting *qa Hopi* behaviors such as gang involvement and substance abuse, demonstrates the "maturity" aspect of becoming and being Hopi—making the "right" choices in responding to such pressures expressed as "*Pam wuwni' hinti,*" or "He made a smart choice." He will likely continue to make the right choices influenced by Hopi cultural values. Dorian, grounded in her experiences and knowledge of her cultural roots, asserts, "I live Hopi, I just don't speak it." The Hopi values imbued in Hopi traditions become an intrinsic part of one's cultural identity poignantly expressed in Justin's words: "Since you're Hopi you're brought up that way [in the Hopi way of life]. You can't let it go; it's just gonna be too hard [to forget this upbringing]."

CONCLUSION

Nettle and Romaine assert that only a better understanding of the historical processes leading biolinguistic diversity to the brink of extinction will allow us to change them.[28] Borrowing from Nettle and Romaine, the Hopi case study is a "bottom-up" examination of the historical process of "top-down" language shift initiated by Western assimilation programs and schooling as well as the Hopi response to the social, cultural, and economic pressures from outside and within Hopi. The shifting process, marked by changes in a "people's practices, roles, and role models," is illuminated as is the persistence, strength, and influence of culture—Hopi oral tradition and the Hopi identity-formation process, those cultural and linguistic functions identified as crucial to the continuation of intergenerational transmission and preservation of Hopi culture and habitat.[29]

The Hopi case study affirms the notion that "there are many ways that one can experience culture, language only being one of them.[30] In Hopi society, through inclusion, active participation, involvement, and interrelations with others in the myriad cultural practices—the Hopi identity-formation process conveyed through various communicative forms of the Hopi oral tradition—Hopi youth acquire the implicit messages about cultural standards of behavior and cultural knowledge embedded in these practices.

However, although "living Hopi"—practicing the customs, traditions, and religion—has anchored each in their Hopi identity, it is an identity that, in Dorian's words, is not "fully complete without the language, the tongue, the speaking." These youth, although rooted and experienced in the Hopi way of life, are linguistically ill-prepared to fulfill a duty and responsibility to pass on the cultural knowledge encoded in the Hopi language. This presents a seemingly ominous future for the vitality of the Hopi language and Hopi cultural practices and religion, but at best, these Hopi youth, secure in their Hopi identity, are confident that the sociocultural institutions and traditions through which they acquired their cultural identity and strength will endure. Each is adamant in securing the same for their own children by upholding the cultural traditions they have been taught and have learned; they have their heart in the Hopi way of life.

This commitment to the Hopi way of life has spurred a newfound motivation and urgency to "learn" the Hopi language: "[Within my lifetime] I'll still be trying to learn," asserted Dorian, "'cuz I really am set on [learning to speak] it." Nettle and Romaine state that "to choose to use a language is an act of identity or belonging to a particular community."[31] This unwavering allegiance to the Hopi way of life has maintained the Hopi people for centuries.

Maintaining, reinvigorating, and revitalizing the Hopi way of life is about keeping a uniquely Hopi personality that has survived for centuries; at the "heart" of this personality is language.[32]

The concern for and work on behalf of the Hopi language points to a reinvigoration of the collective Hopi ideological commitment to the Hopi way of life encoded in the Hopi terms *nami'nangwa* and *sumi'nangwa*—with mutual concern and care for and toward one another, and in the mood of unity—that includes the pursuit of an authentic and valid biculturalism and bilingualism in order to secure a viable future for the Hopi lifeway in the twenty-first century. Ofelia Garcia maintains that indigenous youth have been engaged in the "work" all along, through "translanguaging," or "languaging bilingually."[33] Youth, when engaging in translanguaging, are "integrating language practices from different communities with distinct ideologies"—their Hopi and their mainstream worlds—drawing from their "different semiotic systems and modes of meaning," and "in doing so, they are affirming their past and their local lives, as they project them toward a better future."[34] As such, the possibility that the younger generations of Hopi may fulfill their responsibility and obligation to pass on the Hopi way of life becomes promising.

NOTES

1. Daniel Nettle and Suzanne Romaine, *Vanishing Voices: The Extinction of the World's Languages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), ix.

2. Ibid., 2.

3. Ibid., 3.

4. Kendall King, *Language Revitalization Process and Prospects: Quichua in the Ecuadorian Andes* (Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2001), 12.

