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“Another generation has begun what other people were afraid they couldn't carry on”: Building a
Cahuilla Curriculum at Túktam School

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

by

Elizabeth Celeste Rios

2022

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

“Another generation has begun what other people were afraid they couldn't carry on”: Building a
Cahuilla Curriculum at Túktam School.

by

Elizabeth Celeste Rios

Master of Arts in American Indian Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2022

Professor Erin Katherine Debenport, Chair

California’s educational system fails to implement culturally responsive curricula that meet the standards of California Indian nations. Despite the large population of Native people in California, specifically in the southern part of the State, Native people are erased in the state’s curriculum. Parents in particular are left without agency in how their youth should be educated. This research examines how parents from two Cahuilla nations envision a culturally responsive curriculum for their youth in a public school that I refer to as Túktam School (TS). Additionally, this work examines the role of the Cahuilla language within the curriculum. This qualitative study unites an Indigenous research framework with a Cahuilla epistemology to understand how the critical components of Cahuilla lifeways could be implemented into a curriculum. I conducted in-depth interviews with seven parents/guardians of youth who identified as Cahuilla and were current students of TS were conducted. Document analysis of the current Native

program at TS and participant observation of the Native American Parent Advisory Board meetings were collected and analyzed to understand the current curriculum Native youth were receiving at TS.

The central finding that resulted from this work included the lack of a culturally responsive curriculum that youth are receiving at TS despite its relatively high population of Native students and proximity to three Cahuilla nations. Through interviews, the parents demonstrated their vision of what I term a “Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum” (CCRC). Parents outlined the central place that our Cahuilla language would take in the curriculum among other crucial components. The CCRC was found to be in stark contrast to the current curriculum at TS that lacks community input and fails to include Cahuilla culture, language, or a Cahuilla teacher. Parents identified a plan for implementing the CCRC and outlined the impacts they envision the curriculum would have on their children, families, nations, the school, and their communities.

This study offers a framework for future Cahuilla researchers to do community-based research that follows a Cahuilla methodology. Within academic contexts, this study adds to the growing field of research on California Indian language reclamation and educational sovereignty. This study expands the scope of culturally responsive curricula by including the voices of Native parents in their children’s education.

The thesis of Elizabeth Celeste Rios is approved.

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University of California, Los Angeles

2022

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my two loves: Ish'Wish and Joseph. And to all my family, those now passed on, those with me currently, and those yet to come.

This thesis is also dedicated to all Cahuilla people, especially the parents/guardians who gave their time, stories, knowledge, and visions with me. May this work serve to create culturally nurturing curriculum for our kíkítam and future generations. Nésun 'áchama'.

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This community work was made meaningful by the seven Cahuilla parents/guardians that I interviewed for this work. While I cannot mention them by name, I wish to extend my deepest gratitude for sharing their stories, visions, and time with me and for allowing their voices to be shared in this work. I am eternally grateful for their support and the time we shared together.

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To my fellow Native Grad students, especially those on the American Indian Graduate Student Association at UCLA thank you for giving me a virtual community of support while navigating graduate school during a global pandemic. I felt connected, supported, and heard in our Zoom times together. I was reminded that we do belong in these institutions, and that our work is desperately needed in the academy.

Prologue

I begin this work with a prologue to establish relationality by introducing myself and my life's journey that have led me to this community-based research. My work is primarily responsible to my Cahuilla people—especially the Cahuilla Band of Indians and the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla—who are the primary Cahuilla nations represented in this work. In this way, they are my primary audience, so I begin with introducing myself in our Cahuilla Language.

Míyaxwe, né' nétew Elizabeth Rios há' Leesa. NehenKáwaiiangaxvish. Nemíngkim 'Íswetem pén Casserom. NehenTúkut. Greetings, my name is Elizabeth Rios or more commonly known as Leesa, Mom, Auntie and Bestie. I am citizen of the Cahuilla Band of Indians located in Southern California. I have been raised on the Cahuilla Indian Reservation (Rez) my whole life and now have the honor of raising my two children on our homelands. My lineages from Cahuilla are the Lubo and Cassero families. I am wolf clan and of the wildcat moiety. On my father's side I come from the Rios and Saldaña families from a small rancho just outside of León, Guanajuato, Mexico. May this introduction serve to place me in relation to all who come across my work, or as Kovach (2021), states, "give enough information about my lineage and those who raised me for people to suss me out" (p.2). In a time of Pretendians infiltrating the academy, research, and our communities I find this introduction to be of critical importance in placing me in relationship to my readers and my communities.

My family's relationships with colonial education in the United States is complex and central to this work. I am the great-granddaughter of Mayme Freeman (Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians) a boarding school survivor who attended Sherman Indian School. My grandfather, Marvin Modesto (Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla), was a longtime janitor at Sherman. In the '70s,

my grandmother Josephine Modesto (Cahuilla Band of Indians) was the Johnson -O'Malley Program Coordinator at Túktam School (pseudonym for the site of this research). My mother Celeste Hughes (Cahuilla Band of Indians) is a college graduate from Haskell Indian Nations University – a former boarding school in Kansas. Two of my sisters and one of my brothers have bachelor's degrees – including one sister who is a practicing Federal Indian Law attorney. Our parents never pushed education; however, they modeled being hard working, giving, responsible to your family and community, and honoring your ancestors. In this way, we have used our education as a tool of empowerment and making meaningful contributions to our people. This work is just one of those community offerings.

My own intergenerational connections to Túktam School (TS) are emblematic of other Cahuilla peoples' experiences with TS. Túktam School is located in a small town near Cahuilla, CA in western Riverside County. From pre-school-8th grade I attended TS. My mom attended this school, my grandmother taught at this school, and now my children attend the school. These intergenerational ties to TS have created an investment and sense of responsibility from the local Cahuilla people to push the boundaries of the curriculum and partner with the school to provide meaningful outcomes for their youth.

This work is a product of my life's journey coupled with the inherited responsibility to my Cahuilla people's past, present and future. I grew up in a time that the Cahuilla Language was being taught in informal community settings. I was fortunate enough to be part of classes taught by Cahuilla elder táxunivachem now passed on: Katherine Siva Saubel, Alvino Siva, and Annie Hamilton. They were all heritage language speakers who grew up in a time where Cahuilla was the main source of communication in their communities. I carry their central

teaching with me in this work that is our Cahuilla language is central to who we are as ‘Ívilluwenetem.

This research stems from community-centered conversations following a tribally initiated California Indian Day Celebration on September 24, 2021 at Túktam School. The celebration, which included members from the Cahuilla Band of Indians, the Ramona Band of Cahuilla, and the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla, was a day to share the Cahuilla culture with the school through cultural demonstrations. During this celebration Cahuilla language, plant uses and bird singing and dancing were shared via two assemblies. The California Indian Day Celebration was a day for Cahuilla youth to have their culture celebrated at the school – even if it was for one day.

Following Cahuilla traditions, the community members held a feed where multi-generational community members ate and discussed the event, old times, and the future. Elders in the room spoke of their elementary school experiences at Túktam School. Their conversations centered around the support and mentorship they received from my grandmother in her work as the Johnson O’Malley parent liaison, Native student advocate, and cultural teacher. They voiced the urgent need for the reinstatement, or the creation of a similar position, that could advocate for their children and grandchildren who now attend TS.

Similarly, the young parents expressed their yearning to have the components of the California Indian Day as an everyday component of their children’s education. A curriculum where an elder can walk into the school and witness Cahuilla children singing and dancing their songs and learning their language.

This work weaves each parent/guardian’s visions of a culturally responsive education for their youth into a basket of knowledge. Like the world-renowned Cahuilla baskets this work is

intentional, reflective, and representative of the people, the time, and the life history of the weaver. In this work, I am the weaver amplifying voices and visions of our Cahuilla people.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

‘Et nénay pennánalqa’ né’ tésa’ pish qamíyaxwenive’: pé’e’ chém Cahuilla hémyaxwe, níyaqa’.
Pén, “ ‘Et kill pé’ ‘éxenuk,” yáqa’. “Qáwi’a’ yáqa ‘ét,” yáqa’.
“Qáwi’a’ yáqa’ pé’ pé’.” “Hísh te té’ mú’ ‘ívax Mélkichem hémyaxwe,” yáqa’.
“Qáwi’a’ hémyaxwe. ‘Et kill Cahuilla,” yáqa’.
Pén Mélkish kill míyaxwe pish yáxap. Chéqe Cahuilla hémyaxwe.”n
“‘Ívax ku pé’.

I also asked why my father why they call us ‘Cahuilla’.
He said, “It shouldn’t be pronounced this way.” “Qáwi’a’ is how it’s said,” he said.
“The word is Qáwi’a’.” “White people would say ‘boss’,” he said.
“Nowadays they also say ‘master’ for it,” he said. “That’s what it is,” he said.
They say Qáwi’a’. “It’s not Cahuilla’,” he said.
“But the white man can’t say Qáwi’a’.” They just say ‘Cahuilla’.”
“Now that’s it (that’s how it’s pronounced now).”
(Sauvel & Elliott, 2004, p. 47)

I begin each chapter of this work and relevant subheadings with excerpts from Cahuilla elder, relative, and teacher of Cahuilla lifeways – Dr. Katherine Siva Saubel (may she rest in peace) of Páchawal pá’, or Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla Cupeño Indians.¹ She was a fierce advocate of Cahuilla culture, language, and visibility in California’s educational system. The translated excerpts from her text ‘Isill Héqwas Wáxish (2004), that introduce each chapter serve to center this work within a Cahuilla epistemology. The excerpt above tells the meaning of our peoples’ name: Qáwi’a’ – the bosses, the masters. In connection with the opening excerpt, the

¹ Dr. Katherine Siva Saubel was my elder that taught not only me but our whole Cahuilla Nation our Cahuilla lifeways. She was instrumental in reviving and documenting our Cahuilla Language, songs, plant uses, stories, cosmologies, and all facets of Cahuilla culture. She was a strong advocate of language immersion schooling and had always wished for a Cahuilla speaking school. For more on her life and her publications visit: <http://malkimuseum.org/team/dr-katherine-siva-saubel/>.

remainder of the chapter will provide the reader with additional background knowledge of Cahuilla nations, our language, and lifeways. Additionally, I outline relevant information on Túktam School and the overall research context.

Cahuilla People

The Cahuilla creation story is the basis for who we are as Cahuilla people. Our creation story and our bird songs tells of our migration three times around the world or North American continent –eventually settling in our homelands of present-day Southern California.² Today, the Cahuilla people span across nine sovereign nations in Riverside and San Diego Counties. They include the: Cahuilla Band of Indians, Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla, Ramona Band of Cahuilla, Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla and Cupeño Indians, Torres-Martinez Band of Desert Cahuilla Indians, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, and the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians.

Despite the separation of Cahuilla people across separate nations, our shared identity as Cahuilla people continues to be bonded in our lifeways. Most notably our language, songs, stories, and cultural practices connect us as one Cahuilla nation. Since time immemorial the teaching of our lifeways has taken place outside of classrooms. Knowledge transmission of Cahuilla lifeways has been passed from generation-to-generation through oral and active participation in homes, families, and community ceremonies.

² In interpretations of this portion of the story, some elders tell of the migration happening around the globe, while others state the migration was around the North American continent. Both interpretations were included here to be inclusive of all interpretations.

To exemplify this intergenerational and active participation of knowledge transmission, I share my own personal cultural learning experience. In our Cahuilla lifeways, we honor those who have passed on through a yearly Flower Day ceremony celebrated on May 2nd or 3rd. As a child, I would help my grandmother and mother with cleaning the graves of our loved ones and would gather flowers for the decoration of the graves. Built into this ceremony is the transmission of our lineages—who is who, how they are related, their life histories and the physical boundaries of where our loved ones are buried within our cemetery. Now as a mother, my children have been actively participating and know their caretaking responsibilities within the ceremony. Rather than in a classroom, this knowledge is learned on the land with multi-generational involvement and participation.

The Cahuilla nations represented in this work, the Cahuilla and Santa Rosa nations, are nestled within the San Jacinto Mountains (Tákush Héki'). The Cahuilla Band of Indians has a population of ~450 people, with about half of those members living on the 20,000 acre reservation. ³ Séw'ia' (Santa Rosa), is a checkerboarded reservation with a combined land base of 11,630 acres of land. The total citizenship of the Santa Rosa people is 194 members, with about 150 people of their members living on the reservation (Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, 2020). The Cahuilla and Santa Rosa Reservations are approximately 13-miles away from each other. Since neither nation has their own tribally operated schools, the youth from

³ Personal knowledge as a citizen of the Cahuilla Band of Indians.

Cahuilla and Santa Rosa attend the same local public school which I refer to using the pseudonym Túktam School.

Cahuilla Language

Language is arguably the center of our identity as told by our Cahuilla creation story. Our creation describes that after an earthquake scattered the people, our creator Múkat was able to identify the Cahuilla people because he heard them speaking ‘Ívillu’at (Cahuilla Language). ‘Ívillu’at is an Uto-Aztecan language under the Takic branch and consists of three dialects: Pass, Mountain, and Desert Cahuilla. The former two are closely related in terms of word choice and pronunciation, while all three dialects are mutually intelligible. The Cahuilla and Santa Rosa nations are speakers of the Mountain Cahuilla dialect. However, due to the historical and ongoing subjugation of Native people’s languages and cultures there has been significant language shift in Cahuilla communities.

Before providing statistics from United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on the Cahuilla Language, I caution here that official statistics provided by enumerating systems, fail to account for the on-the-ground and everyday language efforts being made by Cahuilla communities. Yet, the publicly made available data on Cahuilla is important to include to provide a background for the critique I provide on discourses of language endangerment in the section that follows.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Cahuilla Language is classified as “critically endangered,” with five speakers (Moseley, 2010). UNESCO is not clear in their definition of speakers, however based on my personal knowledge, five speakers does not include emerging speakers or those with varying

proficiencies. According to UNESCO, critically endangered languages are defined as, “the youngest speakers are grandparents and older, and they speak the language partially and infrequently” (Moseley, 2010). While English is the dominant language used in Cahuilla homes, and there is an urgency to reclaim the Cahuilla Language for youth, UNESCO frames the Cahuilla language in a trajectory of loss, rather than in a state of reclamation with emerging possibilities.

Cahuilla Language Domains

Despite the ‘official’ enumeration of speakers based on UNESCO, this paper critiques the “discourses of language endangerment” surrounding Cahuilla. I take the stance of Hill (2002) and Shulist and Rice (2019) that view enumeration as a colonial power structure that does not consider the everyday local language reclamation work being done in communities. Further, colonial language enumeration discourse fails to recognize the language reclamation done by elders in language communities. In the early 2000s, Cahuilla elders now all passed on from various Cahuilla communities, such as Alvino Siva (Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla Cupeño Indians) Katherine Siva Saubel (Los Coyotes Band of Cahuilla Cupeño Indians), Annie Hamilton (Ramona Band of Cahuilla) and Christina Morreo (Torres Martinez Band of Cahuilla Indians), began teaching community language classes. Their efforts were foundational in reclaiming the Cahuilla language. In Cahuilla communities, like many Indigenous communities, we honor our elders and teachers. To not recognize the profound impact their language work has had on our communities is to be disrespectful. Chew and Lokosh (2021) agree that language enumeration practices fail to honor the work of Indigenous elders in language reclamation. In writing about language enumeration practices, they state:

Such labels, which arise from Western traditions of anthropological and linguistic categorization, are problematic because they do not account for hope and agency within the work of language revitalization and reclamation. Though Posipóngni' [our Elders/Old Ones] will leave us, their efforts to Chikashshanompa' on to younger generations have made profound and hopeful impact on the Chickasaw Nation. This impact is not captured by labels which are preoccupied with measuring deficits – in terms of a lack of speakers and spaces where the language is spoken – and locating languages along a trajectory toward loss and obsolescence. (Chew & Lokosh 2022, p.6)

Like, the Chickasaw, the Cahuilla elders have given us hope and agency through passing on the Cahuilla language. The truth is that despite the current enumeration of Cahuilla language speakers by UNESCO, the domains of Cahuilla language use are expanding and the number of people increasing their use of their heritage language is growing as a direct result of the work of our Cahuilla elders.

Domains of Cahuilla language use range across a wide variety of genres and spaces. Rigorous language reclamation work is being done at tribal schools including Noli Indian School, Morongo School, Tribal TANF and other federally funded social services programs, college courses and various tribally based language community classes.⁴ Some examples of the

⁴ Noli Indian school is a 6th-12th grade BIE school located on the Soboba Indian Reservation, the Morongo School is a Tribal school on the Morongo Indian Reservation and currently there are various Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs servicing the various Cahuilla reservations. Cahuilla Language classes are offered at the following higher educational institutions: University of California, Riverside; Cal State San Bernardino; California Indian

domains that Cahuilla Language reclamation is being exercised include translated children's books, coloring books, narratives, poems, t-shirts, children's names, naming of community programs, rap, art, road names, signs, and social media. While not an exhaustive list, some of the publicly available language resources include the Cahuilla Dictionary (Seiler & Hioki, 1979, 2006), Cahuilla Texts (Seiler 1970), Cahuilla Grammar (Seiler, 1977), *Chem'ivillu'* (*Let's speak Cahuilla*) (Sauvel & Munro, 1982), 'Isill Héqwas Wáxish (Sauvel & Elliott, 2004), and Menill The Mood Maiden (Mirelez, 2011). In addition to pedagogical materials, Cahuilla people are bringing their heritage language(s) back in their homes.

I offer my own household as an example whereby everyday commands and compliments are being done in Cahuilla. My children's everyday routine begins with me stating, "Qwápi" (wake up). At bedtime – and several times throughout the day – I remind them "etne'áyaw'a" (I love you). Their initiative to now prompt me in our heritage language is evidence, albeit limited, of a reversal of language shift happening within Cahuilla communities. Bringing languages in the home is critical as Hinton (2013) points out because, "The most important locus of language revitalization is not in the schools, but rather the home, the last bastion from which the language was lost, and the primary place where first language acquisition occurs" (p.xiv). Whether Cahuilla is being spoken in homes, heard on YouTube in a rap song, being taught in a university, being presented in art exhibits, or being sung through birdsongs at a local gathering, each of these uses pushes back against deficit models of 'Ívillu'at.

Nations College; and Palomar College. Along with language programs offered through tribally sponsored cultural departments, cultural classes and online resources.

Cahuilla in Written Form

Historically, Cahuilla was solely an oral language. After the publication of three interrelated texts from linguist Hansjakob Sieler: “Cahuilla Texts With An Introduction” (1970), “Cahuilla Grammar” (1977), and “Cahuilla Dictionary” (1979), ‘Ívillu’at became a written language. In this work, I follow the system of writing Cahuilla used in the text ‘Isill Héqwas Wáxish (2004), used by linguist Dr. Eric Elliott, a dear friend and student of Katherine Siva Saubel, who is now my teacher. This system of writing Cahuilla utilizes the Roman alphabet, which shares the same vowels in English with accent marks demarcating the stressed vowels (Sauvel & Elliott, 2004, p. xxxvii). Consonants in Cahuilla include /’/ (glottal stops), /ch/, /h/, /k/, /kw/, /l/, /ll/, /m/, /n/, /ñ/, /ng/, /p/, /q/, /qw/, /r/, /s/, /sh/, /t/, /v/, /w/, /x/, /xw/, /y/ (Sauvel & Elliott, 2004, p. xxxvii). Notably in Elliott’s (2004) system of writing Cahuilla each character makes one sound. The use of written Cahuilla is important to this work both in the production of this paper and in the potential for its written use to be standardized in a Cahuilla curriculum.

Normalizing the placement of Indigenous languages in relation to English is an act of linguistic resistance. In this work, I purposefully place the full translation of each excerpt in Cahuilla above the English translation. I intentionally place English in the parenthesis of the text, and some instances I do not provide a translation. Another form of linguistic resistance that this work implements is in the use of pseudonyms. Instead of giving the study participants pseudonyms in English, each community member was given a pseudonym in ‘Ívillu’at. Each name was meaningfully chosen with the participants. Further to protect the anonymity of the school, the pseudonym Túktam School was implemented. Túktam is reflective of the Cahuilla word for the school’s mascot, which also happens to be one of the two moieties of the Cahuilla

people. The meaningful language choices I make in this work serve to honor the reclamation of our Cahuilla Language.

