

Ientsitewate'nikonhraié:ra'te Tsi Nonkwá:ti Ne  
Á:se Tahatikonhsontóntie

We Will Turn Our Minds There Once Again,  
To the Faces Yet To Come

Second Language Speakers and Language Revitalization in Kahnawà:ke

By  
Kahtehrón:ni Iris Stacey

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of  
MASTERS OF EDUCATION

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**Supervisory Committee**

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Committee Member

## Abstract

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This research has given voice to adult second-language speakers in Kahnawà:ke to help in identifying how they can be supported to continue on their language-learning journey to insure highly accurate unabridged language will be passed on to the next generations. Recognizing these adult second-language speakers as a high priority demographic is essential and timely, as many graduates of adult immersion combined with the first generations from elementary immersion now need the most support and motivation to raise their young families in the language. After years of hard work, patience and dedication, Kanien’kéha revitalization in Kahnawà:ke seems to be at a threshold: it seems as though the next steps in language revitalization will be pivotal. The research suggests the future entails taking a kincentric approach to community language planning and serves as the first study on the impact, successes and challenges of second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke.

## Acknowledgements

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Finally, to all of you who have contributed to the vitality of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke as language advocates, passionate learners, dedicated parents and giving elders - this work represents a piece of our shared story. Tekwanonhwerá:tons. Iorihowà:nen tsi wesawakhwíhsron onkwawén:na aiesewawennakará:tate, kwah iorihowá:nen ne á:se tehatikonhsontóntie raotirihwá:ke.

## Dedication

With great love and respect, I dedicate this work to my grandmother, Norma Kwawennákwás Delaronde. Enkonhsennakará:tate né:'e tsi é:so wahskerihónnien, kwah tserihwaierihkó:wa. Konnorónkhwa.

## Table of Contents

<b>CHAPTER 1: ENKATATENÁ:TON - INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
ENKONKARATÓN:HAHSE - MY STORY .....	2
<b>CHAPTER 2: TSI NIIHTÓN:NE NE KAHNAWÀ:KE – KAHNAWÀ:KE, A HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</b> .....	<b>8</b>
THE BEGINNING OF LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION .....	9
ÓN:WA WENHNISERATÉNIÓN – KAHNAWÀ:KE AFTER OVER 40 YEARS OF COMMITMENT .....	14
REFLECTING ON FISHMAN’S SCALE.....	16
<b>CHAPTER 3: TSI NAHÒ:TEN WA’KERIHWÍ:SAKE – THE MATTER I AM SEARCHING FOR</b> .....	<b>18</b>
A CASE FOR SUPPORTING SECOND-LANGUAGE SPEAKERS.....	18
TSI NAHÒ:TEN ENKERIHWÍ:SEKE - RESEARCH FOCUS.....	20
<b>CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY – AN ONKWEHÓN:WE WAY</b> .....	<b>22</b>
TSI NÍ:TSI ENKERIHWÍ:SEKE – HOW I’LL GO ABOUT SEARCHING.....	23
COMMUNITY SURVEY USING A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS APPROACH .....	24
TARGET PARTICIPANTS – ADULT SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKERS AND LEARNERS .....	24
SURVEY DESIGN .....	25
IMPLEMENTING THE SURVEY .....	26
GATHERING THEIR VOICES.....	26
<b>CHAPTER 5: WAHONTERIHWÁTTHEHTE - RESULTS – A STORY OF DEDICATION, STRUGGLES AND SUCCESSES</b> .....	<b>29</b>
ADULT SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKERS - A DIVERSE DEMOGRAPHIC.....	29
SHONTAHONTÁHSAWEN - GOALS AND MOTIVATION TO BEGIN LEARNING KANIEN’KÉHA.....	30
CURRENT LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY .....	36
<i>Sénha Ahonhronkhatsheriíóhake - Hopes to improve proficiency</i> .....	37
<i>Challenges in increasing and maintaining proficiency</i> .....	38
EXISTING RESOURCES FOR ADULT LANGUAGE LEARNERS.....	41
<i>Thotí:iens Wahonwatiia’takéhnha - Learning from the Elders</i> .....	46
<i>Hopes For Future Kanién’kéha Resources</i> .....	48
DOMAINS OF LANGUAGE USE.....	51
<i>Language Use in the Home</i> .....	52
<i>Speaking at work and using Kanién’kéha skills for employment</i> .....	55
<i>Community - Social settings and first language speakers</i> .....	59
<i>Conversing with First Language Speakers</i> .....	61
<i>Hearing Kanién’kéha in Community</i> .....	62
<i>Summarizing domains of language use</i> .....	63
RENEWED GOALS - CONTINUING THEIR LANGUAGE LEARNING .....	64
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND IDENTITY .....	66
<i>Language learning and cultural awareness</i> .....	67
<i>Language learning and identity</i> .....	70
<i>Summarizing links between language, culture and identity</i> .....	74
PRESERVING ROTINONHSIÓN:NI WORLDVIEW .....	74
MOTIVATION AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF KANIEN’KÉHA IN KAHNAWÀ:KE.....	76

SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKERS – HONORING THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS.....	79
VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF KANIEN'KÉHA IN KAHNAWÀ:KE.....	82
<i>Iorihwákhste - The Future Can Weigh Heavy</i> .....	84
<i>Ientsitewatahsónteron - Committed to the Vision</i> .....	85
<b>CHAPTER 6: KANONHTONNIÓNTSHERA – DISCUSSION AND REFLECTIONS .....</b>	<b>88</b>
ADULT IMMERSION – RE-THINKING AND RE-DEFINING SUCCESS .....	89
RESOURCES - INSPIRING HIGHER LANGUAGE LEARNING .....	92
DOMAINS – SUCCESSES AND STRUGGLES.....	93
KINCENTRIC LANGUAGE LEARNING.....	94
SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKERS CONTRIBUTING TO THE VITALITY OF THE LANGUAGE.....	95
<b>CHAPTER 7: NAHÒ:TEN Ó:NEN ENTSONKWAIO'TEN – CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>98</b>
IMPACTING LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION IN KAHNAWÀ:KE .....	98
RECOMMENDATIONS – A KINCENTRIC APPROACH.....	98
<i>Family – Intergenerational language use in the home</i> .....	99
<i>Speakers and Learners - Cultivating a community of speakers</i> .....	101
<i>Working closer with our elders</i> .....	102
<i>Keeping our spiritual connection to the natural world</i> .....	103
<i>Final Thoughts</i> .....	103
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1. DESCRIPTION OF LANGUAGE RESOURCES PRESENTED IN THE SURVEY</b>	
.....	109
<b>APPENDIX 2 LETTER OF INFORMATION AND IMPLIED CONSENT .....</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2. COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SURVEY QUESTIONS.....</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3. HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL.....</b>	<b>125</b>

## Chapter 1

### Enkatatená:ton - Introduction

Kahtehrón:ni niwakhsennò:ten, wakeniáhton tánon Kahnawà:ke nitewaké:non. My name is Kahtehrón:ni Iris Stacey, I am a traditional turtle clan woman, born and raised in Kahnawà:ke, Mohawk Territory. I come from a large traditional family who ensured I have a strong connection to the land, the river and the people of Kahnawà:ke. The Longhouse teachings, philosophies, and laws have always been integral to my worldview which grounds me in my identity as a Rotinonhsión:ni woman. As a mother, I lead my family with traditional Longhouse ways at the heart of our family. We are proud of our Kanien'kéha (Mohawk) speaking home, as I am a second language speaker working diligently to ensure my children are confident Kanien'kéha speakers, proud of their Rotinonhsión:ni identity.

My research interests are definitely grounded in the needs of my community, and focused on finding ways to move language revitalization efforts in Kahnawà:ke forward. The focal point of my research addresses the growing demographic of adult language learners in Kahnawà:ke. My experience as an adult immersion teacher certainly influences my goal to constantly improve opportunities and resources that encourage second language speakers in becoming **highly**<sup>1</sup> proficient speakers, where they are

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<sup>1</sup> To further discern characteristics of a highly proficient Kanien'kéha speaker, this level of proficiency is described by the American Council on the Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) as a second language speaker who has Superior language skills where the speaker can “communicate with ease, accuracy, and fluency by participating fully and effectively in discussions on a variety of topics in formal and informal settings” as well



naturally using unabridged language in their everyday lives.

As a second language speaker and lifetime learner, my motivation to strive for the continuance of highly accurate language is rooted in our Rotinonhsión:ni teachings as we always look ahead seven generations tsi nonkwá:ti ne á:se tahatikonhsontóntie (towards the new faces yet to come). What is our vision for them, and how will we ensure the great peace, strength and good mind of our people will be everlasting?

### **Enkonkaratón:hahse - My Story**

I begin my story by positioning myself within my family. My parents, both Kanien'kehá:ka from Kahnawà:ke, are Matthew Kanatakén:iate Stacey and Olive Tiorón:se Delaronde. I have always felt fortunate that my extended family is quite large, as my father has 12 siblings and my mother has 10.

My father has always been a hard-working man, an ironworker, who worked in the States for most of my childhood. Like most families in Kahnawà:ke at that time, the women stayed home to raise the children while the men worked away building the bridges and high rises of New York, Boston and Washington. I was always proud that I had an ironworking dad. I recall a time in elementary school, during our Kanien'kéha class we had to learn to introduce ourselves and our parents. I remember saying “Matthew ronwá:iats ne rake'níha tánon karíhstatsi roió'te” (My father is called Matthew and he is a high steel worker). Almost all the other children said the same thing about their fathers, it was like we all shared that common bond. I would go home and repeat

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as “discuss at length complex issues by structuring arguments and developing hypotheses” (ACTFL Can-Do Benchmarks 2012).

that phrase over and over just because I liked the sound of it. That was my first real memory of loving the sound and the feeling of speaking my language.

With my dad being away so much my mother had all the responsibilities at home to tend to. She made sure we were taken care of and it seemed she always had something to keep us busy. We were raised on the river - swimming, fishing and catching crayfish. As we would walk through the paths to get to the river, we would stop to pick berries along the way. I can close my eyes today and still picture every path, every turn and the natural little landmarks along the way. I can remember the smells of the earth and the feeling of those scratchy tall grasses brushing upon my legs. I have countless memories of my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins being together at the river. That place is where my roots are firmly grounded.

My maternal grandparents played a huge role in shaping the world around me, showing me where I belonged in creation and the importance of family. Growing up, I was fortunate that my maternal grandparents lived just through the bushes, down the path, and a quick walk up that steep hill. My mother always took us there to spend the day or we would go to the family farm to work in the gardens. I loved being with my grandparents, they were always so good to us grandkids and because our family is so big, there was always a gang of cousins to play with. We played outside rain, shine, sleet or snow. I grew up in Kahnawà:ke at a time when children still played in the woods and families still swam at the river. I love thinking about that part of my childhood.

I was fortunate to have four Kanien'kéha speaking grandparents, although I didn't know my language when I was young aside from basic commands, I was always surrounded by the language. My father had no understanding of the language and I

thought my mother knew only basic phrases and commands. Only as an adult did I discover that my mother was a Kanien'kéha speaker. I can't recall a significant moment in my life that grew my interest in learning my language, but the message to learn was always told to us at the Longhouse. As young people we were always reminded by our elders that we had a responsibility to learn our ways and our language, to keep the ceremonies alive for our next generations.

As a young person I always felt like I missed out on speaking Kanien'kéha, especially because my younger brother was one of the students in the initial immersion pilot project back in 1978. I was super envious! I always wished that I'd have that same chance to learn, but somehow I never doubted that I would one day speak my language. It seemed as though I was always surrounded by speakers: my grandparents, the elders and my closest childhood friend, my cousin who is a first language speaker. Only later I would realize that her family is the last family in Kahnawà:ke who had never experienced a disruption of intergenerational language transmission.

Although elementary immersion was not an option for my generation, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend school in my community from elementary through high school. My high school experience at the Kahnawà:ke Survival School really kept me grounded in who I am, and proud of my identity as a Kanien'kéha person. Throughout my elementary and secondary education I had Kanien'kéha as a subject, and although at that time it was only isolated words and phrases, there were always opportunities to learn my language. I think back and realize that reading and writing my language was just as natural as learning to read in English. Today it's almost a given that

if you attended school in the community, then you can at least read your language even if you can't speak it.

As I got older I eventually had my first child, I was determined to teach her as much language as possible. I took the occasional community classes when they were offered and stocked up on any language resources I could find. It was so difficult to gain any real functional proficiency without regular classes, but I used whatever language I could with her. I felt bad, and maybe a little guilty, because I knew she struggled through her first year at the immersion school. It took some time for her to adjust and I was beyond proud when she would come home and sing all the Kanien'kéha songs and rhymes. She was the proudest little girl ever.