5. Comment from Minutes, Public Orientation: Hopi Language Assessment Project, Hopi Veteran's Memorial Coliseum, 23 December 1996.

6. *Hopi* as a term has multiple definitions including human being, behaving one, civilized, peaceable, polite, adhering to the Hopi way, and fluent in the language. The Hopi Dictionary Project, comp., *A Hopi-English Dictionary of the Third Mesa Dialect: Hopìikwa Lavàytutuveni* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1998), 99–100.

7. Comment from Minutes, Public Orientation.

8. Hopi Language Assessment Project, Presentation of Hopi Language Survey Results. Prepared for the Hopi Culture Preservation Office, the Hopi Tribe. Prepared by Diane Austin, Bureau of Applied Research and Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson, 13 October 1997.

9. Teresa McCarty, Mary Eunice Romero, and Ofelia Zepeda, "Native American Youth Discourses on Language Shift and Retention: Ideological Cross-Currents and Their Implications for Language Planning," *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 9, no. 5 (2006): 659–77.

10. Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 1976).

11. Joshua A. Fishman, "What Do You Lose When You Lose Your Language?" in *Stabilizing Indigenous Languages*, ed. Gina Cantoni (Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University Center for Excellence, 1996), 80–91.

12. In 1996, the Hopi tribe was awarded a settlement by the federal government that allowed for the purchase of 420,265 acres of aboriginal lands with monies gained from the Land Settlement Act of 1882. The terms of the settlement allowed for purchase of 500,000 acres of additional aboriginal lands to be placed in trust status. "Hopi Tribe's Land Team Honored for Economic Development Plan and Land Preservation Efforts," *Hopi Tutuveni* 15, no. 23 (10 November 2005): 1–2, 11.

13. The villages of Walpi, Sitsom'ovi, and Haano are located on First Mesa, with Polacca at its base; the villages of Musangnuvi, Supawlavi, and Songoopavi are located on Second Mesa; and the villages of Orayvi, Hot'vela, Paaqavi, and Munqapi are located on Third Mesa, with Kiqötsmovi at its base.

14. Keams Canyon Boarding School (K–6), First Mesa Elementary School (K–6), Second Mesa Elementary School (K–6), Hopi Day School (K–6), Hopi Mission School (K–6), Hotevilla-Bacavi Community School (K–8), and Munqapi Day School.

15. Comment from Minutes, Public Orientation.

16. Comment from Minutes at a Public Forum, Village of Munqapi, January 1997.

17. Emory Sekaquaptewa as cited in Sheilah Nicholas, "Negotiating for the Hopi Way of Life through Literacy and Schooling," in *Language, Literacy, and Power in Schooling*, ed. Teresa L. McCarty (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2005), 29–46.

18. Emory Sekaquaptewa, personal communication, 25 October 2000.

19. Peter Whiteley, *Rethinking Hopi Ethnography* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institute, 1998), 191.

20. Elinor Ochs, *Culture and Language Development: Language Acquisition and Language Socialization in a Samoan Village* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 14.

21. Emory Sekaquaptewa and Dorothy Washburn, "They Go Along Singing: Reconstructing the Hopi Past from Ritual Metaphors in Song and Image," *American Antiquity* 9, no. 3 (2004): 457–86.

22. John D. Loftin, *Religion and Hopi Life in the Twentieth Century* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994), 5.

23. Ibid., 9.

24. Ibid.

25. Mary Black, "Maidens and Others: An Analysis of Hopi Corn Metaphors," *Ethnology* 234, no. 4 (1984): 279–88; quotation on p. 286.

26. Helen Sekaquaptewa as cited in Louise Udall, *Me and Mine: The Life Story of Helen Sekaquaptewa* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986), 286.

27. Emory Sekaquaptewa, personal communication, 25 October 2000.

28. Nettle and Romaine, *Vanishing Voices*, 177.

29. Ibid., 97.

30. Emory Sekaquaptewa, personal communication, 24 March 2004.

31. Ibid., 193.

32. Ibid., 192.

33. Ofelia Garcia, "En/countering Indigenous Bilingualism," *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* (Philadelphia: Routledge Taylor and Francis, 2009).

34. Ibid., 377–79.