Background of Túktam School (TS)

Túktam School is located in a rural town within Cahuilla territory at a population of 3,075 people (U.S. Census Bureau). Enrollment data from the 2020-2021 school year indicates that Túktam School's American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) population is significantly higher in comparison to county and state level student populations. Túktam's American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) student population is 10.5%, compared to the district total of 0.8%, Riverside County at 0.4%, and the statewide AIAN student population of 0.5% (*2020-21 enrollment by ethnicity*. Enrollment by Ethnicity, CA Dept of Education). There is data lacking on the specific tribes of the Native students at TS. However, based on the school's proximity to three Cahuilla reservations and my personal knowledge of the school, a logical conclusion can be made that a majority of the AIAN population at TS identify as Cahuilla.

While the school receives federal funding for Indian Education and is receptive to including Cahuilla culture and language in its programming, there is still a gap in Cahuilla youth receiving ongoing and daily instruction in their culture and heritage language. Some examples of current culturally inclusive programs at the school include a once-a-year California Indian Celebration sponsored by the local Cahuilla nations, the Title 6 Indian Education classes offered once-a-month during the school year, and a summer Native academy. The lack of culturally responsive curricula that includes California Indian people is not unusual in California's educational system.

Research Context and Problem Statement

The context of this study is driven by Native people and communities advocating for participation and representation within the educational system. I begin on a national scale with the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, and then move into a California context, examining a Riverside school controversy and its impacts on state-wide curriculum. I then provide a local example of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians' curriculum partnership with the Palm Springs Unified School District. While critical strides were made towards culturally responsive schooling in 2020-2021, it was also a time that amplified overall inequalities Native people experience at the hands of the settler-colonial state's educational policies.

Beginning in May of 2021, social media and news outlets were filled with headlines of the mass graves of children found at the former Kamloops Residential School in Canada (Austen, 2021). Despite the geopolitical border, the same inhumane policies of assimilation and genocide were implicated by the United States towards Native children. In response, on June 22, 2021, the United States established a Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative. Under the leadership of the first Native American Secretary of the Interior, Deb Haaland, the initiative's goals are to identify burial sites at past and current boarding schools, and to conduct a thorough investigation of federal Indian boarding school policies (*Secretary Haaland Announces Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative*. U.S. Department of the Interior). In personal conversations with community members, the sentiment was that the initiative would shed light for members of the public about the United States educational policies towards Native people. This knowledge of

the boarding schools is something that Native people have carried through their family oral histories.

The public would soon see the ongoing harmful impacts of the lack of culturally responsive curricula carried out through a teacher's math lesson. On October 19, 2021, an Indigenous student at John W. North High School filmed his math teacher committing acts of cultural violence in Riverside, CA. The shared Indigenous lands of the Cahuilla, Serrano, Payómkawichum, Tongva, and other California Indian people. This student's video exposes disturbing acts of violence. The teacher appears in a paper headdress while dancing on desks in her classroom. She then appears cross-legged praying to a water goddess for a "secret Indian chant." Then she is seen running into a "rock god," and gesturing a tomahawk chop, all while chanting and mocking a stereotypical notion of Native culture (Li & Thompson, 2021). This teacher's act of cultural violence was embedded as a mnemonic device in her trigonometry lesson.

The Native student – who remains unidentified – took an act of resistance against harmful representations that Native students continue to face in the United States. The video caught the attention of millions of viewers on social media that reinvigorated conversations both within and outside of Native communities. Fundamentally, the video caused people to revisit their own educational experiences. How were Native people, cultures, and histories represented in their education? Were they any different from the viral video, or just more covert? The frustration and utter disgust from the video sparked a stronger urgency to make meaningful changes to California's curriculum.

On November 15, 2021, California assembly member James C. Ramos (Cahuilla/Serrano) – the first California Indian to hold a legislative position in the state –acted by introducing bills AB 1554, CA 6, and initiating a joint hearing on Native American education. Both AB 1554 and ACA 6 call for California Indian history and culture to be taught in the state’s classrooms (*Ramos: Riverside School Board session over classroom incident begins 'long-term process' to 'confront ignorance about Native American culture and history'*, 2021). In a direct response to the Riverside incident, Ramos stated:

The incident that brought us together underscores why educators must form engaged partnerships with California tribes to correct ignorance and bias in our local, state, and national educational systems and teacher training programs. One critical element in confronting these troubling concerns is reviewing California’s curriculum standards (*Ramos: Riverside School Board session over classroom incident begins 'long-term process' to 'confront ignorance about Native American culture and history'*, 2021).

Ramos’ proclamation for California to engage with California tribal nations in curriculum development sets the context of educational policy for which this research is situated.

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (Agua) offer a path forward for tribes and public schools to engage in partnerships through their curriculum with the Palm Springs Unified School District. The curriculum is the first in California to meet state standards, while being based on “authentic curriculum on local Native American history” (Jordan 2020, p.44). The curriculum was first implemented in 2019 in local third grade classrooms and reached approximately 1,800 students. Eventually, the curriculum will reach 4th-8th grade students and 11th grade students in the Palm Springs Unified School District. Tribal Council member Anthony

Purnel noted the significance of the lessons for all children by stating, “When the students learn about the Agua Caliente people and our Cahuilla ancestors, and they visually go into the Indian canyons and view our ancestral lands and they go and touch the rattles and the ollas and the baskets, they get this deep, deep connection and understanding of who we actually are” (Jordan 2020, p.44). To add, Reid, D. Milanovich, Vice-Chairman for Agua, exemplified the impacts of the curriculum by stating that the students who learn the curriculum, “...Will be able to learn more about us... We’ve been here for thousands and thousands of years, and there are certain things that I’m not sure very many people in the community quite understand about the Tribe, and hopefully this is a good starting point to begin when the kids are young so they will grow up and learn more and more about us and why we are here” (Jordan 2020, p.45). Agua’s collaborative curriculum to teach Cahuilla culture and history in its local public schools is a model for other Cahuilla tribes to follow and sets the stage for this research to be implemented in TS.

A brief look into educational headlines in 2020-2021 offers insight into the impacts of federal, state, and local educational policies. Amid the boarding school initiative and the John W. North High School incident there was also the seating of the first Native people in positions of power and strides made for culturally responsive curricula. While limited, the positive progress in the educational system has brought voices, perspectives and experiences that have never been held by people making key policy decisions. This context provides a backdrop from which my research questions emerge from.

Research Questions and Purpose

Né’ kill pen’é’nanqa’ né’ ‘éxenuk písh míyaxwenive’.

Áy pénga' 'áy túku' 'áy pem'áyawwe' peynáminkatem 'íka' pey'éxanikatem schoolngax.

Pé' mán Doctor Bean pén Jane Penn pén Rupert Costo pén kínangia' wíhkwa' pén súpulem pé'em qaháxim pé'em métechem mán kill pem'áyawwe; pé'iy. Mán 'íka' pem'éxanwe' pé'iy. Pé'ish pé'.

I didn't know that it (a certain textbook once in use in public schools) was like that (i.e., that it was offensive to the Cahuilla).

Recently they decided to change it, to remove it (that textbook) from the schools. Doctor Bean, Jane Penn, Rupert Costo, and his wife, and many other did approve it (the book).

And they did get rid of it. That's why. (Sauvel & Elliott, 2006, p.214).

This thesis adds to the sixty-year call of action from Cahuilla elders: Assembly member Ramos, Dr. Katherine Siva Saubel (1920-2011) and Rubert Costo (1906-1989). Each of these Cahuilla advocates have demanded that the California educational system include the culture and history of California Indian people by working with California Nations to implement a culturally responsive education.⁵ Quite frankly, Cahuilla people are tired of reiterating our existence during the once-a-year California Indian Day celebrations with the infamous slogan, Mú' Chémqal (We are still here). Students in California's education system should be informed of California Indian peoples lifeways from California Indian people as an ongoing curriculum standard.

As a stepping-stone for a Cahuilla curriculum implementation, the purpose of this research was to develop an understanding of the cultural components of a curriculum that centered the visions of the parents/guardians of Cahuilla students who attend Túktam School. Since this research was community-based, including the voices of Cahuilla youth's caretakers

⁵For information on Rubert Costo and his call for a culturally relevant curriculum see Zevi Gutfreund; Standing Up to Sugar Cubes: The Contest over Ethnic Identity in California's Fourth-Grade Mission Curriculum. *Southern California Quarterly* 1 July 2010; 92 (2): 161–197. doi: <https://doi.org/10.2307/41172518>.

were especially important as their perspectives on the strengths of their youth move away from deficit models often used to characterize Native youth in the educational system. Caretaker's perspectives were also important since as Cahuilla people, they have the cultural knowledge that is critical in the development of a culturally responsive curriculum. Further, this qualitative study explores the relationship between heritage language acquisition, culturally responsive curriculum, Cahuilla youth identity formation, and the possibility of positive educational outcomes for Native youth in a public-school context. This research is guided by the following research questions:

1. How do caregivers envision a culturally responsive education for their youth?
2. What role does Cahuilla Language immersion play in caregivers' vision for a culturally responsive education for their youth?

These research questions produced novel approaches in research done with Cahuilla people specifically, the overall California Indian educational literature, and broader ethnographic approaches to educational research in Native communities. Previous academic research done with Cahuilla people was focused on anthropological studies of the Cahuilla creation story, language, lifeways, plants, and birdsongs (Bean, 1972; Bean, 2017; Sauvel & Elliott 2004; Johnson et al, 1987, etc.). To my knowledge, there has not been a single research study that focuses on Cahuilla people's efforts for a culturally responsive education for their youth. Further, this thesis is the first research manuscript done by a Cahuilla person with Cahuilla people of the Cahuilla Band of Indians and the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians. Thus, this thesis fills multiple gaps in the literature concerning Cahuilla people.

California Indian educational research efforts in language reclamation vis-à-vis education is a growing, yet still a limited field of research. The specific efforts being made by tribes in Southern California has just recently been documented in the text, “On Indian Ground (California), A return to Indigenous Knowledge: Generating Hope, Leadership, and Sovereignty Through Education” (Proudfit & Myers-Lim, 2017). The research documented in the text records the on-the-ground efforts being made by tribes in California to create culturally relevant and heritage language models both in their respective tribal schools and local public schools. The scope of the current work adds to this emerging field of research by bringing the voices of Cahuilla caretakers in the literature.

The broader literature on Native language reclamation and the possibilities of Indigenous education in the context of schools has primarily focused on larger tribal nations. Those larger tribal nations as measured by populations and numbers of speakers include Hawaiian (‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i), Navajo (Diné Bizaad), and Hopi (Hopilavayi) (McCarty, 2002; Nicholas, 2009; Luning, 2010, Wilson & Kamanā, 2001, Wilson & Kamanā, 2011;etc.). The vitality status of these Native languages is not as critically endangered as Cahuilla and other California Indian Languages, in that these languages still have speakers of all generations, though in the case of Hawaiian younger speakers who are first-language speakers are the children of parents who (re)learned the language through immersion programs. By having limited literature on the smaller language communities, as measured by tribal populations and number of heritage speakers, we fail to understand the unique experiences and challenges of these communities. Furthermore, the question of how parents and communities envision a culturally responsive

education for their youth within their sociocultural and sociolinguistic contexts remains unaccounted for. This thesis is a step towards adding these voices and perspectives.

Summary/Thesis Outline

The first chapter in this work served as an introduction to Cahuilla peoples and the research context. Notably, I provided the reader with statistical data regarding the Cahuilla and Santa Rosa reservations with additional information concerning the relatively large population of Native students at Túktam School. Further, I introduced the research questions that guide this work by providing appropriate information about the research context. In Chapter Two, I outline the body of literature that has informed this thesis including a historical context of Cahuilla people's experiences with colonial schooling. Chapter Three provides the theoretical framework, while Chapter Four addresses the research design. In Chapter Five I share key findings from the research and finally, in Chapter Six I offer concluding remarks and future areas of inquiry.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

‘Et kú’ yéwi’ kíkítam ípax ‘úmu’ ‘íka’ hemhíchiewe’.
Memwénwe’ yá’ Saint Bonifaceka. Pénga. Hemqál.
Kill hemngúillewwe’ túkmash. Chepenga’ húhayimani’chi’ hemqál’e’.
Pé’ pé’ ‘íyaxwe’: pénga’ mán memtéteyamaxwe’ pé’em sisters pén priests kill
písh hem’Ivillupi’.

Long ago all the children from here used to go there.
Or rather, they would put them in Saint Boniface. They would live there.
They did not go home at night. They stayed put all the time.
And that’s how it was: the sisters and priests would tell them not to speak
Cahuilla. (Sauvel & Elliott, 2006, p. 635).

Níchill Sauvel’s recollection in this excerpt, describes Saint Boniface boarding school in Banning, CA as a site of linguicide and ethnocide. Being forbidden to speak the Cahuilla language at boarding schools is emblematic of the schooling policies that Cahuilla people have endured at the hands of the state. Besides this excerpt and others from Sauvel and Elliot’s texts (2004), the experiences of Cahuilla people with formal schooling are lacking in the scholarly literature. Both in a historical and current context. On a broader scope, the experiences of California Indian people with education and their strides with cultural and language reclamation continue to be left unaccounted for in the canon.

This chapter provides a review of four relevant literatures that have informed this work. First, I draw from archival data and oral histories to provide the context by which Cahuilla’s peoples’ experiences with schooling are shaped by Federal Indian educational policies. While limited, the second set of works I engage with concerns California Indian Language reclamation practices both in homes and public-school contexts. In the third set of scholarship, I pull from literature centered on language immersion schooling models and Native youth identity

formation. Finally, I end the chapter with a review of key terms and concepts used throughout the thesis concerning topics of culturally responsive schooling and Indigenous education.

Federal Indian Educational Policies Impacting Cahuilla People

Federal Indian educational policies were targeted towards all Native people in the United States, I choose to narrow this analysis to the specific experiences of Cahuilla people at Carlisle Industrial School, Saint Boniface Industrial School, Perris/Sherman Boarding School and the Cahuilla Reservation Day School.⁶ While a full analysis of Cahuilla people's experiences at these institutions is beyond the scope of this paper, I focus specifically on areas that match the themes of this project. These include: Cahuilla youth maintaining their heritage languages, parents' agency in their children's education, and Cahuilla people's negotiation of schooling policies. I purposefully omit accounts of the rampant sexual abuse present at these schools; however, I do mention loss of life at Saint Boniface to provide context to the reader of the emotional legacy tied to United States' schooling practices, and to provide examples of both positive and negative stories.⁷ A narrower analysis of the historical experiences of Cahuilla people allows for a continuity in the research that demonstrates the ongoing impacts of colonial schooling practices while simultaneously revealing the steadfast agency—albeit limited—that Cahuilla people have had within educational institutions. It is important to note, and hopefully becomes evident in the analysis that follows, that experiences of colonial education vary from

⁶ The Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla did not have a day school.

⁷ I made this decision to avoid (re) traumatizing our people of the stories that, we as Cahuilla people already carry in our hearts.

person-to-person. The analyses of digitized archives published materials, and oral histories will reveal varying experiences of language shift, agency, and resiliency at each institution.

Cahuilla Education, Spanish Mission Period, and California Indian Genocide

Before I move into an analysis of each institution, three topics are worth briefly covering, Cahuilla educational systems, the Spanish Mission Period and the California Indian genocide. First, Cahuilla people have always had their own way of teaching and assessing knowledge and skills of young people. This was especially evident through the coming-of-age ceremonies. While no longer practiced today in the same ceremonial way as described by respected anthropologist Lowell Bean (1972), Cahuilla youth are still observed by elders and members of their community for the use of skills and knowledge that can be of benefit to their families and communities. Transmission of knowledge is ongoing within kinship systems. For example, families that are singers, play peon, or are ceremonial cooks tend to maintain these practices within their own families. In this way, their younger generations are immersed in cultural systems and pass them from generation to generation.

Second, while the analysis that follows does not cover the Spanish Mission period (1769-1833) in California it is important to point out that Cahuilla people were impacted during this colonial period. Especially Cahuilla tribes who were closer to the mission outposts in San Bernardino and Redlands. One such impact, as will be explained later, is the continuation of the Mission Period's practices towards Native people that manifested in boarding school policies. On a third note, the state sponsored California Indian Genocide of 1846-1873, in which at least 9,000-16,000 California Indian people were murdered by state-sponsored militias is a daunting reminder of the will, organizing efforts, and strength of California Indian people to have a vision

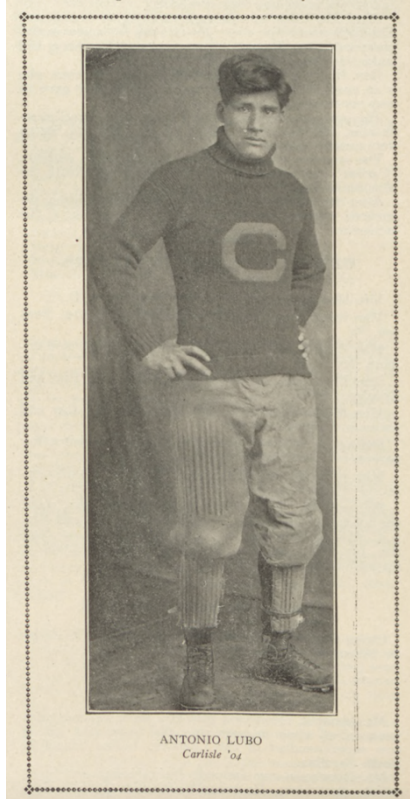


Figure 1 Antonio Lubo, Former Football Star and Captain, 1916, The Carlisle Arrow

for future generations in the face of genocide (Madley 2017). Despite these staggering numbers of genocide in California and the impacts of the Mission period on Cahuilla's peoples' lifeways, the importance of maintaining language and cultural transmission remains an important aspect of Cahuilla people's lives.

Cahuilla People at Carlisle Industrial School

Carlisle was a United States' boarding school opened in 1879 in Pennsylvania, under the direction of Civil War veteran Lt. Col. Richard Henry Pratt. Pratt's assimilationist goals for off-reservation boarding schools were wrapped in his slogan, "Kill the Indian, Save the man" (Richard Henry Pratt Carlisle Indian School, 2020). This slogan in practice meant that Native

youth were forcibly removed from their families and communities to suppress their languages and cultures, and overall lifeways. Cahuilla youth were no exception to these schooling practices.

For a historical look at Cahuilla peoples' experiences at Carlisle, I used the digitized online archives of Carlisle from Dickson University, online newspapers, and family oral histories. I chose to focus on the experiences of two of my relatives, Antonio Lubo and Loretto Lubo both from the Cahuilla Band of Indians who attended Carlisle. Their experiences will highlight the varying experiences of Cahuilla youth at boarding school: sports, generational impacts of boarding school, and resistance.

