School-Community-University Collaborations:
The American Indian Language Development Institute

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In considering what can be done to reverse language shift, many look to schools as primary resources. But school-based language renewal programs also have been criticized for transferring responsibility for mother tongue transmission from its necessary domains the family and community to a secondary or tertiary institution. In this paper, we present one model for connecting school, community, and university resources to strengthen indigenous languages: the American Indian Language Development Institute. In 18 years of operation, AILDI has: 1) raised consciousness about the linguistic and cultural stakes at risk; 2) facilitated the development of indigenous literatures and a cadre of native-speaking teachers; and 3) influenced federal policy through a grassroots network of indigenous language advocates. Here, we look at the program's development, provide recommendations for developing similar institutes, and suggest specific strategies for strengthening indigenous languages in the contexts of community, home, and school.

In the summer of 1978, 18 parents and elders representing Digueño, Havasupai, Hualapai, Mohave, and Yavapai language communities traveled to San Diego State University for the first Yuman Language Institute. There they worked with academic linguists and bilingual educators who shared their interest in the literate forms of Yuman languages and a commitment to use linguistic knowledge to improve curriculum and practice in Indian schools. What has come to be known as the American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) began with this small group and participants' desire to "learn to read and write my language" (Salas, 1982, p. 36). Their efforts ultimately would reach far beyond the Yuman language family to influence indigenous language education throughout the United States, Canada, and Latin America.

Conceived by Lucille Watahomigie (Hualapai), director of the nationally recognized Hualapai Bilingual/Bicultural Program (see Watahomigie & Yamamoto, 1987; 1992), linguist Leanne Hinton, and the late John Rouillard (Sioux) of San Diego State University, the institute trained 18 native speakers of the five Yuman languages. The only program requirement, Hinton et al. (1982, p. 22) write, was that participants be native speakers interested in working with their respective languages. The focus of the first institute was "Historical/Comparative Linguistics: Syntax and Orthography of Yuman Languages" (see Table 1).

The following year, joined by the late Milo Kalecteca (Hopi), director of the Bilingual Education Service Center at Arizona State University (ASU), and linguists Ofelia Zepeda (Tohono O'odham) and Akira Y. Yamamoto, the institute teamed academic linguists with 50 native speakers in an intensive four-week training program. During that time institute participants examined their languages, developed practical writing systems, designed curriculum, and created native language teaching materials. The focus of this second institute, which included Tohono O'odham (formerly Papago) and Akimel O'odham (Pima), was "Orthography, Phonetics, Phonology, and Curriculum Development" (see Table 1).

Since its inception in San Diego, the institute has been hosted by Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Southwest Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, ASU in Tempe, and the University of Arizona in Tucson. Prior to 1990, AILDI faculty had to renegotiate institute summer sites each year. Since 1990, however, AILDI has been permanently housed at the University of Arizona.

Over the years, the number and diversity of participants and language groups have grown; in 1996, the

