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An Analysis of the Current Tribally Initiated Rincon Cham'teela Program as a Way to Promote and Encourage Sustainability of the Luiseno Language

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An Analysis of the Current Tribally Initiated Rincon Cham'teela
Program as a Way to Promote and Encourage Sustainability
of the Luiseño Language

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts
in American Indian Studies

by

Elizabeth Fasthorse

2014

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

An Analysis of the Current Tribally Initiated Rincon Cham'teela

Program as a Way to Promote and Encourage Sustainability of the Luiseño Language

by

Elizabeth Fasthorse

Master of Arts in American Indian Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Henry L. Geiogamah, Co-chair

Professor Paul V. Kroskirty, Co-chair

Native American languages in the United States are struggling to survive. Therefore, many tribal communities are committed to language revitalization programs in order to sustain the vitality of their tribal nation and its future. Using a sociocultural theory this thesis offers a preliminary analysis of the Rincon Luiseño community's effort to create a language revitalization program. This unique language program is a tribally initiated community-based program without no outside influence. I use a collection of data collected through interviews with students (tribal members) are analyzed and presented it as a process to provide a description of the program and give examples of ways to enhance its current language program. The interview questions focused on the following topics: 1) reasons for language revitalization and preservation; 2) importance of passing on to youth; 3) cultural identity; 4) growth of program; and 5) any other issues interviewees brought up regarding the language program. The goal of my thesis, utilizing a tribal based protocol is to provide data and analysis as a basic resource for tribal members to further develop the Rincon Cham'teela class.

The thesis of Elizabeth Fasthorse is approved.

Pamela Munro

Joanne T. Darby

Henry L. Geiogamah, Committee Co-chair

Paul V. Kroskrity, Committee Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2014

DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to all my relatives (especially my grandmother Florentina Lara (Paipa Piper) who raised me and taught me the culture and tradition of my people, extended family the Rincon Luiseño people and, the Rincon Cham'teela class.

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I would first like to acknowledge the teacher Stanley “Boogie” Calac and assistant teacher Verna Calac Arviso for their dedication, commitment and tireless efforts to teaching the language. In addition, I would also like to thank them for allowing me to a part of such a unique and dedicated group of individuals, especially the tribal members of Rincon. My research could not have happened without all of their help. My research work could not have been possible without a grant from the Institute of American Cultures.

As a tribal member from the Rincon Indian Reservation, I understand the extremely unique value of the Rincon Cham'teela¹ class. The language program at Rincon is a tribally based language program that was initiated by tribal members for their community with no outside influence in order to keep the cultural integrity of their language program. The current Rincon Luiseño language class is composed of adults. There are approximately three or four advanced speakers in the class who are bird singers. Their familiarity with the language of the songs gives them an advantage over the beginner speaker when speaking the Luiseño language, but the singers are also an asset in helping the beginner with pronunciation of words and their meaning. The language teacher is fluent in the Luiseño language; the assistant can speak, read and write, but is not fluent. Both teacher and assistant devote their time to teaching the language to all tribal members, descendants, and other Luiseño people who want to learn the language. In this thesis, I take preliminary steps to provide a case study based on interviews to get a deeper understanding of this community-based language program that may provide ways to enhance the Rincon Cham'teela class (Cham'teela means “our language”). The goal of my thesis, utilizing a tribal-based protocol, discussed further below is to provide data and analysis as a basis for tribal members to further develop the Rincon Cham'teela class.

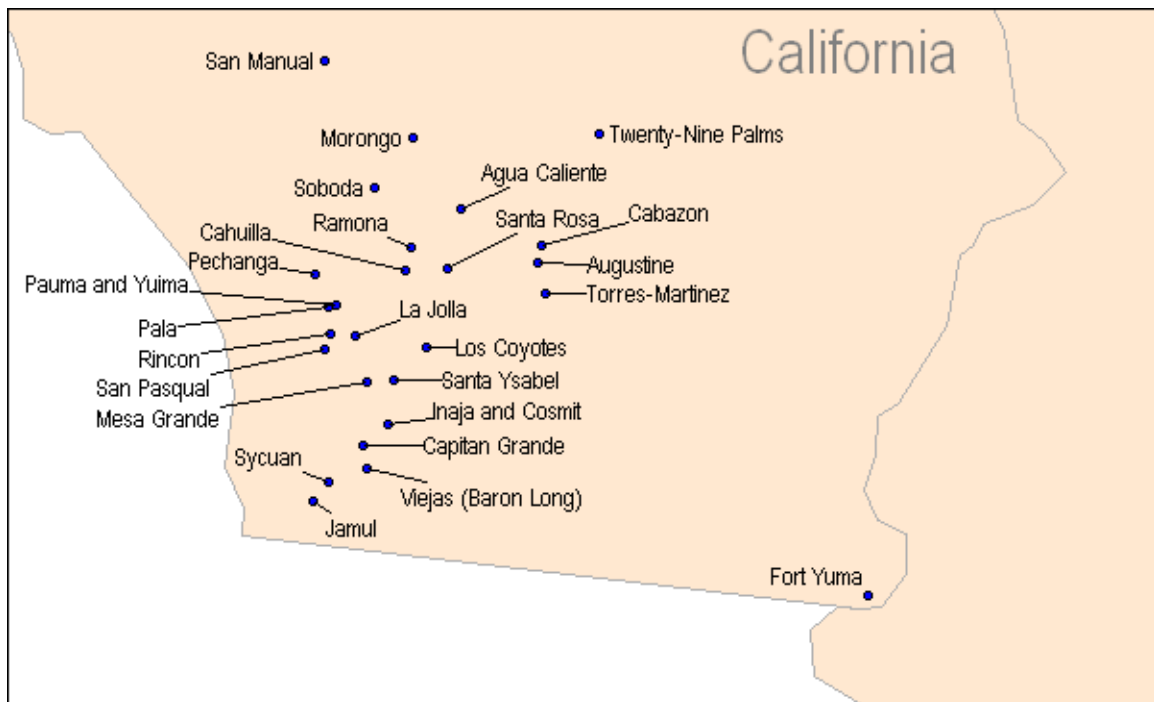
Originally, I thought my research would focus on an assessment of needs through a survey and observation that would include observing performances by the Rincon Youth Storytellers, interviewing parents of the participants and the coordinator, and proposing a pilot performing arts program. However, in respectfully approaching this community-based research, I shifted my focus to the needs of the tribe, rather than my own. This shift in focus was guided by the Assistant Teacher of the Rincon Cham'teela class handing me a copy of an unpublished

¹ This word appears in Elliott's dissertation as *Chamteela* (1999:930) Elliott's spelling reflects the actual pronunciation of the word. There is no².

paper on culturally based research in Native communities by Mark Macarro (1994), Tribal Chair of the Luiseño Band of Pechanga Indians, and encouraging me to use the paper to inform my work. This paper is housed in the Rincon library in the museum. Therefore, understanding the uniqueness and the value of the Rincon Cham'teela class became the focus of my thesis. Thus, my thesis evolved from an assessment of needs through a survey to taking preliminary steps to provide a case study that looked at the Rincon Cham'teela class through interviews with the participants, teachers, and the museum curator. Collecting data from these interviews from the Rincon Language class helped define the vision of the programs and the value of learning the language as a means of language revitalization. Although a small study, this data was useful as a way to analyze how the program developed and provide ways to enhance the current language program that will help in the revitalization of the language. In this thesis I first provide the background of the Luiseño people that will include the location, size, topography, enrollment, government, creation story, and culture. Second, I locate myself as a researcher within a Luiseño tribal member's perspective and discuss the ethical responsibility of Native research. Third, the literature review will cover a broader historical context and Native language struggles, literature on Luiseño, language ideologies, and interconnection of Native cultures, education, language, and performing arts. Fourth, I discuss the process of co-establishing a tribal protocol for ethical community-based research of the Luiseño language at Rincon. Fifth, I provide data analysis of interviews with tribal members of the Cham'teela class at Rincon. Finally, this thesis will have concluding thoughts that reflect my own personal journey and the potential growth of the Rincon Cham'teela class. Although this study is limited by a small sample and preliminary case study, I believe it provides insight into a tribally initiated language revitalization program and uniqueness of the Rincon Cham'teela class.