Antonio Lubo, from the Cahuilla Reservation, entered Carlisle in 1898 at the age of nineteen (Dickenson University).⁸ (See Figure 1.) Antonio graduated from Carlisle in 1904 and left the school on January 3, 1908. The athletic skills that Antonio displayed while at Carlisle led him to a football career playing alongside the notable athlete Jim Thorpe. His historical record is mostly found in the Carlisle newspaper, *The Carlisle Arrow*, where he is acknowledged for his athleticism on the Carlisle football team. Some of the headlines in *The Carlisle Arrow* are “Lubo Elected Captain,” and “Antonio Lubo, Former Football Star and Captain” (1907, 1916). Newspaper articles also documented his ongoing relationship with Carlisle. For example, he returned to school in 1914 for a speech at the graduation ceremony and other talks during the week along with donating to the Carlisle Alumni Association in 1915 (Former Football Player Talks, 1914; Robitille, 1915). In the same year he returned to be the football coach. A newspaper

⁸ Antonio was the son of Corenelious Lubo (brother to my great-great-grandfather).

clipping from The Carlisle Arrow in 1916 summarizes important details of Antonio's life related to the school:

Antonio Lubo of the Mission Tribe, from Redland, Cal., graduated from Carlisle in 1904. After completing the course at Conway, he entered Dickinson College, where he studied for two years. Because of his reputation as a great football star, Syracuse wanted him to play on their football team. Subsequently in 1907, he entered Syracuse University, where was a student until 1910. Just before his graduation, however, he became ill and was unable to complete the course there. He then crossed the continent for a visit to his old home, but returned again to the East the same year to take a position with the New York Central Railroad Company at Syracuse. Mr. Lubo still holds this position, which is an important one and pays a handsome salary. Last year, Mr. Lubo assisted Mr. Warner in coaching the Carlisle football team. In a speech made by Mr. Lubo a year ago last commencement, he has often been quoted as saying: "Never mind what school I graduated from, just give me a chance" (Antonio Lubo, Former Football Star and Captain, 1916, p.5).



Figure 2 School house and children (nd)
<https://cdm16003.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15150coll2/id/12524>.

As the excerpt points out, Antonio Lubo's experiences at Carlisle led to other educational and athletic opportunities. His own words given at the Carlisle's 1914 commencement are evident of him using his experiences at boarding school to further his personal dreams and career.

Antonio's career after Carlisle with the New York Central Railroad had direct impacts on his future generations. As a child, I vividly remember going to my aunt's house on the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indian Reservation, where my grandmother lived. There we met with family from New York. At that time, all I understood was that they were a part of our Lubo family but did not understand why they lived in New York, or why I had never met them. This was also my grandmother's first time meeting her relatives. While conducting this research, I made the connection that those Lubo family members I had met as a child were the direct descendants of Antonio Lubo, who had visited with my grandmother to reestablish their family connections and Cahuilla identity.

Historical records of Antonio Lubo's experiences with boarding school were generally positive and tended to focus on his athletic nature and educational career. However, boarding school displaced him from his homelands which impacted his children and grandchildren's connections to their Cahuilla homelands.



Figure 3 (Pierce, Exterior View of the Indian School and Residence of its Teacher at Cahuilla, 1896)

Cahuilla Day School

A second branch of educational policy towards Native people was manifested in reservation day schools. (See Figure 2 and Figure 3). The purpose of the government ran schools were to “prepare” Native youth for the off reservation boarding schools. The goal of reservation day schools were made clear in yearly Reports of the Commission of Indian Affairs. A report from 1902 notes, “This work, therefore being a particular function of a reservation school, renders necessary the rule that the former class of schools be recruited from the latter, thus giving a foundation of morality, cleanliness, and knowledge of the English language, upon which the non-reservation school may build the finished character” (Office of Indian Affairs, 1902, p. 28). As such, reservation day schools were set in place for a trajectory of “full” assimilation at boarding schools.

The exact opening date of the Cahuilla Day School is not clear, however other day schools within the Mission Agency were built in a timeframe from 1882-1885. Specific discussions of the Cahuilla Day school including repairs to the building are found in reports from 1890 and 1895 (Report for the Commission of Indian Affairs, 1890, p.12; Report for the Commission of Indian Affairs, 1895, p.132).

The data on the Cahuilla Day school primarily focuses on the statistics of the number of students, funding the school received, and the teachers present for each school year (see yearly Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Mission Agency). Within the yearly reports of the Mission Agency of Southern California there is a least one example of Cahuilla parents pushing back against reservations day schools. In the 1904 Commissioner Of Indian Affairs Report, Superintendent L.A. Wright (1904) of the Mission Agency noted that the Cahuilla Day

School was forced to close for a period of time due to, “Lack of proper support and cooperation of the older Indians” (p.171). This sole documented example offers a brief window into Cahuilla parents’ act of resistance and exerting agency in their children’s education.

Saint Boniface School (1890)

On, September 1, 1890, St. Boniface Indian Industrial School, an off-reservation institution, begin operating in Banning CA.⁹ This school was operated by Catholic personnel from the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, with government funding from the Office of Indian Affairs (Bell, 2011). The students included children from the local non-Native community but was primarily focused on youth from Southern California tribes. School records show children ranging from 8-18 years of age came from Cahuilla, Payómkawichum, Kumeyaay and Tualre nations (Harley, 1999).¹⁰

The goal of Saint Boniface was to convert the local Native children into Catholicism, which in turn meant the strict probation of their own beliefs, value systems, languages and overall ways of being. Trafzer et. al (2006), argue that Saint Boniface’s policies were a continuation of the conversion efforts of the Spanish Mission period in California. To make the case clear in aligning the mission period and St. Boniface, Trafzer et. al (2006) draw on key comparisons between the two institutions. The comparisons are the superfluous idea and God-

⁹ Banning, CA is about 45 miles from the Cahuilla Reservation.

¹⁰ While the sources who cite the tribal nations of the students use the Spanish terms for the tribes Luiseño, Diegueño I use the names of the tribes in their respective languages that more commonly used today.

given purpose to “civilize” Native people, careful selection of the school to Native peoples, and the requirement for Catholicism and manual child labor. They argue,

Nuns and priests at St. Boniface demanded that the allegiance of students at the school focused first and foremost on God and only secondarily on the United States. Thus, children attending this Catholic off-reservation boarding school participated in this and several other genuflections every day, because the church established the school with indoctrination into Christianity as its overriding objective as an educational institution (p.Kindle).

The focus on Christianity and the daily indoctrination by nuns and priests at Saint Boniface aligns with the oral histories that Cahuilla people have maintained of their experiences at the school.

Cahuilla Oral Histories of Saint Boniface Boarding School

The Cahuilla oral histories that have been passed down from generation to generation tell of Cahuilla youth’s death, language shift, cultural loss, and youth defying school policies at Saint Boniface. Níhill Sauvel tells a particular story in which school directors had deceitfully told her family that her paternal aunt, Trinidad Siva, died from illness. Yet, the oral accounts of the other children at the school witnessed a nun push the girl down the stairs resulting in her passing (Sauvel & Elliott, 2004, p.151). To give power to this story, the following excerpt of the family’s story is in ‘Ívillu’at, “Yén pé’ kill mípa’ ‘éxenuk pemtéteyamaxwe’. ‘Achakwe’ chéqe’ pemnénganwe’. An English gloss of this excerpt is, “But they [nuns] never told the story this way. They just covered the affair up” (Sauvel & Elliott, 2004, p.151). The same emotional stories of Cahuilla youth passing at Saint Boniface are held in the oral stories of my family. During our yearly preparations for honoring our deceased loved ones, my mom reiterates the story of our relative Frances Lubo who died of food poisoning while attending Saint Boniface. Each year when we reach his grave, I am reminded of the emotionally tolling experience of

Cahuilla children at off reservation boarding schools and the distress that must have caused to our communities. We, as Cahuilla people still feel those emotions.

‘Ívillu’at Resistance in Boarding Schools

Cahuilla language shift and agency is recorded in oral histories. To open, I provide this oral history from Níchill Sauvel:

Memwéweneniwe’ hem’Ivilluwenipa’.
Pé’ memvuksésqa’anwe’ pénga’ kill pish hem’Ivillupi’.
Pé’ métechem pé’em hemsuntáatwaswe’ hemhéaawayñi’.
Súpulem tá’ kill hemsuntáwas.
Mú’ pé’ wíhkwa’ chemqálve’ pén pé’em hépas ‘á’avuwet pé’ mú’ ‘úmu’
hemkúktashwe’. Pemkúktashwe’ chemháwawayñi’.
Pé’ tá’ súpulem pé’em mú’ kíkítam pé’e’ wásallem, hemwáxallem, pén hemyúull,
pé’ ‘úmu’ kill hemkúktash ‘ángapa’.
Chéqe’ he’Mélkishlluwe’. Píka’ pemsuntáatwaswe’ pé’iy chemháwawayñi’.
Pé’ish pé’ pé’ ‘éxenuk ‘íyaxwe ‘ét Mélkish sichúmin’a’.
Míyaxwe’ pish pichemsuntáwaspi’ ‘úmu’ chémem hishTáxliswetem
chemháwawayñi’.
Chéqe’ pish che’Mélkishllupi’ pé’ pé’ múchi’ika’ pem’áyawwe’.

They would keep them from speaking Cahuilla.
And they would whip them so they would not speak Cahuilla.
And many of them forgot their language.
Others, however, did not forget.
My husband, god rest his soul, and his older brother still spoke it.
They spoke their language.
But the others, the little ones, his younger sisters, their younger sisters, and their
younger brother stopped speaking it.
They just spoke English. They forgot their language.
And that is the white man’s plan.
We were all supposed to forget our language.
They just wanted us to speak English in the future. (Sauvel & Elliott, 200, p.635)

In a related excerpt titled, “Sneaking to the Barn at Saint Boniface,” Níchill Sauvel tells of how her husband would avoid being whipped for speaking Cahuilla by going to work in the barn to speak Cahuilla with his friends (Sauvel & Elliott, 2004, p. 675). This single excerpt

highlights the language shift at Saint Boniface. On the one hand, there were Cahuilla youth who maintained their language by creating space for safe speaking spaces. While others suppressed their heritage language in fear of violent consequences.

Three of the parents interviewed for this work provided invaluable insight into their own family's boarding school experiences. Sésem gave a brief insight into her aunt's boarding school experiences. Her aunt who, had recently passed away, told Sésem that she was forbidden to speak Cahuilla and would be "beaten severely," and that while at boarding school they would "beat the Indian out of her" (Int. 1, 4/22).¹¹ She went on to explain that her aunt would be placed in different room, or sent outside if she was caught speaking her Cahuilla language (Int. 1, 4/22). In the face of this trauma, Sésem recalled her aunt's steadfast ability to maintain her language. "She didn't wanna lose her language. So she would go outside when she was able and just speak her language but within herself so she didn't forget it," she recalled her Aunt telling her (Int. 1, 4/22). Sésem's aunt's story adds to our understanding of Cahuilla youth creating their own safe spaces for Cahuilla language maintenance.

Cahuilla youth who attended boarding schools, not only were able to maintain their languages, but were still able to retain their language and pass it on. One interviewee, Sé'ish spoke of how her relative shared stories of being in boarding school and was still able to teach the Cahuilla language to her community. She stated, "And I'm thankful that I got to be around to hear her stories and hear her language and hear her speak and well, our language and, you know,

¹¹ Throughout the thesis, I will follow this convention for the in-text citations of interviews: (Pseudonym of Interviewee, Int. [Interview] Number, Month/Year Interview Occurred).

hear her speak” (Int. 1, 4/22). Níchill Sauvel, Sé’ish, and Sésem’s accounts are powerful examples of pockets of resiliency by Cahuilla youth who were able to maintain their language in the face of colonial schooling. The oral narratives also point to varying experiences with boarding schools: some youth suppressed their heritage language, while others maintained their Cahuilla language use.

Perris Industrial School/Sherman Institute

Cahuilla children, were forced away from their communities to Perris Industrial School (1892) in Perris, CA, which later moved to its current location in Riverside, CA and became Sherman Boarding School (1901). In comparing the curriculum of St. Boniface and Perris Industrial School, Trafzer et. al noted that the latter school was based in labor instruction, while the former curriculum was centered on religion (2006). In comparison to Perris Industrial School, they maintain that St. Boniface’s curriculum was strict in its Christian teachings while the former secular school was thematically based in Christianity. Whether Paris or Sherman’s curriculum was centralized on Christianity or included thematically, the point is that Cahuilla youth at Perris and Sherman were not allowed to speak their languages or practice their cultures.

While Cahuilla people’s resistance to Sherman is limited, one letter does document the agency of Cahuilla parents in relation to their children’s schooling. In a letter dated, August, 8, 1896 to Superintendent Edgar A. Allen of Sherman School, the Cahuilla agent described that Cahuilla parents did not wish to send their children to off reservation boarding school and preferred for them to stay home and continue attending the reservation day school (Corte, 1896). My interpretation of this letter is that is humanizes Cahuilla parents to advocate for their children to stay home with their families and remain in their communities.

Since the introduction of colonial schooling, Cahuilla people have had a complex relationship with formal education. As this analysis of Carlisle, Saint Boniface, and Perris/Sherman school, were institutions of language and cultural shift that resulted in different impacts for different youth. Youth such as Antonio Lubo, used boarding school experiences to advance his career and remained a proud alumnus of Carlisle. While other experiences of boarding school resulted in death, language shift, with spaces of youth maintaining their languages at these institutions and later in life passing their heritage languages on to the next generation.

Now, Cahuilla people have reclaimed education to be transformative in taking back our language, history, and ways of being. The Cahuilla Band of Indians has a high proportion of college educated tribal members. I think of my own sister, who is among one of the five lawyers from Cahuilla. She attended the University of California, Riverside and the University of Arizona and is now practicing Federal Indian Law. As a Cahuilla lawyer she protects and advances the sovereignty of our nations. I also think of my fellow Cahuilla scholar, William Madrigal Jr., a PhD student at the University of California, Riverside who is documenting the history of our Cahuilla leaders. Despite the ability of Cahuilla people to reclaim education for positive outcomes, we continue to push back against language loss in our Cahuilla communities. This paper is a tool with the intention to reclaim our Cahuilla language and culture from the shift that occurred because of boarding school policies.

Language Reclamation Practices

Language reclamation is a framework first introduced by Miami scholar Leonard Wesley (2017), that encompasses language revitalization. Wesley argues, that language revitalization is

based solely on increasing the number of speakers. While Language reclamation, as a process of decolonization, is defined as, “a larger effort by a community to claim its right to speak a language and to set associated goals in response to community needs and perspectives” (Wesley 2017, p. 19). McCarty et al. (2018), offer an additional definition of language reclamation:

Language reclamation is not about returning to an imagined “pure” form of an ancestral language. Instead we highlight the dynamic, multisided, heteroglossic, and multivocal character of Indigenous-language reclamation, underscoring that the “success” of these efforts must be locally defined but also externally shared – a movement toward mobilizing strategic new global alliances and protocols for collaboration (p. 161).

The process of language reclamation includes a focus on the future, whether that be future speakers, future needs of the community, or future goals. Within this framework, language reclamation includes non-linguistic factors that are defined by a particular language community. Non-linguistic factors can include, epistemologies surrounding language as more than a tool of communication, but as a form of identity and integrating community-input on language classes and curricula that are culturally responsive.

As an extension to the literature on language reclamation, McCarty et. al (2018) use storywork as a theory and methodology to transcend language reclamation being about language as only a complex tool of communication to being rooted in Indigenous people’s voices. The idea of “voices” in this work is about illuminating Native peoples’ agency in the process of language reclamation through personal stories and experiences in their communities. A story provided in McCarty et al. (2018), exemplifies language reclamation as surpassing language as purely a method of communication. Using the Mohawk community as an example, Louellyn White, one of the coauthors, writes, “Our journey of language reclamation goes beyond the

mechanisms of language as communication and honors the ways that language encapsulates culture and identity” (White, in McCarty et al., 2018, p. 167). The Mohawk case exemplifies that reclaiming language is more than just increasing speakers. Rather, language reclamation is tied to identity and culture. This research is informed by the practice of language reclamation literature in the understanding that reclaiming ‘Ívillu’at is not just about increasing speakers. Language reclamation for the Cahuilla people in this work is about the community identified goal for youth to simultaneously reclaim their identity to honor their ancestors and become teachers themselves. There are multiple avenues that communities take to reclaim their languages, arguably the most natural form of language learning is in the home.

Heritage Languages in Homes

For all people and across communities, learning a language in a home is the most conducive to language acquisition. Hinton (2013), argues this point throughout her text, *Bringing Our Languages Home*. Each of the chapters provides different contexts and strategies from across language communities who are reclaiming their heritage languages in their homes. Hinton makes clear that a home is the primary locus for language reclamation. Second, throughout the various chapters, the text points out that while reclaiming heritage languages is the main goal of the families included, becoming bilingual in their heritage language and English is favored. This research agrees that that the goal of heritage language reclamation is not to resist English language learning. The current research adds to the literature on heritage language acquisition that language learning in the home is the goal and the most favorable setting for reversing language shift.

An unintended question this research raises is how can a culturally responsive curriculum that includes Cahuilla language be used to facilitate language learning in the home? Hinton contends with this point by stating, “Or it may be the children of the activists, who learned the language at school, and as adults bring the language to their home so that their own children will learn it as a first language” (2013, p. xiv). The theme of children bringing the language from school back to their homes was a theme identified in this research and will be covered in the analysis section. In this way, the paper broadens our understanding of the process that is possible from youth bringing their language home from a culturally responsive curriculum learned at school.

While reading Hinton’s (2013) work, I felt a tension between literature that argues for language reclamation in homes and literature that argues for schools as sites of language reclamation. Can schools be sites of language reclamation? Dr. McCarty (2008) provides the following response:

No, schools alone cannot do the job, *but* they are potential sites of resistance and opportunity. No, schools in themselves are insufficient, *but* they can become strategic platforms for more broad-based language planning, from orthographic standardization, to preparing Indigenous teachers, to elevating the status of oppressed and marginalized languages. No, schools are secondary to the primary language implanting and expanding institutions of family and community, *but* there are few instances of successful language revitalization in which schools have not played a crucial role (p. 161).

In other words, schools can be “strategic tools” for language reclamation, especially when they are under Indigenous control (McCarty, 2008). Additionally, schools have been proven to be spaces of “language strengthening effects” (McCarty, 2008). The section that follows covers the literature on positive impacts that schools can have on language reclamation.

Schools As Sites of Language Reclamation

Previous literature that focuses on the role of schools in Native language and cultural reclamation through culturally responsive curriculum and the impacts on Native youth identity formation and educational attainment are especially relevant to this paper. In the review of the literature that follows, I look at language reclamation in the context of school implementation and the impacts on Native youth identify formation, educational outcomes and well-being. The literature regarding the role that schools play in the process of language reclamation is a critical connection made by McCarty and Nicholas (2014). By examining Native American Language Education Policy in the context of Native American education being under community control, they found that tribally operated schools are the most suitable locations for language preservation to occur (McCarty & Nicholas, 2014). While this research will be analyzing Túktam School within a public-school setting, the work by McCarty and Nicholas (2014) informs this research by situating the context of schools more broadly as a primary setting to explore the proposed research questions.

In addition to identifying the role that schools play in language reclamation, McCarty and Nicholas have conducted extensive research on the cognitive and social benefits of Native language immersion schools and their development of new heritage language speakers (2009, 2014). In a policy brief addressing the role and impact of Native Language and cultural content in the schooling of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian students, McCarty explored which cultural/heritage language school approaches are most effective in producing positive cultural, social and educational outcomes. They found that strong Native Language Curriculum (NLC) programs correlated with higher student achievement, while those with a

“weak” Native Language Curriculum did not correlate with higher student achievement and simultaneously contributed to Native language and culture loss (McCarty, 2011, p.13).

Furthermore, as McCarty (2011) points out, “regardless of their Native-language expertise, most youth valued the NLC, viewed this as integral to their identities, and desired to learn their heritage language” (p.13). McCarty’s work informs the current research in the important connection between the development of “strong” NLC programs and student achievement. Additionally, the finding that despite the level of the NLC program, Native youth connect their heritage languages to their identities as implemented in their school’s curriculum. My research at Tuktum School has implications for the design of Native Language Curriculum that is both culturally responsive and informed by parents/caregivers. In this way I contribute to a growing body of scholarship on the design of NLC programs and the desired outcomes of such programs.

Native Youth Identity Formation

The next set of literature that informs this work is the role that Native languages play on Indigenous youth identity formation. Tiffany Lee (2009) found that for Native youth, “language is a large part of their identity, but they struggle with how to learn their language and maintain it in a world that often makes such choice difficult” (p. 317). She goes on to argue that Native youth “Remain strongly assertive in their sense of self as a member of their heritage language community, even when they feel limited in fully accessing and understanding their culture and its associated worldview” (Lee, 2009, p.317). This research reminds us of the ‘layers of negotiation’ and the internalized assimilation that Native youth face when connecting their heritage languages and identities. In applying this work to the current research, I think of the ways in which language and identity are inextricably tied, especially for Cahuilla people as noted

in the Introduction to this thesis. I am reminded of the critical role that schools and culturally relevant curricula can have on Native youth's Indigenous identity and connections this value can have on overall well-being.