I wanted to keep up with my daughter's language learning to help with her homework and to speak at home, so I spent time visiting elders who were graciously patient to teach me whatever I asked. I found a special kindness in one elder, who helped me with everything from simple vocabulary and practical phrases until eventually she was helping me put together my words to offer at Longhouse ceremonies. She really helped me build a strong foundation as a beginner speaker. For a few years I was learning by picking up and using words and phrases as needed. It was only later, as a student at McGill University, that I had first discovered Kanien'kéha had an organized complex structure.

I was in a class called *Kanien'kéha – An Introduction to Grammar* along with 14 other students from Kahnawà:ke and Kanehsatà:ke, many of who were elders. The teacher was a first language speaker from Ahkwesásne, a skilled Kanien'kéha teacher very knowledgeable in Iroquois linguistics. Throughout the course each lesson was an

eye-opener. To see and discuss the system of the language, and to hear the elders question and debate some of the differences between dialects was awesome. I was learning a lot at a quick pace, and I couldn't wait for the next class.

I poured over my final project, showing examples of noun incorporation and verb morphology. I enjoyed applying my new understanding of Kanien'kéha and my new abilities to create with language. I was especially happy to begin using everything I had learned with my daughter, and I enjoyed the conversations with my grandmother each time I called her for help. Those intensive language courses and focused grammar lessons were obvious mediators that afforded me great strides in my language learning.

Later I worked in the elementary immersion school for 5 years before I became a stay-at-home mom with my two younger children. At home with my two boys, I was struggling to pass on the language to them, and soon realized I wasn't the only one. There were other mothers at the Longhouse who were experiencing the same difficulties so we decided we would start our own Kanien'kéha language nest. I attended the language nest for two years with my two younger children, and with the help of families working together with elders, many of our children became first language speakers.

When my children began school I attended the full-time Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion program for 2 years. By that time I was an average speaker but I was looking to be better. I just immersed myself in my studies, making sure to find learning in every day. I made the focal point of my studies on gaining practical language relative to my family life and building proficiency focused on contributing to ceremony. I excelled in my studies and graduated a highly proficient speaker, I was asked to teach and develop the program the following year.

After teaching adult immersion for over 5 years, and collaboratively developing a project based curriculum, I knew we had developed a highly successful program of studies rooted in Kanien'kehá:ka culture. Through that two-year program, students have been able to achieve a very high level of spoken language proficiency through a balance of grammar lessons and hands-on experiences. Now a vision of what will come next for language revitalization in my community is what I am working towards. I hope this project will inspire learners to continue their language learning beyond the classroom, beyond the conversation and into their homes with their children. I also hope that, as carriers of our language, we can work towards ensuring our language will still carry the voices of our ancestors so we can stay connected to them, the land and each other through ceremony.

## Chapter 2

### Tsi Niihtón:ne ne Kahnawà:ke – Kahnawà:ke, A Historical Background

Kahnawà:ke is a Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) community situated ten minutes outside of Montreal, on part of what is original Kanien'kehá:ka Territory. We are one of eight Kanien'kehá:ka communities which make up the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation, or the People of the Flint, Keepers of the Easter Door of the Rotinonhsión:ni Confederacy. Kahnawà:ke has a population of approximately 8,000 people and we call our language Kanien'kéha.

From the beginning of Kanien'kéha language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke, which began over four decades ago, the love the people have for our language combined with the strength of the community has paved the way for the successes of today. Language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke started off slowly but has steadily gained momentum with every passing year. Dating as far back as 1835 the issue of language, specifically in the area of education, has always been a contentious issue in Kahnawà:ke (Reid, 2004). Beginning with the introduction of formal schooling in Kahnawà:ke by British colonial authorities, and later further established under the catholic church in 1843, Kanien'kéha speaking children were expected to attend school to be educated in the French language (Reid, 2004).

By the 1890's it was reported by the Indian Department that enrollment and attendance in the Roman Catholic day schools was extremely lacking (Reid, 2004). The language barrier between French speaking teachers and Kanien'kéha speaking students was problematic and, among other reasons, was a factor in poor school enrollment (Reid,

2004). In an attempt to increase enrollment, the department heeded to requests for the community to appoint its own teachers who would teach their children (Reid, 2004).

In 1900 Kahnawa'kehró:non, Peter J. Delisle, in a formal request to the Indian Department, asked to be appointed head teacher of the Catholic Schools saying: "Indian children knowing only their own language teach faster with a teacher of their own race.... who can explain things in their own tongue" (Delisle, as cited by Reid, 2004). To the satisfaction of the community Delisle's request was approved and school enrollment increased to 70% of all Kahnawà:ke's school aged children (Reid, 2004). Despite this increase, native teachers were later dismissed as the new deputy super intendant chose to exert power over the community, a political move in reaction to the community's unrelenting opposition to the Indian Act. Native teachers were replaced by the Sisters of St. Anne who were then given control of Kahnawà:ke's catholic day schools. Kanien'kéha language in community schools came to an end in 1915 (Reid, 2004).

### **The Beginning of Language Revitalization**

By 1950, most families in Kahnawà:ke were no longer raising their children in the language (Hoover, 1991). This was due to the devastating effects of the Indian day schools in Kahnawà:ke, residential school and the effects of modernization. This generation would be the first generation of primarily first language English speakers. After over two decades of steady intergenerational language loss, parents decided that steps needed to be taken to address it (Hoover, 1991).

In 1970 Kanien'kéha was introduced into all elementary classrooms for 15 minutes a day at the Kahnawà:ke Indian Day School (Hoover, 1991). Taught by three



committed speakers and supported by the non-native principal, the language classes were soon increased to a half hour daily (Hoover, 1991; Jacobs, 1989). Following this increase the Kahnawà:ke Combined Schools Committee initiated the first teacher training program in 1972, in partnership with the University of Quebec, a certificate program to train 5 Kanien'kéha language teachers (Jacobs, 1989).

In 1978, the passing of Quebec's Charter of the French language would profoundly transform the community of Kahnawà:ke (Hoover, 1991). Bill 101 (1978) defined French as the majority population and named French as the official language of Quebec. Within the educational frameworks, it states that language of instruction from kindergarten to secondary is French, Kahnawa'kehró:non (the people of Kahnawà:ke) would need to apply for a license to continue their education in English.

At that time the community of Kahnawà:ke , for many reasons, highly opposed Bill 101 (1978). This sparked the establishment of the Kanien'kéha Raotitióhkwa Cultural Center, later known as the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC), within that same year. The center was created to preserve and enrich the language and culture of the Kanien'kehá:ka of Kahnawà:ke (KORLCC, 2014).

Additionally, on September 6<sup>th</sup>, 1978 Kahnawà:ke's students walked out of the neighboring community high school in protest of the implications of Bill 101, and the following day the Kahnawà:ke Survival School was formed (Blanchard, 1980) - a high school where students would have the opportunity to attend school in their own community, and Kanien'kéha language and culture would be the foundation of their education (Blanchard, 1980).

The community continued to stand together to reaffirm that we, as Kanien'kehá:ka people, would decide **all** aspects of our children's education. One year after the passing of Bill 101, in 1979, the community affirmed that Kanien'kéha immersion was what they wanted for their children (Hoover, 1991; Jacobs, 1989). In response, the Kahnawà:ke Education Center and KORLCC sponsored a pilot project for a half-day total immersion program at the nursery level (Jacobs, 1998). This was the catalyst for the formation of the first elementary immersion program in Kahnawà:ke (Hoover, 1991).

The growing needs of the elementary immersion program meant that language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke would increasingly become a school based effort, because of this, there has been comparable consideration for training our teachers as our needs evolved. In September of 1985, Kahnawà:ke's second teacher training program took the form of a ten-month Kanien'kéha immersion program. The program focused on training nine qualified teachers, all who had some knowledge of the language (Maracle, 2002; Jacobs, 1989). Later this teacher training would be known as the first adult immersion program in the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation.

Kahnawà:ke's second immersion school was initiated by an ambitious group of mothers with very young children in 1988. These mothers wanted to create an opportunity for their children to begin learning Kanien'kéha at an earlier age than previously established through public immersion schooling. Karihwanó:ron Kanien'kéha Owén:na Tsi Ionterihwaienhstákhwa was formed to offer an early childhood immersion program within a home-like setting, a school for children to begin learning Kanien'kéha at the age of 2 years old (Karihwanó:ron, 2014).

In 1991, twelve years after the implementation of elementary immersion, a joint study was carried out by McGill University and the KORLCC to determine the state of the language in Kahnawà:ke (Hoover, 1991). The study found that the people of Kahnawà:ke revered the language and it was strongly rooted in their identity even though they didn't speak at the time, identifying the Longhouse as being integral to the strong connection they felt to their cultural identity as well as in reaffirming their responsibility to ensuring the language continues (Hoover, 1991).

At the time of the study, immersion programs were seen as being successful and young people were described as speaking with their grandparents but not speaking with their parents (Hoover, 1991). The reason identified for this phenomenon was not because they did not want to use the language, but because they did not want to be disrespectful to their immediate elders knowing they didn't understand (Hoover, 1991). The study identified a crucial area of language maintenance lacking in Kahnawà:ke's efforts, this was defined as intergenerational language transmission in the home (Hoover 1991). Since this study there have been tireless efforts to maintain language programming and the KORLCC implemented numerous adult language classes and support programs to increase visibility of Kanien'kéha throughout the community (KORLCC web site, 2015).

Language revitalization efforts continued to spread across Kanien'kehá:ka Territory when the Mohawk Language Standardization Project brought together language teachers, speakers and resource workers from across 6 Kanien'kehá:ka communities in 1993 (Lazore, 1993). Headed by Dorthy Karihwénhawe Lazore, the six-month project consisted of a huge consultation process, followed by a Mohawk Language Standardization Conference that enabled elders, teachers, linguists and speakers to

successfully define a standardized Kanien'kéha orthography (Lazore, 1993). With the newly standardized orthography, the staff of the Kanien'kehá:ka Curriculum Center in Kahnawà:ke updated existing curriculum and undertook the creation of new resources to support the Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienhsthákhwa elementary immersion program.

Still concerned for the future of our language, in 1998 the KORLCC Elder's Advisory board put their efforts towards developing the Kahnawà:ke Language Law. The purpose of the law is "to revive and restore the Kanien'kéha language as the primary language of communication, education, ceremony, government and business within the Mohawk Territory of Kahnawà:ke" (Section 1.1) The language law was enacted in 2000 by the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, making Kanien'kéha "the official language of the Mohawks of Kahnawà:ke" (Section 3.1).

By 2002 excessive teacher shortages were reported by the administration at the Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienhsthákhwa elementary immersion school. This led to a collaboration between the Kahnawà:ke Education Center and McGill University for a specialized teacher training program and the formation of the Kanien'kehá:ka Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Language Immersion Program. Using a primarily linguistic teaching approach, skilled teachers Karihwénhawe Dorothy Lazore and Kwaronhiá:wi Annie Deer created and implemented the 1 year intensive adult immersion program. In June 2003, the community of Kahnawà:ke celebrated the success of the program as efforts to foster new Kanien'kéha language teachers were achieved, graduating 25 highly proficient adult students that inaugural year.

In 2005 the Iakwahwatsiratátie Language Nest was founded by a group of young mothers from the Longhouse who wanted to switch the responsibility of language revitalization from the schools back to family. The grassroots initiative targeted parents of infants as well as toddlers, and was intended to foster intergenerational language transmission in a natural learning environment. The nest began with approximately 10 families and was successful in fostering both first and second language speakers through daily interaction of families and elders, engaged in day-to-day activities and cultural teachings.

### **Ón:wa Wenhniseraténion – Kahnawà:ke After over 40 years of Commitment**

After 46 years of efforts in language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke, Kanien'kéha can be heard in many domains within the community. The language movement has created an energy that everyone seems to want to be a part of. A large population of Kahnawa'kehró:non have it in their hearts to speak their language, and now, after years of hard work, patience and dedication, Kanien'kéha revitalization in Kahnawà:ke seems to be at a threshold: it seems as though the next steps in language revitalization will be pivotal. The new generation of adult second language speakers are a result of the successes of the past 46 years, now the future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke will depend upon these new speakers to carry the language forward and nurture the next generation of new speakers.

Today, the Longhouse continues to be a significant motivator behind language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke, as many second language speakers have now become leaders in ceremony. The ceremonies continue to be conducted in Kanien'kéha and many

young people focus their language learning on gaining cultural knowledge to ensure and contribute to the continuation of traditional Longhouse ways. Through ceremony, the importance of speaking the language is emphasized as being everyone's responsibility to the next seven generations.