Year	Location	Theme	No. of Participants	Indigenous Languages Represented
1978	San Diego State University, CA	Historical/Comparative Linguistics; Yuman Languages	18	Digueño, Havasupai, Hualapai, Mohave, Yavapai
1979	Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff	Orthography Development, Phonetics and Phonology; Curriculum Development	50	Havasupai, Hualapai, Mohave, Yavapai, O'odham*
1980	SW Polytechnic Institute, Albuquerque, NM	Spoken and Written Languages in Cultural Contexts	37	Havasupai, Hualapai, Maricopa, Mohave, Yavapai, O'odham
1981	[No institute held]			
1982	Arizona State University, Tempe	Lexicography; Dictionary-Making	37	Havasupai, Hualapai, O'odham, Northern Ute, Shoshone
1983	Gila River Reservation, Sacaton, AZ	Historical Linguistics and Language Change	47	Western Apache, Havasupai, Hualapai, O'odham, Shoshone, Northern Ute, Yaqui
1984	Arizona State University, Tempe	Language Use, Language Assessment, and Language Policy	47	Havasupai, Hualapai, O'odham, Shoshone, Northern Ute, Yaqui, Yavapai
1985	Arizona State University, Tempe	Language Policy, Language Assessment, Bilingual/ESL Endorsement	27	Western Apache, Arapaho, Havasupai, Hualapai, Kickapoo, Navajo, Tohono O'odham, Shoshone, Yaqui, Yavapai
1986	Arizona State University, Tempe	Bilingual/Bicultural and ESL Materials Development; Tribal History and Government	22	Western Apache, Arapaho, Havasupai, Hualapai, Navajo, Penobscot, Yaqui
1987	Arizona State University, Tempe	Bilingual/ESL Endorsement	55	Western Apache, Arapaho, Havasupai, Hualapai, Kickapoo, Lakota, Navajo, Shoshone, Tohono O'odham, Yavapai
1988	Arizona State University, Tempe	Cooperative Learning in Indian Education	82	Western Apache, Arapaho, Chemehuevi, Havasupai, Hualapai, Lakota, Navajo, Shoshone, Tohono O'odham
1989-A	Arizona State University, Tempe	Building Children's Literacy Through Native Languages	108	Western Apache, Havasupai, Hualapai, Hopi, Navajo, Tohono O'odham
1989-B **	University of Arizona, Tucson	Languages and Literatures of the U.S. Southwest	16	Hualapai, Navajo, Yaqui
1990	University of Arizona, Tucson	Literature, Literacy, and Biliteracy	134	Western Apache, Blackfoot, Havasupai, Hualapai, Mesquakie, Navajo, Pima, Sarcee, Tohono O'odham, Yaqui
1991	University of Arizona, Tucson	Indian Education: Perspectives on the Past, Planning for the Future	140	Western Apache, Bununu (Taiwan), Havasupai, Hualapai, Navajo, Tohono O'odham, Yaqui, Cheyenne, Cree
1992	[No institute held]			
1993	University of Arizona, Tucson	Indigenous Languages in a Global Perspective-Resources, Research, and Renewal	37	Western Apache, Havasupai, Navajo, Hopi, Tohono O'odham, Pima, Southern Ute
1994	University of Arizona, Tucson	Literacy and Literatures in Indigenous Languages	68	Western Apache, Athabascan, Blackfeet, Dakota, Hualapai, Havasupai, Kaska, Maricopa, Navajo, Northern Tutchone, Tlingit, Menominee, Muskogee, Sioux, Ute, Sahaptin/Yakima, Upper Tanana
1995	University of Arizona, Tucson	Tradition in Technology: Weaving the Future of Indigenous Languages	103	Western Apache, Cherokee, Cree, Dakota, Havasupai, Hualapai, Hopi, Iroquois, Navajo, Tohono O'odham, Sahaptin, Cheyenne, Maliseet, Menominee, Ojibway, Paiute, Ute, Maricopa, Tuscarora
1996	University of Arizona, Tucson	The Politics of Indigenous Languages, Literatures, and Education: National and Grassroots Strategies for Language Maintenance	104	Apache, Cheyenne, Dakota, Hopi, Maliseet, Menominee, Navajo, Paiute, Quichua, Tewa, Tohono O'odham, Tuscarora, Yakima/Sahaptin, Yaqui

*Unless otherwise indicated, O'odham includes Tohono O'odham (formerly Papago) and Pima or Akimel O'odham.
**In 1989, two institutes were held; the institute at the University of Arizona was offered in conjunction with the Linguistic Society of America and Modern Language Association Summer Institute.

Table 1. AILDI Chronology

institute enrolled 116 participants representing language groups throughout the United States and Canada and from Venezuela and Brazil. Altogether, the institute has prepared over 1,000 parents and school-based educators to work as researchers, curriculum developers, and advocates for the conservation and development of indigenous languages and cultures. Most participants are native speakers of an indigenous language, but AILDI has never turned away any applicant. Today, it is open to all who are interested in the maintenance of indigenous languages and the application of linguistic and cultural knowledge to classroom practice.

Institute goals and pedagogy

> I used to wonder why the students would just sit there when the teacher gave them all these verbal directions. I know now that it was because they did not understand. I used to wonder why, when the teacher would ask the student to write a story about a city or an unfamiliar place, they would only write one or two sentences They were only trying to tell us that there was not anything of meaning to them. This will give you an idea of what I've learned at the institute.
> -Bilingual teacher assistant and AILDI participant

AILDI's overarching goal is to incorporate linguistic and cultural knowledge into curriculum in ways that democratize schooling for indigenous students and support the retention of their languages and cultures. The statistics on Indian students' school performance are well documented; they are significantly overrepresented in low-ability, skill-and-drill tracks, and experience the highest school dropout rates in the nation (U.S. Department of Education, 1991). Equally well documented are the immediate causes underlying these outcomes: curriculum "presented from a purely Western (European) perspective," low educator expectations, loss of "the wisdom of the older generations," and a "lack of opportunity for parents and communities to develop a real sense of participation" (U.S. Department of Education 1991, pp. 7-8). Our hope is that through their involvement in the institute, participants will return to their home communities with the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to challenge the English-only, deficit-driven pedagogies that have characterized Indian education and debilitated indigenous students academically. Just as important, we seek to heighten awareness of the preciousness of indigenous mother tongues and assist participants in their struggle to maintain their languages and cultures. Finally, we aim to prepare academic professionals such as ourselves to engage in mutually beneficial research and teaching activities in indigenous communities.

