

**naat ?a maqlaqsyalank hemkank'la:
Sustaining tribal sovereignty through community-based language research**

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The continued loss of languages around the world is one of the primary challenges facing global politics today, as demonstrated by the announcement of the United Nations' Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022-2032. In the United States, federal policy obligates federal and state institutions to preserve, protect and promote the rights and freedom of more than five hundred tribes to use, practice, and develop their respective languages. Addressing the converging needs of tribal nations, their communities, and their respective languages in practice, however, requires the integration of theoretically informed analyses and comparative perspectives in broader social-political contexts.

In this talk, I will introduce an approach to sustaining tribal sovereignty through community-based language research. The approach was developed through multi-year collaboration with the Klamath Tribes and the American Indian Language Development Institute. Pilot workshops were held on the Klamath Tribes Reservation in Chiloquin, Oregon in 2016 and 2017 to survey community language vitality and determine methodological considerations for a nascent tribal languages research program. The pilot research informed the trial validation of an intracommunity survey instrument and the portability of Where Are Your Keys? Techniques to language education components in a three-run series of workshops December 2018, March 2019, and August 2019. There were no negative training outcomes and the null hypothesis (no difference) was rejected. Five tribal community investigators, two tribal high school students, and youth volunteers supported the trial, serving more than forty tribal community adults.

I am currently working with the Klamath Tribes to initiate long term strategic planning for maqlaqsyals (Klamath, Modoc languages) and numu yadua (Yahooskin-Northern Paiute languages). My work includes building an interdisciplinary research team to establish a tribal languages network and facilitate community visioning with several off-reservation and urban Klamath Tribes communities in Oregon over the next year. Long term strategic planning for tribal languages is directly related to the establishment of a Living Cultural Center that will support maqlaqsyals and numu yadua communities from tribal nations in Oregon, California, Nevada, and Oklahoma.