Background

The Rincon Indian Reservation is located in North San Diego County and sits at the base of Palomar Mountain with a total of 4,643.5 acres of land. The geography consists of rolling hills, including Palomar Mountain, that form a basin encompassing the reservation boundaries. This topography makes it cold in the winter and very hot in the summer. The tribal enrollment consists of 500 tribal members over 21 plus 36 tribal members under the age of 21 for a grand total of 536 members, with 120 members that live on the reservation (phone conversation with Rincon Tribal Administrator Dick Watenpugh, October, 2012). The following map shows the location of Rincon and neighboring reservations surrounding it.

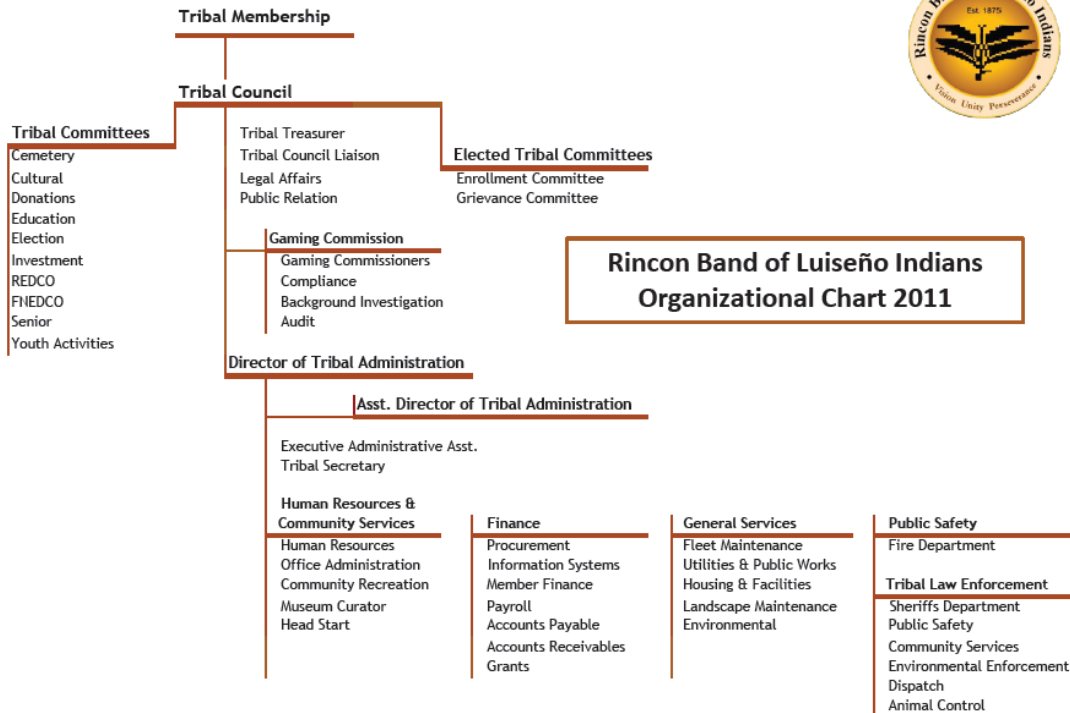


<http://www.epa.gov/ozonedesignations/1997standards/tribaldesig.htm>

Philip Stedman Sparkman (1908), in his publication, *The Culture of the Luiseño Indians*, states, “‘Rio San Luis Rey de Francia,’ River St. Louis King of France, was the name given by the Franciscan friars to what is now known as the San Luis Rey River. Four miles up the river

from its mouth was established the mission of San Luis Rey de Francia in 1798. Twenty miles higher up the river the mission of Pala, an outpost of San Luis Rey de Francia, was established in 1816. The Indians who were gathered at these two missions were called ‘San Luiseños’ by the Franciscans. ‘San Luiseños,’ the equivalent of ‘St. Louisans’ in English, has now been shortened generally to ‘Luiseños,’ and adopted by the tribe as their designation, they, like many Indians, having no name for themselves, except one merely meaning ‘people’” (189). As mentioned, the mission at Pala was established in 1816, and in 1958, the Pala Mission School was established and staffed by the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament and Sisters of the Precious Blood, who continued the work begun by the Franciscan Friars 184 years before. The Pala Mission School not only served the natives of Pala but also the natives from the surrounding reservations, such as Pauma, La Jolla, and Rincon. The school no longer exists as a Catholic school but as a charter school of the Bonsall Union School District at present day.

Eric Elliott’s (1999) dissertation, *Dictionary of Rincón Luiseño*, offers helpful historical cultural background. He describes the creation story of the Rincon Luiseño people as interpreted by a Rincon tribal elder the late Villiana Hyde: “In the beginning, *Móyla Wuyóot* [‘God’] lived among His children, all of God’s creations. At that time, all creations were human. All animals could speak, and even trees were human. For some reason *Móyla Wuyóot* was betrayed and murdered by Frog, one of His own children. He was, however, resurrected, and a physical manifestation of *Móyla Wuyóot* still visible today is the moon” (5). The elder went on to describe other spirits, customs and beliefs. The elder emphasized that the importance of knowing and understanding customs and beliefs is essential in knowing who you are as a Luiseño, as well as knowing the language (Elliott 1999:5).



5/18/2011

Rincon Proprietary Information

Rincon Snap Shot Org Chart.xls

[http://rinconmembers.net/filestore/HR%20FORMS/Rincon%20Snap%20Shot%20Org%20Chart%20\(2011\).pdf](http://rinconmembers.net/filestore/HR%20FORMS/Rincon%20Snap%20Shot%20Org%20Chart%20(2011).pdf)

The Cultural Committee is an essential part of the tribe as the organizational chart above shows.

Members work to sustain cultural autonomy, as a people and as a tribe, and to preserve our language. The cultural committee oversees the museum and the Luiseño language class, which is made up of beginner speakers, intermediate speakers, and advanced speakers. The advanced speakers assist the teachers when creating sentences to help other students in the class. The students range in age from mid-twenties to mid-fifties. In the language class they learn simple sentences, colors, numbers, songs and dances.

Locating the Researcher

In an important way, my thesis begins with my experience that includes growing up with my maternal grandmother, and my educational path from Pala Mission School on the Pala Indian Reservation so many years ago, to the University of California, Los Angeles, for both undergraduate and graduate school. My grandmother played a very inspirational role in my life and encouraged me to go to school and get an education, which amazed me because she herself had only an elementary education. She spoke our language fluently and to other elders, but only spoke English to us at home. I heard the language in different community events and ceremonial settings. She told us stories at different locations on the reservation that I reflect back on as I drive through the reservation today. Yearly, Pala Mission School held a Christmas play that included a choir. My participation in choir was always one of joy and fulfillment. As time passed and I became a college student, I also participated in theatre and music. This became my anchor to stay in college because I saw my love for the performing arts and my commitment to theatre and music as a way to achieve a goal.

As a tribal member of the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians, I am particularly concerned that our culture and traditions are heading toward demise. I believe this is due in part to the mainstream educational ignorance of the value of Native American cultures and arts. Native Americans are at the low end of the educational spectrum. Jill Fleury DeVoe and Kristen E. Darling-Churchill (2008) in *Status and Trends in the Education of American Indians and Alaska Natives: 2008* look at the educational progress of American Indians/Alaska Native children and adults and challenges in their education. The demographic overview in 2006 showed there were

4.5 million American Indians/Alaska Natives in the United States, a 1.5 percent of the total U.S. population. The educational struggle for Native Americans is rooted in historical trauma and these statistics are a reflection of recent educational challenges for American Indians/Alaska Natives in the United States (Spring 2013). The current data in the *National Center for Education Statistics* shows that in Fall 2012 the total enrollment at the University of California, Los Angeles, was 39, 945, and the percentage of undergraduate enrollment for American Indian or Alaskan Native was at 0.2%. This is particularly problematic considering the large number of urban Native Americans in Southern California.