With these goals in mind, the AILDI holds this basic view of language and culture teaching:

> Language is not taught by mere word lists and grammatical drills. And native literature is not fully appreciated by pupils if it is presented in translation. Language and literature can be taught most effectively by teachers who are native speakers of the language and are trained to teach in elementary and secondary schools with language materials and literature produced by native speakers. (Watahomigie & Yamamoto 1992, p. 12)

Hence, AILDI emphasizes bilingual/bicultural education within a whole language paradigm (Goodman, 1986; Fox, 1992), experiential and interactive teaching strategies, alternative assessment such as literacy portfolios (Tiemey et al., 1991), and more generally what Cummins (1989, 1992) has called "empowerment" pedagogies. Institute participants engage in collaborative research, dialogue, critique, and bilingual materials development the same types of learning processes in which they might engage their own learners at home. "My learning experiences at AILDI were very relevant to what is happening in real classrooms," one participant reports; "I learned skills that I can use in whatever I may do in the future."

Sharing and cooperative work are central to institute coursework. A recent participant recalls "sharing our creative writing in class, laughing and crying. We had fun learning together." Frequently participants from the same school or language group work on joint projects. When funds have permitted, elders have been invited to work with participants from their communities on language teaching projects. Participants also observe, practice, and coach each other in microteaching learning centers (discussed below), a forum for piloting the methods and materials developed over the course of four weeks.
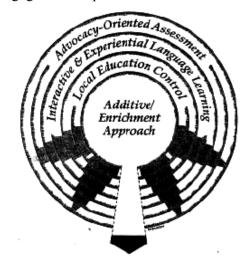
In sum, AILDI has adapted Cummins' (1989, 1992) framework of fourfold empowerment:

1. An additive/enrichment approach: Schooling for indigenous children should add to and enrich not

replace the cultural and linguistic resources children bring to school.
2. Local education control: Indigenous communities have great knowledge of their language and culture which should be the foundation of children's learning in school. The community should have input and control over the school curriculum.
3. Interactive and experiential language learning: The content and organization of instruction should motivate students to use language naturally and creatively in meaningful contexts, enabling children to inquire, critique, and generate their own knowledge.
4. Advocacy-oriented assessment: Assessment should be holistic and authentic, allowing children to display their full array of bilingual strengths, rather than justifying deficit labels and remedial "treatments."

Figure 1 below illustrates these pedagogical concepts.

Identity Affirmation
Language and Culture Maintenance

Figure 1. AILDI Empowerment Pedagogies

Organizing institute experiences

I've learned that I have many skills, and it made me proud to be an Indian.
-Bilingual teacher and AILDI participant

AILDI is a learning-teaching environment in which participants can affirm their identities and their power to act as change agents within their home communities. This occurs within a four-week summer residential experience in which participants attend classes, work individually and in small groups on curriculum and linguistics projects, critique existing curricula, and develop new texts (thematic units, autobiographical and biographical literature, poetry, dictionaries, and children's storybooks) that they can use in their classrooms. Each year a theme is selected around which coursework and guest speaker sessions are organized (see Table 1). Participants choose from a suite of related linguistics and educational methods courses, enrolling for a total of six semester hours. Classes run from approximately 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, and are complemented by special evening sessions featuring speakers and topics related to the theme. A sample list of courses is given below:

Weaving the Future of Indigenous Languages
1995 AILDI COURSES (All 3 Semester Credits)

LING/AINS 102: Linguistics for Native American Communities.
LING/AINS 500: Linguistics for Non-Majors.
LING 495A/595A: Navajo Grammar.

AINS 476X: Creative Writing in Indigenous Languages & English.
LRC 501: Language & Culture in Indian Education.
LRC 428/528: Bilingual Curriculum Development.
LRC 415/515: Media in Reading Language Arts (Computers & Media in Indian Bilingual Settings).
LRC 499/595D: Applications of Language & Literacy: Math & Science in Indian Bilingual Classrooms.
TTE 497P/597P: Parents as Partners in Indian Education.