Benefits of Language Reclamation

The literature on the benefits of language reclamation includes Native youth's improved math and reading scores, educational attainment, and overall well-being. I begin with a look at the benefits of language reclamation in the context of pushing back against colonial policies of assimilation. McCarty's (2020) use of Education for Language Reclamation and Revitalization (ELR2) is useful as a lens to look at language immersion schools as spaces of pushing against colonial frameworks for the well-being of communities. Additionally, the goal of ELR2 in: "reversing the consequences of failed state-sponsored schooling, reflected in persistent disparities on almost every measure of academic success," will be useful in this work (McCarty, p. 928). ELR2 is a basis for identifying the ways in which Native language immersion schooling can increase academic success, and by extension youth's social capital.

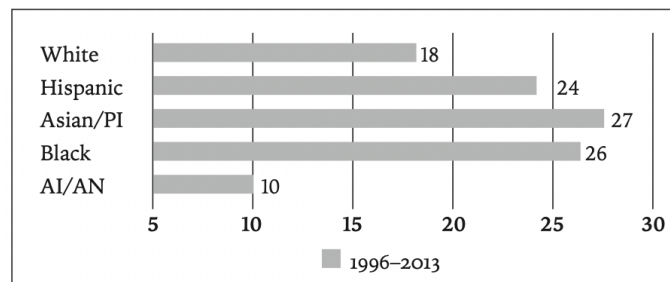


Figure 4 Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy, & Margaret J. Maaka. (2015), "Net change in National Assessment of Education Progress in Grade 4 mathematics scores between 1996 and 2013: the Nation's Report Card: Reading 1023. NAEP."

Native Youth Well-Being

There is a wealth of evidence that demonstrates the positive impacts of Native youth who attend language immersion schools. Some of the means used to measure well-being in this research arena include positive identity making, strengthening sovereignty and self-determination, improved test scores, and overall language/cultural reclamation (Lee, 2009; McCarty, 2011; McCarty et al., 2021). For this paper, I focus on measures of well-being tied to academic success. I specifically choose measures related to academic success for multiple reasons: the sociohistorical context of schooling, the federal trust responsibility that the United States has to Native nations' education (discussed later in the paper), the role that increased educational attainment has on social capital, and the role that language immersion education has on pushing against colonial frameworks of assimilation and language loss.

The impact of language reclamation in schools has proven to lead to higher levels of educational attainment. American Indian and Alaska Native Youth (AIANY), attain the lowest level of education and have a 50% graduation rate compared to 75% for white students (Fast Facts on Native American Youth and Indian Country). By comparing the reading and mathematical levels of fourth and eighth-grade Native students from 2000-2015 Brayboy and Lomawaima, (2018) found that:

- (1) Native youth in fourth grade have the lowest reading scores of all minority populations in the United States.
- (2) Over a fifteen-year period, there is little to no improvement in reading scores for Native youth in grades fourth and eighth.
- (3) Math scores for both grades are unstable over time.

Figure 4 (above) offers a visual representation of the lack of improved math scores of AIANY in comparison to all other racial groups in the United States. The brief statistics offered here are

emotionally and socially taxing for individual Native families and their communities.

Educational inequities among American Indian and Alaska Native Youth are a grim reminder of the ongoing impacts of settler colonial policies inflicted on Native people.

To make the case clear on just how radically transformative language immersion models can be for improved educational outcomes for AIANY, I present specific findings from Puente de Hózhó (PdH) that can be juxtaposed with the findings from the non-language immersion models outlined by Brayboy and Lomawaima (2018), presented above.. PdH is a trilingual school (English, Dine, and Spanish) in Flagstaff, Arizona. In comparison to the failure of English-only schooling, the Puente de Hózhó school resulted in the following educational benefits to the AIANY:

- Students have consistently met or exceeded federal and state benchmarks for Adequate Yearly Progress reports.
- In 2008, Native students at PdH surpassed their Native American peers in English-only programs by 14% and 21% in Grades 3 and 4, respectively
- In 2009, fifth grade Native students outperformed their English-only peers in reading by 11%, and in mathematics by 12%.
- In math, sixth grade Native students outperformed their English-only peers by 17 %, and PdH students “outperformed their English-only peers across all grade levels in writing (McCarty & Lee, 2014).

This works draws attention to the stark differences of AIANY educational outcomes based on immersion school and non-immersion schooling. Raising the question, which model of schooling is working in increasing educational outcomes for AIANY? Clearly, a language immersion model is the best fit for AIANY’s educational attainment.

Language Immersion: Educational Benefits

The type and level of language immersion education matters in the educational outcomes of American Indian and Alaska Native Youth. The inclusion of heritage languages in educational models results in academic success when the model includes high levels of immersion coupled with rigorous academic work (McCarty, 2003, 2011). On the other hand, “transitional, pull-out, and add-on programs lead to subtractive bilingualism and have not been found to be correlated with high levels of academic achievement” (McCarty 2011, p.15). McCarty’s findings (2003, 2011), inform this research by establishing the that a culturally responsive curriculum that includes language immersion should be focused on immersion models with attention to high academic standards to lead to positive education outcomes for Cahuilla youth.

There is additional literature to support American Indian and Alaska Native Youth’s academic benefits as result of their attendance at intense language immersion schools. For example, the language immersion program at the Fort Defiance Elementary School in Arizona, reported improved performances in English testing. Students in immersion programs outperformed non-immersion students in English writing and mathematics (McIvor & McCarty, 2017). At PdH the students in the immersion program outperformed their non-immersion peers on all state standardized tests (McIvor & McCarty, 2017). The educational outcomes of youth who attend rigorous language immersion schools make it clear that school-based models of immersion are beneficial for pushing back against the negative impacts from policies of assimilation.

Language immersion schooling requires community involvement, engagement, and sociocultural tailoring. A language immersion model for a community that is in the process of

reclaiming their language would look different than a community that has a large heritage speaker pool to benefit from. As such, this paper is informed by these various contexts by reiterating the critical role of working closely with Native communities to apply this model to each communities' context, with a goal of implementing ongoing and academically rigorous language immersion school models that lead to the best outcomes for AIANY. This is language reclamation.

To summarize, the literature reviewed here demonstrates that language reclamation has proven to be successful in addressing American Indian and Alaska Native Youth's educational inequities. A national scale, multi-site approach of the educational impacts of language immersion schools is underway by UCLA professors Teresa McCarty and Michael Seltzer, in collaboration with Professor Tiffany Lee at the University of New Mexico and Professor Sheilah Nicholas at the University of Arizona (Indigenous-language immersion can narrow achievement gap for Native American students, 2022). Based on the literature provided in this review, I anticipate that this study will mirror the smaller scale case studies in documenting the positive impacts of language immersion education and AIANY's educational attainment.

The next set of literature I will examine are the approaches to implementing community-based schooling and culturally responsive curriculum. The key terms used in the literature are important to review as they ground the implementation portion of this research. In other words, they provide a pathway to transform parents' visions of curriculum to actionable steps of implementation.

Key Concepts: Culturally Responsive Schooling & Indigenous Education

The literature on culturally responsive schooling for American Indian and Alaskan Native (AI/AN) peoples in the United States is unique in that it is based on the federal trust relationship between the Federal government and tribal nations. The federal trust relationship recognizes the inherent sovereignty of AI/AN nations. In an educational context, sovereignty is a nation's inherent right to decide how its nation will use its language and culture and especially how its people will be educated (McCarty & Lee, 2014). To better understand the use of culturally responsive schooling within the context of AI/AN nations, a condensed review of key concepts in the literature is important to provide to review as these concepts are used in the research questions that guide this work: How do caregivers envision a culturally responsive education for their youth? What role does Cahuilla Language immersion play in caregivers' vision for a culturally responsive education for their youth?

Culturally Responsive Schooling for Indigenous Youth

Culturally responsive schooling (CRS) broadly defined is schooling that matches the home cultures of its students (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). Castagno and Brayboy (2008), make clear the distinctions in the literature of culturally responsive schooling specific to schools that serve Indigenous youth. CRS in contexts with Indigenous youth, they argue, the focus should be on sovereignty, self-determination, racism, and Indigenous epistemologies (p. 941). They argue that while Tribal nations in the United States recognize the connections between education, sovereignty, and self-determination, the associations between these inherent rights are often not recognized by policymakers or in the canon of CRS (p. 949). Racism towards Native youth in schooling and the impacts that it causes is often omitted from the literature on CRS, and

Castagno and Brayboy (2008) argue that for a high-quality CRS to be implemented for Indigenous Youth, racism needs to be addressed (p. 950).

Indigenous epistemologies, as central to Indigenous lifeways, are a critical theme in CRS for Indigenous youth. These worldviews influence their interactions in the world and in school. Castagno and Brayboy (2008) argue, “We would likely serve Indigenous youth more effectively if we did a better job integrating multiple epistemologies within our pedagogy, curricula, and educational policies” (p. 953). In a review of the literature on culturally responsive schooling for Indigenous youth, Castagno and Brayboy (2008) found that schools are a primary area for facilitating CRS. Further, a CRS that when implemented properly across pedagogy, curricula, community involvement, and school-wide support, can lead to positive outcomes from Native youth both in educational attainment and in becoming active member of their tribal nations. Since the research site for this work, Túktam School, serves Indigenous youth, CRS informs this work by centering the role of racism, self-determination, and Indigenous epistemologies as areas in which TS could better serve our youth.

Brayboy and Castagno (2009), argue that community and culture-based education is the most conducive to meet the educational needs of Indigenous children. Their data focuses on reading and literacy skills as evidenced on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to track the consequences of Culturally Responsive Schooling not being implemented. They found that Native youth are not scoring at the academic level of other students in the county when their cultures and languages are not taught in their schools (p.38). Brayboy and Castagno’s (2009), work is powerful in that it illuminates the stark differences in educational outcomes when schools do have a community oriented and culture-based education. Their case

studies found that not just any culturally responsive curriculum implemented in a school will lead to positive educational outcomes, rather it must be relevant to the local culture and collaborative with the community. In other words, must be “contextualizing” or “localizing” curriculum and pedagogy (Brayboy & Castagno, 2009, p.47). For this research, it makes sense to focus the interview participants on those youth who identify as Cahuilla since, Cahuilla is the Indigenous culture by which Túktam School occupies.

Critical Culturally Sustaining/Revitalizing Pedagogy (CSRP)

The concept of Critical Culturally Sustaining/Revitalizing Pedagogy (CSRP), was developed by McCarty and Lee (2014) in their work, “Critical Culturally Sustaining/Revitalizing Pedagogy and Indigenous Education Sovereignty.” They drew on previous literature on culturally sustaining pedagogies, while adding revitalizing pedagogies to account for the current state of Native communities’ linguistic, cultural, and educational circumstances. The three components of CSRP are:

- (1) Attends directly to asymmetrical power relations and the goal of transforming legacies of colonization;
- (2) Recognizes the need to reclaim and revitalize what has been disrupted and displaced by colonization; and
- (3) Recognizes the need for community-based accountability
(McCarty & Lee, 2014).

The key term CSRP, and its three components enrich this research by tailoring the key terms in the literature to fit the sociohistorical and sociolinguistic contexts of Native communities.

McCarty and Lee (2014) take the three components of CSRP and apply this framework in a case study of two off-reservation public school locations: Native American Community Academy (NACA) and Puente de Hozho (PdH). Both case studies exemplified the CSRP in practice and parallel the social context of Túktam School. Both schools serve a relatively large

population of Native students. McCarty and Lee's (2014) work offers a model for public schools to serve the local needs of its Native nations and to respect their sovereignty. As the authors state, "We propose that culturally sustaining and revitalizing pedagogy requires precisely this kind of non-homogenizing attention to local communities' expressed interests, resources, and needs. This responsiveness exemplifies community-based accountability" (McCarty & Lee 2014, p.117). CSRP informs this work by demonstrating that by including parents' visions for their Cahuilla culture and language in their youths' school is to be accountable to the community. In this way, giving parents power to reclaim language and culture is critical to being responsive to the impacts of colonization.

Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL)

For a culturally responsive schooling to be implemented, the support from all levels of school leadership is crucial- especially that of principals or heads of school. Khalifa et al. (2016), in their work on urban school principals of minoritized students, found that principals are agents for setting the school's context and are leaders in implementing the needs for culturally responsive schooling. The four, "behavioral strands," they identify for Culturally Responsive School Leadership are: (1) critical self-awareness, (2) culturally responsive curricula and teacher preparation (3) culturally responsive and inclusive school environments and (4) engaging students and parents in community contexts. This fourth tenant is especially important to this work as it situates the role of parents in creating a CRS. Khalifa et. al (2016), write, "So although receiving a good education and having highly qualified teachers is paramount, these benefits do not transcend the need for Indigenous identities and communities to be valued in school -- in their authentic expressions -- and the principal is central in constructing these spaces" (p. 1290).

In addition, school leaders inviting the community to be involved in the education of their youth gives voice and agency to the people and in turn support sovereignty and self-determination. Khalifia's (2016) research informs this work that by interviewing parents on their youth's education is just one critical component that will also require the support of Túktam School's leadership.

The existing literature outlined here will inform my study by providing a base for the type of data that is important to track, methods to apply, and approaches to follow. This research will seek to address the gap in the knowledge base by exploring how parents make sense of the relationship between their children's heritage language(s) and Native identity within a culturally relevant, public-school curriculum. It will bring to light the unique circumstances that the Cahuilla communities face in their language reclamation efforts in the context of language reclamation efforts being implemented in a public-school setting. Additionally, it will provide a platform for the parents/guardians of these communities to express their visions for their youth's education in relation to culturally relevant curriculum in a manner that will better inform current and future approaches to Native parent involvement in efforts to support an education that they best see fit as aligning with their cultural values and knowledge systems.

Summary

In Chapter 2, I outlined the foundational literature that informs this research. Additionally, I provided the reader with a historical overview of Cahuilla people's experiences with colonial schooling, a clear legacy of educational policies and their impacts on language and cultural reclamation can be traced. Centering this work on the premise of language reclamation, rather than revitalization, focused this research as community identified markers of awakening

their heritage language. An important point was made that while in this paper I agree with literature that focuses on the home as being the most conducive site for language reclamation, in the current context, schools are a logical research site, since youth spend a considerable amount of their time in school spaces. Additionally, in this chapter I emphasized the ‘why’ behind this work by providing multiple examples in the literature that rigorous, community-based, culturally responsive schooling leads to positive outcomes for Native youth. Especially, along lines of identity, academic achievement, and cultural and language acquisition. The next chapter will explain the research methodologies that are employed in this paper.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

‘Et pé’ tuháyimani’chi’ néi’iy nemnánalwe métechem.
Pé’ish pé’ yéwi’ pé’e’ péta’ ne’élavive’ pennánalqa’ qeméxenuk míyaxwe, níyaqa’ ‘í’.
Mélkish yáqa’ chém pish chemnámive’ ‘éngax yúyat náwxwangax ‘ípika’ pé’ pé’ ‘ív’ax
pé’ Bering Strait hémyaxwe pé’ Mélkichech, níyaqa’.
“Kí’i’,” yáqa’, “ ‘ét ‘ípa’ pá’ chémemi’ chememnúkwe’.”
“ ‘Ípa’ pá’ chémemi’ chememtávwe’.” “ ‘Ípa’ témal pá’,” yáqa’.
“Pé’ish pé’ ‘í’ ‘úmu’ ‘í’ pekávayqalet témal pá’ chemqálive’ chémem hishTáxswetem,”
yáqa’ ‘úmu’.
“Pénga ‘ípa’ hishchéchichem chém múlu’uk mú’ ‘ípa’ pé’ hishchéchichem
chememnúkwenipa’.”
“ ‘Ípa’ pá’ ‘áy hémnay pá’ pe’méknive’ pénga’ ‘áy paás hempekávaywe’ ‘ípa’, yáqa’,
‘ív’i’ témal pá’ Táxswetem témal pá’ hemqálvenga’ ‘ív’ax.”
“Paás,” yáqa’, “ ‘ípa’ hempekávaywe’ pé’ish pé’ ‘í’ Táxliswetem ‘úmu’ pá’ hemqál,”
yáqa’.
“ ‘Engax kichamxwa’, ‘ípika’ témamka’ ‘úmu’ hemháypuliwe’, Táxswetem yéwi pá’
hemqálive’” ‘ív’ax súpulem mú’ hemqál, yáqa’.
“ ‘Exenuk chémem ‘ípa’ chemqál.”
Pé’ ‘ív’ax pé’ Mélkish yáqa’ péngax ‘ípika’ pish chemnámive’.
Pé’, “Kí’i’” yáqa’ péta’ ne’élavive’.
“Pé’ish ‘ét pé’e’ chéqe’ sichúmin’a’ ‘ét,’ yáqa’.
“Nésungax kill chepév.” “Péqi’ ‘éxenuk hémyaxwe.’”
“ ‘I’ tá’ chém chem’á’alxia’ wálangax,” yáqa’.

Many people are always asking me about this.

That is why I asked my father, God rest his soul, long ago how it was.

I told him about how the white people say that we came from the polar region and crossed the Bering Strait.

“No,” he said, “we were created right here.”

“We were placed here.” “On this land,” he said.

“Therefore all the surrounding land is ours to live on as Indians,” he said about everything.

“We were the first ones to appear here when we were created.”

“And then when they killed their own father they began a period of wandering all about this continent, this continent which the Indians’ to live on.”

“Three times,” he said, “the Indians circled around this entire continent,” he said.

“From the south, to the north, they (began and) ended up here, in the Cahuilla Indians’ traditional lands, and today there are still some left living here,” he said.

“And so we came to be here.”

And so today the white man says that we migrated from there (Asia) to here.

My father said, “No, (that’s not so).”

“That is just what they (white people) think,” he (my father) said.

“I don’t think it’s true,” (my father said). “They just say so.”

“This (what I have told you) is our own history from the beginning,” he said.
(Sauvel & Elliott, 2006, p. 223)

Níchill Sauvel’s father’s narrative of discrediting the Bering Strait theory by centering a Cahuilla epistemology through our creation story and bird songs is representative of a Cahuilla form of knowledge production. A framework that accounts for our ways of being and knowing. Our creation story and songs are sources of knowledge production and carry legitimacy in a Cahuilla worldview. This work aligns with Chew and Lokosh’s (2021) assertion that, “Indigenous people have always done research, gaining an intimate understanding of the world, and that research can be a means of resistance to colonization” (p.2). This work integrates cultural protocols that centers a Cahuilla worldview through the research methodology and influenced the methods used in this paper.

In this chapter I describe the methodology used in this thesis and how the influenced the chosen methods. The result is an Indigenous method rooted in a Cahuilla framework. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the qualitative research design approach in this work including, the sets of data that I collected, the methods I used to select the research participants, and site location, and how I coded the data in relation to a Cahuilla methodology. The research questions that guide this paper are: how do caregivers envision a culturally responsive curriculum for their youth; and what role does Cahuilla Language immersion play in caregivers’ vision for a culturally responsive education for their youth? I explore these questions through three sets of data collection: document collection/analysis of the current Native American program at Túktam School, interviews of parent/guardians whose child(ren) identify as Cahuilla, and observations of Túktam’s Native American Parent Advisory meetings.