My research approach is from my own informed perspective and the root of my deep respect for my community and their traditional ways that cannot be overlooked or dismissed, Mark Macarro's (1994) paper challenges graduate students and researchers: “My admonishment is this, incorporate a human element into your research—remember that Indians are not so much data to merely plot, distribute, and analyze on a graph. Indians are not merely a ticket to a PhD. or a department promotion. Step-back from time-to-time keeping the big picture in view” (3). He then goes on to offer an ethical human framework for tribally based research. He makes a clear distinction between First Amendment rights and Luiseño rights:

So Where does this all lead us? Within America’s legal framework you have a first amendment right to publish what you will. But what I speak of is bigger. I would like to engage you in a human framework that acknowledges that the Luiseño people have a right to exercise cultural sovereignty and determination over sensitive religious information—but to do so in a manner that will result in an arrangement or agreement beneficial to all parties (11).

In other words, a researcher has an ethical responsibility to every facet of Native culture and to the community. Using a Native perspective, according to Macarro, to study the Luiseño language has value and can lead to agreements and guidelines that take language programs to another level of ethical responsibility, cultural sovereignty, and language revitalization. This statement, coming from the right to exercise cultural sovereignty without fear of restriction or discrimination, and more importantly protecting what is known as cultural and traditional protocol in tribal communities, is a guiding principle for my research.

From a Native research perspective in their article, “Reliability, Validity and Authenticity in American Indian and Alaska Native Research,” Tsianina K. Lomawaima and Teresa L. McCarty (2002) address “the requirements of sovereignty and self-determination” while conducting Native American educational research and using research methodology from a Native perspective (3). In describing these guidelines, they further explain: “Additional sovereignty safeguards include requirements that tribal representatives be involved in setting research standards and evaluating projects against those standards. All these measures have grown out of the recognition that local communities have as great a stake as outside scholars in establishing what constitutes high-quality, useful research” (3). Therefore, as a tribal member from Rincon, I feel an ethical responsibility to conduct research that comes from the position of a Native perspective.

This is not only exercise of sovereignty, but it also poses the question, “What do the Luiseño people get out of it?” First, it gives Luiseño people the right to exercise cultural sovereignty regarding sensitive information that has been discussed in class and in any interviews with tribal members. Although I am a tribal member from Rincon, I think it is even

more important for me to exercise tribal protocol and protect what is rightfully the Luiseño people's language and culture. As Macarro (1994) states:

More and more however, cultural researchers are becoming increasingly cognizant of their ethical responsibilities; recognizing a primary duty to help foster and conserve the traditional cultures they study. This is moving in the right direction for it acknowledges that our cultures are rooted in who we were 100 years ago. And that who we were 100 years ago has shaped and molded who we are today as Indian people—and who our descendants will be 100 years from now. In essence, it acknowledges that our culture—like every culture Indian and non-Indian alike—exists on a continuum: always dynamic rather than static, adaptive, flexible, conserving and forward-thinking (2).

As a Luiseño and as a Rincon tribal member, I also believe it is my responsibility and duty to carry out the ethical responsibility of fostering and conserving the traditional cultures of the Luiseño people at Rincon. This thesis will reflect that cultural responsibility. Again, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of this ethical responsibility to the tribal community and what is being taught and how it should be taught. At Rincon this ethical responsibility comes from what Macarro (1994) describes as understanding “the human component—that thing that will reach-out and connect with the Indian people who are the descendants of those who provided the information” (3-4). Furthermore, I am particularly honored to be able to provide a copy of my thesis for the Rincon Library upon completion.

Literature Review

Broader Historical Context and Native Language Struggles

In recent years tribal communities have noticed a serious decline in Native language, especially among the youth (Pease-Pretty On Top 2003: 17-18). This decline grows out of the U.S. Federal government earlier attempts at silencing Native cultures (Spring 2013). Otto Santa Ana's (2004) edition of *Tongue Tied: The Lives of Multilingual Children in Public Education* highlights the linguistic racism by citing Commissioner J.D.C. Atkins in 1885, who states "that the languages of American Indian students are a 'barbarous dialect' and that to 'teach Indian school children their native tongue is practically to exclude English, and to prevent them from acquiring it'" (93). In 1887, Atkins further continued an assault on Native languages:

Every nation is jealous of its own language, and no nation ought to be more so than ours, which approaches nearer than any other nationality to the perfect protection of its people. True Americans all feel that the Constitution, laws, and institutions of the United States, in their adaptation to the wants and requirements of man, are superior to those of any other country; and they should understand that by the spread of the English language will these laws and institutions be more firmly established and widely disseminated. Nothing so surely and perfectly stamps upon an individual a national characteristic as language... [Because the Indians] are in an English-speaking country, they must be taught the language which they must use in transacting business with the

people of this country. No unity or community of feeling can be established among different peoples unless they are brought to speak the same language, and thus become imbued with like ideas of duty (93, 94).

Lomawaima and McCarty (2002) in “When Tribal Sovereignty Challenges Democracy: American Indian Education and the Democratic Ideal” further discuss the devastating consequences of these federal policies. They state: “In the last century-and-half, schools have purposefully and systematically worked to eradicate Native language, religions, beliefs, and practices. American Indian children have been at the very center of the battleground between federal powers and tribal sovereignty; the war has been waged through them and about them, and the costs of Indian education have largely been borne by Indian people” (282). These challenges of language loss especially concern tribal members because of the damage to their communities.

According to Lomawaima and McCarty (2002), “These losses cannot be divorced from their historical antecedents. Genocide, containment of reservations, and forced transformation of Indigenous social systems have created the present circumstance. Schools and education policies are also complicit; for many Native people, the punishments inflicted in the boarding schools for speaking the Native language left a firm resolve that their children would not face a similar fate” (296). As a consequence, tribal communities have recognized the serious rate of language loss as a tribal sovereignty issue. Through language revitalization programs tribes have sought to strengthen and preserve culture for future generations to come. Lomawaima and McCarty (2002) provide the Rough Rock Native language immersion program on the Navajo Nation as an important example of “ways in which Native communities continue to assert their linguistic and educational rights, even as they confront enormous constraints” (297). Language loss is more

than a just a crisis of identity; it is also a crisis of exercising tribal sovereignty to keep the language and culture alive.

In her (2003) article, “Revitalising Indigenous Languages in Homogenising Times [sic],” T. L. McCarty explains that fundamentally language loss and revitalization are human rights issues. She writes, “Through our mother tongue, we come to know, represent, name, and act upon the world” (148). Thus, she focuses on the imperative of recent developments in Native language programs in the USA.

Richard Littlebear (2003) in his introduction to the *Native American Language Immersion: Innovative Native Education for Children & Families* report also observes that Indigenous people must turn to their own communities if they “want Native American languages to not only survive, but also prosper and be so strengthened that they remain relevant and conversationally useful indefinitely” (5). Littlebear further articulates this holistic view of language and community. He emphasizes the impact of knowing the language: “Our languages mean much. They encompass whole linguistic solar systems of spiritual expression, whole galaxies that express universal human values like love, generosity and belonging, and whole universes of references that enable us to cope with an ever-changing world” (7).

Literature on Luiseño

All the work described in this document (among other literature) provides input into the revitalization process. Although there is a great variety among many of the tribes of southern California, they share a similar view of the significance of revitalizing languages. Lisabeth Haas (2011) in *Pablo Tac, Indigenous Scholar* articulates that writing about history, words, images, attention to elders, humor, poetry and wit was a way to preserve the language. Therefore, she

defines Pablo Tac as an indigenous scholar because of his act of writing and translating the Luiseño language in the 1800's.