One AILDI hallmark is microteaching, literally "lessons in miniature" by participants at the culmination of the institute. Microteaching is an opportunity for participants to engage as both learners and teachers within a collegial environment. Individually or in teams, participants present a language learning activity based on their curriculum projects; participants are encouraged to conduct their demonstrations in their native language. Several microteaching centers operate concurrently, with individuals or teams demonstrating two consecutive times. This allows participants to refine their practice following peer feedback from the first demonstration and enables all participants to observe a larger number of centers. If funds and time permit, AILDI faculty and staff videotape the demonstrations. The videotapes are used for subsequent consultations with participants to review the strengths of their lessons and strategies for improvement.

Microteaching lasts a full two days. It is one of the most powerful learning experiences in the institute--a celebration of participants' work and a hands-on opportunity to exchange a multitude of language teaching ideas. "I am a visual learner," one teacher-participant states in a reflection on the benefits of microteaching. Another says that from microteaching, "I was able to pick up ideas from other teachers."

AILDI also facilitates the credentialing and endorsement of participating educators. All AILDI courses apply toward university degree programs and bilingual and English-as-a-second-language endorsements. Degree advisement workshops and individual advisement are scheduled each week. "I like the one-on-one meeting," a participant recently remarked; "I was very able to ask questions and state some concerns." In addition, post-institute advisement and periodic on-site courses taught by AILDI faculty enable AILDI participants to work toward their teaching and graduate degrees during the regular academic year.

AILDI is characterized by sharing and communal learning. Microteaching and other small- and large-group activities, including after-class gatherings, all aim to create a community of co-learners and co-teachers. "The collaboration of other nations is tremendously resourceful," an AILDI participant writes, adding: "Bonding with other Indian educators is my greatest strength to advocate language and culture maintenance." The building of collegial relationships is enhanced by the fact that participants and guest faculty share housing in one of several apartment complexes or dormitories. When institute enrollment was still relatively low, faculty members conducted evening tutorials at the dormitories to assist participants in their linguistic and curriculum projects. Today, such conferencing occurs directly after class at the university. Participants also are encouraged to bring their children, spouses, and other family members to the institute. Family-style housing near the campus is arranged for this purpose.

Institutionalizing AILDI

To implement a bilingual program, we first have to have funding and administrative support, then community support.
        -Bilingual teacher and AILDI participant

As this participant suggests, the keys to institutionalizing any program are adequate funding and an acknowledged "place" for the program within the host institution and the larger community. AILDI has always enjoyed strong support from tribes and indigenous communities, who have contributed to participants' attendance through tribal and school-based grants. However, paying for staff, faculty, guest speakers, promotional literature, teaching materials, and other basic operations requires a stable financial base and an institutional home. This has been a major challenge for AILDI and its faculty. A brief review of AILDI's history illustrates those challenges and how they have been addressed.

The original Yuman Language Institute was funded by a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to San Diego State University obtained by Watahomigie, Hinton, and Rouillard. As the institute evolved to include additional language groups, it became the centerpiece of a federal Title VII (Bilingual Education Act) grant for parent training administered through the Title VII-funded Bilingual Education Service Center (BESC)

at Arizona State University in Tempe. Institute faculty included the service center staff as well as AILDI's original faculty. In 1982, the U.S. Congress reauthorized Title VII, transforming the BESC into the National Indian Bilingual Center (NIBC), which served American Indian bilingual programs nationwide. NIBC continued to support AILDI and 16 regional institutes until the NIBC contract was eliminated in 1986 by a subsequent Congressional reauthorization. For several years thereafter AILDI was administered by the Arizona Department of Education and funded by federal grants obtained by that agency. While this allowed the institute to continue to offer courses at Arizona State University, AILDI's administration by an external agency created serious management difficulties and mitigated against the program's institutionalization within the university.

Throughout the years, continuity in AILDI's curriculum, pedagogy, and goals has been assured by the presence of a core faculty that included cofounders Watahomigie and Yamamoto, along with Ofelia Zepeda of the University of Arizona and Teresa McCarty, who worked both at NIBC and the Arizona Department of Education. In 1989, Zepeda and McCarty became colleagues at the University of Arizona in Tucson. With long-standing interests in institutionalizing the institute, they assumed responsibility for co-directing AILDI, joining the resources of their respective departments and colleges to sponsor the 1990 institute. AILDI has since been housed in the Department of Language, Reading and Culture within the College of Education, receiving support from that department as well as from American Indian Studies, Linguistics, the Graduate College, and the Office of Undergraduate Student Affairs.

