

CHAPTER 15

Hawaiian for Indigenous Purposes to Sustain Hawai‘i’s Rich Culture and Language

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1 Introduction

The Hawaiian Language is the native language of Hawai‘i spoken by the indigenous peoples for hundreds of years here in the islands of Hawai‘i. With the introduction of the written form of Hawaiian language in the early 1800s and the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy came the gradual loss of the original oratory tradition of the spoken language. Today, many Hawai‘i natives have worked to restore and regain the native tongue of Hawai‘i. The State of Hawai‘i recognizes Hawaiian as one of two official languages of Hawai‘i, alongside English.

This proposal is about the creation of a Hawaiian Language for Specific Purposes (HLSP) course that will merge the ideas of language for academic purposes and language for indigenous purposes together to serve both distinct purposes for second language learners of Hawaiian. Language for indigenous purposes is defined as a language learning environment that is directed towards being sensitive to the culture of the target language. When learning and

teaching a language, it is imperative to be-culturally sensitive in the development of course materials that include pedagogy, experiential learning activities, and assessment methods. This is one of the primary goals in any indigenous purposes course. Likewise, language for academic purposes places the goals and needs of the learners in the area of academic second language use, typically for learners receiving an education or working in academia in a context where the L2 is used. Many students learning the native language of Hawai‘i at the college level are often familiar with the Hawaiian language but may or may not have learned to speak the language. Those who do speak Hawaiian have typically learned from their family, school, or in a Hawaiian immersion school context.

1.1 Institutional Background

Here in the University of Hawai‘i system, beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels of Hawaiian Language courses are offered to students seeking to earn a degree ranging from an Associate’s degree to an advanced doctorate degree in Hawaiian. Community colleges offer Hawaiian language courses at the beginning and intermediate level only. The students at community colleges tend to have a different purpose and focus than their peers at four-year campuses. To this end, the mission of community colleges in the University of Hawai‘i system is to provide open access to Hawai‘i’s people, offering high quality education and training for students either transferring to a four-year college or entering the workforce.

There is a need for this Hawaiian for indigenous purposes course as a way to provide Hawai‘i’s people with a course to learn the native language of Hawai‘i in order to sustain the rich language and culture of Hawai‘i. There are many *kānaka* (people) interested in learning the

Hawaiian language in order to communicate as their *kūpuna* (ancestors) did and to perpetuate the language for their *keiki* (children).

This proposal was proposed by a Hawaiian language professor at Kapi‘olani Community college, which is located in Honolulu at the slopes of Diamond Head on the island of O‘ahu. The purpose of this proposal for a HLSP course is to identify the need for opportunities for Hawai‘i’s community to learn the native language of Hawai‘i.

2 Need Analysis

In the proposed needs analysis for this course, the data gathered will provide evidence to continue the development and implementation of the Hawaiian for indigenous purpose course to be offered at Kapi‘olani Community College’s credit and/or non-credit programs. This analysis will ultimately identify and support the college’s mission of leading to student success while sustaining Hawai‘i’s rich language and culture.

In order to complete this needs analysis, data from Kapi‘olani Community College on student enrollment, demographics, and status will be collected. Additional information will be gathered from students enrolled in the Hawaiian programs at the college inquiring about their goals and commitment to learning the Hawaiian language. A survey with questions about the student’s needs and wants concerning Hawaiian language will be one form of data collected.

3 Student Learning Outcomes

The projected student learning outcomes (SLOs) for the course will reflect the currently approved SLSs in use for Hawaiian language courses; however, the depth and breadth of the outcomes will need to be adjusted for this course based on the results of the needs analysis. The projected outcomes should also align with the mission and goals of the college, focusing on open access to Hawai‘i’s people offering high quality education and training for students.

The SLOs for this HLSP course will likely include the basic language skills of writing, speaking, reading, listening, and cultural understanding. Students will learn basic Hawaiian language skills to speak and write phrases and sentences that family members would use to greet each other throughout the day. The grammar and vocabulary content will focus on conversational Hawaiian. A foundation of vocabulary building, through the use of resources and other materials, will also be set as a goal for learners in this course. The primary teaching philosophy guiding the student learning outcomes will be that they are each implemented with a high degree of cultural sensitivity. Culturally responsive strategies for curriculum development, delivery of instruction, and assessment of learning will be used. Lastly, students will be able to identify and model cultural practices in speaking with family members throughout the day.

4 Materials and Curriculum

The Hawaiian language is mainly taught here in Hawai‘i at the University of Hawai‘i campuses, though as a language course, it is not as popular as other world languages such as French, Japanese, Spanish and others. Therefore, the teaching materials are minimal and quite sparse. Over the many years of teaching the Hawaiian language, I have created many of my own

materials for students. In awareness of the cultural values of teaching and learning the native language of Hawai‘i, much of the world language materials are not suitable for a Hawaiian language classroom. Nonetheless, the majority of curriculum development and implementation will be carried out by individual teachers in a way to suit their students’ needs in accordance with their own teaching styles.

Possible teaching techniques include the Learning Styles Inventory (McLeod, 2010) to address all students’ learning styles, including visual, audio, and kinesthetic learners. Curriculum materials with vocabulary and grammar lessons will be presented in class and reinforced as supplemental materials available online. A variety of minimal lecture, authentic tasks, real-life experiential learning and student application will also be used when teaching the course. All content will have a strong cultural value and practice.

5 Assessment and Evaluation

Culturally responsive assessment strategies will be used to emphasize native Hawaiian values and cultural practices. In general, the assessment tools to measure the above SLOs will be in the form of assignments and activities during the course. One tool will consist of students creating a written dialogue and presenting it. For example, as students learn to greet family members throughout the day in Hawaiian, they can be assessed in this skill through the form of a paper and pencil quiz, as well as an actual family gathering in class to demonstrate and practice what was learned in class. Students can prepare a script and perform or interact with other students or family members using the language just learned in the class. Other tools will include

worksheets with matching, multiple choice, and short answers identifying and translating words, phrases, and complete sentences.

The student learning outcomes will be provided as a checklist to evaluate student learning. The professor and individual students will complete the checklist during the semester. A part of the needs analysis survey will be conducted here specifically targeting the students' report on their goals and commitment to learning the Hawaiian language, as well as their needs and wants at the end of the course.

6 Conclusion

This proposal is meant to provide data and support for the continued efforts to teach and redevelop the way Hawaiian language courses are taught at the college level. It will also provide a community outreach for Hawai'i's people to continue to perpetuate the native language and official state of Hawai'i language, allowing the indigenous people to communicate as their *kūpuna* once did with their *keiki*.

It is expected, however, that certain constraints and limitations for this proposal will be encountered, particularly in terms of time and participants for the needs analysis. Time constraints are aligned with the college semester, in particular balancing data gathering, course planning, and the facilitation of different stakeholders during a time when everyone is already busy with other obligations. In addition, the number of participants will be determined by students registered for Hawaiian courses, which may be a small sample size depending on the semester. One possible course of action to account for this is to carry out the needs assessment

over several semesters and contact both current former students within the program. Likewise, the advertisement of this course will not be eligible for funding by the college itself and therefore will have to rely on word of mouth to gain the necessary enrollment.

In the end, the benefit of this course is that it will increase interest into learning Hawaiian and may encourage students to continue at the college for an advanced degree. Though Hawai‘i is the home of Hawaiian language, it is not spoken freely here, and so through this HLSP course a large population of Hawai‘i’s people may be encouraged to speak the language of Hawai‘i again.