Philip Stedman Sparkman's (1908) publication, *The Culture of the Luiseño Indians* describes places, food, hunting, clothing, pottery, baskets and basket making, stone implements, fire making, games, houses, marriage, ceremonies and government. The book states, "For years before his death he had spent much time in communication with the Luiseño Indians of Rincon and vicinity, and in the study of their language..." (188). Although this book does not speak specifically about language, it does address how the Luiseño people have had a specific way of living and engaging in social life. Embedded in practicing ceremonies, preparing food and every one of these practices is the vital role of language.

While A.L. Kroeber and George William Grace's (1960) book, *The Sparkman Grammar of Luiseño* mostly concentrates on the grammar there is a valuable section that does emphasize the stories that were told by speakers of the Luiseño language. Kroeber and Grace (1960) attempt to keep the integrity of the Luiseño language through collections of recordings and written versions while showing the importance of keeping the language alive through the stories (177).

William Bright's (1968) book *A Luiseño Dictionary* draws material from the works of earlier authors. He worked with a speaker, learning new words and trying to check words from earlier sources to publish an English - Luiseño dictionary. This book seeks to "consolidate all of these materials into coherent lexical entries, to clarify problems of pronunciation, grammar or meaning by means of new field work and prepare the results for publication" (1). The book includes the meaning, examples of how to use the word, and several definitions for the same word's different senses. This dictionary serves as another aid in language revitalization for the Luiseño people and the language class.

Villiana Hyde's (1971) *An Introduction to the Luiseño Language* goes one step further to capture and renew the language. The book includes vowel and consonant pronunciations, phrases, extensive material on grammar, and English to Luiseño glossary. She also suggests that using this book is most effective when used with a native speaker for purposes of learning proper pronunciation. This book not only is an aid in learning the most basic Luiseño language; it also emphasizes the importance and the opportunity for all members of Rincon to renew the language or to learn the Luiseño language (Hyde 1971). Currently, *An Introduction to the Luiseño Language* is used at the Rincon Cham'teela class by the teacher and assistant to help the students learn the basics of speaking Luiseño and to help them recognize words and phrases in Luiseño.

Another example is Villiana Calac Hyde and Eric Elliott's (1994) *Yumáyk Yumáyk Long Ago*, which is a collection of stories in the Luiseño language by Villiana Calac Hyde the same Villiana Hyde mentioned in the previous paragraph, translated into English with assistance from Eric Elliott. The content of *Yumáyk Yumáyk Long Ago* is a memorial to the Luiseño people and the culture. The collection of stories are for those who still want to preserve the richness of the culture. Although this book cannot capture the entire Luiseño culture, it emphasizes importance of keeping the culture alive for future generations.

Eric Elliott's (1999) dissertation *Dictionary of Rincon Luiseño* builds on the former book *Yumáyk Yumáyk Long Ago*. It describes the richness of the language and further captures the words of the Luiseño people as way to document it for the next generation. Elliott comments, "there is no way to preserve on paper every nuance of all that a native speaker knows about [their] language" (xiv). He describes this dictionary as responding to "a pressing need to document the Luiseño language" (xii). This dictionary is vital for language preservation, learning the language, and the progress of students in the Rincon Cham'teela class.

Language Ideologies

Paul Kroskrity and Margaret C. Field (2009) address important issues impacting language revitalization in their introduction to *Native American Language Ideologies, Beliefs, Practices, and Struggles in Indian Country*. They emphasize: “All Native American communities have experienced significant changes as a consequence of their contact with European societies and their incorporation into the nation-states of the Americas. These transformations continue today as Native American communities affirm their persistence and attempt to renew their traditions as an expression of their cultural sovereignty” (3). The idea to remake or revitalize language is critical in most Native American communities, especially those communities that have few fluent speakers. Kroskrity and Field further observe that “language ideologies provide an alternative for exploring variation in ideas, ideal, and communicative practices and for understanding how their dynamic interaction plays out in linguistic and social change” (8). An example of this occurs in the Pueblo Southwest with the emphasis on “indigenous purism” (8). The “indigenous purism” approach focuses on the complexity of language and community change. They point out that “While language ideological analysis can provide a more insightful and incisive analysis, it also tends to rescue important observations about the cultural diversity of language beliefs and practices that have been substantively ignored or neglected” (9). My research is informed by a respectful tribal protocol and the linguistic purism of the Rincon Cham’teela program. Linguistic purism, as practiced in this program, may be described as the prescriptive practice of selecting one variety of the language as being purer than others. At Rincon there is no perception of influence from other languages, no use of slang forms, only the preference for the speech of elder language experts. The linguistic purism approach of the Cham’teela class is a form of “elder purism” that has been observed in a variety of Native

American (e.g. Shoshoni (Loether 2009) and First Nations (e.g. Kaska (Meek 2007)). Respecting this linguistic purism within the program is another form of exercising cultural sovereignty within a tribal community.

In Margaret Field's chapter, "Changing Navajo Language Ideologies and Changing Language Use" (2009), she analyzes the shifts of the Navajo language and language ideology. She writes, "This chapter adopts a perspective on language ideology as equally complex and dependent on the social categories of age, class, occupation and religion (among others)" (31). Field describes this as a sudden shift in language as an increase of contact with English language use, but this does not entirely explain the shift in Navajo language attitudes.

She writes, "At present, and in contrast to the norms of half a century ago, codemixing (defined as using English nouns as part of Navajo discourse) among bilingual speakers of Navajo and English is quite common, especially among middle-aged and younger speakers..." (32). Even though these linguistic tensions and differing ideologies pose challenges to language revitalization it also shows that language ideologies vary among tribal communities as to whether purism or syncretism is to be used and it shows that hybridity can be a good thing. In addition, age and social status can also influence language ideologies. Although the influence of hybridity is quite normal it may inadvertently encourage the use of English and hinder language revitalization efforts. At Rincon the use of only speech by elder language experts from Rincon is what motivates the use of language purism in the language class by the teacher and assistant teacher, but can also hinder the growth of the Cham'teela class in revitalization of the Luiseño language.

Interconnection of Native Cultures, Education, Language, Media, and Performing Arts

In their important article T.L. McCarty, Mary Eunice Romero and Ofelia Zepeda (2006) discuss the impact of language loss amongst the youth in “Reclaiming the Gift: Indigenous Youth Counter-Narratives on Native Language Loss and Revitalization.” They base their title on the views of Hualapai author and educator Lucille J. Watahomigie. Quoting her, they emphasize the power of language: “When you are given a gift—especially one that is alive—it must be cherished, nurtured, and treated with respect to honor the giver” (quoted from Watahomigie 1998, 5, on 29). This quotation shows the importance of passing values and belief systems from one generation to the next. This article further explores the impact of language loss on youth, including the difficulties in retention of American Indian youth “language learning, identities, and academic achievement” (30). In addition, they look at Navajo “counter-narratives” that “are concerned with social and political as well as the personal.” These “resist or counter official texts and taken-for-granted assumptions” (31). On one hand, the youth in this study need their language for their identity and roles in the community. On the other hand, they feel the need to understand and speak the dominant language for work and education. This article by McCarty, Romero and Zepeda underlines the importance of the “heritage language” (31). They emphasize that knowing the language is integral as part of your identity and that it is central to the ability to bring about positive change in this colonial world along with the importance of language preservation as a part of cultural identity. These issues posed for native youth also offer promising directions for the future of language revitalization. McCarty, Romero, Zepeda (2006) emphasize this “potential”:

Such narratives have potential to wedge open spaces of possibility
—new fields of adult—youth dialogue and interaction in the Native

language—that can serve as a counter-force to linguistic assimilation. As expressions of youth concerns about the future of their people, their language, and their cultural heritage, youth counter-narratives serve as potent testimony capable of informing local, tribal, state, and national language planning efforts (43).

Janine Pease-Pretty On Top's (2003) major study, *Native American Language Immersion: Innovative Native Education for Children & Families*, a project of the American Indian College Fund, documents the importance of Native language programs. The benefits she focuses on include cultural identity and educational achievement for students:

Native language immersion schools have remarkable benefits: students show impressive educational achievement, participants demonstrate considerable language knowledge gains in relatively short periods of time, programs contribute significantly to family strength and college students—adult learners are retained as a positive correlate with language and culture learning. Each of these potentials have importance for tribes, agencies and organizers (both Native and non-Native) who interact or hope to interact positively and significantly with Native Americans in areas of educational and community development. Creativity and unique qualities characterize the language immersion approaches and are especially reflective of the tribes and their language (8).