During this time, AILDI enrollments continued to rise, demonstrating the need for the program and participants' enthusiasm for its new location. University administrators voiced their approval of the institute, and the heads of the cosponsoring departments and vice president for graduate studies actively assisted Zepeda and McCarty in obtaining funds and graduate assistants to coordinate participant registration and housing. The Graduate College dean cited AILDI as one of the university's "showcase" programs, and in 1993 it was recognized in a national study by the U.S. Department of Education as one of 10 exemplary programs serving teachers of language minority students (Leighton et al., 1995). Nonetheless, lacking office space, operational monies, and sustained clerical and administrative help, and dependent on funds for participant stipends that had to be renegotiated with diverse university offices each year, the program struggled to survive. These difficulties led to the cancellation of the 1992 institute.

The situation grew more desperate until pressure by AILDI's co-directors and their department heads secured $25,000 in university funds for a full-time program coordinator. The hiring in 1993 of AILDI coordinator Karen Francis-Begay and the provision of an office and equipment within the Department of Language, Reading and Culture, breathed new life into the program. In 1995, an opportunity arose to apply for permanent state funds. That year, 17 years after the institute began, AILDI was awarded a permanent annual budget of $75,000. This was indeed cause for celebration.

The current budget supports the coordinator, a part-time secretary, supplies and operations, some participant stipends, and year-round community outreach, recruitment, and retention activities. We continue to seek additional funds each year for participant stipends and guest speakers. However, AILDI at last has secured a financial base and a "place" within its host university.

Institute Impacts

> Speaking two languages is better than one. As I go back home, I want to work with program directors, teachers, and my community to let them know bilingual education works and how important it is.
> -Teacher assistant and AILDI participant

AILDI's most immediate impacts can be readily observed in indigenous schools, classrooms, and communities. Previously unwritten languages have been committed to writing and in some cases standardized. As institute participants have returned to their home communities, they have refined and published their summer projects, creating a small but growing indigenous literature. "Writing in my own language to create lessons for classroom use" is a typical participant response to questions about the most useful aspects of their AILDI experience. The numerous materials developed in Hualapai, Havasupai, Tohono O'odham, Akimel O'odham, Western Apache, and Navajo are but a few examples of the ways in which institute coursework has been transformed into locally relevant curricula (see Figure 2). Even more important, AILDI has been an integral force in the credentialing and endorsement of native-speaking teachers, many of whom have assumed

Figure 2. Examples of Curriculum Materials Developed by AILDI Participants

administrative and other leadership positions within their local schools.

All of this has the potential to bring indigenous students' experiences directly into the classroom, building on their linguistic and cultural resources instead of treating those as deficits, and engaging students in using their experiences to learn. While no comprehensive study has been undertaken to document the extent to which this has occurred, a 1988-89 Arizona Department of Education study of Arizona participants is worth noting. The study followed 25 Indian and non-Indian AILDI participants from four reservation schools for one year (McCarty, 1993). Data included observational records and videotapes of classroom interactions, teachers' logs, student writing samples and achievement records, and participants' responses to written questionnaires. At the conclusion of the academic year, the study reported "dramatic improvements in students' oral and written language development" associated with cooperative learning strategies developed at the institute, greater involvement by parents and grandparents in children's literacy and biliteracy experiences, and a willingness by teachers to relinquish English-dominated basal readers and workbooks for locally meaningful materials (McCarty, 1993, p. 91). In one teacher's words, "the training finally gave me the courage to throw out the workbooks and get students involved in real reading and writing" (McCarty, 1993, p. 91). This teacher's rewards were great: Student attendance improved, the quality and quantity of her students' writing increased, and one student "on the verge of dropping out," remained to complete the school year (McCarty & Zepeda, 1990, p. 4).

These local-level changes occurred simultaneously with larger tribal and national policy developments. During institutes centered on language policies (see Table 1), AILDI participants from several communities generated tribal language policies. Within a few years, this led to the adoption of formal policies for Tohono O'odham, Northern Ute, and Pascua Yaqui proclaiming those languages as official within their respective communities. These and other codes and policies for Navajo and Northern Cheyenne advocate bilingual/ bicultural education and call on schools to act "as a vehicle for the language, whether it is restoring, retaining, or maintaining it" (Zepeda, 1990, p. 249).

At the national level, AILDI participants and attendees at the 1987 Native American Language Issues (NALI) conference held in conjunction with AILDI, drafted a resolution addressing the endangered state of indigenous U.S. languages and the need for federal support for their maintenance and perpetuation. The resolution was sent to key federal-level decision makers, including Senator Daniel Inouye, then head of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs. In 1988, Inouye succeeded in introducing the Native American Languages Act based on this resolution. Signed into law in 1990 by President Bush, the Act declares the U.S. government's policy to "preserve, protect, and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice, and develop Native American languages" (Public Law 101-477, Sect. 104[1]). The Native American

Languages Act has propelled some of the boldest new initiatives in indigenous language revitalization (see, e.g., Hinton, 1994; McCarty & Zepeda, in press).