Kahnawà:ke's two elementary immersion schools continue to thrive, with approximately 240 students enrolled for the 2015-2016 school year. Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienstákhwa maintains a culturally based program of studies for the elementary total immersion program to support students from nursery to grade 4, with maintenance programs for grades 5 and 6. Karihwanó:ron Kanien'kéha Owén:na Tsi Ionterihwaienstákhwa continues to offer an immersion program from pre-school to grade 6. The Kahnawà:ke Survival School offers Kanien'kéha grades 7 to 11 exposure classes as well as an advanced language maintenance program to accommodate those entering from immersion based education. Additionally, they offer option classes at the higher grades to students aiming for advanced proficiency. Kateri Tsi Ionterihwaienstákhwa remains a primarily English elementary school with French immersion and Kanien'kéha exposure classes. All community schools see graduates of the Kanien'kéha Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion program teaching Kanien'kéha at all levels.

The KORLCC continues to offer a multitude of language learning and cultural activities, and in 2012 declared April as cultural awareness month in Kahnawà:ke (KORLCC, 2014). A recent telephone survey conducted by KORLCC and the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke's Language Training Center in the spring of 2014 found that of the 376 individuals surveyed, only 27% considered themselves a non-speaker and 73%

reported having some speaking ability. Notably, 50% reported having at least 1 other person (other than themselves) in the home that was an intermediate to advanced speaker. There is yet to be any follow up or discussion on these results, but these figures are promising for the state and future of Kanien'kéha in our community.

A factor that can potentially build on the positive findings from the telephone survey is the newly revised program at the Iakwahwatsiratátie Language Nest which now has twenty new families dedicated to passing on the language to their children. Additionally, the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke has applied the Kahnawà:ke Language Law by providing language learning opportunities for all their employees. Towards the end of this study, in June of 2016, the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program graduated another cohort from the now two-year program, bringing the number of successful graduates to 142 speakers. Many of these former students continue to use their language skills within their families, employment and throughout the community (KORLCC, 2014).

### **Reflecting on Fishman's Scale**

Efforts in language revitalization in Kahnwà:ke have been growing and evolving since its beginning. Expanding from 15 minutes per day in elementary, we now see two elementary immersion schools and many community language efforts in existence such as the Iakwahwatsiratátie language nest, the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program, and the annual Rotinonhsión:ni Languages Gathering. Reflecting on Fishman's graded intergenerational disruption scale (GIDS), Kahnawà:ke can be looked at as being on the threshold of stage 6 where most of the world's stable languages are described

(Fishman, 1991). The next steps the community takes towards reversing language shift will be crucial in securing the language into the future, particularly because the majority of all language programming in Kahnawà:ke today is being initiated, facilitated and maintained by second-language Kanien'kéha speakers.

Although it may be difficult to plainly assert an explicit “stage” to describe the state of many Indigenous languages in the process of revitalization, Kahnawà:ke's situation on Fishman's scale would be defined as *threatened* (Fishman, 1991). This description is comparable to UNESCO's 2009 framework (Lewis & Simons, 2009), where language in Kahnawà:ke would be described as being in an *endangered* state. In similar terms, Nettle and Romaine (2000) state that “languages are *at risk* when they are no longer transmitted naturally to the children in the home by parents or other caretakers” (p.8). This means that although we have been making progress in our efforts, Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke remains at risk, threatened and endangered until we see many strong first language speakers emerging and intergenerational use of the language spanning 3 generations. Establishing our current situation is crucial to planning strategies for the future. For this research it also serves as a benchmark, underscoring the importance of focusing on strengthening the home domain for language transmission and draws attention to the binary role of adult second language learners.



## Chapter 3:

### Tsi Nahò:ten Wa'kerihwí:sake – The Matter I Am Searching For

#### **A Case for Supporting Second-language Speakers**

There are many undeniable challenges to learning Kanien'kéha, and more so for second-language speakers to transmit the language to another generation (Dauenhauer, 2005). With Kahnawà:ke's many graduates of elementary immersion and over 140 graduates of the Ratiwennahní:rats Kanien'kéha Adult Immersion Program (KORLCC, 2014), there are potentially many young families raising their children in the language. It is unclear, however, to what extent these second-language speakers are using the language at home and throughout the community.

Additionally, it is concerning that in Kahnawà:ke there are presently few first language speakers emerging, as the number of first language speakers sadly continues to decline. This means the future of Kanien'kéha will depend largely upon today's second-language speakers to become highly proficient speakers and pass the language on to their children to nurture a renewed generation of speakers. Focusing our efforts to bring about this desired situation is essential in ensuring a rich unabridged language will continue for generations to come.

Wilson & Kamana (2009) also advocate supporting second language speakers and echo Fishman (1991) as they shed light on the importance of supporting the “creation of a demographic trend of highly proficient second language adult speakers in the language”. Consequently, as language and culture are intertwined (Antone, 2013; Battiste, 2008; Baloy, 2011; Dauenhauer, 2005; Greene, 2009; Hinton, 2001; Hoover, 1991; Ignace &

Ignace, 2008; Napoleon, 2014; Smith, 2012; Tattie, 2015), we will be affording a space for the continuance of our rich Rotinohsion:ni cultural knowledge.

As an adult second language learner, I have come to know that supporting adult learners of Kanien'kéha in becoming highly proficient speakers is a greater cause than language for communication. The language leads us back to our traditional medicines, our stories, arts, ceremony and strengthened spirituality. As second-language learners in search for language we uncover a knowledge system built over centuries - a vessel which holds the knowledge of our ancestors. We have come to know that when re-learning our original language "language is not merely a tool to replace English" (Anonby, 1991), it is an act of reaffirming and reclaiming our identity as Onkwehón:we people (Alfred, 2009).

Regaining our language as adults is a source of strength in recovering our relationships with the natural world where, in many ways, we have become disconnected and disjointed from our natural ways of being in the world as a result of imposed education systems and extensive land loss. The journey of learning one's original language is life-long learning, an exploration of one's identity through language that connects us to the land, to creation and to each other as Onkwehón:we people. It enables us to see the world through the eyes and hearts of our ancestors. Supporting adult second-language speakers through an intergenerational community approach to revitalize Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke creates a path to healing by reclaiming, rebuilding and recovering what we were once denied.

### **Tsi Nahò:ten Enkerihwí:seke - Research Focus**

It is my belief that because the majority of all language programming is initiated, facilitated and maintained by second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke, community planning needs to continue its investment in adult second language speakers in order to insure highly accurate unabridged language will be passed on to the next generations. Additionally, I feel that recognizing adult second-language speakers as a high priority demographic is essential and timely, as many graduates of adult immersion combined with the first generations from elementary immersion may now need the most support and motivation to raise their young families in the language.

This research is intended to inform future language planning by giving a voice to second language speakers in order to determine how they are using Kanien'kéha in community, how they are continuing their language learning and what resources have been useful for their language maintenance or growth. I have carried out my research in hopes of moving community revitalization efforts forward by identifying how second-language speakers can be supported in achieving very high proficiency.

My main research question is:

**How can second-language Kanien'kéha speakers in Kahnawà:ke be supported and motivated to continue on their language-learning journey to become highly proficient speakers?**

To help answer my main question, the research has also considered these six sub-questions:

1. How do second-language Kanien'kéha speakers perceive their current language abilities?
2. How are second-language speakers using language in their homes, and in community?
3. What resources are they using to increase their spoken proficiency?
4. What are some challenges they face in increasing or maintaining their proficiency?
5. What do they feel would help them increase their language proficiency?
6. What is their motivation and vision for the future of language in Kahnawà:ke?

The sub-questions helped me to focus my research on the abilities, needs and challenges experienced by second language speakers in my community and consequently created a path upon which I formulated my survey.

## Chapter 4

### Methodology – An Onkwehón:we Way

As a Kanien'kehá:ka person I begin my research by grounding myself through the words of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, the words that stand before all else, the Thanksgiving Address. It reminds us to be thankful for all of creation and to reaffirm all our relations with people and with the natural world. Our Rotinonhsión:ni worldview and spirituality is conveyed in the words of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen, as those words carry the intellectual and scientific knowledge of our ancestors, passed on from generation to generation to generation.

We continue to use those ancient words today, each time there is a gathering of our people. We reaffirm our relationships with the earth, waters, plant and animal life. It speaks of the inter-dependence of all the natural elements of this earth and how we as human beings are dependent upon them for our health, happiness and survival. The ancient words express equality for all elements of the natural world and are constantly being reaffirmed.

Our custom of consistently passing the words of our Thanksgiving Address at our gatherings is a construct put in place at the time of our creation story, to ensure that we, as human beings will forever see and appreciate our world as an interconnected and interdependent system. It is not simply repository knowledge, it is applied knowledge (Antone, 2013), as we continue to live and govern ourselves based on these teachings. Thinking of this earth and our people in terms of seven generations ahead, we have a saying within the Thanksgiving Address – “Á:se tahatikonhsontóntie raotirihwá:ke” it means “for the faces yet to come.” It refers to the faces coming from the earth - our future

generations. The choices we make today are for their survival, benefit and well-being. It is where this work is rooted, as I reflect on our work in language revitalization today, I look ahead to them, planning for seven generations ahead, to *The Faces Yet To Come*.

### **Tsi Ní:tsi Enkerihwí:seke – How I'll Go About Searching**

From within an Indigenous paradigm rooted in Rotinonhsión:ni worldview, I began this research project with the intention of giving a voice to those who have dedicated themselves to learning Kanien'kéha as adults. Although I am a second language speaker with an insider's perspective, as a Rotinonhsión:ni person, I value the voice of the collective. This research brings together many individual experiences intended to form a collective voice to build and support this research. Their integral role in language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke is the focus of this ethnographic inquiry, as their experiences, thoughts and vision for the future will help identify gaps in community language planning and define ways to support the growing demographic of second language speakers - connecting our past, present and future generations.

I have chosen a qualitative research design through two modes of gathering knowledge to answer my research questions. First is a literature review on the history and current efforts of language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke, approaches in community language planning and the role of adult second language speakers. Second, as my primary source of data collection I have conducted a community survey of past graduates of the Kanien'kéha Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program to help answer my main research question. I had anticipated that because of the qualitative nature of the research,

other issues and themes would emerge which would require additional literature based inquiry.

### **Community Survey Using a Qualitative Analysis Approach**

For my community survey I chose a qualitative analysis approach to explore the experiences of second-language speakers. I designed a pre-structured survey, where some main topics were defined beforehand in order to focus on my specific research areas of interest (Janson, 2010). Through the survey my intention was to shed light on their language attitudes, experiences and ideas about the future of language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke. Through the use of primarily open-ended questions I was able to explore existing issues, discover new ideas and opportunities, as well as common themes that had emerged (Heigham & Croker, 2009; Hinton, 2001; Jansen, 2010).

### **Target Participants – Adult Second Language Speakers and Learners**

Choosing the past graduates of the Kanien'kéha Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program to represent the target demographic for this study has been advantageous due to the existing mailing list maintained by the KORLCC. Their mailing list consists of 7 cohorts of past graduates since its inception in 2002. This enabled me to personally invite them to participate as opposed to a general community invitation. This, however, excluded the present cohort and the few adult second language speakers who learned through methods other than adult immersion. Additionally, choosing these past graduates to represent the growing demographic of adult second language speakers in

Kahnawà:ke will result in the first study to document their language use after completing the program.

### **Survey Design**

The community language survey designed for this research consisted of 38 questions formulated as mainly qualitative, open-ended questions with few posed requiring a quantitative response. The qualitative nature of the survey was intended to create a space for the participants' collective voice to guide the research. The quantitative aspects of the survey dealt mainly with frequency of language use within particular domains. This quantitative data collection was intended to help in establishing context and clarifying main points highlighted in the correlative open-ended questions.

Beginning with demographical descriptors, the survey then looks to establish participants' perceived linguistic abilities relative to the ACTFL spoken proficiency scale<sup>2</sup>. Questions then explore language use relative to language domains such as home, work and community. The survey then focuses on determining the language resources being utilized and provides a space for learners to identify their needs to help determine gaps in community resources or existing programming. Questions also look to gain insight on how learners describe their experiences reflective of research that asserts language and culture are intertwined. Finally, participants identify motivating factors for language learning and their vision for the future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke.

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<sup>2</sup> The ACTFL oral proficiency scale has been used in Kahnawà:ke for approximately 15 years. Most, if not all, students of adult immersion are very familiar with this proficiency scale and most have been evaluated through an ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).