These language immersion programs have been developed in many Native American tribal communities in the United States in the recent years. Many tribes and tribal members have

planned and operated these immersion schools. The most successful language immersion is at the Navajo community in Rough Rock, Arizona, where they have successfully provided language immersion to their youth for over twenty years. Other tribes such as the Blackfeet, Ojibway and Assiniboine/Sioux people have also organized language immersion programs. And still others have summer and seasonal camps for all ages. Many tribes have mandated cultural and language learning by their cultural committees that include leadership training, language teaching, and certification (Pease-Pretty On Top 2003).

According to Pease-Pretty On Top (2003) these language immersion programs and activities have great benefits in the areas of education, community, family, and youth development. Thus, an act of urgency of language preservation takes devotion and commitment due to the following reasons: 1) “the serious rate of language loss” and “lifetime commitment to tribal language restoration” for the future of their tribe; 2) “stagnant educational achievement” of Native American youth; 3) awareness of the value of “cultural and language preservation or revitalization effort that strengthens and rebuilds the Native community;” 4) “culture and language teaching and participation” have positive “Native student retention rates;” 5) the “urgent need of Native perspectives or world-view that include child rearing, natural resources management, family and community development;” 6) the “political potential” to put to rest “the centuries old history of injury and subjugation of Native people” (9). Pease-Pretty On Top (2003) draws on these factors as a way to analyze her study of Native Immersion programs, supported with extensive research literature and data. Most importantly, these factors are compelling reasons for language immersion and the importance of language “living on” in Native American communities.

Erin Debenport's (2011) "As the Rez Turns: Anomalies Within and Beyond the Boundaries of a Pueblo Community" describes a type of play writing as one of several methods used to promote usage of the Tiwa language. Although the tribal members of San Antonio Pueblo in New Mexico have taught Tiwa orally, they made the decision to incorporate written materials such as the soap opera as another way to promote use of Tiwa on the reservation. Students in this community Tiwa-language class of the San Antonio Pueblo wrote and performed the "first Indian soap opera," entitled *As the Rez Turns* (87). Creating the text produced new ways for eight high school and college students to use the Tiwa language through working with different levels of speakers that included fluent speakers, guest speakers, and other community members. For example, they created a fictional space in which they could use political and social issues at the pueblo for other community members as well as each other and have an implied community-based venue to perform their "first Indian soap opera." As a result their work connects to cultural identities and current realities. Debenport explains: "The characters in *As the Rez Turns* also emphasize markers of local identities, engaging in authenticating practices that allow them to identify as San Antonian and Puebloan" (99).

Another innovative way to connect language and youth culture is through translating popular media into the heritage language. There have been many revitalization efforts to push indigenous language learning into new roles as an attempt to expand the scope of language revitalization programs to increase their vitality. Stephen Greymorning's chapter "Reflections on the Arapaho Language Project, or When Bambi Spoke Arapaho and Other Tales of Arapaho Language Revitalization Efforts," in *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice* (2001) edited by Leanne Hinton and Ken Hale describe the Arapaho Language project as a "positive event" (294). He also states, "Young Arapaho children have been said to watch the

video, “When Bambi Spoke Arapaho and Other Tales of Arapaho” repeatedly and have learned some of the speaking parts of their favorite characters. The fact that the video was produced has also helped in furthering Arapaho language revitalization efforts...” (294).

Additionally, in a current news article from the *Navajo Times*, dated April 25, 2013, Bill Donovan explained that the movie “‘Star Wars’ would be dubbed into Navajo,” and “Obi-Wan Kenobi will soon say, ‘May the Force be with you’ in the Diné language” (*Navajo Times*, April 25, 2013). This is a creative way to bring the youth, elders and other community members together in an entertaining manner while still promoting the Navajo language. Emphasizing the importance of this effort, Manuelito Wheeler, Director of the Navajo Nation Museum, states, “By preserving the Navajo language and encouraging Navajo youth to learn their language, we will also be preserving Navajo culture” (*Navajo Times*, April 25, 2013). The impact of media in tribal communities and the influence it has on youth has also created inferiority and a reluctance to speak the language and, in turn, a loss of cultural identity. “Star Wars” was shown at the Red Nations Film Festival in Los Angeles, California on November 9, 2013.

Maenette Benham and Wayne Stein’s (2003) *The Renaissance of American Indian Higher Education: Capturing the Dream* discusses the Native American sponsored project of the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Benham and Mann (2003) in their chapter, “Culture and Language Matters: Defining, Implementing, and Evaluating,” highlight the integral connection of language, culture, education, and sovereignty. They emphasize, “In light of these challenges, advocating for language and culture becomes a political stance because it means that one believes that native sovereignty matters, that native people have the right to engage in matters that are directive and purposeful, and that native communities are empowered to act on important matters” (169). In their Language and Culture Model they use the medicine wheel to show the interconnections of

language, culture, and community (Fig.9.1, 174). One example of advocating for language and culture is Project HOOP (Honoring Our Origins and People through Native Theatre, Education and Community Development). This project was co-founded by Hanay Geiogamah and Jaye Darby and began as a collaboration from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and Sinte Gleska University on the Rosebud Indian Reservation, South Dakota. According to Benham and Mann, “The program presents a dynamic process that illuminates the elements of the epistemological model and values of community building....Its goal is to present opportunities and experiences that builds community cultural awareness and knowing” (176-177). Indeed, this use of performing arts is another expression of cultural sovereignty and linguistic empowerment that brings communities together. Furthermore, they note, “the project includes cultural scholars and native artists in residence, as a means of engaging youths and community members in learning their own language and culture” (177). While Project HOOP has primarily focused on tribal communities, it has strong potential to engage youth and elders in language revitalization efforts through performance.

PROCESS AND DATA ANALYSIS

As a Rincon tribal member hoping to gain the trust of the teacher, assistant teacher, and participants, I knew to proceed respectfully in consultation with key tribal elders in order to progress with my research. This process involved a rigorous tribal protocol that occurred over a two-year period. For purposes of requested tribal confidentiality, I will use pseudonyms as follows: Alex Smith, a Rincon elder who is the teacher speaks the language fluently, but does not read or write it. Viv Jones, assistant teacher who speaks the language, but not fluently, writes, and reads. Greg Hill, a student who has been acknowledged as being quite advanced can speak, write, read and structure sentences. Mary Grace and Joe Gray have learned to identify words,

read and write, and they do speak to each other outside of the classroom with simple greetings. Joe Gray can also sing birdsongs and belongs to a group from Rincon. Linda Look, the museum curator hosted and assisted the teacher and assistant with administrative support for the Cham'teela class. My interviews focused on Rincon tribal members only with the exception of the museum curator. Other students who attended the class were from different reservations.

First, in Fall 2011 I spoke with a highly respected Rincon elder and asked permission to “talk” about our language with him, and he agreed. This conversation encouraged me to be able to speak with the teacher Alex Smith and assistant teacher Viv Jones of the Cham'teela class. Next in November 2012, I formally requested permission from the Tribal Council to conduct a series of interviews. In December 2012 my request was approved by the tribal council to begin my research. At the same time, I was then referred to the Tribal Cultural Committee and was granted the permission to start conducting the interviews, upon approval of the assistant teacher.