Finally, AILDI has served as a model for the recruitment and retention of indigenous students into the university and for revisioning how universities "do" teacher education. AILDI is the only program of its kind on campus, and the only program in the state to offer an approved curriculum for bilingual and ESL endorsements in American Indian languages. On a larger scale, it is the only American Indian language program to provide a total multicultural, multilingual immersion experience. "I had a wonderful experience [at the institute]," an alumnus writes, "largely because of the other participants." She continues: "I knew that the immersion with people of other cultures would enrich me and it truly did even more than I could have guessed."

These qualities and AILDI's direct relevance to tribal community needs make it a natural vehicle for Indian student recruitment. "AILDI is more focused on our instructional needs," one participant states; "other [programs] become too general." Another states: "This is more of a 'friendly' experience." Still others add: "This institute is more relevant to my background AILDI stands above any bilingual training!" Such positive experiences lead many participants to continue their professional development in undergraduate and graduate degree programs. In its first four summers at the University of Arizona, AILDI enrolled 162 undergraduates, most of whom were Indian teacher assistants. Of these, 12 or seven percent have matriculated in education degree programs and four have graduated. During the same period, the institute enrolled 181 graduate students; 35 have matriculated and 15 have graduated with master's degrees. Several of the latter now are pursuing education specialist and doctoral degrees.

It is perhaps for all these reasons that AILDI has been adapted and replicated in Indian communities throughout the U.S. Between 1983 and 1986, credit-bearing institutes based on the AILDI model were held for Northern Ute, Ojibwe, Navajo, Lakota, Cherokee, Osage, Kickapoo, Shawnee, Cree, Northern Plains, Western Apache, Arapaho, Shoshone, Tewa, Zuni, and Keresan language groups (Swisher & Ledlow, 1986). More recently, Yamamoto and his colleagues initiated the Oklahoma Native American Language Institute (ONALDI) to address Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, Kickapoo, Omaha, Potawatomi, Sauk-Fox, Shawana, and Euchee language education concerns. "The strength of the institute model," Swisher and Ledlow (1986, p. 63) note, "is that it presents academically sophisticated concepts to educational practitioners who ordinarily might not have received such training. This is critical to American Indian bilingual projects, who necessarily develop their own curricula."

AILDI and Indigenous language maintenance

> It's scary how important language is. If I only had someone from my school to help me, this is what I would do: Make a curriculum to benefit the students from kindergarten to eighth grade, speak just in my native language to the kindergartners, and repeat this system every year until the kindergarten children are in the eighth grade.
> -Bilingual teacher and AILDI participant

Over the years AILDI has increased the value of the linguistic and cultural capital brought to school by indigenous students through its facilitation of curricula, programs, and personnel able to make use of that capital. Just as important, AILDI has helped transform indigenous linguistic and cultural resources into political capital. Recognition of the importance of indigenous languages and cultures more than validates them; it increases their value and the power of those who control those resources. By creating curricula and programs to articulate local resources with local schools and by simultaneously preparing and credentialing local educators, AILDI has in fact empowered its alumni in their school systems. Moreover, AILDI has reinforced the collective power of its alumni by building a network of indigenous educators committed to a shared philosophy for indigenous language maintenance. These educators not only have strengthened threatened languages and built more effective school programs, they have influenced federal policy toward these goals. A prime example of this is the Native American Languages Act.

The teacher's statement above, however, suggests the limits of that power. Just as sustained funding and administrative support have been difficult for AILDI faculty to secure, such support and control over local curricula remain elusive for many AILDI participants. Hence, AILDI's influence on indigenous mother tongue maintenance is indirect and constrained by local circumstances. Key to language maintenance, Fishman (1991; 1996) insists, is intergenerational language transmission--the natural communicative processes in the home,

family, and community through which succeeding generations replenish their speakers. Such processes are difficult for outside institutions such as schools and university programs to create.

Nevertheless, AILDI has been a catalyst in reinforcing these processes by placing an overt moral and academic value on heritage languages and assisting practitioners in establishing new contexts and genres for native language use. "I would like to be an informed advocate for bilingual education," an alumnus states, "and convince fellow teachers, administrators, the school board, parents, and community members about the need for our language revitalization." Another says: "I will be an inspiration and educator of language maintenance for my students."