## **Implementing the Survey**

Prior to launching the survey, I shared my MILR project with the community on our local radio station as well as through a flyer in our local newspaper. The survey was disseminated with the assistance of the Kahnawà:ke Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC), the organization presently overseeing the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program. Through their alumni mailing list, 121 of the 123 graduates of the immersion program were sent an invitation to participate, accompanied by one paper survey and a paid return envelope addressed to the KORLCC. One past graduate had no contact information listed, and therefore was not contacted to participate, nor did this researcher (although a past graduate) participate in the survey.

The survey was launched on February 26, 2016 and remained open for 4 weeks before closing on March 25, 2016. Two weeks following the start of the survey, a reminder was posted in our local newspaper. It was hoped to attain a minimum 20% response rate anticipating a fair representation of diverse experiences and ideas of second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke.

## **Gathering Their Voices**

The community survey came to a close with 27 completed surveys returned to the KORLCC offices, exceeding the anticipated response rate by 2 participants. The detailed and heartfelt responses of the participants told a story of their experiences as second language speakers, showing they are truly passionate about their language and have a great vision for the future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke.

To bring together the voices of the participants, responses were coded, analyzed and organized into 8 main themes, which were pre-determined and guided through the survey design:

1. Goals and Motivation to Begin Learning Kanien'kéha
2. Current Language Proficiency
3. Challenges in Increasing/Maintaining Proficiency
4. Resources for Adult Language Learners
  - Learning from the Elders
  - Future Resources
5. Domains of Language Use
  - In the Home
  - Speaking at Work and Using Kanien'kéha Skills for Employment
  - Community - Social Settings and First Language Speakers
  - Opportunities to Hear Spoken Kanien'kéha
6. Continuing Their Language Learning
  - Renewed Goals
7. Relationships Between Language, Culture and Identity
  - Preserving Rotinonhsión:ni Worldview
8. Motivation and Vision for the Future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke

The analysis of the data also allowed for any new themes to emerge that were not pre-defined through the survey, and the results convey topics that were described by participants as important discussion through the open-ended question format. Three such themes were very apparent – camaraderie between second language speakers, the prestige

associated with speaking Kanien'kéha, and the heavy responsibility they feel because of the urgency to strengthen the language. These themes will be discussed within various sections of the results. Finally, their responses showed a diverse representation of this demographic of adult speakers, this allowed for the many themes to be discussed in order to answer my main research question.

Chapter 5:  
Wahonterihwáthehte  
Results – A Story of Dedication, Struggles and Successes

The results of this research project are intended to inform the direction of language planning in Kahnawà:ke by highlighting the story of second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke. The project has given voice to adult second-language speakers to help in identifying how they can be supported to continue on their language-learning journey to achieve very high proficiency. This is the first study on the impact, successes and challenges of second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke. Choosing the past graduates of the Kanien'kéha Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion to represent the growing demographic of adult second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke has also resulted in the first study to document their language use after completing the program.

Before I begin to tell their story, it's important to share how I, as the writer of this paper, am gratefully humbled by the honest and forthcoming responses provided by all who have participated in this research. I hope that you, as the reader, can appreciate their openness for sharing their unique experiences and thoughts about something they care so deeply about. This is their story. I have been diligent in portraying them with the utmost care and respect.

**Adult Second Language Speakers - A Diverse Demographic**

The demographic of past graduates of the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program chosen for this study represents a diverse group of second language speakers in

Kahnawà:ke. This demographic is comprised of both women and men, with the youngest survey participant being 21 years of age and the eldest participant 78 years. Almost half the participants report having studied in the full-time Ratiwennahní:rats Program for one year, while the other half benefitted from an extended two-year program.

Adding to the diversity of this group is the variation in the amount of years they have been studying Kanien'kéha. Some report to have been studying ten years or more, while others report studying the language for as little as one to three years. The significance of this difference has resulted in the contrasting levels of spoken proficiency described by participants. Varied proficiency levels also impact their responses throughout the survey, such as when describing useful resources as well as their language use in various domains. Other notable factors contributing to their diverse responses can be likened to differing family units and occupations. Because of this broad representation I am quite confident that the participants in this language survey thoroughly represent the thoughts and experiences of adult second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke.

### **Shontahontáhsawen - Goals and Motivation to Begin Learning Kanien'kéha**

As second language speakers of Kanien'kéha, we surely all had something that motivated us to get moving on our path to become dedicated students of our language. Many of us share those initial goals with few people, as it can be quite emotional to talk about wanting to gain something so badly, something that is such an integral part of our identity as Onkwehón:we people. Often only our closest family members, our cherished teachers or other ambitious language learners know what keeps us focused on doing the work, a task that sometimes seems so difficult to achieve.

That is where this story begins, placing adult second language speakers at the start of their language-learning journey. Establishing their aspirations to begin learning Kanien'kéha opened the door to their personal stories in their journey towards regaining their ancestral language. Revealing the underlying motivation and the goals that have kept these learners committed to pursuing their language as adults can help to clarify ways they can be supported to continue reaching for higher proficiency.

When the past graduates of the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program were asked what their main goal was when they first started learning Kanien'kéha, their responses were thoughtful and forthcoming, as they conveyed how motivation to begin learning was rooted in their goal to speak their language and to converse with their children, grandchildren, extended family and first language speakers. For some, they aspired to become the main support for their children in becoming speakers of the language. In the following response, Kawennéhawe shares how her goal was motivated by her hopes to support her children to speak Kanien'kéha. She writes:

I wanted to teach my kids. I wanted them to have a base in the language. I knew if this were to happen it had to be me that did it. I didn't expect them to only learn at school. (Kawennéhawe Fawn Deer)

Kawennéhawe was not alone in hoping to support her children to speak the language, as many participants also describe their main goal as wanting to teach or at least hold simple conversations with their children and family members. Many young language learners envision one day raising their future children in the language, hoping to

pass the language on in the home, to give their children the gift of being a first language speaker of Kanien'kéha.

Relative to fostering Kanien'kéha speaking relationships, some learners share that when they began learning Kanien'kéha they were pursuing very high proficiency with the intention of one day being able to converse with first language speakers, family and elders. In addition to gaining proficient conversational skills, some second language speakers described their motivation to aim for high proficiency as rooted in their desire to fully participate in ceremony.

Another common motivation described by these adult learners is their desire to gain an understanding of the language in ceremonial contexts. They describe wanting to understand the speeches when attending Longhouse ceremonies as well as to understand their grandparents and elders. These learners share their experience growing up in the Longhouse, attending ceremony for most of their lives, without understanding what was being said by their elders. This lack of understanding during ceremony motivated them to focus their learning on the ceremonial speeches and traditional oratory.

Respondents also explain their motivation to learn was to become grounded in their identity and to contribute to saving the language by using their skills to become teachers in various community immersion schools or in other work settings. Konwaia'tanón:wes gives an example of this and describes how her goal had evolved over time:

At first, learning Kanien'kéha was to know who I am and become more in touch with my culture, but once I had started having my kids my goals

changed. I wanted to know my language so I can give it to my kids and in whatever small way contribute to saving the language so future generations will continue to speak it. (Lynn Konwaia'tanón:wes Jacobs)

Many second language speakers describe their goals similarly, showing many layers of motivation and aspirations to use their language skills to suit their changing needs.

Some of these second language speakers described their reason to enter the Ratiwennahní:rats immersion program as being an opportunity to grow from being an “understander” of the language to a speaker of the language as well as an opportunity to finally learn as there were no opportunities when they were young. This was described by some older participants who missed their opportunity to benefit from language programming in community schools, which only began in 1970.

The past graduates were also asked if they felt satisfied that they had accomplished their primary goal as a second language learner. Participants have achieved their described goals to varying degrees. Their responses can be divided into two groups: i) learners who are satisfied they accomplished their goal and ii) those that feel unsatisfied with their learning outcomes.

Those who report they are satisfied to have reached their goal feel they have gained very high proficiency or have surpassed their goal because they underestimated how much they would learn in the Ratiwennahní:rats program. Another factor reported as being a measure of their success is that they have been able to secure their desired employment outcomes in teaching Kanien'kéha or other language work. They describe being very ambitious and motivated to reach their goal and for some, they find validation



from their elders. Here is what one young learner shared about realizing her goals to speak and teach her language:

I feel that I've accomplished my main goal because I can carry on a conversation with a first-language speaker and I also began teaching in two different Mohawk immersion schools since I've graduated in 2012. I'm currently teaching in a Mohawk immersion nursery and kindergarten class.  
(Atewenniióstha Jacobs)

Atewenniióstha's measure of success mirrored her original goal, which was to be able to speak with first language speakers and to one day become a teacher of her language. She later described how her language-learning goals are always being renewed, as she continues to increase her proficiency by setting small, attainable and specific learning goals.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, other learners who have reportedly attained their goal exhibit their measure of success as very closely mimicking their earliest goals when they began learning Kanien'kéha.

Those who feel they have not yet reached their goal express their view that learning Kanien'kéha as a second language is a lifelong journey. Graduates feel the Ratiwennahní:rats program was extremely helpful in their language learning, giving them the ability to speak with their children, grandchildren and/or grandparents. Yet, for some, a lack of practice using the language following completion of the immersion program has

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<sup>3</sup> This method of goal setting for learning Kanien'kéha was presented by this author in workshops presented at the KORLCC's Annual Rotinonhsión:ni Language Gathering in 2014 and 2016.

held them from fully reaching their learning goal. Here Konwaia'tanón:wes, who studied in the one-year program, explains her experience as she reflects on her initial goal:

After years of night classes, a light bulb finally went on when I was in the Ratiwennahní:rats program and I could suddenly understand how the language worked! It was a very exciting time for me. Unfortunately the one year program was not enough to make me a fluent speaker and I have struggled ever since to keep it going amidst our busy family life. (Lynn Konwaia'tanón:wes Jacobs)

Others share that they have also struggled to maintain their proficiency, primarily those who did not work in language revitalization programs following the completion of the Ratiwennahní:rats program. Finally, some learners feel they did not fully reach their goal because they were unable to speak exclusively in Kanien'kéha with their children as they had hoped to do. They later describe their challenges in maintaining a Kanien'kéha speaking home, where they identify difficulties stemming from being the only speaker in the household.

As their responses have shown, their motives for committing themselves to learning their language as adults are very personal. They strongly link learning Kanien'kéha to growing their identity, an act of restoring and rejuvenating their spirits as Onkwehón:we people. Surely it would be emotional, as previously mentioned, when language learning is described as linked to providing for family, in this case, our true language for our children and grandchildren. Drawing connections between Kanien'kéha

language learning, identity and our future generations will need to continue to be a source of strength, motivation and encouragement for second language speakers.

### **Current Language Proficiency**

It is important to bring to light that not all second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke have equal levels of proficiency, including the past graduates of the Kanien'kéha Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program. There are many factors that contribute to this variation, of which the most obvious would be time spent learning the language or being immersed in a Kanien'kéha speaking environment. Establishing the range of Kanien'kéha proficiency for Kahnawà:ke's second language speakers will help in understanding and identifying their needs to continue learning Kanien'kéha.

Understanding spoken proficiency is important to establish in order to distinguish the resources, programs and challenges experienced at each level of proficiency. It can also help to recognize the attitudes and characteristics of adult learners who have attained a high level of spoken proficiency and determine their approach to learning language.

The survey invited participants to share their range of spoken proficiency relative to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) oral proficiency scale which has been used in Kahnawà:ke for approximately ten years. Most, if not all, students of adult immersion are very familiar with this proficiency scale and most have been evaluated through an ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).

The participants' feedback on their current spoken proficiency reflects quite a range of abilities, extending from novice-mid to advanced high. Some of the responses may not represent the past students' current abilities, as their responses reflect their

proficiency **before** admission to the immersion program. They reported inconsistencies in the administering of the OPIs, where some students were only evaluated as part of their admission to the program and few cohorts were interviewed following completion of the immersion program. Some also note that although they had an OPI they were never informed of the results. It appears that only the most recent cohorts were evaluated both at the beginning **and** upon completion of the Ratiwennahní:rats program. There are, however, additional indicators of their present spoken abilities throughout the survey to help in clarifying their range of proficiency.

Almost all participants who report never having an OPI interview are still quite familiar with the ACTFL proficiency scale. They describe their spoken proficiency level ranging from novice-high to advanced-high, and offer reasoning for their self-assessment relative to the descriptors within the ACTFL guidelines. Many elaborate and describe their comprehension to be greater than their spoken proficiency.

*Sénha Ahonhronkhatsheriióhake - Hopes to improve proficiency*

The majority of past graduates say they would like to improve upon their language skills by focusing on Kanien'kéha grammar. They identify their needs in mastering pronouns and transitive pronouns as well as to improve their proficiency by focusing their learning on more advanced verb tenses such as benefactive, purposive and continuative. The knowledge these past graduates have of Kanien'kéha grammatical structures is a reflection of the grammar based approach within the Ratiwennahní:rats program, established by teachers during the first cohort of the program.