After receiving preliminary permission, I spent the next year attending language classes and community events in order to establish myself as a respectful researcher of the Rincon Luiseño language. At one class meeting during Winter 2013, I asked Viv Jones if I could interview her about the language program and she agreed. In addition, Viv Jones gave me the Mark Macarro (1994) paper as a guide to help me conduct my research at Rincon in a tribally respectful way. Then, I was able to engage in a series of interviews that included assistant teacher Viv Jones, two advanced students Greg Hill and Mary Grace, beginner student Joe Gray, and Linda Look. The tribal guidelines specified no recordings of the class, especially when they sang songs of the Rincon Luiseño people. However, if the person gave me permission, I was allowed to record interviews. The beginner student Joe Gray met with me for approximately 30 minutes and asked me to destroy his recordings after listening to it and collecting data for my

research. Throughout this entire time, I continued to attend the Cham'teela class. In the course of my research the daughter of Villiana Hyde passed away in early May 2013, and the Rincon Cham'teela class was dark for about two weeks to mourn the death of Mrs. Hyde's daughter.

During spring 2013 I was able to collect five interviews: from the assistant teacher, Viv Jones of the Rincon Cham'teela class: from three students, Greg Hill, Mary Grace, and Joe Gray; and from the museum curator Linda Look, who hosted the class. These interviews occurred at the Rincon Indian Reservation, California, and followed an open-ended protocol. I began each interview by thanking each person for participating. I then asked the participant to introduce him-or herself and to speak freely about the language program. The interview questions covered the following topics: 1) reasons for language revitalization and preservation; 2) importance of passing on to youth; 3) cultural identity; 4) growth of program; and 5) any other issues interviewees brought up regarding the language program.

In the course of analyzing the interviews, I noticed there were several major themes emerging. These were the following: 1) the importance of learning the language by all tribal members and passing the language on to the next generation, especially the youth; 2) the inter-relations of language, cultural identity, respect for the culture, and a sense of place and belonging; 3) hopes and tensions surrounding learning the language by youth; and 4) class progress and the desire to have the language program grow.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING THE LANGUAGE BY ALL TRIBAL MEMBERS AND PASSING THE LANGUAGE ON TO THE NEXT GENERATION, ESPECIALLY THE YOUTH

The interviews with the students Greg Hill, Mary Grace, Joe Gray, and the assistant teacher Viv Jones at the Rincon Cham'teela class have continually expressed that the language

is what defines you as a Luiseño person and that knowing the language and understanding the songs and dances creates a whole Luiseño person. As I listened to the interviews in person and then again after listening to the recording, I noticed how adamant all interviewees were when it came to knowing “your” language and knowing who “you” are as a Luiseño person as an expression of pride and cultural identity.

An interview with Viv Jones of the Cham’teela class emphasizes how language is integral to the Luiseño identity, history, customs, and traditions—lessons she learned growing up from grandparents and other family members fluent speakers of the Luiseño language:

I believe that not allowing your language to become extinct is your identity and your identity is your future. You cannot be an Indian in name only. You have to have some kind of knowledge in your history, in your customs and traditions and what’s left of your religion part of your Indian beliefs and protecting your deceased that you can’t see, spirituality. That’s why we are here because of those deceased that left behind our language, our song and dance to learn to pass it on to our younger generations and to those of interest that want to learn and know who they were and who their families were and without that it gets more broader and becomes extinct if you don’t.

In Sparkman’s (1908) article he emphasizes the interconnection of language, cultural identity and community as described in the puberty ceremonies for Luiseño boys and girls (221-226). Additionally, in their article Benham and Mann (2003) emphasize the interconnection of language and cultural identity and community through the language and culture model that connect the physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual (see Fig. 9.1, 173-174).

This interconnection of language, cultural identity, and community is the foundation of who you are as a Luiseño, as Viv Jones continues to discuss in the interview. Viv is emphatic on this point:

The importance of keeping the language alive is that it is not for *us to hoard*, it's NOT for us NOT to share, and very few here in Rincon that speak the language fluently. And that is my purpose to wanting to help and teach what I know in my 51 years—what I've learned. What I've been a part of is our language and our song and our dance, what we used to do here that I've seen from my own perspective. And putting it into perspective now—that it is very important to carry on our language our song and our dance and our identity and know what it means sincerely. And when you teach, I do it out of sincerity and respect to my deceased people, because they are the ones that put it into writing to learn, and there is nothing that we do here that is not authorized by one. I cannot do things on my own that I don't get permission to do, and that is called respect to my elders to my deceased and doing things right.

Our language, our song, and our dance is our identity. [italics added]

Also, she views language as a gift. McCarty, Romero and Zepeda (2006:29-30) conclude, “When such a gift is compromised or threatened, the most important stakeholders are the young. Through the language socialization process, Romero (2003:3) writes, ‘understandings of essential information such as the values, precepts, and the belief systems [Native people] hold close to their hearts, are passed from one generation to the next’” .The inter-generational

continuity she emphasizes is supported by Littlebear's (2003) views: "We still have great responsibilities to the youngsters of today, to the elders who are still with us today, to those who are yet journeying toward us and, especially, to those elders who have journeyed on. This present generation of fluent speakers needs to honor all the preceding generations of speakers of their languages by strengthening those languages so that they remain viable beyond the seventh generation" (6). This connection with identity, respect, and continuity for future generation's ties to Mark Macarro's (1994) view that the Luiseño people have a right to exercise cultural sovereignty and self-determination in order to sustain the language for future generations. This practice of "doing things right" as emphasized by Viv Jones sets a precedence for the Rincon Cham'teela class. Recognizing the importance of language revitalization for the community, she then talks about the efforts in establishing a class and finding a meeting place for the community.

THE INTER-RELATIONS OF LANGUAGE, CULTURAL IDENTITY, RESPECT FOR THE CULTURE, AND A SENSE OF PLACE AND BELONGING

The theme of cultural identity, respect for culture, and a sense of place and belonging is strongly expressed by several students in the Cham'teela language program. Viv Jones's discussion also shows the importance of how language ideologies as discussed by Kroskrity and Field (2009) are put to practical use from a tribally initiated perspective. In response to my question of how she became involved with the program, she states:

I went in as a student, sat down and listened for about three classes. All we did was sit in chairs and just had discussions of what we were gonna do, what everybody wanted to do, and [there were] just one teacher and a director. This program came

out of EPA Department to begin with, and I was just a student and talked and listened and had ideas of what we could do.

So what I did is I got up in front of the classroom as a student and just more or less told them what I could see the class becoming, if we could get construction, development and someone to drive our ambition. The Director then asked me to help her to help the [teacher] teach the Cham'teela class. And I said I'll come, and I'll help and whatever the teacher wants me to do, I'll do. We continued to stay at the Fire Station for about a good eight classes. And the Director was able to secure funds to purchase the trailer to use as the current classroom. So for about five months no classes were held. And during that time my mind was going wild on things I could do. I went to my [relative/elder] for guidance during this time. Me and the Director began to plan on when the classes would start and set up a curriculum. And both of us [teacher and assistant teacher] are dialysis patients. We still came to the class.

The set of beliefs as expressed by Viv Jones clearly defines that the linguistic ideology as described by Kroskrity and Field (2009) for the Luiseño people comes from the direct expectations from relatives/elders, and affects how the class is structured, what will be taught, and who will teach it.

Another interview occurred with class member Greg Hill, who is an older student who lived off the reservation for approximately 17 years and then returned in 2008 to Rincon. He

became interested in attending the class when he heard that a language program would be started.

Greg shares the following about why he wanted to attend class:

Getting back to my original interest was in high school. My mother and I lived in Escondido and I attended Escondido High School. My grandmother Angelina was still alive at the time. I remember my freshman year there was at that time still called Title V program, tutorial service for Natives attending. And so when I went in for some tutoring, the aide, they had some books and that was the first time I saw the book *An Introduction to the Luiseño Language*. We were allowed to check the books out, almost like a library system that was in 1982. In 1983, a little over 31 years ago—so I checked it out and showed my grandma and she was able to kinda see some things, some words that she recognized. It was the first time for her to see it in a written structure.

He continues his efforts to learn the language as a youth:

After seeing this book I really started taking the initiative to learn this book or at least try—just learn to say a word not the structure. As a little kid my very first Indian word was *\$iisqila* (stink bug). I think I was in kindergarten. I learned what Pala meant and other words with relatives and elders. Those were the only words I knew. When I got to high school, I learned a few more words before my grandmother died. I learned the numbers. Then I learned the directions.