While AILDI cannot "save" endangered indigenous languages, it has mobilized local efforts to stabilize them. "I'd like to have my grandchildren learn our tribal language," a Hualapai elder recently told us, "because if they don't...nobody will ever speak Indian again." This elder presents an urgent charge. AILDI has played a critical role in addressing that responsibility, but it cannot act alone. Ultimately it is local stakeholders AILDI alumni and their communities--who must identify and consciously shelter those domains where indigenous languages remain unchallenged by the language of wider communication. In most communities served by AILDI, these language planning efforts have only begun.

Lessons learned

What have we learned from 18 years of involvement with the American Indian Language Development Institute? In this section we reflect on what our experiences have taught us, in the hope that this information will be useful to others engaged in similar work.

Lesson 1: The need for focus and commitment. AILDI began not with the ambition to be all things to all language groups, but with community-specific goals for indigenous language and literacy development and a shared commitment to reforming local education practices. Though the institute now serves a much larger constituency, it remains anchored to the needs of indigenous communities and educational personnel. This focus guides the development and delivery of AILDI's curriculum and contributes to the successful integration of linguistics and methods courses and their consistency over time. We have added new courses as participants' interest in particular topics has evolved; courses on parent involvement, creative writing in indigenous languages, and media and computers are examples of this. However, core courses in linguistics and bilingual/ bicultural curriculum development are offered each year, and all AILDI participants are assured of a learning experience that enables them to apply linguistic and cultural knowledge from their home communities directly to educational practice.

Coming to understand the experiences and struggles of fellow participants is essential to the AILDI learning experience. At the same time, both participants and faculty recognize the need to concentrate on specific issues and problems within individual language communities. AILDI seeks to strike a balance between this concentration on local language issues and the opportunity to learn from the successes and problems experienced by others. The unique advantage of AILDI, however, clearly derives from the diversity of languages, communities, participants, and faculty it represents.

AILDI also has been characterized by a high degree of staff commitment. This is the virtue of its community-based focus: Because AILDI faculty and staff are either members of indigenous communities or non-Indians with a long history of involvement in those communities, they have high expectations for the communities' children and a vested interest in helping them succeed. A great part of children's school and life success, we believe, is a strong foundation in their language and culture. Yet we recognize that the institutional reforms necessary to build this foundation do not occur simply or overnight. They must be cultivated over time from the community's human and material resources. AILDI and its faculty and staff are dedicated to that long-term process.

Lesson 2. The need for outreach and local follow-up. AILDI is more than a summer program, though that is its center of activity. Languages have been written and high-quality materials developed, however, because AILDI faculty and staff have continued to collaborate with institute participants throughout the school year. Collaboration has entailed site visits by faculty, designing and implementing research projects, telephone consultations on linguistic questions, and co-involvement on materials development. Many participants return to the institute year after year. The personal relationships developed through this extended contact have not only promoted local curriculum reform, but helped establish lasting ties between indigenous educators and AILDI

faculty, and, by extension, between indigenous communities and the university. The overall effect has been to generate widespread tribal support for the program and make the university more approachable and "user friendly." This mutually beneficial process has facilitated the certification and endorsement of indigenous educators and helped institutionalize the program within the university.

Lesson 3: The need for permanent funding and a home base. Like all Indian education programs, AILDI has depended for most of its livelihood on external grants. Such short-term funding forced AILDI faculty to knit together a program each year from disparate financial resources. Instability in funding mitigated against institutionalization, creating a vicious cycle of uncertainty and impermanence.

Through dogged effort, AILDI at last secured a permanent budget and a home. While no recipes exist for achieving such outcomes, we offer this advice: Begin early in communicating the program's goals and organization to individuals in positions to help. We met frequently with deans and department heads to familiarize them with the program, being careful to relate AILDI's goals to the larger university mission. Brief but informative narratives were helpful, as were detailed budgets showing actual and anticipated expenditures and contributions from various departments and university offices. Most university administrators recognized the academic and outreach benefits of the program; when apprised of offers to help by colleagues in other departments, they usually found some funds with which to assist AILDI. We followed every contribution with an invitation to meet and welcome participants on the institute's opening day, and with letters clearly showing whom and how particular administrative funds had helped. In the meantime, we sought and received funds from external sources, including the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Arizona Humanities Council.

These measures served two purposes: They enabled AILDI to survive during its first years at the University of Arizona, and they made key administrators aware of the program and of the extent and urgency of its financial needs. Along the way we were allocated official space within an established department. This enhanced the program's visibility and credibility both within and outside the university. When the Arizona legislature made it possible to apply for permanent funds, AILDI already had a visible university presence, strong tribal support, and powerful advocates within the system to shepherd and promote our funding request.