Many respondents express that they would like to improve on all their language skills in general with a primary focus on their speaking abilities and storytelling. Participants at all proficiency levels report a desire to develop a more diverse vocabulary to enhance their speaking skills. Some speakers hope to continue their language learning by focusing on formal Longhouse speech.

Participants reporting a high level of proficiency share several areas of interest to concentrate their efforts to grow their Kanien'kéha language skills, such as the aforementioned interest in Longhouse oratory. Although there were few who reported doing Kanien'kéha translation work professionally, those who are doing this specialized work are hoping to find ways to improve their skills primarily for English to Kanien'kéha transcription. Several others reporting higher proficiency would like to increase their knowledge of idioms and particles of Kanien'kéha.

The interests and goals of the participants at all levels of proficiency are quite specific and can guide community language planning concerning resource development and Kanien'kéha programming for adult learners. The following section will further help in determining the needs of adult learners as they share specific challenges experienced in increasing their proficiency.

### *Challenges in increasing and maintaining proficiency*

To determine how second language speakers can be supporting in their language learning, participants were explicitly asked to share their challenges in maintaining or increasing their Kanien'kéha spoken proficiency. The past graduates of the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program report the most challenging factor in

maintaining or improving their language proficiency is the lack of other speakers to converse with daily. This is because they are reportedly the only speaker in their household and, for some, in their extended family. Many also report being the only speaker or most proficient speaker in their work environment. When asked if she felt comfortable using her language at work, this past graduate explains:

Sometimes. I am seen as the expert, but I don't know "enough" in my opinion. There are only a small handful of people learning, who understand or speak. Others are learning but the group is small. It makes it difficult for my skills to develop in this environment. Although I have taught a couple of groups. (Kawennarò:roks McComber)

Participants also report that it is very challenging to continue studying independently without support from a teacher or program. Finding time to continue learning with any consistency is especially difficult when they find themselves with many family responsibilities and/or returning to work or school. Wahéhshon, a full-time university student, describes her challenges in maintaining and improving her proficiency:

I do not have many people to speak with on a regular basis. I feel that I need a teacher/speaker to help me with words and to correct the errors that I make. (Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean)

Second-language speakers also indicate a lack of opportunity to attend classes supporting those with advanced Kanien'kéha proficiency, as the majority of language classes are focused on beginner learners. They also bring attention to a gap in resources and texts for higher-level language learning or maintenance. This lack of advanced level resources is also apparent when advanced speakers later described being challenged to find engaging materials and texts to learn from. Here is what one advanced speaker shared when discussing the resources he draws from to increase his Kanien'kéha skills:

The most helpful resources for me have been bible translations and linguistic research papers because they were at a higher level of fluency and had more detailed and rare language that you don't read anywhere else, and the linguistic papers gave me a better understanding of the make-up of the language and why things could be the way they are now. (Akwiratékha Martin)

Akwiratékha describes wishing to have opportunities to read classic novels in Kanien'kéha both for broadening his vocabulary and simply for the enjoyment of reading a good book. He also shares how he would appreciate a community radio show discussing science, politics and current world issues.

Some past graduates describe having experienced a decrease in their Kanien'kéha spoken proficiency and have struggled to maintain their language skills. They explain this as a result of less language use over time, as they transitioned from the immersion setting to one where English is the primary language of communication. These struggling

speakers share that their reduced language proficiency has led to a reluctance or shyness to use the language with others.

To summarize their feedback concerning spoken proficiency respondents confirm that, due to the several factors described, their levels of Kanien'kéha spoken proficiency is varied and the challenges they have shared offer insight into the community supports needed to maintain and increase their Kanien'kéha skills. Their experiences help us to recognize the need for varying types of resources and programming for differing levels of proficiency. The following section will discuss the existing resources that have helped these speakers in their learning as well as the resources they are currently drawing from to overcome their challenges to grow as second language speakers.

### **Existing Resources for Adult Language Learners**

From the beginning of language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke there has been a need for the development of language learning resources. Although early efforts have been focused on primarily school based programming, two of the first extensive language resources developed were focused on supporting adult learners. First, a textbook with accompanying audio, *Mohawk – A Teaching Grammar* (Harries & Deering, 2007), and second, a compilation of community legends, stories and history called *Kanien'kéha Okara'shón:'a* (Horne et al., 1976). Following the development of these two texts, most efforts in creating language resources have focused on supporting children in Kahnawà:ke's community schools or supporting teachers in using common vocabulary across grade levels through thematic dictionaries. (See Appendix 1 for a detailed chart of Kanien'kéha language resources highlighted within the survey)



With the growing number of adult language learners and second language speakers, the need for resources and programming to support learners of varying proficiency levels has become apparent. The following feedback from participants offer insight into the most relied upon resources in their language learning as well as their hopes for future supportive programs and Kanien'kéha materials. Identifying their needs will help to insure resource development, primarily for advanced language learners, will focus on the specific needs and interests of the learners themselves.

When second language speakers were asked to share the most helpful resources to enhance their language skills after completing the adult immersion program, they identify other speakers and elders as their most valued resources. Many describe that their efforts to maintain or increase their proficiency has been by creating a network of support. They explain that they are habitually fostering Kanien'kéha speaking relationships with others by visiting, creating study groups, and using the language whenever they encounter other speakers in the community. To share her most valued resources for improving her language skills, Atewenniióhstha shares:

My main resources (are) visiting with Elders and Speakers, the Grammar Book I've received from the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion program, as well as the Mohawk Teaching Grammar. (Atewenniióhstha Jacobs)

Just as Atewenniióhstha shared, graduates of adult immersion are continuing to utilize various grammar texts such as the Mohawk Teaching Grammar (Harries & Deering, 2007) and the Ratiwennahní:rats program's grammar booklet. They are also

drawing upon their old notes, projects and assignments from their time in the immersion program to review grammatical concepts they have learned.

Learners of all proficiency levels describe various dictionaries as helping to maintain or improve their knowledge of the language. Those with high proficiency report using a variety of literary texts to increase their knowledge of the language. This advanced speaker describes what information he appreciates in some of the resources he is taking advantage of to continue in his language learning:

Stories that have accurate translations – dictionaries with different aspect conjugation and with example sentences. (Anonymous Male)

An example of the resourcefulness of adult language learners is their use of technology especially in the form of social media and web based learning sites. This participant shares her creativity in finding ways to practice using her language skills and continue learning her language:

On facebook I write to my speaker friends in Kanien'kéha in a group chat. In the general newsfeed, I write my comments in Kanien'kéha if I know the person is a speaker. If I'm writing my own post and I am not sure about a word or conjugation, I refer to workbooks. I also store some words and grammar rules in my phone. (Anonymous Female)

This is an example of how many past graduates describe using Kanien'kéha for texting and habitually writing on Facebook often to translate words and draw support from a community of learners and speakers. As Kaniehtenhá:wi describes, it can be challenging for past graduates to connect with other speakers or to find time to continue studying Kanien'kéha, yet, she still finds opportunities to engage in some available learning opportunities:

My old notes and grammar books. I have a hard time making time lately to study which has had an effect on my proficiency. I have no one to speak to on a daily basis other than children so I just try to keep up to date on social media or read or listen to K103 when I can. (Kaniehtenhá:wi Sarah Phillips)

Another technology-based resource being used is the Rosetta Stone – Kanien'kéha edition. Here, Kahawinóntie lists her most relied upon resources and mentions why a past graduate would use a resource developed for beginner learners:

My go to resource is the Kanien'keha Owenna'shón:'a book. I also ask my mother-in-law for words. Rosetta Stone is a good refresher. (Kathy Kahawinóntie Jacobs)

It is very important to note that Kahawinóntie was among few who reported using the Rosetta Stone resource. Although it is a well-developed learning program, using

thousands of real-life images with audio in the voices of community members and elders, the software is outdated and not accessible to modern computers. It is rather disappointing that there have been no software updates to address the issue considering the time and resources committed to its development. This resource has never been fully implemented in the community, and so has not been able to realize any impact in language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke. It is a high investment, with little return.

Community radio is the source for what learners describe to be a cherished resource, the Sose tanon Leo Talk Show, where they can listen to elders conversing in the language on a regular bases and episodes are being downloaded onto their iPods. They recognize the all Kanien'kéha talk show to be a unique resource, as it gives them an opportunity to hear and learn from first language speakers discussing a wealth of topics regularly. Here, Tehokwiráthe, a very proficient speaker, shares why this is his most helpful resource:

Recording(s) of Sose tanon Leo because they are actual conversations not just narrations. (Tehokwiráthe Cross)

The all Kanien'kéha talk show is one example of the continuous contributions of community elders towards language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke. The show calls attention to the vital role of first language speakers in providing opportunities for rich language experiences for the growing population of second language speakers.

Their feedback on the crucial role our cherished community elders is further explained in the following sub-section.

*Thotí:iens Wahonwatiia 'takéhnha - Learning from the Elders*

Throughout the survey participants share many examples of learning from first language speakers and elders, highlighting their key role in supporting the demographic of new Kanien'kéha speakers. It has been estimated that there are approximately 200 first language speakers in Kahnawà:ke today, therefore, to understand how participants are learning from elders the survey asks past graduates of adult immersion to illustrate their approach to language learning guided by their elders.

Adult learners clearly express, as shared in the previous section, that elders are their most cherished resource for learning Kanien'kéha. According to their responses, second language speakers depend on community elders to assist them in various types of translations and to document old Kanien'kéha words. They also rely on their elders to help in learning ceremonial language and teachings, as well as to learn traditional skills. As Atewenniióstha shares, second language speakers share great appreciation for opportunities to visit the elders, listen to their stories and talk in the language.

Whenever I am around a First-Language speaker, we speak strictly in Kanien'kéha. I am not around First-Language speakers often, so, I make it a point to visit them and ask whichever questions I have. (Atewenniióstha Jacobs)

Similarly, Tekanerahtané:ken shares a feeling of having only occasional opportunities to learn from the elders:

I don't have much interaction with first language speakers. I relish the opportunity to speak [Kanien'kéha] with first language speakers whenever I can. (Tekanerahtané:ken Greg Horn)

Just as these two second language speakers have illustrated, learners report feeling time spent with Kanien'kéha speaking elders is infrequent, therefore they honor that time by conversing in Kanien'kéha. As learners they are building Kanien'kéha speaking relationships with the elders, an integral part of their learning. Many share that it is those very relationships that motivate them to begin learning as adults just as Kanerahtitákhe openly shared:

My Ma was my best friend, she would talk, I would be able to understand, but not respond or converse with her. After she died I vowed I wouldn't let that happen with my Rake'ni. (Kanerahtitákhe Lisa McGreger)

Kahsennókwás also explained that her inspiration to begin learning Kanien'kéha as a young adult was:

To be able to pass the language on to my future family, kids, grandkids, nieces and nephews. And to be able to speak with my family who are speakers, mainly my grandfather. (Kahsennókwaw Reese Jacobs)

Some participants share they rarely visit with elders to learn Kanien'kéha, mainly because they have no elder speakers in their family who can share in their language learning. Some second language speakers relate that they are the only Kanien'kéha speaker in their immediate and extended family. This highlights the need for future language planning to include opportunities to learn from first language speakers and elders in order to ensure highly accurate unabridged language will be passed on to the next generations.

#### *Hopes For Future Kanien'kéha Resources*

To ensure future resource development will focus on the specific needs and interests of second language speakers, past graduates of adult immersion were asked what other types of Kanien'kéha programs and resources they would like to see in Kahnawà:ke. As previously discussed, learners describe other speakers as their greatest resource therefore, would like opportunities to strengthen or grow their network of elders, speakers and learners to converse with in Kanien'kéha. They suggest study groups and speaking circles as immersive environments in which they would enjoy being a part of. Kanienhtenhá:wi shares initiatives she would like to see as she writes:

Maybe a scheduled group for past Ratiwennahní:rats learners to converse and share notes to help remember what we learned. Also a list of elder speakers who wouldn't mind a non-family member to come over for an hour a week to learn to speak. (Kanienhtenhá:wi Sarah Phillips)

Other participants relate they would also like an opportunity to attend Kanien'kéha classes for advanced speakers and learners and describe their willingness to attend weekend sessions and night classes. Konwaia'tanón:wes describes community classes that would be specific to her needs in growing her Kanien'kéha skills,

Kanien'kéha classes – once per month, all day on the weekend for intermediate – advanced learners. Simple conversations will not be enough. I need language structure grammar and vocabulary. I think this would be a perfect way to help me build on my language skills and incorporate into my life on an ongoing basis. (Lynn Konwaia'tanón:was Jacobs)

Many describe feeling classes structured as suggested by Konwaia'tanón:wes would benefit them most because they are employed in full-time positions, saying part time classes would suit their schedules best. It was also stated by some participants that a third year of adult immersion for the most advanced speakers would be of high interest to them.