Indigenous Methodology

To borrow from Wilson (2008), my ‘Cahuilla-centered research journey’ was informed by own experiences as a Cahuilla person. A lifelong participant observer if you will. My identity is rooted in my Túktam moiety, my inherited ‘Íswetem clan, my lineages (Lubo/Casserro), and my citizenship in the Cahuilla Band of Indians. Né’ henKáwaiiyangaxvish. This Cahuilla centered research journey is also informed by personal experiences with my Cahuilla community and our ways of knowing and being. The Cahuilla epistemological stance I learned through being a life-long resident of our reservation homelands, active participation in our tribal gatherings, tribal governance, ceremonies, and all aspects of Cahuilla life. While the framework for this paper is rooted in a Cahuilla epistemology, it draws from the broader literature of Indigenous research protocols and paradigms.

The two Indigenous scholars with whom I draw an Indigenous Methodology are from Wilson (2008) and Kovach (2021). Wilson (2008) defines an Indigenous research paradigm as, “research that follows an ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology that is Indigenous” (p.38). Guided by Kovach’s work (2021), I apply an Indigenous methodology guided by a Cahuilla conceptual framework. While conducting this community work, I came to develop an understanding of the critical components of carrying out research grounded in a Cahuilla epistemology. I focus on the tenants of (1) relationship building/accountability, (2) having a good heart, and (3) promoting sovereignty. The three components parallel Indigenous research methodologies. However, by drawing specific examples from a Cahuilla conceptual framework sets the methodology in a Cahuilla context.

Cahuilla people – like many Indigenous communities are no strangers to extractive research and researchers. To counter extractive research, relationship building and accountability were central to this work. To my knowledge, this work is the first research done by, with, and for Cahuilla people. As, Indigenous Studies scholar Shawn Wilson (2008) so eloquently states, “Research by and for Indigenous peoples is a ceremony that brings relationships together” (p.8). As member of my own research community, I had relationships with each of the participants. Some being my family (sister and cousin), former classmates, co-workers, and friends. Having a foundational relationship with each of the participants, made the initial contact for this work quite seamless. While not an explicit question in the interviews, I believe they each had a level of trust built with me to share their stories. The personal relationships I have with each member of my community added to the responsibility I will always carry in my heart to ensure that it will always be used in a “good way”(Kovach, 2021, p. 35).

Participant Selection

The research participants were selected based on two criteria: their youth identified as Cahuilla, and their youth were enrolled at Túktam School. As a phenomenological study, aimed at understanding the experiences of people who were currently experiencing the phenomenon, the participants focused on parents/guardians of students who were enrolled at Túktam School while the research was being conducted. It was important for me to be inclusive of the multiple caretakers that make up Cahuilla communities. From biological parents, one parent households, grandparents who raise their grandchildren, adoptive parents, and auntie and uncle caretakers, there are many different ways that families are made and provide care for children. While the initial selection of research participants did not require that the caretaker themselves identify as

Cahuilla, each caretaker participant ended up being Cahuilla. I purposefully used language that represents youth self-identifying as Cahuilla since I am aware of the politics of enrollment within Native nations within what is now the United States. While neither the Cahuilla Band of Indians nor the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians use blood quantum to determine citizenship, both nations do have instances of disenrollment and refusing to recognize citizenship for certain families. Therefore, to be inclusive of all our Cahuilla relatives, I intentionally used self-identifying language for the research participants and their youth.

While there are certainly Native youth from other nations at TS, parents/guardians of students who identify as being Cahuilla were the target participants. Parents of Cahuilla youth were the target population since the Cahuilla people are the Indigenous people of the land that the school currently occupies. In addition, it is fitting for the work to solely focus on caretakers of Cahuilla youth since the epistemological outlook for the paper is rooted in a Cahuilla worldview.

I brought research participants into this work by personally contacting caretakers I knew that fit the participant criteria. To start, I would start by providing context to the study including its community basis. Importantly, I shared the same story provided in the Prologue of the conversations that occurred after the California Indian Day event at TS. If the participants were interested, I emailed them the commonly asked questions in the IRB, and requested official acceptance from them to participate in the research. The next step was to schedule their interviews.

Relationship Accountability

In order to be accountable within researcher/participant relationships, Wilson (2008) argues for the following four components: (1) Choosing the topic of research, (2) Methods used to conduct the data, (3) Analysis of knowledge and (4) Presentation of research outcomes (p. 107). Applying an Indigenous research methodology requires that the community decide the topic of research. As, I outlined in the Prologue of this paper, the research topic, questions, and research site selection were community based. The conversations that occurred after an event at Túktam School organically led to the research selection to also be at this school. In short, the decision for including Túktam School for this work, was not a decision that I came to individually. As noted in the Prologue, the current work stemmed from a community event where elders brought forth the need to demand for Túktam School to be culturally responsive to their youth. Methods used to gather parent's stories of culturally responsive curricula included: interviews, participant observations, and document analysis.

In total, seven parents/caregivers participated in the research project. Each participant was interviewed two times. The interview process followed a modified structure of Seidman's (2019) three-part interview series: (1) focused life history (2) the details of lived experience and, (3) reflection on the meaning (p. 21). The first interview combined the focused life history and the details of lived experiences. Each interview was conducted over Zoom, lasted approximately 60 minutes, and was recorded. Combining parts 1 and 2 was done to place the research participants' experience in context. For example, I asked questions that focused on each participant's experiences with formal schooling. Such as whether they receive a culturally responsive education and their personal experiences with their Cahuilla culture and language. In

the details of lived experience, I asked questions relating to concrete details of caretakers' vision for implementing a Cahuilla curriculum. Included in the details of lived experience were questions relating to specific curriculum components of a culturally responsive education and the steps that would be required for this to be implemented at Túktam School.

The second interview, which took 15-30 minutes to complete, covered reflection on meaning. These interviews were beneficial in gaining an understanding of the intellectual and emotional connections to a culturally responsive education. Questions in this interview were centered on the meanings, impacts, and connections between a culturally responsive curriculum and youth's well-being, community wellness and school climate.

Observations are an important data collection strategy utilized to, “employ interpretive and naturalistic approaches to understanding people and activities in their multiple and intersecting contexts, including aspects of social identity and positionality” (Ravitch & Carl, p.141). The goal of the in-depth observations was to produce field notes that were focused on the goals and objectives set forth by the parent advisory meetings including updates on programming related to the Native Club, and any information that was pertinent to the study. Overall, I was hoping to gain insight into the relationships between Native parents and the school. On a research implementation level, I was interested in becoming informed on avenues to navigate the public school system to bring this research into useful practice. During the initial formulation of this research design, I had planned to observe at least four of Túktam School's monthly Native American Parent Advisory meetings. However, only one meeting was held during the timeframe of this research (February 2022-June 2022).

Before attending the Native American Parent Advisory meeting, I received permission from TS's principal via e-mail. I made her aware of the study, including the goal and objectives of the work and assured her that the school, the students, and the parents would be protected under UCLA's IRB process. The principal was supportive and enthusiastic for this research. The principal's enthusiasm for the research was not surprising as she had been responsive in working with the local Cahuilla tribes for events such as the California Indian Day assemblies. Since the Native American Parent Advisory meeting were not open to the public, I announced my research to the attendees and explained that I would be observing and taking notes during the meetings. Each participant verbally consented to my request for observation.

To gain insight into the curriculum that was being offered in the once-a-month Native program at Túktam School I gathered documents and crafts from the Native Program. Since both of my children were students in the course, I collected the crafts they brought home. A collection of the documents and crafts included: a coloring page, a medicine pouch, pottery, dreamcatcher, and a knitting project. These crafts helped shape my understanding of how a curriculum that was being offered to Cahuilla youth may differ – or not—from a community responsive curriculum.

Analysis Of Knowledge

On an individual level, research participants were given their interview transcripts for accuracy and to decide whether to omit any part of their interviews. To make sense of the data I collected, I analyzed the interview transcripts, documents, and observational notes through the process of coding. This process established themes and connections across the data sets. These data sets were read through multiple times using different lenses based on the analytic goals

being implemented. These analytical goals used three of the suggested ways to look at data in Ravitch and Carl (2021): (1) inductive reading (2) readings specially centered on the research questions and (3) readings that explore how aspects of participants' social identities, backgrounds, and/or experiences influence their responses and inform the analysis (p.262).

To complement the coding of the data, I used the analytical tools of connecting strategies and dialogic engagement. Contrary to coding that separates pieces of the data for the themes, connecting strategies looks at the data to create connections, which is especially useful to analyze the data gained from narratives. Dialogic engagement involves collaboration on data to reach an agreed upon interpretation. This reflexive approach was used to, "faithfully represent participants' experiences in the most complex and contextualized manner possible" (Ravitch & Carl, 2021,p.275). As a community-based project, dialogic engagement continued throughout the research to ensure that research is addressing the needs of the community and was accurately representing the community in the best way they saw fit.

Presentation of research outcomes required centering my Cahuilla communities. To be accountable to my community, I announced my research at a Tribal General Council meeting where all eligible voting adult members of my Nation are able to attend. In this way, I provided a space for my community to not only provide feedback, but to be held accountable to return to my community at the conclusion of the research. In the interview process, I reiterated to participants that I would be returning this knowledge to each of their Cahuilla nation's tribal leaders to initiate and support a culturally responsive education for their youth. While also providing the research to Túktam School and the school district.

Relational Accountability

Central to an Indigenous research paradigm is relational accountability summed up in the ‘3 Rs’: respect, responsibility and reciprocity. Relational accountability as I understand from scholars (Wilson 2008; Kovach 2021) is to do good by the people and communities by which you do research with. This extends to the relationships one has with reality, knowledge production, knowledge legitimacy, data interpretation, and being connected and understanding in ways that are meaningful and conducive to good medicine (outcomes). In this work, I specifically found that respect in a Cahuilla conceptual framework to research is built in knowledge legitimacy, responsibility is rooted in centering the needs of Cahuilla communities, and reciprocity as being based in multiple forms of gifting.

Respect: Knowledge Legitimacy

This chapter opened with a commonly held belief in Cahuilla lifeways: our bird songs tell of our people’s migration around the continent and eventually settling back home in our Cahuilla territory. As a Cahuilla person, it is intuitive for me to take the knowledge contained in our songs as reality. This reality has shaped the way I look at the world and the land. When I see Tákush Héki’, the mountain that centers our homelands, I know I am home. Home as defined since time immemorial as recorded in our songs. As the elders say, “We get our power from our songs.” This relates to Kovach (2021) who writes, “In considering knowledge generation from an Indigenous perspective, both the tangible and intangible factors and forces have equal weight in Indigenous knowledge construction” (p. 71). Using songs as a form of legitimate knowledge is to respect our songs and ceremonies as essential components of who we are as Cahuilla people.

Responsibility: Cahuilla Representation

The added responsibility I have to my community and my Cahuilla people overall from this work is ensuring that I represented all of us in good way. Some of the questions I asked myself while writing, included: Is this information, that our people are okay with sharing to the public? Am I accurately interpreting the research participants' responses? Does this work generalize Cahuilla people? To ensure that this work was responsible to my community and representing us in the best way, I engaged multiple people to review the drafts of this paper. My thesis committee, my family, and multiple community members reviewed this draft for feedback.

Rooted in an Indigenous worldview is that nothing can be perfect, but to be humble and honest. In terms of this research, there were areas where I should have been more responsible while conducting this work. One of the shortcomings in this work, is that I should have presented the research topic not just to my own community via a Tribal meeting, but also to the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians. Even before presenting, I should have asked permission from each of the sovereign Cahuilla Nations in this work to interview their citizens and represent them in this way. Another limitation is that I wish I would have included in my IRB the opportunity to interview elders. This would supplement areas of the historical record that were missing from the topic of Cahuilla's peoples' experiences with boarding schools and reservation day schools. Yet, I am reminded of my great-grandmother who always placed an "off-bead" in her beadwork as to maintain a balance. In the same way, I have come to terms that this work is not perfect, nor is it intended to be. As a novice researcher, I am humbled in knowing that I still have knowledge to gain as a responsible researcher and good relative to my Cahuilla people.

Reciprocity: Multiple Forms of Gifting

While engaging in the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process for this research, I realized the tension that exists with Indigenous forms of reciprocity and Western institutionalized concepts of gifting. The former is often done by sharing a meal with someone or giving back in multiple ways. The latter built into the IRB is predetermined and does not accurately reflect the multiple forms of reciprocity. Section 16.1 of UCLA's IRB application titled "Payment, Costs and Injury," requires the applicant to outline what the research participants will be given for their participation in the study. The options include: no payment will be provided, a University check, course credit, cash, gift cards/Bruincard deposit, non-monetary gifts or services, or other (including vouchers for parking). This section of the IRB comes in tension with the multiple forms of reciprocity that I understand as a Cahuilla person, because it assumes that the type of reciprocity for each person will be the same and that the type of gifting will be defined before engaging with each participant.

For this work I chose 'Non-Monetary Gifts and Services' and 'Other' as being the most in-line with my Cahuilla framework of reciprocity. Specifically, I outlined that, "study participants will be gifted a series of texts translated into Cahuilla that can be incorporated into their children's language learning. Additionally, the school's library will be gifted with the same texts." A framework built in a Cahuilla methodology would include a gifting of a meal shared with the participants. The justification for choosing 'Other' was that it allowed for a category of reciprocity that would account for the multiple forms of giving back not just to my research participants, but to the school and Cahuilla communities overall. During this research I provided Cahuilla language immersion classes to Túktam High School's Native club and during Túktam's

Elementary Native summer program. In this way, I was sharing my knowledge as a gift back to the youth whose parents participated in this research. Sharing knowledge with youth in my Cahuilla community was a form of reciprocity.

While I cannot verify this to be true, I strongly believe that beyond a one-to-one sharing of stories and visions with me, each caretaker in this work participated in a form of community reciprocity. In other words, they expected that by participating in this research they were investing in a fellow tribal member's education that would benefit the community overall. This type of community reciprocity is rooted in our moiety and kinship systems dating to creation (Bean, 1974). In our Cahuilla worldview each moiety and/or family plays a particular social function in maintaining our community. These range from singers, dancers, cooks, educators, government officials, diggers, basket weavers, organizers, and keepers of different knowledge systems. Research collaborators made comments such as, "I am here to support," "I am so proud of you," "I would love to participate," "Let me know how I can help." The support I received for my research was humbling. So, while the IRB does not account for this type of community reciprocity that is a life-long responsibility, I understand the multiple forms of gifting that our Cahuilla communities value and expect of our people.

Having a Good Heart

In a Cahuilla worldview there is a common guiding principal to do everything with a good heart, which I extend into my research. Failure to do things with a good heart can result in negative events happening not just to the individual, but their families and those close to them. My mother still reminds me of this when she sternly states, "Do it right or don't do it at all."

Similarly, Kovach (2021) writes, “The Elders say that if our work comes from the heart and if it is done in a good way, it will count” (p.9). In this way, I considered this research as heart work that must be done with good intentions, feelings, and outcomes that will produce good medicine.

A common experience of writers is what is termed, writer’s block or the inability to produce new material. In my Cahuilla worldview I interpreted these instances as my heart not being in the right place. The sense of having a good heart is common in Indigenous research methodologies as Wilson (2008) writes in his work:

The source of a research project is the heart/mind of the researcher, and “checking your heart” is a critical element in the research process. The researcher insures that there are no negative or selfish motives for doing the research, because that could bring suffering upon everyone in the community. A ‘good heart’ guarantees a good motive, and good motives benefit everyone involved. (p.60)

While checking my heart throughout the research and writing process, I would interpret instances of writer’s block, for example, that my heart was not in the right place. As a result, I would choose not to write in these instances as I knew that the writing was not from a good place.

When checking my heart in the research, if a topic or certain cultural information did not feel right to share as part of this project, I listened to my heart and did not include that knowledge.

This is in line with our emotional expressions in ‘Ívillu’at as all being a state of the heart. Such as nésun ‘áchama’ (my heart is good, happy), or nésun ‘élelema’ (my heart is bad, unhappy).

Good motives that were from the heart were reinforced when community members expressed their thankfulness and the excitement from the work. It was in those instances that I knew this was community heart work that would be good for everyone.

Promoting sovereignty

For the purposes of this paper, I understand sovereignty to be rooted as an inherent right of tribal nations to decide for themselves how their current community and future generations will live in balance with the world. I extend the notion of balance in the world to include Wilkins and Starks' (2018) tribal sovereignty as being differentiated from other government forms as possessing a spiritual and cultural connection (p. 60). Extending the notion of relational sovereignty, Indigenous scholars, Heidi Kiiwtinepinesiik Stark and Kekek Jason Stark (2018), describe sovereignty as, "a relationship that focuses not on the rights retained or attained via treaties, but rather on the responsibilities and duties we have to one another and to creation. These are the relationships Indigenous people want with other sovereign political entities—relationships oriented toward a mutual future" (p. 24). Sovereignty, while an inherent right, is also a complex legal concept and associated system in the United States. In a legal, government-to-government relationship with Tribal Nations and the federal government, federal recognition of a nation's sovereignty is the "formal diplomatic acknowledgement of a tribe's legal status" (Wilkins & Stark, 2018, p. 23). More recently, sovereignty has been attached to domains of its exercise. Take for example: linguistic sovereignty, political sovereignty, and educational sovereignty. As a paper that is rooted in culturally responsive education, I specifically focused on how this work can promote sovereignty in the domain of education.

An emphasis on exercising educational sovereignty extends not just to how a nation decides to have its youth educated but adds that schools must consult Tribal nations as they do with other sovereigns. McCarty and Lee (2014) make this point clear: "Regardless of whether schools operate on or off tribal lands, in the same way that schools are accountable to state and

federal governments, so too are they accountable to the Native American nations whose children they serve” (p.102). Tribal nation accountability then must be an area of dialogue where Native nations are given the agency to communicate how they want their youth to be educated and schools must engage and implement the educational requests.

This research was able to promote educational sovereignty for the Cahuilla Band of Indians and the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, in two core instances. First, the choice to interview caretakers of Cahuilla youth at Túktam School is to center self-education through parents and by extension Tribal Communities deciding for themselves how their youth should be educated. To avoid a monolithic definition of sovereignty, I specifically inquired with each interviewee on the following question: What types of impacts do you think a culturally responsive curriculum would have on your child(ren), family, and tribe? These findings will be covered in the analysis section. Finally, one of the goals of this work is to present the findings to TS to implement a culturally responsive curriculum. In this way, this work stressed educational sovereignty in that Túktam School must be held accountable to the tribal nations it serves.

Summary

This chapter has covered the methodological stances and associated Cahuilla centered conceptual frameworks that guide this paper. I provided examples of an Indigenous methodological framework that was tailored to be specific to a Cahuilla worldview. Included in this discussion were topics of: relationship building/accountability with an added emphasis on respect, responsibility, and reciprocity, having a good heart, and promoting sovereignty. This methodological stance and framework set the basis for the research design including the types of data I collected and the method I used for data analysis.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS – TOWARDS A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE

CAHUILLA CURRICULUM

‘Et Mélkish ‘úni’a’ híchaxi’ chémna’ chémemi’ pe’áyawqa’ héspen píš pichem’énanpi’...” ‘Achakwe’ píš tax’emqwáavichui’pi’ yáqa’, píš pe’em’énanpi’ qaméxenuk hích’a’ píš míyaxwenive’, tuxwá’i’chi’ píš pe’emyáwnashipi’.” Pé’em’énanpi’ míyaxwe ‘í’ Mélkish háwawayñi’, ‘í’, Mélkish nú’inay.

“Péngap ‘áchama’.”

“Yéyeyen wálangax ‘etTáxliswet: kill ‘esuntáwaspi’ míyaxwe qaháx’i’ píš ‘emíyaxwenive’,” yáqa’.

Pé’ish pé’ pe’énanpi’ míyaxwe túm híchamiviy pé’ pé’ Mélkish nú’inay.”

“Pén ‘eméxanay ‘éqi’ ‘e’énenay ‘etTáxswet.”

“Kill mípa’ ‘esuntáwasna’,” yáqa’ chémiyik.

Our father, was very much in favor of us receiving the white man’s education. “So that you can take care of yourselves,” he said, “so that you can figure out how things work (in the white man’s culture), so that you can get jobs.”

“So that you can learn the white man’s language and the white man’s culture.

“That’s good.”

“But first and foremost, you are a Cahuilla Indian and you must not forget who you are,” he said.