The keys to institutionalizing AILDI, then, were these: perseverance, communication, a vision of where the program fits within the larger institutional mission, and a firm commitment to program goals.

Lesson 4. The need for administration from the inside-out. Institutionalization would not have occurred without the presence of tenure-eligible faculty within the host institution. For years AILDI remained institutionally marginalized because its faculty were guests from other institutions or were university staff of federally funded (hence, short-term) Indian education programs. Guest faculty continue to serve the institute and provide much of its direction, depth, and breadth. At the same time, administration by two regular faculty members and, since 1993, a permanent full-time coordinator, have been instrumental to AILDI's success. This has made it possible to work on a year-round basis from the inside-out, and to permanently seat the program within the host institution.

Concluding thoughts

The foregoing section highlights the logistical challenges faced by AILDI. Its greatest challenge, however, is more substantive and essential: the life-and-death struggle for survival of indigenous North American languages and cultures. Uniquely positioned by its community foundation, AILDI is prominent among the field of forces for strengthening indigenous languages and cultures. Yet in the final analysis, their survival is dependent on language choices enacted within native speakers' homes and communities. AILDI can light the path, but its participants must lead the way. Still, when we consider the path without the light, we are reassured of the purpose and the value of AILDI.

In conclusion, we share these suggestions for community-based language restoration work:

1. Talking about "what to do" to rescue endangered languages is important, but will not in itself reverse the shift toward English. Begin using the language now--at home, in the community, and everywhere.
2. Don't criticize or ridicule errors.
3. Be a risk-taker; look at your children and learn from them.
4. Learning is fun; don't stifle it by making it overly difficult or boring.

5. Through children, involve the parents; through parents, involve the grandparents. Start small and expand the circle.
6. Internal politics are best set aside for the benefit of the language restoration work at hand.
7. Believe that your language is a gift, as many tribal language policies openly state. If the language is not used and given life by its speakers, they are not fulfilling their responsibility. "Our Creator has created the world for us through language," 1996 AILDI participants and faculty observed; "If we don't speak it, there is no world."
8. This is the time for each person to do her or his part. We, not others, must assume responsibility. The stakes are high--don't wait for someone else to begin.
9. Finally, understand that others share your mission. Together, you can become a powerful team for positive change.

The following poem, composed by AILDI participants, suggests the potential of such teamwork:

We are the enemies of our language
We are speaking another language
We don't engage in our native language
too lazy
denial
ashamed
too busy

assimilated
sacrificed
forsaken.

TEACH OUR OWN CULTURE —
for what?

To ensure we will endure.

NOT TOO LATE.

Mothers are working
Fathers are working
Grandparents in a HUD home
But no native language--all English.

Become friends
Learn to speak the native language
Write, read, and listen.

WALK THE TALK.
JUST DO IT.

Speak, speak, speak, and speak
Surround yourself with the native language
Geographically
Environmentally
Immerse yourself in the native language.
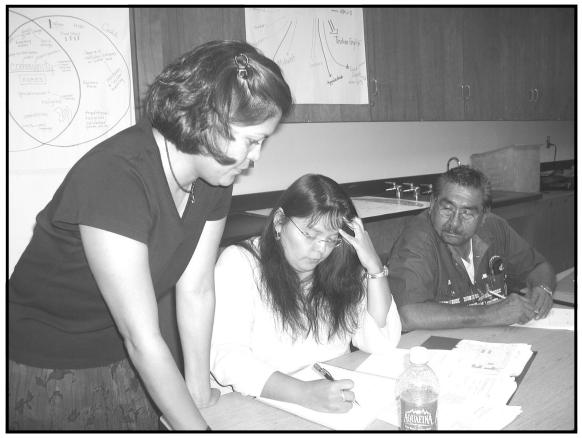
Instill
the child with self-esteem.

Need supportive teachers, administrators, communities,
tribal councils
and
committed native language speakers.

ALL OF US!

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> **"I believe that Indigenous peoples who are interested in sustaining and creating more speakers of their languages need all the necessary resources they can acquire. AILDI is one of those resources committed to providing its participants with unlimited information and knowledge that will assist them in their efforts for language revitalization."**

AILDI instructor Stacey Oberly with students from the *Linguistics for Native Communities* course. (L-R) Stacey Oberly, Christina Jaquez & Don Jack (2005)

> **"AILDI – <u>A</u>sk, <u>I</u>nformation, <u>L</u>earn, <u>D</u>evelop, and <u>I</u>mplement. We as students come here to ask questions; our instructors give us information to answer our questions; we learn it; we develop that information into a plan to help us; then implement the plan to teach our children and community members our language."**