Some learners relay that they would like to access various documentation relative to formal ceremonial speeches, stories, songs and old words. This learner explains her interest to grow as a Kanien'kéha speaker is relative to spiritual Longhouse speech:

I'm really interested in learning ceremonial vocabulary – what you're supposed to say when you're working with medicine, what speakers are saying at Kanonhsésne. For me, it's hard to understand because the contexts aren't everyday conversational Kanien'kéha. (Kahsennókwaw Reese Jacobs)

Many participants also felt that technology based resources such as podcasts, electronic dictionaries and apps would be most beneficial to them. Tiawentí:non explains why such resources would be most helpful for her:

Podcasts. I enjoy hearing the language and find that listening helps me to retain my abilities. However I can't visit family often and I sometimes miss Joe Tánon Leo. A podcast series would be wonderful! (Tiawentí:non Canadian)

Other advanced speakers share that literary resources would be most beneficial, describing a desire for opportunities to read classic novels translated to Kanien'kéha and newsletters to discuss current events and pop culture. Similarly, they would like to hear more radio programming that discusses current events, news and politics all in the language.

To summarize the resources section, their responses affirm that there have been many efforts to develop resources for teaching and learning Kanien'kéha. Their experiences bring to light the effective resources they have relied upon, and show a need for new resources to support adult language learners primarily to address a lack of resources for more advanced speakers. Their responses also point us towards the importance of fostering a continued network of support which is integral to growing or maintaining their proficiency following adult immersion. Future planning for growing this support network must intentionally highlight the role of first language speakers and foster a strengthened community of second language speakers. The rich feedback relative to their interests and needs as continuing language learners has surely given much to look forward to in terms of possibilities for new resources and programming in Kahnawà:ke.

### **Domains of Language Use**

When previously describing the state of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke relative to Fishman's scale, it was stated that Kahnawà:ke's situation would be defined as *threatened* (Fishman, 1991). This description was also compared to UNESCO's 2009 framework (Lewis & Simons, 2009), where language in Kahnawà:ke would be described as being in an *endangered* state. In similar terms, Nettle and Romaine (2000) state that "languages are *at risk* when they are no longer transmitted naturally to the children in the home by parents or other caretakers" (p.8). This means that although we have been making progress in our efforts, Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke remains at risk, threatened

and endangered until we see many strong first language speakers emerging as well as intergenerational use of the language spanning three generations.

The future of Kanien'kéha will depend largely upon today's second-language speakers to become highly proficient in the language and pass it on to their children to nurture a renewed generation of speakers. Focusing our efforts to bring about this desired situation is essential in ensuring a rich unabridged language will continue for generations to come. Yet we know there are many challenges to learning Kanien'kéha, and more so for second-language speakers to transmit the language to another generation (Dauenhauer, 2005). With Kahnawà:ke's many graduates of elementary immersion and over 140 graduates of the Kanien'kéha Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program, there are potentially many young families raising their children in the language. To help clarify to what extent second-language speakers are using the language, the survey asks them to share their experiences using Kanien'kéha in the home, at work and in social settings.

#### *Language Use in the Home.*

To initiate discussion on domains of language use, this segment of the survey began by asking past graduates of the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program what the main language spoken in their home is. All but one participant reported that English is the main language spoken in their home. Many participants share that although they are using Kanien'kéha in the home, it is used less than English for several reasons. Most significantly, past graduates report being the only speaker in the home. They share that they either live alone or their partner has little or no knowledge of Kanien'kéha, therefore, English takes a dominant role in their homes.

Many second language speakers share that using their language in the home happens mainly when specific family members are present, such as their nieces and nephews or other family members who have attended the Ratiwennahní:rats program. Tsonatiió:'a shares her efforts to continue the language in the home with family, saying:

When my granddaughter visits me I use the language as much as I am able to her. She went to immersion throughout grammar school, but she doesn't use the Mohawk so she is forgetting, I also try to teach my granddaughter as much as I know... she is learning. (Tsonatiió:'a Delisle)

Like Tsonatiió:'a, second language speakers reportedly use Kanien'kéha in their homes specifically with other learners of the language whether they are family members or friends. Here Kawennarò:roks shares that English is the main language spoken in her home but she still makes an effort to use Kanien'kéha with family members, she writes:

Tiohrhén:sha, nék tsi shé:kon kate'niéntha á:katste ne Kanien'kéha nó:nen  
 teniakwathá:ren ne akhwá:tsire. – sewatié:rens. (Kawennarò:roks  
 McComber)

Some note a reluctance to use the language with other family members who show little interest or initiative to learn, as they feel Kanien'kéha may not be a passion for others as it is for them.

Those with young children share a deep desire to raise their children in Kanien'kéha yet struggle between two languages because their partner is reportedly a non-speaker of the language. For this reason, participants describe their home language use to be mainly with their children, using Kanien'kéha throughout the day for commands or carrying out daily tasks. Sharing when she uses Kanien'kéha most in her home Kanerahtitákhe elaborates about speaking the language with her children as she writes:

I try to use it as much as I can and my husband is trying to learn as well which helps a lot. (Kanerahtitákhe Lisa McGregor)

Many others share that their efforts to strengthen the use of Kanien'kéha in the home is focused on helping and encouraging their partner to learn the language. They are inspired to continue using the language in the home with their children when they observe their partner's language skills growing.

Some second language speakers report that using Kanien'kéha in the home is primarily when Kanien'kéha speaking friends or family visit or call on the telephone. They also describe making efforts to use Kanien'kéha regularly by speaking to themselves often and to their pets regularly. As Warisó:se shares, she uses Kanien'kéha in her home most when:

Talking to my cat!! Watching the language programs and reading Kanien'kéha adds as they come on the TV. (Chera Warisó:se Lahache)

Warisó:se brings to light another source of Kanienkéha available to bring the language into the home. Many young second language speakers have been increasingly producing and contributing to the development of Kanien'kéha television programming made available through the local cable programming or the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN). The following section will elaborate on this phenomena, as past graduates explain how they are applying their Kanien'kéha skills in the workplace.

Finally, their experiences using Kanien'kéha in their home environment offer much insight into some of the challenges they are facing as second language speakers. Most significant is their feedback reporting English to be the main language spoken in the home, as the reasons they offer for this are crucial to consider for future language planning pointing to solutions for supporting second language speakers to pass on the language to their families and children.

*Speaking at work and using Kanien'kéha skills for employment.*

To understand how past graduates are continuing to apply and maintain their language skills, the survey asks several questions to clarify their opportunities to use their Kanien'kéha skills in the work place. The responses showed remarkable evidence of the benefits and employment opportunities for second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke. This also demonstrates the demand for proficient speakers in many occupational fields both locally and non-locally.

At the time of this study, many participants had reported that they are teaching or assisting in community schools and working at all grade levels. They are working in full

immersion classrooms as well as teaching Kanien'kéha maintenance and exposure classes. Others are also employed teaching, managing or administering various adult language programming described as immersion, beginner courses and cultural training. Additionally, some report to be employed working with very young children within the language nest and local day cares.

Past graduates overwhelmingly reported that, because of their Kanien'kéha language skills, they have secured employment in the past and their opportunities for employment have increased immensely.

Yes, as soon as they know you can speak you are in higher demand. I got hired at the Day Center at the hospital to work with the elders. I also got hired at Karonhianónhnha before I got in at Step by Step where they started their Kanien'kéha class. (Kanerahitákhe Lisa McGregor)

Just as Kanerahitákhe has described, past graduates recount an extensive list of employment experiences within various fields such as in the teaching profession, cultural education as well as curriculum design and development. They also report that having proficiency in Kanienkéha has given them opportunities to work doing professional translation, voice-overs and script writing for both local programming and national enterprises. Presently teaching adult immersion, Akwiratékha shared how his language skills have also helped him to gain employment in the past.

It has opened the door to the world of translation. Mostly for television for Kanien'kéha language voice-overs/dubbing. I have been professionally translating for around 9 years, as well as doing voice-overs myself.

(Akwiratékha Martin)

In addition to various part-time employment opportunities, numerous places of employment reported by second language speakers are within Kahnawà:ke's community schools, Step by Step Day Care, Iakwahwatsiratátie Language Nest, MCK Language and Culture Training Center and the KORLCC. Other areas of employment highlighted were working with our elders at the Elders Lodge and the Kateri Memorial Hospital Center, as well as working with our community youth in private childcare and early childhood education. Additionally, participants report opportunities to contribute to Kanien'kéha language committees within their place of employment in various community organizations.

Young graduates of the program share that because of their Kanien'kéha language skills they have secured various summer student employment positions such as working in youth camps, the elders lodge, hospital, KORLCC and Kahnawà:ke's town pool. It has also been reported that being a graduate of Ratiwennahní:rats helped in gaining admission into university and they have had opportunities to use their Kanien'kéha language skills and knowledge in their studies. This new speaker shares several employment experiences:



Twice I've done stages<sup>4</sup> that included speaking, at Karonhianónhna and Turtle Bay Elder's Lodge. For a short period of time I babysat a group of children at a Kanien'kéha cooking class. I've also babysat for a group that studies culture and language because I'm a speaker. Most recently I was offered a 2 week job doing voice overs all in Kanien'kéha. I'm extremely grateful that I've gotten all of these opportunities from being a speaker.

(Kahsennókwas Reese Jacobs)

Graduates report feeling very comfortable to use their Kanien'kéha language skills at work and are very often depended upon as the language specialist in their organization. They note that their employers encourage Kanien'kéha language learning for their co-workers. Second language speakers report feeling confident about their language abilities because they are working in a position appropriate to their level of Kanien'kéha proficiency. Relatively, those in immersion schools and programs feel they have support if needed and feel that co-workers who are first language speakers are their greatest resource.

To summarize this section, the findings are quite significant as it provides overwhelming evidence of the demand for Kanien'kéha speakers in a variety of occupational fields. Their experiences confirm that becoming proficient Kanien'kéha speakers entails added opportunities for employment both locally and non-locally. These findings are of great importance in helping to address a recurring issue facing adult language learners, as there is very little financial support for adults to attend a full time

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<sup>4</sup> Stage is a French term used to indicate a supervised work study placement for students.

immersion program despite the ongoing successful outcomes the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program has shown.

*Community - Social settings and first language speakers.*

The final segment of the survey that discusses domains of language use looks to uncover opportunities for past graduates to use the language in community and how they are using Kanien'kéha in social settings. Participants were asked to describe, aside from work, in what situations they are speaking their language in community. Their responses indicate that second language speakers are habitually speaking Kanien'kéha throughout Kahnawà:ke.

Past graduates report using the language throughout their daily lives whenever they encounter other speakers or learners at community events, local stores, the post office, the bank and when visiting local schools. They also report having opportunities to use the language with family when visiting them and encountering them in the community. Exemplified here, Tsoié:'on shares her opportunities to speak Kanien'kéha by identifying two specific domains:

[I speak Kanien'kéha most ] (a)t my children's schools with elders. At Kanoñhsésne with other language speakers. (Kary Tsoié:'on Robertson)

Like Tsoié:'on many speakers share that they are speaking Kanien'kéha when attending Longhouse ceremonies. They describe the Longhouse as a gathering place where many Kanien'kéha speakers and learners attend, therefore, affording them

opportunities to use their language and hear Kanien'kéha being spoken. Explaining situations she uses language in community, this speaker writes:

I often speak Kanien'kéha with my close friends, as well as my former and current co-workers. I speak to at least 2 people a day using the language. I attend ceremonies at the Longhouse, and mostly Kanien'kéha is used during that time. I have a study group once a week, and we only speak Kanien'kéha as well. (Atewennióstha Jacobs)

Participants also report that using Kanien'kéha in social settings can be challenging because most of their friends do not speak or understand the language, therefore, they only use Kanien'kéha when with other familiar speakers and learners. At those times some will stay in the language while others report finding it to be too challenging, and consequently, revert to using English. Some speakers ensure to continue being active language learners by creating their own opportunities to use language with friends. They attend or organize times to gather specifically to socialize in the language but, predominantly, using Kanien'keha in social settings is completely dependent on which circle of friends they are with. This new speaker shares her experiences that mediate her language use in social settings:

I speak if I see other confident speakers like Kahrhó:wane, Akwiratékha, Kahtehrón:ni, Tehokwiráthe or my old classmates from Ratiwennahní:rats. If I am alone with a friend who speaks, we will speak the language but

usually all 4 of my friends are together and one is a non-speaker so we don't use Kanien'kéha so she is not excluded. (Anonymous Female)

Their responses reveal that second language speakers are regularly using Kanien'kéha throughout the community and in their daily lives. They speak Kanien'kéha whenever they encounter other speakers and are making efforts to create social opportunities primarily to speak the language. This shows that they are taking advantage of opportunities to use Kanien'kéha regularly and therefore, contributing to the vitality of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke.