I learned words from her—what little she could remember—her mind was going. Later on I had my other aunts. Every now and then when my Aunt would go on vacation, I would stay in the summertime at Rincon and my other Aunts would speak Cham'teela here and there. While at Sherman other tribes were speaking their language and this was something we could not do, me and my cousins.

Greg Hill's struggle to learn his language reflects the historical trauma of language loss and the need for language revitalization. This loss is a concern in many communities, as recognized by Lomawaima and McCarty (2002). Littlebear (2003) states, "The really sad aspect is that if we do nothing to save our languages, we are depriving those generations who follow us of the privilege and joy of speaking our languages and of having their own true identities that come with them" (6). Greg's desire to return home and participate in the language class is important to the connection with his cultural identity.

Joe Gray, beginner student, also expresses the significance of learning the language:

The motivation was that our language is a dying language, no doubt about it, and I see the elders today and it's not going to be around as long as you think. To be honest we take it for granted, and if we lose it, we only become Indian in name only, and we need to move forward and keep it strong. Also, I was always interested in our language. When I was growing up I used to be into drumming, but as I grew up I found out our people weren't drum people, so I just kind of put that aside, and I am more interested in what we do in our traditions and

it just caught my ear and I am ready to learn more, I'm still a student, I'm willing to learn more, because it's not going to be around anymore.

In this interview Gray express his respect for the elders and the cultural benefits from learning the language is essential to being Indian. Also taking an adolescent developmental perspective, McCarty, Romero and Zepeda (2006) emphasize that knowing the language contributes to developing a strong sense of identity for youth.

Furthermore this sense of the important connections among language, cultural identity, community, and leadership is expressed by Mary Grace when she talks about the tribal chair Mark Macarro from Pechanga:

Their Chairmen up there took it upon himself to learn the language, learn the customs, and traditions. And so he becomes a better person for that. And he also becomes a better leader for his people because he can associate the language, the teachings, the honoring of our dead, and all the other things that he does and still be a leader for his tribe. So I think when you have that kind of an interest, you have a stronger tribe. I would like to see more people come here, and our leadership to be more participative.

In this interview, Mary Grace associates the value of language and culture as a strength and responsibility to the tribe that plays a vital role in leadership. In Sparkman's (1908) article he describes the boy's puberty ceremony as an including exhortation to "heed this speech" of the "feast chief" (224) in order to live a long and good life. He writes: "He (the boy) grew old because he heeded what he was told" (224). This connection of language and culture is what

defines cultural identity. In their article Benham and Mann (2003) comment: “Language and culture identify a cohesive set of worldviews, such as, values, concepts, and beliefs, that are essential to the life of human beings” (167).

HOPES AND TENSIONS SURROUNDING LEARNING THE LANGUAGE BY YOUTH

One way to include youth in the Rincon Cham'teela class would be to use creative and engaging activities. Greg Hill shares his idea:

In high school I had taken an art course, and one of our assignments was to make our own Christmas cards. I had an idea. In the class we had a variety of non-Indians, Asian descent, Mexican descent, so they were able to incorporate into their own language, so why not try to apply Cham'teela, and so I sent Aunt Lorraine [Villiana Hyde's daughter] a letter asking for a request and not really hearing anything. My grandmother had come for a visit into town, and that Saturday morning Aunt Lorraine and Aunt Villiana pulled up, and there was no correspondence saying she would do it or not do it. And they went directly to our house and brought the translation for me. So I applied that and that's how I designed my card. I'm trying to remember how I wrote it, because everything I had written down was burned in the fire. I kept it for a long time, but it burned in 2007. Aunt Villiana picked up on that; here's a young boy who wants the knowledge.

Lomawaima and McCarty (2002) in their article “When Tribal Sovereignty Challenges Democracy: American Indian Education and the Democratic Ideal” state that “heritage loss is a

concrete tear in the web of family life – a crisis of identity and of whether children will in fact, be ‘lost’ disconnected from the words and worlds of their forebears” (296), a loss Greg felt. The awareness of language loss at Rincon has been expressed and then initiated by tribal members to create a program for tribal members as a way to keep the language alive and keep the family connected to culture, song and dance and more specifically how important it is to pass it on to the youth and what is particularly needed is programs that address the youth.

Although the desire is to pass the language on to future generations, specifically the youth at Rincon, it's not possible to make anyone attend the class. No matter how much marketing or advertising is done for the Cham'teela class, it has to be something the individual wants. However, there are still some youth that desire to attend the class but are intimidated or embarrassed to attend class. Joe Gray also comments: “Some of the youth I’ve told to come to the language class said that they are embarrassed and ashamed to speak for fear of being made fun of by other kids.” McCarty, Romero, Zepeda (2006) in the article “Reclaiming the Gift: Indigenous Youth Counter-Narratives on Native Language Loss and Revitalization” acknowledge “Indigenous communities face enormous challenges in revitalizing and maintaining their languages. Working with drastically reduced numbers of speakers, communities must acknowledge and transform internalized images of Native languages as being what youth in our study characterize as ‘dirty,’ ‘backward’ or ‘the way of the devil’ ”(43). This struggle of how to engage youth in learning their heritage language is common in many native communities. They also remind us: “Understood in this light, Indigenous language revitalization is concerned not only with reclaiming the Native language as a gift but with reasserting linguistic self-determination as an inherent human right” (43-44). Although Joe Gray is a novice, he is not

ashamed of speaking, singing and using Cham'teela outside of the classroom. For this particular student shame and embarrassment of learning, speaking, singing and using the language has disappeared. He sets the tone for other Luiseño youth to attend the Cham'teela class and dissolves the shame of not wanting to learn the language. When asked what is being done to attract the youth to the Cham'teela class, Viv Jones explains the challenges:

Well, like you said, you can't make anybody do anything, but we have advertised on that thing up there at the fire station, we put out flyers, we mentioned it at Earth Day, and what we prefer is tribal members, and then descendants, or anybody from the reservations that are Luiseño. We made one exception for a Chumash whose grandchildren are Luiseño and allowed her to come and learn. You can't force anyone to come. I believe if you want to learn because it's not easy. It's hard, it's a lot of paperwork, but my thing is if you do not want to write and you don't want to participate, then you can come and listen but, you have to be quiet. You can come and listen you do not have to take one piece of paper or pencil and write nothing, but I expect you to listen. I don't expect you to be disruptive here. We have attempted and the museum curator has attempted with the education center, but they have their own curriculum. There's a charter school that is run by a tribal member that has language pal that they implemented that came from Pechanga, and I think they learn from that. But to sit in a structured classroom I don't know

about that, but we have reached out, we have announced it, but how much can you do?

Linda Look sees more emphasis on cultural activity in the Cham'teela class as a way to engage the youth through the performing arts. She explains this point:

They [teacher and assistant teacher] also include and talk about what cultural traditions are which is the strength of the class....So, when I go to the [assistant teacher] what I do is try to find more ways of teaching, to try unique ways of teaching to do more conversation. We then introduced song and dance. She translated some of the song and dance from Luiseño to English, so [students], would understand them. And then she figured out [for the students] could learn it by conversation. And so she was allowed by her elders to make the rattles to use for the [students] and so we got a lot of people coming in just for that and for the dance.

Many native youth represented in the article by McCarty, Romero, and Zepeda (2006) have expressed that the language is unimportant and that the dominant culture language is what is needed to survive in the world. However, like Linda, I feel that if the native language were incorporated in a way that youth were the ones to create it through media and performing arts, it would demonstrate inclusion and expression of their own creativity. One promising example of engaged youth was expressing themselves in the soap opera *As The Rez Turns* Debenport (2011), and we could go a step further to use this as a way to incorporate the language in a theatrical setting. This incorporation of the arts would be another way of reviving language through the means of creativity. In their article Benham and Mann (2003) discuss Native theatre as a creative way of incorporating the interplay between language and performing arts. It builds on the

“Native epistemological model” and values of community building, and further strengthens cultural awareness and knowing (176).