“That is why you must learn what the white man’s laws are all about.”

“And you as an Indian must also know your own (culture).”

“You must never forget,” he told us. (Sauvel & Elliott, p. 482)

In the excerpt above titled, “Getting an Education,” Sauvel retells the story of her father stressing the importance of maintaining the Cahuilla culture and language in the face of multiculturalism and multilingualism (Sauvel & Elliott, 2004). An important aspect of this narrative is the point being made not to reject English or the dominant culture, but to live in syncretism while maintaining a Cahuilla identity. This is true for the parents interviewed in this research. Their visions for a culturally responsive curriculum for their youth does not involve rejecting English. Nor, do they wish for their child to avoid the core curriculum offered at Tuktam School. Rather, their vision is for an education that incorporates the Cahuilla language

and culture into a space where their children's identities are celebrated as important themselves and their communities.

In this chapter, I provide an analysis of findings from observations, document analyses and interviews. In conjunction, the observations and document analyses outline the basis for parents wanting a culturally responsive curriculum at Túktam School. This analysis includes a critique of the current program and a lack of current parent involvement in their children's education. The bulk of the data that informs this chapter describes the components of what I refer to as a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum (CCRC), as defined by each of the research participants. A CCRC is grounded in Cahuilla lifeways, as taught by local elders, that centers the Cahuilla language and is intended to have far-reaching impacts. A CCRC includes specific learning themes, frequency of implementation, identifying a teacher(s), learning tools and comprehension checks. Taken together, the findings indicate that due to a lack of parent and community involvement in building a culturally responsive curriculum, the current classes and funding dedicated for Native students does not match the local Cahuilla culture. This work seeks to implement the vision of a CCRC.

Before I provide an analysis of the data, I pause here to introduce the parents and the youth that are included in this work including summaries of the interviewees' backgrounds relating to their schooling experiences. In addition to their early backgrounds concerning connections to their reservations. I am humbled to call the interviewees my relatives, friends, and fellow community members. As I outlined earlier in this thesis, each caretaker was given a pseudonym which were: Túchill, Húnwet, Málmal, Sésem, Tax'únivash, Sé'ish, and Hésun 'Áchama'. While not a prerequisite for the interviewees, each of the interviewees were Cahuilla

with six of them being enrolled members of the Cahuilla Band of Indians and one being an enrolled member of the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians. Six of the interviewees identify as female and one male. Six of the seven participants are the birth parents of their youth who attend TS, while one interviewee is the adopted mother of her children. The backgrounds of the interviewees range across those who grew up on their reservations, those who did not, and those who had infrequent visits to their homelands, however all interviewees are now current residents of their respective reservations. The cultural experiences of the caretaker interviewees ranged across those who grew up learning their heritage languages and participating in their cultures via bird singing and dancing, to those who had trauma with family not wanting to teach them their culture due to them not “looking Indian.”

Interestingly, there is also a range of schooling experiences among the parent/guardian interviewees. Some of them experienced some cultural education in their school, three of the interviewees attended a Bureau of Indian Education schools and received daily cultural and language instruction in school, and some who did not have any cultural education in their schools besides the once-a-year when their parent took the initiative to present in their classroom. The analysis that follows finds that despite the varying backgrounds of each caretaker, they each want and see the benefit of their children receiving a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum at Túktam School.

Cahuilla youth’s strengths and interests are important to outline as they provide a basis for the components of a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum that centers the interests of Cahuilla youth and builds upon their existing cultural knowledge. As told by their parents and guardians, their children’s interests are as follows. Húnwet’s child’s strengths and interests:

drawing anime characters and video games, representing his tribe through a southern California tribally based youth sports program Inter Tribal Sports (ITS). Málmal's son in her words, is "really good" with bird songs. Túchill's daughter's interests are math, reading and pottery. Hésun 'Áchama's son is good at math, loves to read, draw, and learning his Cahuilla language. Sé'ish's children have good hearts, and are builders, technologically savvy, artistic, storytellers, cooks, bird singers and dancers. Tax'únivash's child loves to read and is a Kindergartener reading at 4th grade level who loves art, bird songs, language and learning about her family through candle night and flower day. Sésem's child's strengths include compassion and possessing a leadership mentality, creative, enjoys bird singing, sweat ceremonies, Cahuilla language, and Native games. As outlined by the parents, Cahuilla youth are not deprived, nor do they lack interest in their Cahuilla lifeways, rather the CCRC is seen as a tool to extend their knowledge.

Observation: Native American Parent Advisory Meeting

Currently, Túktam School has a Native American Parent Advisory Board. The purpose of observing the Native American Parent Advisory meetings was to gain insight into the relationship between parents of Native students and Túktam staff and administrators. While only one meeting was held during this research (possibly due to COVID-19 limitations), the single observation informed this research by providing insight into lack of parent involvement with the school and the goals of the Native American Parent Advisory Committee meeting.

First, the initiative for Túktam School to have a Native American Parent Advisory Committee is indicative of the school's receptiveness to including Native parents' input into the school. While also recognizing the responsibility to their Native students and communities. Both

of which are foundational for a CCRC to be implemented. However, on the Zoom meeting, there was limited parent attendance. Those in attendance included the principal, myself, a previous teacher from the summer Native American program, and an employee of the school who is Cahuilla tribal member. In interviews with parents, I asked if they were aware of the advisory meetings. All the parents said they were unaware of the meetings and expressed their frustration with lack of communication, consistency, and outreach for the meetings. I, too, felt frustrated and defeated attending the meeting alone because if parents are not attending the meetings, their meaningful contributions are left unheard. This thesis is driven by making the voice of those Native parents heard.

In the Native American Parent Advisory Committee meeting, the teacher and principal presented the goals of the committee. During the meeting, I, as the only parent in attendance, helped refine the goals. The goals are based on two themes: improve Native student outcomes through local culture and increase Native student visibility and tools to meet educational goals. Specifically, the goals are to:

- (1) Utilize Native community and school resources to increase student learning and improve outcomes. Embrace culture and language through Native American Day/Month incorporating local culture into our curriculum.
- (2) Elevate indigenous voices, perspectives, strengths, and skills as well as educate our faculty and staff to better support educational needs specific to our local bands (personal observation, February 17, 2022).

These goals are promising for implementing a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum because they outline the importance of engaging the local Native culture in their curriculum. The second goal is encouraging in that it recognizes the need for teacher and faculty education and collaboration with the local Cahuilla tribes. While these goals and recognition of Native

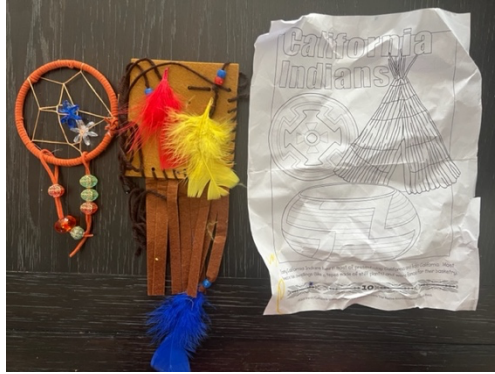


Figure 5 Crafts from the Native American Student Program at TS, personal photograph.

student's parent involvement is needed, they are currently not being implemented as evidenced through the current Native program being offered at Túktam School.

Document Analysis

Document analysis of crafts and handouts from the Native program referred to as the Native Club were collected from my children. The crafts were used to gain an understanding of the content of the program and to compare that to the visions of the parent's definition of a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum. The Native Club is a monthly class taught by a teacher from Túktam School that identifies as Native American, however is not Cahuilla. Students who identify as Native American during their school enrollment process are sent home with a paper to be enrolled for the Native Club. Both of my children attended the Native Club for the 2021-2022 school year, and I collected their projects and handouts to inform this work. These materials consisted of a coloring page, dreamcatcher, and medicine pouch (Figure 5). I argue that while there is an existing Native Program at TS, the curriculum is based on a stereotypical, decontextualized, pan-Indian knowledge base that is in direct contrast with the parent's visions for a culturally responsive curriculum.

Parents critiqued the current Native club and the school's overall curriculum concerning Native people based on content and the lack of awareness of the program. Túchill, for example, stated her critique of the program as being irrelevant to her child's learning, since the materials covered topics that her child already knew. In a specific critique of the content, she stated, "It's the same which no offense to Plains Indians, but it's the same Midwest, Midwestern focuses that we've seen... That people have seen on TV all the time, portrayed in Hollywood type thing. And I think it's so important for especially local non-Natives to see present-day Natives" (Int. 1, 2/22). To critique curricula of the school more generally she notes, "But I think it's also more important to see them today, present day, as teachers, as doctors, as lawyers...that my kids aren't getting that view in school" (Int. 1, 2/22). Túchill's comments are important as they make clear that the current program lacks a focus on Cahuilla people and fears that the curriculum is a presented as stereotypical notions of Native culture.

The frequency of the Native Club, as a once-a-month class, was insufficient for one parent. She noted, "Pretty much all they (the school) offer is the native program and that's what couple weeks out of the year, you know, my kids are Native. My kids are Native American every day you know" (Sé'ish, Int. 1, 4/22). While this paper offers a critical analysis of the program through document analysis, I argue that the teacher who is currently overseeing the Native Club is not to blame for the current content being provided to the Cahuilla youth at TS. Rather, the lack of community control of curricula has created the current curriculum conditions at TS.

The documents given in the Native Program exist within a "document safety zone." Like Lomawaima and McCarty's (2006) use of the "musical safety zone" in which Native nursery rhymes were not seen as a threat to a white settler social order and thus were acceptable, so too

are the current materials in the Native Club (p. 54). A coloring sheet printed from www.gallopade.com given to the students is titled, “California Indians.” The pictures for coloring include what is described in the caption as being baskets and a California Indian dwelling. The caption reads, “Early California Indians lived in most of present-day California and Baja California. Most lived in tule dwellings (like a tepee made of stiff plants) and were famous for their basketry” (Figure 5). An immediate critique of this caption is that the language used places California Indians in the past. California Indians are still here. Specifically, Cahuilla people are still here, and we are still known for our basketry. This document also fails to recognize the ongoing diversity of California Indian nations – who continue to be one of the most culturally and linguistic peoples in the world. This single document being provided to Cahuilla students at Tuktam School falls within a document safety zone that parallels the ongoing erasure of California Indian people.

The medicine pouch and dreamcatcher crafts stay within the safe zone as they are extracted from any meaningful cultural context. Lomawaima and McCarty (2006) argue, “Extracted from Native contexts of Indigenous meaning and social control, ‘traditional’ artifacts take their regimented places as props in a story of race development” (p. 58). The current crafts being offered in the Native program at TS from my knowledge did not contain any cultural knowledge or background included in their creation. Moreover, medicine pouches and dreamcatchers are not based in Cahuilla culture, nor are they typical hands-on materials usually associated with cultural teachings. Cultural materials and practices usually offered are gourd making, basketry, and ribbon shirt and skirt making. Whereas in a school context these cultural

materials may be viewed in the “danger zone,” or outside of the scope of current norms in education regarding Native people as culturally homogeneous.

While the current crafts could be argued to be associated with an extended notion of Native culture, the current crafts and knowledge being given in the Native program at Túktam School are completely disconnected from Cahuilla culture and language. I argue that the current curriculum is harmful since many of the students who attend TS are Cahuilla. What types of identity making are being made in this program? Does this class influence Cahuilla youth’s identity formation? How does the knowledge being given in this class differ from the type of cultural curriculum the caretakers envision for their youth? These questions call for placing pedagogy in a local context and is a demand that has been made in previous literature. Baloy (2011), in her work of “placing” Aboriginal language revitalization efforts in urban settings with a diverse set of Indigenous languages and cultures argues that Indigenous people of the land must be honored in these efforts. In their protocol for local territories and languages they outline:

To be prioritized, particularly in public use of aboriginal languages. Local First Nations individuals and nonlocal urban aboriginal people agreed that the ties between land, language, and identity must be acknowledged and respected by emphasizing local peoples. By adhering to protocol, language workers can participate in *placing language*: localizing the connections between land, language, and identity (p.523).

The same protocol exists for Cahuilla people in prioritizing local people in knowledge production. For example, when an event is hosted in the traditional Cahuilla territory, the Cahuilla expect to be invited to open the event whether that be through opening songs or welcoming prayers. The same exists that if we are hosting an event on another tribe’s territory,

our cultural protocols are rooted in asking the people of that land for permission and invitation to host the event.

The connections between Cahuilla knowledge, language, identity and land is a basis for Cahuilla people's worldview. Elder Katherine Siva Saubel recorded this connection in the following excerpt:

Wíhkwa' táxwika' híchiqa. Táxwika' námiqa 'ét háwawayill pén chemtém'a'.
Híchamivi' pichemkúktashwe chémem hishTáxliswetem 'ív'iy téma'li', píyik héspen
chémem chémsun péma' míyaxwe.
Pé'ish pé' né' nekúktashqalive' pennánalqa 'ív'iy chemeynúki'chi' chemeytáva'chi'
qaméxenuk múchi'ika' pish chemetéwap, qaháx'i' pish chememámaywap, qaméxenuk 'í'
pish kíyalawap chemtém'a' pén chemháwaway'a'.

The two go together. The two, the language and our land, overlap.
When we Indians speak of this land, the words come from our hearts.
That is why when I pray I ask the one who created us and placed us here to look after us
in the future, in hopes that someone might help us in our effort to preserve our land and
our language. (Sauvel & Elliott, 2006, p.455)

This paper extends this call for the incorporation of Cahuilla language and culture into curriculum, as do the parents as evidenced in the interviews that follow. They specifically call for local Cahuilla knowledge to be placed in curriculum efforts at Túktam School.

Building a CCRC

Defining the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum was developed through interviews with the parents/guardians. The basis for the parent/guardians wanting a Cahuilla curriculum for their youth at Túktam School is a lack of Cahuilla teachings in the current curricula. This in turn fails to honor their people and results in the lack of cultural sensitivity amongst the school and larger community. Cultural sensitivity regarding boys with long hair was

the most cited response as experiences with lack of cultural sensitivity at TS. One of the responses included the following:

But I think it's obviously more hurtful for, um, young boys to be belittled for long hair because it ties directly to who they are as a person culturally (Túchill, Int. 1, 2/22).

As the quote above illustrates, lack of culturally responsive curricula and knowledge of local cultural norms can be damaging to Native youth's identity.

Parents envision their youth having a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum as an important step of honoring their ancestors' struggles to keep their Cahuilla culture and language alive. Some examples of the language that was indicative of this reasoning were, "We gotta keep it up and it's huge," (Sésem, Int. 1, 4/22). Sé'ish, makes clear that a CCRC would honor her ancestors and be a victory against multiple forms of genocide. She expresses this by stating:

My ancestors were, what my ancestors did for future generations... So the culture, the traditions, the language, all of that is like a victory to me. Every time we have it or every time, we learn it it's a victory to me because all those, they were trying to wipe all that out. They wanted it gone. They wanted it like almost like a genocide. They wanted it completely destroyed and the more it happens and the more it's taught and learned, the more it's like a victory for us, it is, it is a victory and a reminder of how far our ancestors came and how much our, not just our ancestors, but our people all across the country had had to go through (Int. 1, 4/22).

Honoring the sacrifices of Cahuilla elders keeping the language and culture alive was extended to the envisioned classroom that would implement a CCRC. One parent noted that she would like to see pictures on the walls of notable Cahuilla elders who revived cultural practices to remind students of traditions that, "we almost lost," as a motivational aspect to encourage students to continue learning their traditions. The foundation for caretakers to have a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum is for their youth to realize the impacts on the current generation of students while at the same time honoring past generations.

Components of a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum (CCRC)

The components of a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum (CCRC) include teaching components, identifying a teacher(s), the ideal frequency of the curriculum, specific learning tools, and methods to test the effectiveness of the curriculum. The teaching components included a wide-variety of Cahuilla culturally specific teachings. There was an emphasis on the Cahuilla Language being central to the CCRC that will be explained in detail below. Identifying the teacher(s) of CCRC was an especially important detail that parents made clear to outline in their discussions of a CCRC. The learning tools and methods to test the comprehension of the CCRC were detailed by the parents in ways that were tailored to their student's learning styles. Parents were enthusiastic in their role as curriculum developers of the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum.

Teaching Components

Parents/guardians identified specific cultural areas of the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum (CCRC) that I grouped into seven themes: stories and songs, land-based teachings, art, field trips, spirituality, tribal government, and Cahuilla language. All seven themes are connected and overlap. For example, teaching language can be a tool used in tribal government, a basis for stories and songs, and the used during gathering of plants. As such, the seven themes should not be interpreted as mutually exclusive, rather as interactive and part of a larger system of Cahuilla cultural knowledge. The parents identified the following detailed components of a CCRC:

- **Stories and songs**: birdsinging, dancing, peon (including the songs), storytelling, family lineages, history

- **Land-based teachings:** plant knowledge especially dealing with medicinal uses, cooking & hunting, cattle ranching
- **Arts:** baskets, pottery, tools, gourd making
- **Field trips:** to local hot springs, Málki' Museum, Sherman Indian School, local reservations
- **Spirituality:** creation story, Flower Day, Candle Night including why we celebrate these ceremonies, gender responsibilities, reasons for growing hair long
- **Tribal government:** tribal laws, government functions, how to conduct tribal meetings, being on committees, boards, and commissions; and
- **Cahuilla Language:** primary language of the CCRC in an immersion-based method

To provide a more in-depth detail of the components of a CCRC, I will go into an analysis of the components of tribal government and Cahuilla language. These two themes were chosen for a deeper analysis because of the identified role that Cahuilla language would take in these specific topics and is relevant to the research questions that guide this thesis. Tribal government is given special attention in this work due to the parent's attentiveness to carefully describing how and to what extent the subject is to be taught. Whereas, the themes of stories and songs, land-based teachings, arts, field trips, and spirituality were not given the same emphasis. I begin with the theme of Cahuilla language as this was the most crucial and central component identified by the caretakers of youth at Túktam School. Importantly, this analysis will answer one of the research questions that guides this paper. That is, what role does Cahuilla Language immersion play in caregivers' vision for a culturally responsive curriculum for their youth?

Cahuilla Language

The interviewees' language ideologies concerning their heritage language ('Ívillu'at), were that it should be a priority in the curriculum. In describing the importance of Cahuilla language, parents/guardians used descriptive words such as language is, "sacred" and should be incorporated as a "mandatory class." One parent, Túchill, stated, "The goal should be speaking in

Cahuilla when they're at school. English should be the second language” (Int. 1, 2/22). In connection to making Cahuilla the dominant language of the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum, a second parent outlined her expectations of the role ‘Ívillu’at should take in the curriculum. “I would expect a majority of the class to be taught in the language (Cahuilla),” she stated (Sésem, Int. 1, 4/22). In addition, Sé’ish, made clear, “Inside these four walls, our primary language is our language” (Int. 1, 4/22). In sum, the parents’ responses indicate the central role that ‘Ívillu’at should play in the CCRC. Shifting from English, as the dominant language, to Cahuilla in the CCRC is indicative of the ongoing role that language plays in Cahuilla identity formation at all ages.

Parents emphasized that ‘Ívillu’at should be especially focused in the CCRC for youth in elementary. Túchill stated, “But I think language at that age is priority. Or should be a priority at both (elementary and high school), but mainly I think that would be the goal of K-5th” (Int. 1, 2/22). Tax’únivash agreed with younger children being the target age group for the Cahuilla language in the curriculum. She stated, “I think it would be great to start something like that, especially, at a young age where children are, I guess better able to learn a language. They're much, it's easier for them, they're like sponges when they're really little like preschool age to learn new languages and new words. And I think it sticks a little better (Int. 1, 5/22). Whereas Tax’únivash believed that older children could have the Cahuilla language taught as an option. Despite the grade level that ‘Ívillu’at is taught. Parents see full immersion as the best teaching technique for their children to learn their heritage language.