*Conversing with First Language Speakers.*

For most past graduates, getting out into the community to speak with first language speakers happens only very occasionally and their language use is primarily only with other second language speakers. This is especially true for those who are not working in an environment that provides an opportunity to interact with them. Some participants say that being very busy with life responsibilities doesn't leave much time to visit the elders and speakers in their family.

Participants who say they regularly speak with first language speakers are doing so at work, the Longhouse, in public domains and during home visits. These second language speakers describe themselves as making the effort seek out first language speakers and say they enjoy speaking exclusively in the language. Some report having difficulty to speak with them solely in Kanien'kéha yet ensure they try their best out of respect for the speaker.

Their feedback here is important to consider, as they have previously described first language speakers as their greatest resource yet in this section they share that speaking with first language speakers happens rarely outside of work. Second language speakers use their language primarily with other second language speakers. Again, this affirms the importance for future language programming to include first language speakers as part of a supportive network to encourage and provide rich language experiences for continued learning.

*Hearing Kanien'kéha in Community.*

As much as second language speakers are using the language in Kahnawà:ke, they equally report hearing Kanien'kéha being spoken regularly throughout the community in places such as immersion schools, at work and during various community events. The Longhouse is described as a place they consistently hear the language in ceremony, during meetings and for social gatherings. Second language speakers impart great appreciation for often hearing elderly men socializing in the language when they are together in the community. Kahawinóntie confirms this and shares a bit of humor that many second language speakers can relate to, saying she hears language being spoken often:

At my stops at the post office, bank, local stores and restaurants. From local speakers. I make a point of listening and trying to comprehend what is being said. But not being nosey!! Hahaha. (Kathy Kahawinóntie Jacobs)

In addition, the Sose and Leo all Kanien'kéha talk show on K103 radio provides them with another outlet they can listen to elders speaking fluently on a regular basis. As described in the language resources section, the talk show provides listeners with natural language from first language speakers who converse on a variety of topics regularly.

Some fortunate participants share being very close to their parents and grandparents who are Kanien'kéha speakers, therefore, they hear the language most when they are visiting family. It was also reported that because of the increasing number of second language speakers and learners, they more frequently hear parents speaking to their children in community. The frequency for hearing Kanien'kéha in community is very important, as it provides a picture of language use in Kahnawà:ke today and combined with all domains of use, it serves a benchmark for future reference and comparisons.

#### *Summarizing domains of language use*

To summarize how past graduates of the Ratiwennahní:rats program are using Kanien'kéha most often, as evidenced by their feedback, participants are using their language most often with their children, grandchildren, extended families, and other learners within a variety of domains. Those employed doing language work are immersed in the language and using Kanien'kéha consistently with both students and co-workers. Additionally, they are using the language extensively at the Longhouse, on Facebook and at gatherings where language is the focus. This is a reflection of many combined efforts working towards language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke.

The section has also shown how many past graduates of adult immersion are continuing their learning as they reach for higher proficiency, and collaborate with other

speakers to overcome challenges and move their language learning beyond the classroom into their everyday lives. It is also clear that most challenging for second language speakers is reinforcing Kanien'kéha in the home, indicating future language planning will need to offer specific solutions to support families in fostering Kanien'kéha speaking homes. Additionally, because elders are their treasured resource for continued learning their feedback also suggests a need for support by providing opportunities to nurture closer relationships to our first language speakers.

Finally, researching the topic of domains of language use has shown me that Kanien'kéha language use for second language speakers is not necessarily mediated by domain, but is mediated by the relationships second language speakers have with other speakers and learners. They choose to use Kanien'kéha in all domains when Kanien'kéha speaking relationships are fostered, be it with their family, friends, fellow students, or elders.

### **Renewed Goals - Continuing Their Language Learning**

To establish whether second language speakers are pursuing higher proficiency, the survey asked participants if they have specific language learning goals. The majority of participants express having goals they are working towards in order to increase their Kanien'kéha skills and have varied plans for continued language learning. Many describe their goals as focusing on increasing their language use with their children, family, elders and other speakers. Here Tsoié:'on describes the goal she has set for herself and her family:

To teach my baby Kanien'kéha as a first language along with my husband, her father, to be able to communicate and learn Kanien'kéha with her at the same time, as he does not know very much or very little of our language.

(Kary Tsoié:'on Robertson)

Many express similar aspirations, sharing examples of how they are working towards using Kanien'kéha more consistently at home. Some describe a means to attaining their goal is by visiting speakers more often or by participating in regular study groups.

Others expect to attend community classes to increase their proficiency while some define their goals as aiming to habitually use what they know to ensure they maintain their spoken proficiency. Wahéhshon explains:

Since I am in school full time with children and doing volunteer activities, my language goal for the past year has been to maintain what I have learned and review as much as possible so that I can learn more this summer.

(Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean)

Learners also explicitly define an area of the language to concentrate their goals on such as mastering transitive pronouns, developing a broader vocabulary, learning 20 new verbs or further study on syntax and particles. As discussed in an earlier section, one participant earlier shared that her language learning goal is always evolving, and here she explains how her focus is on her abilities as a Kanien'kéha teacher:



I always have a goal; once I've obtained a goal I set a new one. My current goal is to become proficient enough to teach higher than a Beginners [adult] course. I believe that I can, but I am not quite confident enough to do so, so my goal is to make a new curriculum that follows that one I have for the Beginners course I teach. (Atewenniiósthá Jacobs)

Deserving much attention, many learners set their goals on teaching as well, yet their focus is on teaching their partner or family members in order to increase the use of Kanien'kéha with their children and family.

This section has shown that the majority of second language speakers have goals to increase their proficiency with varying plans for their continued language learning. Additionally, they are not only concerned with raising their own Kanien'kéha proficiency but they are also trying to find ways to support others in their learning, primarily their families because of their desire to maintain a Kanien'kéha speaking home. This implies that because second language speakers have aspirations to improve their Kanien'kéha skills, motivating them to continue learning may not be an issue as much as finding ways to support them in achieving their learning goals.

### **Relationships Between Language, Culture and Identity**

It is often said that language and culture are intertwined, and consequently, revitalizing Indigenous languages affords a space for the continuance of the rich cultural knowledges of Onkwehón:we peoples. For many adult language learners, when searching for our language we uncover a knowledge system, built over centuries, a vessel which holds the knowledge of our ancestors. It leads us back to our traditional medicines, our

stories, arts, ceremony and strengthened spirituality – and becomes an exploration of one’s identity through language learning. Regaining our language as adults is a source of strength, creating a path to healing by reclaiming, rebuilding and recovering what we were once denied.

The survey asks several questions to further understand how learning Kanien’kéha as adults has enabled second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke to increase their cultural knowledge and strengthen their identity as Onkwehón:we people. Their responses were very moving and forthcoming as they shared their insights, which resulted in the lengthiest responses of the survey as they reflected upon their experiences. I have been especially careful in representing their voices in the following summary.

*Language learning and cultural awareness*

When asked how learning Kanien’keha has contributed to their cultural awareness, participants shared that learning the language has helped them gain a deeper understanding and connection to our traditions, primarily through a greater understanding of our Rotinonhsión:ni Longhouse ceremonies. Kanerahtitákhe shares:

Growing up I had a basic knowledge of our language, it wasn’t until Ratiwennahní:rats did I begin to understand our ceremonies at the Kanonhsésne. It opened up my world. (Kanerahtitákhe Lisa McGreger)

Many explain that having a greater understanding of the formal speeches and ceremony has enriched their worldview and they feel a stronger connection to their ancestors. This second language speaker also shared her insights:

I grew up as part of the Longhouse but I knew very little of the language.

When I began studying, it enriched and reinforced the cultural knowledge I had and helped me to understand the culture on deeper levels. (Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean)

Second language speakers also assert that learning their language has made them feel complete as Onkwehón:we people, and share they are very proud to speak their language. Kaniehtenhá:wi illustrates her appreciation of heightened cultural awareness, saying:

It brings a sense of pride and belonging. Many things make more sense once you understand them in your language. Everything around you is suddenly more beautiful. (Kanienhtenhá:wi Sarah Phillips)

As learners, they feel connected to the elders who have shared their life experiences, memories and stories and thus raised their awareness of our community's history and culture. Tiawentí:non gives this example:

I became more aware of our ceremonies, and stories from the elders who helped connect me to our shared history. (Tiawentí:non Canadian)

Participants affirm that language and culture go hand in hand, as language learning fostered their strengthened cultural awareness and grew their interest to learn more. Tsonatiió:'a tells of her experiences as a student in the adult immersion program:

I learned some of the language in the immersion course and learned also what it means to be a Mohawk woman, my roles and responsibilities as an elder woman and during the course we took several trips to various locations and, which very much inspired me to learn more of my history, my language, my culture, [and] traditional singing. (Tsonatiió:'a Delisle)

Similarly, this young speaker shares:

Everything that has to do with my cultural awareness, I believe, came from learning my language. It may be because I took an interest and started learning about the both at the same time, but I'm positive that language learning had a huge impact. (Kahsennókwaw Reese Jacobs)

Finally, on their path to reclaiming their language, these second language speakers have shared how learning Kanien'kéha as an adult can lead to a continuous search for more knowledge – knowledge of tsi niionkwarihò:ten, meaning knowledge that

encompasses all that makes us who we are as a people. This is also a reflection of why second language learners often relate that learning Kanien'kéha is a life-long journey.

*Language learning and identity*

The survey asks if participants feel that learning Kanien'kéha as an adult has strengthened their identity as Onkwehón:we and all but one participant agreed that it has. As in the previous section, they offered many descriptive examples to help understand their experiences. The first example is from the youngest participant, she strongly feels that learning her language has strengthened her identity saying:

Completely. From my personal experience, it helped me grow so much as a person, as Onkwehón:we especially. I wasn't brought up in Kanonhsésne or with much language, but we always had a traditional mindset, so the absence of language and culture along with yearning to have it was always there. I was really lost as a teenager, and the opportunity to learn my language and culture really feels like it brought me back to be the Onwehón:we woman I'm supposed to be. (Kahsennókwas Reese Jacobs)

Like Kahsennókwas, second language speakers express that Kanien'kéha is a vital part of their identity that was once missing and they are very proud they can now speak their language. This participant's response reflects the voice of many new speakers in Kahnawà:ke as she says:

Yes, and I feel like part of the bigger movement to revitalize the language. I am proud to know my language. Before I was embarrassed and ashamed not to know my language. (Anonymous Female)

This response is another example of how learning Kanien'kéha creates the path to healing, as her learning process evolved from shame as a non-speaker of her ancestral language to pride as she gained knowledge of Kanien'kéha.

Throughout their responses participants share that learning Kanien'kéha has strengthened their identity and, for many learners, it has helped them to grow as a proud Onkwehón:we person.

I didn't realize I was missing an important piece of my identity until I learned enough of the language to think and dream in it. I feel that it is a vital part of our identity that we must fight for. I am very proud and thankful to learn as much as I have and it has enriched my identity as a Kanien'kehá:ka. (Wahehshon Shiann Whitebean)

Other responses described how learning the language has changed their outlook on life. They feel that becoming a Kanien'kéha speaker has helped them to see the world as our ancestors did. Many elaborated, sharing that learning Kanien'kéha and being part of the community effort to strengthen the language is their purpose in life. Kanerahtitákhe reflects on her story, saying:

I signed up for workshops about the Creation Story with Fran Beauvais. In her teachings she spoke about roles and responsibilities. That people “carry” with them certain things. Some people learn about the medicines and pass that on, some learn about beadwork, etc. She then looked at me, maybe without realizing it and said some are “language carriers”! I hadn’t realized until that moment... my life’s purpose. (Kanerahitákhe Lisa McGreger)

Second language speakers feel a connection to other learners and see everyone working together for the language. When writing about her strengthened identity Kawennéhawe reminds us of the expanding population of adults who are learning, not only in Kahnawà:ke, but throughout Rotinonhsión:ni territory:

Yes definitely. I feel more connected. Not that I felt less Onkwehón:we, before I became a second language learner and speaker, but you do feel more connected to not only the other speakers in our community but among the many other second language learners across the Confederacy.  
(Kawennéhawe Fawn Deer)

Her response also points to the section discussing resources for second language speakers, where they related that other speakers are their source of support, and they enjoy speaking with other learners who are passionate about the language.