CLASS PROGRESS AND THE DESIRE TO HAVE THE LANGUAGE PROGRAM GROW

Looking back at where the Cham'teela class was four years ago to the present day and the support from the tribal council and the cultural committee, interview participants indicate it has become a well-supported language program. Viv Jones explains:

The language class comes from being stuck in a little tiny room at the GSA building-fire station to having our own classroom to having our own curriculum and be able to do our own study, and we do not have anybody who comes in and regulates what we do, or here you teach this. We do it all ourselves—myself and the Director and approval of the teacher and the authorization of my *nino* [godfather, her uncle, an elder and ceremonial chief of Rincon]. I believe we have grown in the sense of putting our materials on an iPod for material use for students to learn with our books, and all of our information compiled is learning tools being able to structure what we are doing today and where we want to be five years from now. And what I see five years from now is computers in here for the use of my students that are computer literate.

Viv Jones further comments on the progress of the class:

We have ambitious students that strive for the history, some things they never knew, never knew what a “metate” was, never knew what an “olla” was, never knew things that existed. Some were too old,

some never got involved, some really didn't care and some never wanted it. And here we are today going on our fourth year, I believe with a new Director who is my mentor that I work under...and very knowledgeable. I don't know who sent her our way but thank God, she's here. She has helped me very much in constructing our curriculum and getting it in order, if you will, a classroom structure of a very good curriculum that I implement. Director has handouts of history and stuff like that for the students. Today, I believe that our class has grown it is a success my students have progressed very rapidly. I have approximately six tribal members from Rincon, two descendants, seven from Pauma when they all come. We used to have LaJolla people, but they do not come anymore.

In addition, when Viv was asked about the progress of the students, she explains:

A student who started at the GSA building has only missed one class, and today she is one of my top-notch students. She knows, she give suggestions, she's here all the time, pretty much can answer all the questions, very good on her quizzes. And I can see from then until now when you do your homework, when you study when you take time to look at your work, when you go home whether its fifteen minutes or an hour or whatever it is, skim through it— whatever it makes a difference. And it shows me you're sincere about learning and it helps you learn.

Viv also shares the importance of incentives and community support:

We would have raffles okay, and then I thought well are

they just coming because there's raffles you know because I don't. I didn't see them, and it wasn't balancing well your coming here where there's food, there's raffles but I'm not seeing a difference in your homework. So, we cut out the raffles. I did that for about two years and nice raffles. At Valentine's or Easter I'd have something for them on occasion, but when I see someone over exceeding their duties and their progress, I will announce it, and I will make sure that I give them an incentive. Or the [museum curator] will suggest that the student(s) is doing good. Instead of paying fifty dollars for their book, we'll give it to them free. Incentives like that a learning material, but we always have something for them. I do. I think it is a good practice to give because to me it would make me feel like I'm appreciated by coming here and my teacher really looks forward to seeing me. And that's the way I feel. When I see somebody not coming, it bothers me why, was there something that happened in class, or is it because you're getting off track, or is it because your sick, or is it because you're doing other things, school work, sports, you know.

The success to date of this program is consistent with Pease-Pretty On Top's (2003) research that shows tribal communities have to initiate their own tribally based programs.

In spite of this progress there is still a need for expansion of the current program in a variety of ways. Mary Grace expresses the need to support student levels of language learning with appropriate instruction. She explains:

I think what happens is you get a group of students who come all the time; you have one set of students and then all of a sudden you have a new set of people coming in that may have to be indoctrinated into the basic instruction.

And so I mentioned to the [museum curator] you always have to keep a beginning group going, because you do get in a group of beginner students. So you have to keep the other students moving forward. It may be kind of complicated because you then ask to have two class sessions in one situation. So I'm not sure how we would do that. It needs to be addressed, but it takes people to do that or extend the allotted time to the teachers by giving them more time. I imagine it's being handled as best it can be. She never knows who is going to show up. They seem to be ready for that by having a check off list of beginning materials and get the new ones caught up. Advanced students are asked to help the newer students.

She also points out the need for support from the tribe and collaboration with other departments. When asked what would be a way to motivate other community members, tribal members and youth to be a part of the language class, she responded:

It gets complicated. You would want certain departments to correlate with one another so that they can have some plan where certain things can go on between the culture department and recreation department. These departments could come up with some sort of—I think they had something like that where the recreation department did a week with that basket maker--you know things like that to get people interested. I think if we could use our newsletter to be more informative, have a little section in there for a new Luiseño word is this, and this is what it means, and this is how you say it. You know just like a basic word. I don't see that anymore it starts and then goes away. It needs to be consistent. It's easier said than done.

Participation and support from all tribal members that include leadership is imperative to the success of the language program. She continues:

The chairman used to attend, and one other council member, but they stopped attending due to council responsibilities. It's not an arts and crafts situation; this is serious and you need to undertake and be serious by starting, staying, and coming up with a finished product. At least be able to have a conversation, that's the goal. When this program first started, it was approached to the council to please budget us some money for it. They went ahead with it, and it became

a line item that the tribe considers every year. So, that's a goal in itself. If not, they would be asking people to volunteer their time.

In Pease-Pretty On Top's (2003) study she emphasizes extensive programming as tribal initiatives. While noting progress Mary Grace emphasizes the urgency to continue to expand and revitalize the language program. She further adds:

What I have seen is people are being more aggressive in the way of a confidence level that has built up because you see that people are attempting to speak to one another in Indian to a certain degree and that wasn't happening a lot before. Like I see more of that happening as of lately. I would like to see more of that confidence and the ability to converse and take the criticism that comes along with it because I think, myself included. I would like to see more of the conversational coming out with people. It makes people feel good about themselves because you can see it when they are trying to joke in Indian or try to say something funny or laughing, and I think that is bringing back a certain identity that Indians have, you know, because they were a people who had to survive in the environment taking care of their families and surviving. That is why there are no cuss words in Luiseño; people didn't have time to gossip...So I would like to see the program flourish.

If it's more money for the program to have two class times for the new students or younger kids; there is no way that it should be stagnant.

Littlebear (2003) is a major advocate for language revitalization and appropriate educational opportunities. In his work he constantly reminds communities of the value of tribal elder's knowledge. As the student of the Cham'teela language class has so poignantly stated, tribal members should not take the elders for granted because Cham'teela will not be around for much longer.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

At the Rincon Cham'teela class I have heard the voices of dedicated tribal members and their concerns about language preservation, culture, tradition, song, dance, and stories. I have also heard their concerns and the importance of passing it on to the next generation and yet there have so far been no creative or innovative ways to engage the youth in learning the language. This lack of youth engagement has influenced the use of only speech by elder language experts from Rincon and is what motivates the use of language purism in the language class, which in turn hinders the growth of the Cham'teela class. Not everyone has had the opportunity to grow up with a grandmother speaking Luiseño as I did. Writing this paper has been a very emotional experience, it has brought back childhood memories of growing up at Rincon with my grandmother, hearing Luiseño and conversations with other elders as they shared the stories. My grandmother and I attended the ceremonies, listened to the songs and at times participated in the dances. It is my grandmother's voice that motivates me.

My vision for this tribally initiated language program at Rincon is to see it grow, include

the youth, and have the community more integrated in the Cham'teela class. To date, the Rincon Cham'teela class has created the foundation to further enhance this tribally initiated program to grow. Based on this analysis, there are several promising directions. These include the following:

- 1) Having a deciding voice of what will be taught and who will teach it;
- 2) Creating a program that is child and youth friendly;
- 3) Engaging participants in the performing arts;
- 4) Establishing collaborations with other departments of the Rincon tribal government to successfully incorporate a unified program that will enhance the current language program.

I am excited about the future of the tribally initiated Luiseño language program. Viv Jones is committed to teaching the language as her ancestors would want and that is why she teaches Cham'teela to anyone who wants to learn it, and more specifically to Rincon tribal members! My grandmother would always tell me to “listen,” and so I hope I have “listened” in a way that is respectful and honors our language and our people of Rincon in this thesis.

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