Teaching Cahuilla language in an immersive technique was especially important for the parents. Sésem noted the importance of implementing Cahuilla words and numbers on the walls

of the classroom so that seeing the language is normalized for the students. Similarly, Hésun 'Áchama' envisioned the "The ABCs of Cahuilla" displayed in the classroom including the associated words in 'Ívillu'at corresponding to each letter in the Cahuilla alphabet. Implementing 'Ívillu'at from the moment students walk into a classroom with greetings was an important and useful tool that Sé'ish gave as an example for an immersive environment. She provides a vision, or a new language policy, within the CCRC. Sé'ish illustrated an example of what a child walking into a classroom at Túktam School could expect with a CCRC being implemented:

So like you walk through the classroom and instead of saying, good morning, you say, "Míyaxwa'," or you know, something in our language to help them get more comfortable in understanding with the environment they walk into. Cause if, you walk into a culture class, or a language class and that language, isn't the first priority language, our primary language it kind of wouldn't make sense to me. You know, I remember going into Spanish class when I was in college and we had to greet our teacher in Spanish. So I think it would be somewhere along the same lines. Like, you know, if you're gonna walk in and say, "Míyaxwa' 'étew Patricia, or , "Nétew Patricia," and vice versa. So I think that's really important to implement that as a primary language in that classroom (Int. 1, 4/22).

Sé'ish's point that not including Cahuilla language as the primary language via an immersive environment in the CCRC simply, "wouldn't make sense," is telling of the critical role that parents believe 'Ívillu'at should have in the curriculum.

Tribal Government

Teaching tribal government was the most carefully crafted teaching component of the CCRC. Crafting pedagogical materials designed to explain the structure and function of tribal government was a subject that parents believed should be carefully considered to avoid tribal politics. In this paper, tribal politics means the long-standing disagreements between families

within a reservation of how to best govern the nation. Carefully crafting this theme was to be rooted in concepts, for example, of how to be on a tribal government committee, boards, and how to take official meeting minutes. Parents were clear that the topic of tribal government should steer clear of topics concerning contentious laws and historical tribal in-fighting.

The importance of teaching tribal government made clear that parents' and guardians' desires for their youth to be involved in nation-building. This was especially true for youth whose families may not be politically involved in their respective tribal nations. For example, Sésem noted,

Because you never know that Native youth, that may be the only teaching they get. On how things are, are governed. You know, they might not have a family, you know, that, that are into those, you know, deeply into, you know, tribal governing. And so that might be the only thing and that might trigger something within them to be like, "Oh, cool. Like give them motivation to wanna be a part of the tribe. (Int.1, 4/22).

In Cahuilla communities, tribal government is not something that is taught, rather youth are usually immersed in tribal meetings due to their parents simply not having babysitters. For example, I, as the youngest child in my family, was forced to attend monthly tribal meetings with my mom. On the contrary, parents that are not involved in tribal government, tend to have children that are not involved. Then, when tribal members become of voting age in their respective nations, their political involvement is much harder to acquire if their parents were not involved. However, CCRC could help change the trajectory for youth to feel empowered to be active members of their tribe's governance whether or not their relatives are involved.

Tribal governance was an important part of CCRC to promote sovereignty both within the Cahuilla nations and creating a more expansive understanding of tribal laws. Húnwet, in recounting his experiences, shared that growing up the local non-native community

misinterpreted a tribe's inherit right to self-govern as people on reservations being lawless. He felt that including tribal government in a curriculum would provide an accurate understanding of sovereignty (Int. 1, 4/22). Tax'univash was hopeful that including tribal government in a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum would promote the next generation of tribal leaders to develop a constitution for their tribe. She said it would, "Help youth understand a little bit more what it's about. Not, governing on whims or emotions, but looking at, you know, what the way decisions have been made over the years and how they affect people" (Int. 1,5/22). On an internal level of understanding a youth's tribally specific laws, Hésun 'Áchama' noted that teaching tribal laws would be important for youth if tribal laws may be used against them. She stated, "In case they come into a position in their lives where it's like, no you're not gonna mess with me on this, you know? I know (Int. 1, 5/22). Empowering youth to know their rights on an individual tribal level, while at the same time providing the legal basis of sovereignty for tribes overall though a CCRC would prepare Cahuilla youth to be the next tribal leaders.

Cahuilla Teacher Prioritization

Identifying the teacher(s) of the CCRC was a crucial component of the curriculum as identified by the parents. Their responses followed a tiered-like system based on the most preferred teacher(s) down a chain of the next in line to teach if the person in the tier above them was not available (See Figure 6). The top tier, or the most preferred to teach the CCRC, were identified as local Cahuilla elders from one of the three local Cahuilla tribes (Cahuilla, Santa

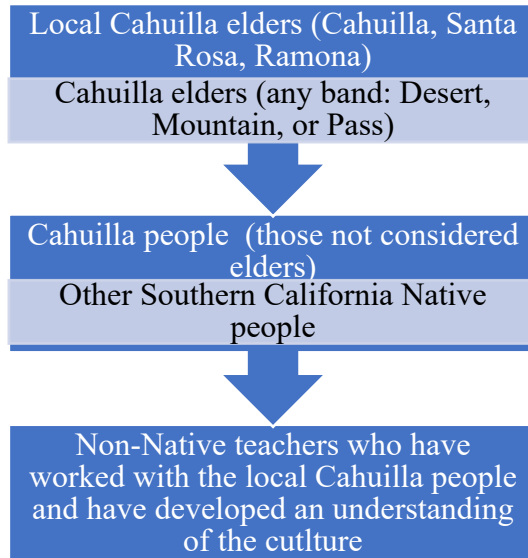


Figure 6 CCRC Teacher Preference

Rosa, or Ramona). Next in line if local Cahuilla elders were unavailable, was Cahuilla elders from any Cahuilla nation. Sé'ish outlined the preference for a local Cahuilla elder, while also noting that any Cahuilla elders would be suitable to teach the CCRC. She stated, “I mean I think for our local kids, Cahuilla people would be good whether it's Mountain Cahuilla, Desert Cahuilla, just Cahuilla in general. I would prefer it be Mountain Cahuilla. So that way my kids know their area first” (Int. 1, 4/22). Similarly, Húnwet stated, “And I think that would be Cahuilla from you know, the surrounding tribes as well and they're actually a branch of Cahuilla so, I mean, this, you know. Maybe there are somethings that might be a little different, but, it's all, you know, it's just the same” (Int. 1, 4/22). Critical to a CCRC at Túktam School is to have the primary teacher(s) be elders from local Cahuilla band, or Cahuilla elders from any of the nine Cahuilla nations.

Third in line after Cahuilla elders, would be teachers that are Cahuilla but are not considered elders by age, but are considered qualified in their experiences with Cahuilla culture

and language. Cahuilla here was defined not just as a Cahuilla person, but an enrolled member. Húnwet stated, “If we want somebody to teach about Cahuilla then why not make it an actual tribal member” (Int. 1, 4/22). Two parents outlined similar definitions of being qualified to teach CCRC. They include:

Túchill: When I say qualified, I mean number one, being Cahuilla, whether that would be Mountain, Pass, or Desert. But then also qualified, like, not necessarily certified through to the state to teach, but who’s qualified who knows the Cahuilla language, have experience, who participates in their culture, participates in language classes, an elder, or someone respected in the community as having that knowledge. And then, if there’s no one available, then yes, it would mean qualified to teach like certified by the state (Int. 1, 3/22).

Tax’únivash: People obviously who have the education, but also people with, with, with degrees in the field, but also people who have spent years or, or I would say at least many months to years, and it can be documented or proven. I guess that they have been learning the language. They know the language that they’re fluent. We’d have to definitely set up some criteria for that to see how do you qualify (Int. 1, 5/22).

Both parents, Túchill and Tax’únivash based their notions of qualified on the merits of having notable experience with learning Cahuilla language. The qualification for teachers being able to teach on the basis of language is in-line with the parents’ emphasis on the role that ‘Ívillu’at should take in the curriculum.

The fourth level of prescribed teachers for the CCRC is a Native person with the stipulations of having a good heart, accuracy, and dedication. Húnwet noted, that as long as the person teaching is Native and “doing it in a good way,” then that would be fine, but he did note that a Cahuilla instructor is needed for “accuracy” (Int. 1,4/22). Tax’únivash also noted that despite who is teaching the curriculum elders would be needed to provide accuracy in the teachings. “Definitely tribal elders should be included either in teaching of the curriculum or

supervising. Looking at what's presented to make sure it's accurate," she noted (Int. 1, 5/22).

Taken together, Húnwet and Tax'únivash's statements illustrate the hesitancy to have Native people generally teaching the CCRC without accuracy from elders being included.

An important aspect of requiring a local Native person to teach the curriculum is to have the knowledge of cultural norms. This was especially true for Túchill's explanation of the importance of a Tribal person in teaching tribal government. She stated, "That's why it's important to have a Cahuilla person teaching it, at the very least a local Native person teaching it so they understand how to walk that line of what to say and what not say" (Int. 1,2/22). Túchill went on to say that straying away from tribal political frameworks that delves into families or personal politics, that a non-native, or non-Cahuilla person, "wouldn't realize" (Int. 1, 2/22). As evident by Túchill's comments, a teacher for the CCRC is important to have local knowledge of what should and should not be taught.

The final pool of teachers to implement CCRC were described as non-Native teachers that are allies to Cahuilla communities. In other words, "So that's somebody who respects our culture who respects our learning, our teaching, our lifestyle, I would think. Somebody who is invested in our kids" (Málmal, Int. 1, 4/22). In a nod to the reality that not all Cahuilla people have an interest in learning their heritage language and culture, Hésun 'Áchama' noted that a teacher of the CCRC would not have to be Native. She stated, "We have people who are outside of the culture that want to learn. So, I wouldn't put it in black and white, you know, like you have to be Indian to teach like, Indian children" (Int. 1, 5/22). Both Málmal and Hésun 'Áchama', are parents that agree the teacher(s) to implement CCRC do not necessarily need to identify as Native, but should be invested, respectful, and know the Cahuilla culture and language.

Frequency

With a detailed map of the teachers outlined for the CCRC, an important piece of the curriculum was to identify the frequency of the program. Each of the seven parents agreed that implementing the curriculum daily is preferred. One parent noted if instruction is not possible daily then at least weekly would suffice. One parent, Húnwet, made an important point in his recommended frequency for implementing CCRC in recognizing that a once-a-week implementation would be sufficient, since Cahuilla youth are continuing to learn their cultures at home. He stated, “I mean, because Native students get a lot. I mean, they get taught a lot at home. So, you know, to have it, you know, school and you can't just get them out, you know, I mean you don't wanna do that. I mean, we live the native lifestyle I mean there's not really a lot for us to learn, maybe just you know on the history side of it” (Húnwet, Int. 1, 4/22). The point that Húnwet makes especially on the lines of removing children from their “regular” classrooms to be placed in a class with CCRC for knowledge children may already be getting at home is a reminder that for the frequency of the CCRC, there is a need for the curriculum to push beyond the knowledge base that Cahuilla children already receive in their homes.

The reasons for a daily implementation for the CCRC was for children to have a curriculum that could be as close to a lived experience. Especially, along the lines of identity and increasing heritage language acquisition. In the parents’ words, “Because the more you learn it, the more, you know, it'll be a part of you” (Int. 1, 5/22). The extension of the lived experience to the CCRC was also related to the children’s identity in that the curriculum should be daily because at Sé’ish points out, “ I think that's a daily. My kids are Native American every day and not just native. My kids are Cahuilla every day” (Int. 1, 4/22). Another cited reason for a daily

implantation of the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum was related to increasing Cahuilla language acquisition. Tax'únivash stated, "I would think, daily, I think obviously would definitely be the best... I would think at least a couple times a week because it's hard to learn a language if you're not exposed and you're not seeing anything. Might be able to learn to count to 10 by the end of the year, but if you're not doing it at least I would say three times a week, it's not. I can't imagine it would be very beneficial" (Int. 2, 6/22). The parents' demand for the CCRC to be implemented daily at Túktam School was telling of the parent/guardian's vision of the curriculum's impact on the daily lives of their children.

Learning Tools

The purpose of gaining an understanding of the types of learning tools and comprehension checks that would be beneficial to Cahuilla youth is to avoid a one-size-fits-all model for learning resources and forms of testing within the CCRC. Parents had a variety of learning tools they believed would be the most useful for their children including books, computers, and other electronic program such as apps and video games. Additionally, parents identified comprehension checks to test the success of the program both on long-term and short terms measurements. For short term comprehension checks parents noted one-on-one conversations with children in the language, reading and writing in 'Ívillu'at, their overall school test scores, drawings of their comprehension, and group activities. Testing the success of the CCRC long-terms were based on a student's long-term educational attainment, and their level of participation with their local tribal government. In a nod to educational sovereignty, there were parent/guardian responses to tribes developing their own tests for the curriculum.

Summary

In Chapter 5, as the analysis chapter of this work, I examined three sets of data: observations, documents, and interviews. In summary, the findings from this chapter found that the current Native program at Túktam School does not have a strong cultural match with the local Cahuilla nations. As such, the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum envisioned by the parents is radically different from the current curricula being offered at the school. The key differences are the central role that Cahuilla language should have in the curriculum along with detailed learning components related to Cahuilla culture. An additional important difference is the daily implantation of the CCRC and a call for special attention to the teacher(s) of the program. Túktam School as evidenced by the current goals of the Native American Parent Advisory Board, is a prime site for bringing Cahuilla parent's visions for a CCRC to fruition. In Chapter 6, I conclude with a pathway for implementing the CCRC along with concluding thoughts and possibilities for future areas of research.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Métechem hémyaxwe pish wélchem kikitam, “‘Ángapa’ pichemqwé’eqanne’, ‘ángapa’, ‘ángapa’ yéwi’ Táxstem che’mingkim pish hem’áyaxwenive’, chemnú’in’a’ ‘ív’i’, yéwi’ Táxstem Kawíiyam hemnú’inay, hémyaxwe kikitam.

Yén kill pem’é’nanwe kikitam.

Kíll míyaxwe híchaxi’ pe’ ‘ívanipi’ sáwaaqalipa’ ‘enú’in’a’.

Pé’ish pé’ yéwi hemqál’e’ taxnú’invachem, paxá’am, nét, háwiniktem.

‘Umu’ ‘ív’ax pé’em hemsáwaaawe. Méxenuk ‘áy pe’ikúlka’ ‘ángapa’?

Méxenuk ‘áy ‘etpéniichika’? Pé’ish pé’ ‘ív’ax ‘úmu’ kikitam chéqe’ he’Mélkishlluwe.

Kíll mípa’ híchay pemnánvaxanipi’ míyaxwe.

Kíll mípa’ ‘áchakwe’ hémpeñiichipi’ míyaxwe.

Hémki’ sáwaaqa.

Kísh ‘Amna’a’ kill híwwe.

Kíll mípa’ hémpeñvawe.

Kíll pem’é’nanwe qaméxenuk qíchi’lli’ pish pemkúlpi’.

Pé’ish pé’ né’ níyaqa, “‘Ay yéwi’ chúmálaw’i”.

Pé’ pé’ ‘áy túku’ háyve’ kísh ‘Amna’ay pemchútwe’, pé’ pé’ Táxstem ‘Ivilluwenetem he’méxanay.

Pé’ ‘áy háyve’.

‘Iv’ax pé’ish pé’ péqi’ pichemqwá’asnipi’ míyaxwe yéwi qaméxenuk pish míyaxwenive’.

Mán túm méxenuk pichemkíiyapi’ míyaxwe ‘éxenuk.

Kíll mípa’ ‘ángapa’ ‘éxenuk míyaxwenap míyaxwe qaméxnuk yéwi che’mingkim pish hemqálive’.

Lot’s of young people say, “We are going to revive the Cahuilla culture, just like our ancestors used to do, our culture, the culture of the Cahuilla people, the young people say.

But the young people don’t know.

You cannot bring it back once your culture has died out.

Long ago there used to be leaders, paxá’ officials, nét officials and ceremonial singers.

Nowadays they are all gone. How are you going to recreate that?

How can you do that? Because not all the young people speak English.

They can never bring that (a revival about).

They will never be able to do it right.

Their (ceremonial) houses (i.e. kísh Amna’) are gone.

There are no more ceremonial houses.

There is no more ceremonial tobacco smoking.

They do not know how to make ceremonial money.

And that is why I say, “It ended long ago.”

Recently they burned the last ceremonial house, the one belonging to the Cahuilla people.

That was the last one.

And so now we have to document it (the culture) accurately.

We have to document it any way we can.

There is no way that the culture of our ancient ancestors will ever come back. (Sauvel & Elliott, 2004, p. 1006)

I agree with Nichill Sauvel, that our Cahuilla lifeways will never go back to our ceremonial traditions involving Kísh ‘Áman’a’, the paxá, a nét, or the use of qíchi’. However, this work has shown that parents do not have this expectation for their youth. Rather, their cultural and language reclamation requires that Cahuilla youth are proud of who they are and that they maintain the language and culture that has been kept alive by their elders. In addition, to being empowered to continue to teach this knowledge to the next generation. Hésun kút míyaxwe.

This thesis, like Nichill Sauvel’s questions in the excerpt above, has raised the following research questions. How do caregivers envision a culturally responsive curriculum for their youth? What role does Cahuilla Language immersion play in caregivers’ vision for a culturally responsive curriculum for their youth? In this **concluding chapter**, I summarize the findings of this research in relation to the research questions. I discuss the contributions this work has added to literature. Included in the discussion of the contributions, I look to the future of the impacts a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum could have from a parent’s perspective. Finally, I close out the paper with potential areas for future research.

Scholarly Contributions

While writing the problem statement for this paper, I outlined the state of American Indian educational policy in the United States. Included in this discussion was Senator James Ramos’ AB 1703 California Indian Education Act: California Indian Education Task Force. On September 23, 2022, California Native American Day, Governor Newsom signed the bill into

law (California Indian Education Act, 2022). The key component of this bill is for, “local educational agencies to partner with California Indian tribes local to their region or tribes historically located in the region” (AB-1703 California Indian Education Act: California Indian Education Task Forces). The purpose of the task forces is in summary to: develop and encourage implementation of curricular materials with the local tribes, a shared understanding of proper or improper instructional materials concerning Native people, and strategies for addressing Native people’s achievement gap.

This thesis provides a method for engaging local tribal people, especially parents, in policy making such as AB 1703. The curriculum framework of the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum, while limited to two Cahuilla tribes, provides an example of the type of curricula that California Indians people expect and want for their youth in California’s Education system.

This research has provided an avenue for future research with tribal nations relating to culturally responsive curricula. Future research would benefit from understanding school personal and district level employees’ perspectives on culturally responsive curricula such as the CCRC. Questions such as: how are school districts with relatively large populations of Native students in California engaging or not engaging the local tribal nations they are responsible to? What are avenues to bridge the gap between school districts and Southern California tribal nations? The answers to these questions could strengthen the support needed to implement a CCRC. These questions could be explored by individual Native communities or in future research. Future research could benefit from a more expansive pool of interviewees and research sites. Such as including a multi-site study of all Cahuilla nations and their respective school

districts. I imagine a guiding research question could be, do the components of a CCRC, especially Cahuilla Language use hold true to all Cahuilla Nations? Since, I was unable to interview every caretaker whose youth identified as Cahuilla at Túktam School, I see future community work increasing the level of involvement of parents in the ongoing development of a CCRC.

The scholarly implications from this work has expanded methods for future Cahuilla researchers to work within and for their communities by implementing the Cahuilla methodology I outline in this paper. Other Cahuilla scholars can use this framework for other areas of study. Additionally, other Native people can use this to tailor their model to their tribe's ways of relating to knowledge. The Cahuilla methodology could be used by non-Native scholars to conduct research for and with Native communities that is done in a good way and honors their ways of being and knowing. Additionally, this research has expanded the voices of Native parent's involvement in curricula development and deepened our understanding of culturally responsive curricula development with Native communities. The critical implication that results from this work is implementing the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum, discussed in the next section.

Future Impacts

To conclude, I use the words of parents/guardians regarding their forecasted impacts of a CCRC being implemented at TS. The important points they outlined for the envisioned impacts of the CCRC were along the lines of tribal-school relationships, a required course, and the funding and resources needed to fulfill the learning components of the curriculum. Tribal-school

relationships were identified by the parents as being crucial for the curriculum to be implemented.

Tribal-school relationships were identified along the lines of tribal parent involvement and support with ongoing communication. Additionally, including tribal leaders in the implementation, especially with funding and resources, and cultural committees/departments. To include tribal nations overall there was a suggestion for school and/or district personal to attend tribal meetings – the monthly tribal government decision making meetings of Cahuilla nations. Parents expressed the current lack of tribal-school communication and see that forming relationships would be a critical step for implementation. Sé'ish noted the initiative she wishes the school would take by saying, “I think we should definitely have some form of relationship cause I kind of don't feel like there's one..., but it's like that you call me first type thing, it would be great if they called first once in a while” (Int. 1, 4/22). A defined position to maintain the tribal-school relationships was a Native parent liaison that could serve as an advocate for Native youth. In addition to being dedicated in maintaining communication regarding the CCRC. The acknowledgement of teachers and other staff to respect the curriculum was also noted.

The Cahuilla tribes' responsibilities for the CCRC to be impactful in future implementation were along the lines of funding through Tribal resources. Túchill noted, “I think the funding should come from the three local tribes. They have more resources to maybe do that. And it makes sense for them to help fund programs that help their children, their communities” (Int. 1, 2/22). She went on to state that intertribal bonds, among Cahuilla and Santa Rosa, would be necessary for implementation. Tribes supporting curricula advances educational sovereignty by tribes deciding for themselves how their children should be educated through a curriculum.

Parents found that implementing the CCRC, mainly the Cahuilla language portion, would have the best future impact through a required “foreign language” class. This course could be opened to all students. Their responses were as follows:

Sésem: I think it should be 'cause you know, you have French and Spanish and, you know, things like that. I think our Cahuilla language should be, it's crazy, have them say it's mandatory. Like a mandatory class that you take (Int. 1,4/22).

Túchill: It could be added in as an elective. As... I think it's easier to add in that way and not quote unquote disrupt their common core standards that they have to learn. And, you know, especially with all the college requirements that they have. But it could easily be add it in as an elective, as a foreign language (Int. 1, 2/22).

Hésun ‘Áchama’: So just like with you go to school, you know, you do English, math, you know? You're learning all these different science and history. I think... I feel like how it was at Noli, you know how it was a class that was mandated, basically? You had culture class, you know? (Int. 1,5/22).

Sé’ish: Maybe other kids would be like, "Hey, you know, I wanna learn that language." You know, 'cause you hear people say, "Oh, I wanna learn Spanish. Oh, I wanna learn French. I wanna learn Italian." But you don't hear anybody say I wanna learn Cahuilla. And I feel like if you have that out there, then that's another seed being planted to other children. "Oh, hey, I wanna to learn Cahuilla." You know, that'd be great. I think that's great. I think that's opening up the doors to not just us, but our surrounding people, our surrounding community (Int. 1, 4/22).

The responses quoted above envision the impacts of Cahuilla being implemented as a required foreign language course with the understanding that ‘Ívillu’at is not foreign, rather the Indigenous language of the land that TS occupies. In this way, implementing Cahuilla as a mandatory language class, or an option to fulfill language requirements at the high school level provides a framework that is already in place for California graduation requirements to include Cahuilla in the curriculum.

Parents and guardians of youth at Túktam School outlined the potential impacts that a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum would have on their youth, their own families, their communities, their respective tribal nations, and the larger community. The impacts of

implementing a CCRC on individual Cahuilla youth were focused on building on their existing cultural knowledge that would increase their sense of cultural pride, confidence, and self-esteem. The family impacts of a CCRC were based on the intergenerational learning that could result from Cahuilla youth bringing their cultures and languages home to teach other members of their families. Community impacts were forecasted to increase cultural sensitivity and help mitigate stereotypes within the school and the larger community. The tribal impacts were foreseen to help build intertribal bonds.

The forecasted outcome of youth receiving a CCRC on an individual level were centered on increasing their cultural knowledge. Including, a safe space to learn, build friendships, increasing school interests, confidence, and visibility. Parents cited pride in multiple excerpts regarding the potential impacts of CCRC on their individual children. Three of the excerpts that stood out in this regard, were:

Húnwet: It'd mean a lot. What it would mean to know that people are recognizing native history, native culture. That would bring a lot of pride for our children that do go to school up there. Everywhere you go it's a white world if you really look at it. Not only that. It is what it is. It's what I see, and I think that's what our children see. So to see something of their culture being taught in class or in school, it would definitely bring a sense of pride to them (Int. 1,2/ 22).

Sésem: You know, it would give them a sense of who they are, but 'cause there's, I'm sure there's many people out there that don't know who they are. Don't know their ancestral background, don't know anything-.. about their culture and it's a loss (Int. 1, 4/22).

Túchill: I think it would..a provide them with, maybe some of them who don't have that as strong, tribal cultural ties, make those stronger and others 'cause they're learning about their history, who they are (Int. 2, 3/22).

Húnwet, Sésem, and Túchill's responses are indicative of the pride they envision children would have with a CCRC being taught at TS. For one, the curriculum would present a space for Native youth to feel seen and have subject matter they can connect with. For Sésem and Túchill, they

see the CCRC as a possible avenue for foundational cultural knowledge for students who currently do not have that opportunity.

Parents added that when students do have the cultural teachings, like those identified in the CCRC, it can have positive impacts on Cahuilla youth's spirituality, cultural connections, and avoid risky behaviors. Tax'únivash, believes that the sense of self and identity, or as she termed it "wellness," that a child could gain from the CCRC could help break chains of violence that impact Cahuilla communities. In relation, Sésem stated, "For my children, I feel like it would give them a self of sense and allow them to be confident in who they are and where they come from. Never questioning their Native culture or where they come from, because they have that to tie back to who they are as a Native person.. like my ancestors would approve of. Just like really make them think like the choices they're making are smart ones, especially when it goes to, you know, I'm gonna say it, drugs, alcohol" (Int. 1, 8/22). Sésem and Tax'únivash connect Cahuilla youth's cultural connections gained from a CCRC to overall well-being that could potentially break cycles of violence, drug, and alcohol abuse.

The result of children not knowing their Cahuilla culture was related to youth being "lost." One parent stated, "You kinda just wonder, you know, and you try to find yourself" (Sésem, Int. 2, 8/22). Another parent stated, "Once they connect themselves to their spirit, I think all, a lot of that outside stuff, a lot of what, I guess you would say our flesh goes through probably would be irrelevant anymore because they know that they have that inner peace that our, that our soul, our spirit is looking for" (Sé'ish, Int. 1, 4/22). For Sésem and Sé'ish, the CCRC is forecasted to be able to ground Cahuilla youth in a strong cultural foundation for their Cahuilla identities.

Improving Cultural Sensitivity

As previously discussed, Cahuilla youth at Túktam School have experienced lack of cultural sensitivity regarding their long hair. Parents identified the CCRC as having the potential to mitigate these experiences especially for Cahuilla boys. In Túchill's words, being ridiculed for long hair is, "more hurtful for young boys to be belittled for long hair because it ties directly to who they are as a person culturally" (Int 2, 4/22). Húnwet, whose son has long hair stated, "A lot of kids get teased for their long hair. So if there's just something going on in school, I mean, I think that would make a better understanding of why our kids have long hair instead of just being like, "Oh, you want to be a girl," or, "You look like a girl" (Int. 2, 4/22). Using the CCRC as a tool for educating the school overall on cultural practices, such as boys with long hair, extends the potential impacts of the curriculum to be implicated throughout Túktam School.

Responding to experiences with cultural insensitivity was an additional envisioned impact of the CCRC identified by parents. Sésem, another parent, noted teaching the youth how to respond to comments youth face regarding their hair could help them to deal with bullying from other children. In response to bullying Native youth face regarding their long hair Sésem, outlined, "They don't even want long hair. So teaching them but teaching those in the class that may not know... listen this is why we have long hair" (Int.1, 4/22). Looking at the future impacts that CCRC could have on issues Cahuilla youth face regarding their long hair, we see that the curriculum would not just benefit the Native youth. Instead, there could be far-reaching impacts for the school overall to bridge cultural misunderstandings and empower Cahuilla youth to continue to have long hair, despite the current experiences they face with being teased.

Although Túktam School is in a border town of three Cahuilla nations, Cahuilla people continue to endure stereotypes and erasure. Notably, the stereotype that all Native people receive gaming revenue filters into the school, and parents foresee that the CCRC would help break this stereotype. Húnwet expressed his frustration with the lack of visibility of Native people by stating:

Even with the casinos and the Pow Wows and how far we've come, people just don't believe that Indians exist. And it just shocks me when I run into people and it's like, "Oh, you're Native American?" And it's like, "Yes". And it's like, "Oh, I didn't know there were still Native Americans around." It's like, "You haven't heard of casinos or anything like that? (Int. 2, 4/22).

Túchill, on the other hand, noted the stereotypes that casinos have brought to the Native community. She stated that from her experience,

What I think for the most part a lot of people up here have grown up with a lot of Natives in their community. But when it comes to assuming that all... You know, economics... Because we've had, we have a tribal business and tribal enterprises, people assume that it's... That everyone has all this money or is rich (Int. 1, 2/22).

Similarly, Tax'únivash noted the potential for CCRC to impact the casino Indian narrative:

And not having people think, "Oh, they're just casino Indians," or something. There's always those little stigmas and things. Just to see something positive in the community and see how much we support our kids, and to, to be welcoming to the other students, to see who we are in a better light (Int. 2, 6/22).

The interesting point here is that tribally operated casinos have an intended result of bringing visibility to Native communities, while at the same time they have created a narrative that all Native people have casinos or that all casinos are as profitable as others. Parents expressed that the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum has the possibility for pushing back against this stereotype by providing the school with accurate representations of local Native people.

Intergenerational Learning

In the context of this research, intergenerational learning is the idea that youth learning their language and culture in school can take this knowledge home and transmit this information to those in their homes both younger and older. Túchill stated that youth being able to teach their cousins, siblings, or other members of their family who may not have the opportunity to receive the proposed CCRC would, “Empower them to continue to learn more because they’re able to pass that knowledge on themselves” (Int 2, 3/22). She went on to say, “They will also be teaching me something. It gives an opportunity for not just children but for them to teach their family at home” (Int. 1, 2/22). Málmal, another parent stated, “That would be awesome for them to come home be like hey mom check this out I learned that did you know that?” (Int. 1, 4/22). The impact of youth being able to be transmit cultural knowledge back to their families was identified as powerful potential area of empowering Native youth.

Including parents in the curriculum was another tool that parents felt would encourage culture and language learning in the home. In an example, of including parents in the CCRC classroom with language immersion, Sé’ish said, “And I think it would be good too, to have like, try to implement some parents that way. Like if the parents have to come in, they greet in the same way. So that way it's um, how do you, it's kind of like reignited, not just in the children, but in the parents also” (Int. 1, 4/22). Tax’úvash envisions, “And then once she starts [her child], I think even the older ones will be like, "Well, the little one's doing it. We can do it, too." You know, that kind of thing” (Int. 2, 6/22). In an envisioned CCRC classroom youth would learn along with parents learning language and culture from a preferred elder teacher where youth and parents are taking this knowledge and transmitting it to other people in their homes and families.

Equipping youth with cultural knowledge was not intended to break the chain of youth learning from elders, rather parent's speculate that the CCRC could instill cultural knowledge in youth at a young age. So that they can be teachers too. For example, Hésun 'Áchama' said,

They would know as they grow up, and they would have people ask them questions about their culture and they can just answer off the bat and not have to go call, your aunty or your elder or your uncle or somebody and ask questions. They would know for sure like this is it and they would get an understanding of who they are (Int. 1, 5/22).

Again, we see that parents intend for the CCRC to mirror as closely as possible intergenerational knowledge transmission that would naturally occur in a multi-generational home. The potential impact being that youth possess cultural knowledge that is left unquestioned because it was learned in an environment from their own elders.

Comm(unity) Impacts

An intended community impact from a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum is community building within each Cahuilla reservation, across Cahuilla reservations, and Cahuilla people's relationships with their non-native community. Community building in the context within a reservation community was envisioned along the lines of tribal government component of the curriculum. For example, completing goals and seeing them through. Impacts of a CCRC for the Cahuilla communities included encouraging a tribally operated school, increase of cultural knowledge and tribal government involvement. Effects of a CCRC with the local non-native community were forecasted to break stereotypes of Cahuilla people while sharing the cultural knowledge. The caretakers of the youth noted that cultural knowledge through the curriculum could break down assumptions concerning tribal businesses.

The tensions that exist with the Native community and non-Native community are based on racism and misunderstandings. This leads to frustrations among Native parents who noted, “They live around us and they don’t even know us” (Sésem, Int. 1, 4/22). Similarly, Hésun ‘Áchama’ stated that “The whole town isn't a fan of Cahuilla” (Int. 2, 8/22). While being sure to note that the local town does have some allies, she noted that the CCRC could impact the current tensions with the non-native community. Specifically, she noted the CCRC by, “impact[ing] children to see like it's not those dang Injuns they would have more respect of the culture and, like boys having long hair them doing the bird songs and stuff. And not them making fun of them, or talking down, or making them feel like it's wrong (Int. 2, 8/22). Additionally, unifying the community and the parent-school relationship was a forecasted impact that would result from the curriculum.

The potential impacts of the CCRC on individual tribal nations fell under three categories: (1) language documentation (2) encouraging tribally chartered schools, and (3) tribal unity. In terms of language documentation, Túchill stated that the CCRC could create, “more of a record of the language being produced by people for others who aren't in school, but in the Cahuilla community that can have somewhere to go to reference and learn it for themselves (Int. 1, 2/22). The possibility of the CCRC to uplift the Cahuilla nations to implement their own tribally operated schools was a theme across four parents. Túchill, Sé’ish, Tax’úvash, and Sésem. They stated:

Túchill: I would hope that by having...someone teach them at their current school, [Túktam School], that would encourage local tribes and communities to want to provide their tribal children with their own school, in their own curriculum, rather than have it done through the school (Int. 2, 3/22).

Sé'ish: Don't get me wrong. I love our casino. I love our business. I'm all for the progress I am, but I don't want us to forget who we are and where we come from. And, you know, and I'm surprised that we don't even have our own school here on the reservation (Int. 1, 4/22).

Tax'únivash: Yeah, it would have to come from the tribe, and you know what, that maybe something like that with the right people on the council would be just enough motivation for tribes as a whole, for all of us in every tribe to step up and be like, "Okay, yeah, we're gonna do this for our future generations." To take on that responsibility I think it'd really strengthen ties just in general between the tribe and our community, and, and maybe other reservations would see about, would see it or hear about it, you know, might be able to start something like that in their local schools as well (Int. 1, 5/22).

Sésem: For the tribe, jeez, like it'd be a great accomplishment, for our tribe and the surrounding tribes. And something that we can be very proud of. And maybe even being a role model for other tribes, who may have these thoughts of, of doing the same thing that we hope to do (Int. 2, 8/22).

The quoted statements from the parents above point to the parent's long-term vision of tribally operated schools. In other words, tribes taking the responsibility of educating their own youth, rather than relying on public schools. The point that Sé'ish makes in realigning tribal goals that not only focus on economic benefits for the tribe, but those that also benefit the linguistic and cultural landscape of the next generation is an important message of educational sovereignty. Sésem brings the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum into focus as being an achievable goal that can be a model for other tribes and schools to implement.

In Chapter 4, this paper touched briefly on the tribal politics that exist within Cahuilla nations, especially regarding familial differences on how the nation should be governed. One parent, Tax'únivash, made several important comments regarding the proposed impact that CCRC could have on mending intertribal relationships. While lengthy, I share her words in full as they illustrate the depth of tribal politics, while bringing to light the potential impacts that a

CCRC can have beyond the confines of a classroom. Especially, the potential to create meaningful changes within tribal communities. She stated,

So I think short term, it would be really just a sense of pride in feeling, in our community, because helping the younger generations...I would personally be more comfortable and confident with the direction of our tribe in terms of how we view each other on a personal level if we're seeing togetherness and cohesion, the children are learning cultural foundations, you know, something for everybody to share. Not just, "Oh, this is what my family does. This is what my family does," but have something that we can share together. That gives me more confidence in the future generations, like, the direction the tribe's gonna go in and have cohesion...I think they have that good solid foundation, and, and it's built on being part of our community, not just, "Oh, I'm from this family," but being part of the Cahuilla community as a whole. And they get to see each other that way in school, and they're doing it together. So I really think it'll help build relationships, strengthen bonds. You know, you always hear stories about how strong ties are, or even were, you know, a long time ago before there was a lot of an outside interference. And I mean, just to even start heading that direction, have stronger connections between family groups and between the children as time goes on. I think that would be really beneficial for the tribe, just to have a sense of being not just a tribe of different people, but really be together as a unit (Int. 2,6/22).

The expectation from parents and guardian for the CCRC to have widespread and long-term impacts on their youth, their families, Túktam School, and their communities challenges our understanding of a curriculum simply being a tool of knowledge. Rather, we see that parents' visions of curricula as a powerful tool for making meaningful changes that has the potential to have wide-spread benefits.

Conclusion

As the first research done by and with Cahuilla parents regarding culturally responsive curricula, this paper brought forth the voices of Cahuilla people for the benefit of Cahuilla youth, the future of Cahuilla nations, and the larger community for which Túktam School situated. This research, through community collaboration, answered two research questions: How do caregivers envision a culturally responsive curriculum for their youth, and what role does Cahuilla language

immersion play in caregivers' vision for a culturally responsive education for their youth? The research revealed that parents at TS envision a culturally responsive curriculum that is rooted in Cahuilla cultural practices and centers the teachings of local Cahuilla elders, that I refer to as the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum. Additionally, the parents clearly showed that the Cahuilla language should be the central component of the CCRC. This work has demonstrated that a legacy of colonial schooling can be transformed through culturally responsive curricula. A curriculum that can impact youth's self-esteem, cultural pride and empower them to be cultural teachers. In other words, the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum can honor Cahuilla elders by instilling cultural and language teachings that have persisted in the face of colonial policies.

Sé'ish's words, are the final juncus stitch of our Cahuilla basket of knowledge. Her words bring together the CCRC and closes the community work with the motivation behind this research. She stated, "it would mean that another generation has begun what other people were afraid they couldn't carry on. It would mean an achievement for not just my children or me, but our culture as a whole" (Int. 1, 4/ 22). Nésun 'Áchama'.

Epilogue

Pemkúktashpi' míyaxwe hemháwawayñi'.
Pénga' pé' múchi'ika' tuhayimani'chi' míyaxwenap míyaxwe pé' hemháwawayñi'.

They have to speak their language.
In that way their language will live forever and forever. (Sauvel & Elliott, 2004,p.925)

The excerpt above reminds me that this thesis carries an abundance of responsibility to the parents who gifted me their visions, the Cahuilla nations I include in the work, and Túktam School. Now the on the ground community work towards implementation is necessary to bring these visions to life. To this end, first, I will disseminate the findings back to the parents and provide them with the naming of their shared visions: a Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum. Second, I will summarize the key findings of this thesis to present back to the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, and the Cahuilla Band of Indians. In this way, the respective nations can make meaningful decisions in the realm of tribal policies and funding for culturally responsive education and future curricula. A key component of implementing the CCRC is to work closely with Túktam School and the school district. As a first step, I will present this work to the principal and eventually the district.

As I write this epilogue, task forces are being created to implement the California Indian Education Act and roundtable discussions are being planned throughout California tribal communities to move the law into action. I am hopeful that I can bring this thesis to these discussions and realize that now is an opportune time to bring the Cahuilla Culturally Responsive Curriculum to Southern California public schools, not just for Cahuilla youth, but for all students in our homelands. Pípa' 'ángapa' – until next time.

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