Kawennéhawe’s feeling of being connected is also evidence showing that second

language speakers are quite aware of each other's efforts and opportunities exist for second language speakers across communities and nations to interact in various settings.

Second language speakers are grateful that their work to regain their language has afforded them the opportunity to learn more about themselves, their culture and traditions. Many also describe the effect this has had on their families, as it has enabled them to pass on those teachings to their children. Here Konwaia'tanón:wes explains:

Yes. I feel so much more connected to who I am and I am grateful that I can give that to my children. It's limited but much more than I had when I was younger, also, being able to understand what is being said in the Kanonhnsésne has truly opened the culture to me and my kids. (Lynn Konwaia'tanón:was Jacobs)

What Konwaia'tanón:wes also exemplifies is how one generation can create positive change for the next. As second language speakers are regaining their language it is also affording them an opportunity to lead our families, communities and nations with a strengthened rootedness in who they are as Onkwehón:we people.

Finally, it is important to include Tekanerahtané:ken's explanation for being unsure if being an adult learner has explicitly contributed to his strong identity as a Kanien'kehá:ka. Here he reflects on his experience as a young learner of elementary immersion:

I've always had a strong identity as a Kanien'kehá:ka person, as my parents instilled a strong sense of who I am and who we are. Speaking Kanien'kéha



has been a part of who I am from an early age, so it's difficult to say if learning as an adult has had any effect on me in that way, as I've always thought that way. (Tekanerahtané:ken Greg Horn)

Tekanerahtané:ken was the only participant to offer any insight into his experience as a student of elementary immersion. His response raises more questions that would be worth investigating in the future, as there has never been any follow up study of the past graduates of Kahnawà:ke's elementary programs.

*Summarizing links between language, culture and identity*

The questions investigating the relationship between language, culture and identity affirm that for adult learners of Kanien'kéha the language has afforded them greater cultural awareness and a strengthened identity as Onkwehón:we people. Their experiences confirm that learning Kanien'kéha has given them a greater connection to our traditions, ceremony, community and to our ancestors. Their experiences underscore the importance of learning one's ancestral language by showing that language learning has indeed provided learners a path to healing, rebuilding, reclaiming and recovering our ways as Onkwehón:we people not only for them as learners but for their families as well.

**Preserving Rotinonhsión:ni Worldview**

Second language speakers were asked what aspects of the language they felt would help most in preserving Rotinonhsión:ni world view. They affirm that all

characteristics of the language conserve Rotinonhsión:ni worldview, saying the language is the culture and perpetuates the ideologies of our ancestors. This speaker explains:

Our whole language is our entire worldview! Meanings of words. The way we incorporate verbs and nouns. Everything is so descriptive and it just paints a picture in your mind so easily. Some words, we don't even have direct translations for, and some that could go into the same category do, and the translation is so simple yet so thoughtful! And you think, this language has been here since creation and even earlier in the sky world.

(Kahsennókwaw Reese Jacobs)

Participants share several examples such as the words of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwén, saying it embodies our way of life and our respect for the natural world.

Other examples of our worldview being embedded in the language is the use of our kinship terms, traditional greetings and formal introductions used between clan families and other nations that exemplify Rotinonhsión:ni philosophy. Wahéshon elaborates:

It is very difficult to choose one! Some aspects stand out, such as our relationship to the natural world, the respect that we have for women and elders (in contrast with other cultures), our greetings and introductions that remind us to keep our clan and family ties alive and link us to our ancestors and future generations. (Wahéshon Shiann Whitebean)

This next learner agrees that the language itself embodies our worldview, yet he brings to the forefront how some teachings and aspects of Rotinonhsión:ni worldview may be at risk of being forgotten. Ro'nikonhkátste says:

All aspects [of the language] preserve Rontinonhsión:ni worldview, influence from other languages is where it gets lost (eg. Aónha vs Akaónha).<sup>5</sup> (Ro'nikonhkátste Norton)

What Ro'nikonhkátste is referring to, I believe, is not specific to second language speakers, it also effects first language speakers. It is a casualty of colonization, where Eurocentric worldview encroaches and potentially compromises the cultural integrity of the language. It leaves us with much to consider in terms of language planning, as we look to the future of language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke and within all Indigenous communities.

### **Motivation and Vision for the Future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke**

To further understand the needs of second language speakers to continue learning the Kanien'kéha, the survey asks several questions about their vision for the future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke. To begin, all participants are of one mind, as they

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<sup>5</sup> *Aónha* is defined as it (neuter) or her (feminine) and *akaónha* is defined as her (feminine), both are free pronouns in Kanien'kéha. Today there is a belief by some that using *aónha* and its prefixes to refer to a girl or woman is a level of disrespect, yet others say this is not the case, that either may be used, and both are equally respectful because no living entities are viewed as lesser than another.

unanimously agree that second language speakers should continue learning to become highly proficient speakers. Here are Kanientenhá:wi's thoughts:

Definitely. Two years is not enough. I felt I was just getting warmed up and it was over. There must be support for graduates to help them maintain the language and build upon it. If you don't know the skills to do that it gets lost fast. (Kanienhtenhá:wi Sarah Phillips)

Many participants shared similar ideas, stressing the need for a support system for graduates of adult immersion after completing the Ratiwennahní:rats program. They make several suggestions to foster a strengthened learning community such as an alumni group, speaking circles and advanced language classes for teachers and ambitious learners.

Second language speakers affirm that learning Kanien'kéha is a life-long journey, and as learners, we should always be challenging ourselves to be better speakers and share in the responsibility to carry the language forward. Tehokwiráthe explains:

Yes I strongly believe that everyone should become a highly proficient speaker. There is so much to learn about our language and culture and so little time. If we're content with being intermediate or novice speakers we run a high risk of eventually losing our language and our culture, the things that make us unique as Rotinonhsión:ni people. (Tehokwiráthe Cross)

Participants feel that if learners do not continue learning we will risk losing both our language and culture in the near future, as we will not have our first language elders to help us. Kawennéhawe articulates this as she writes:

Of course, most definitely! The future of our language is in the hands of today's second language speakers. Without the efforts put forth by every second language speaker, the chances of Kanien'kéha surviving into the future will sadly diminish with the eventual passing of all of our present first language speakers as the total number of first language speakers isn't very high. (Kawennéhawe Fawn Deer)

Additional to Kawennéhawe's reply, participants strongly put forth that it is imperative for second language speakers to achieve high proficiency in order to raise their children in the language, saying the future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke depends on it. Here Akwiratékhá elaborates as he explains why he feels second language speakers should continue learning and aim for very high proficiency:

... it's the only way the language will be preserved properly and as a whole community and not be preserved by a few people. Not one person can know it all, and if they could what happened if they die tomorrow? It will be gone. Proper language acquisition by a child needs to be supported by strong speakers so that a child could learn and know the language fluidly.  
(Akwiratékha Martin)

Finally, as part of their vision for the future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke, participants strongly feel that keeping the language alive will take a strong aggressive effort from a community of second language speakers, were we are supporting one another to become very proficient. They also share that continuing to learn Kanien'kéha is important to the future of our spiritual health, saying language learning strengthens our identity. This speaker elaborates as to why we should continue learning:

I believe if we lost our language, we would lose our identity, without language, we have no ceremonies. So I think we would lose everything to us, our language is the key. It is very important to know your language, and to use it as often as possible, to teach and to never stop learning. So we don't lose our identity as an Onkwehón:we person. (Atewenniiósthá Jacobs)

As exemplified by Atewenniiósthá, it is clear in their strong responses that second language speakers realize the need to continue learning in order to become highly proficient. Their responses also emphasize the urgency for a strong community of speakers in Kahnawà:ke who are very ambitious to continue learning Kanien'kéha, reiterating the need for a deliberate network of support.

### **Second Language Speakers – Honoring Their Contributions**

Elderly first language speakers are a valued treasure, immensely depended upon to support continuing efforts to revitalize Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke. Yet, because of

the aging population of elders, second language speakers are now heavily relied upon to lead community efforts to revitalize the language and they are now the primary support for all language programming in Kahnawà:ke. To see if second language speakers recognize their contributions to the greater community effort of securing the language into the future, the survey asks if they feel they have contributed to the overall efforts in any way.

Second language speakers report that they have contributed to language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke in various ways. Most are greatly involved or have been involved in community language programs as teachers, assistants and language workers. Exemplified here, Raronhianóhnhha shares of his dedication to strengthening Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke as he writes:

As a member of the school committee I was involved in introducing immersion in our schools. After attending Ratiwennahní:rats , while on the KOR board, I saw the need for expanding Ratiwennahní:rats [from a one year adult immersion program to two years]. (Raronhianóhnhha Joe Deom)

Raronhianóhnhha's contributions remind us of the integral community support for language programming both in its beginning stages as well as in supporting the sustainability and evolution of community programs.

Many second language speakers feel they contribute to the vitality of the language by speaking to their children and family as well as by using Kanien'kéha regularly throughout the community. This past graduate of the Ratiwennahní:rats program, now an

advanced speaker, explains how she contributes to language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke:

I think I have. I started [by] knowing colors, numbers, days or weeks and basic sayings. I now teach immersion elementary students, I had 2 first language speakers - toddlers. I feel I did a 180 turn around and have made my life work to be a better Kanien'kehá:ka speaker, for my family and myself. (Lauren Deom)

Like Lauren, many second language speakers began learning with very minimal abilities in speaking Kanien'kéha, therefore, they feel they are role models to others.

Kahsennókwás explains:

If I haven't made a contribution already, I really want to, and I think I will. If I have made a difference, I think that it would be that I'm encouraging towards people who want to learn. I prove that it's not impossible to learn, that it doesn't matter what kind of upbringing you had, that if you want to do it, you can. (Kahsennókwás Reese Jacobs)

In addition to being role models, second language speakers share that they are always willing to help others who would like to learn and often encourage others to begin learning their language. This past graduate explains how some of her efforts are to bring the language into new domains through the use of technology:



Yes. Part of my efforts in writing on Facebook in Kanien'kéha is to give others practice in reading it, invite them to write back, or simply to make our language present and relevant in today's world. I also help people when they inbox me with questions. I feel like I serve as a role model and show other people that they can become speakers too. (Anonymous Female)

Many others elaborate saying they are advocates for the language and, for some, it is their passion and life's work. It was also shared that being directly involved in language work can be very demanding, because of the urgency to revitalize the language there are high expectations attached to both family and community investment. This can often weigh heavy on the minds of all as we look to the future and strive to ensure we are doing all we can for our future generations.

This section has helped to recognize the valued contributions of second language speakers in revitalizing Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke. Participants have illustrated that second language speakers are continuing the work of those before them. They strive to bring Kanien'kéha into the future and are motivated by seven generations thinking, as our way teaches us to always be looking ahead to the faces yet to come. That is their inspiration for being heavily involved in community efforts, contributing to the sustainability and evolution of the language movement in Kahnawà:ke.

### **Vision for the Future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke**

This section brings together the final thoughts of the participants. Here again, they are the voice of second-language speakers, most of who are actively engaged and deeply

committed to securing Kanien'kéha into the future. As you will see, their responses reflect both their hopes and fears for the future of our ancestral language.

To begin discussing their hopes for the future, participants were asked how they see the next generations continuing to carry on the language. Second language speakers envision the next generations continuing the work to strengthen the language. They hope the momentum of the language movement continues, as they see a strong interest to learn from the young adults.

The drive is there, and if we continue to push the importance and pride on them then hopefully they will fight for our language. (Kanienhtenhá:wi Sarah Phillips)

Similarly, some report feeling the future of the language is promising, as they have many supports for their learning with immersion programs and the language nest. They hope to see the next generation being first language speakers, raised in the language by first and second language speakers.

I think that we are going to have a lot of first language speakers coming up or children being raised with a lot of Kanien'kéha incorporated into their homes and lives. It's really astonishing to see the improvement in the mothers at the language nest and every time I see students learning in Ratiwennahní:rats. (Kahsennókwas Reese Jacobs)

*Iorihwákhste - The Future Can Weigh Heavy*

Past graduates of the Ratiwennahní:rats program were also asked what is their vision for the future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke. Coming to the end of the report, this may have been the most heart-heavy section to address. It seemed to be an area of language revitalization that these second language speakers needed to confront, as the future of our language weighs on our minds, hearts and shoulders. In writing about their vision, they also shared apprehension for what may lay ahead.

Predominantly, although participants have hope for the future, they are very concerned the next generations will struggle to keep the language alive as the number of first language speakers declines. As reported in several previous sections, they have continuously affirmed first language speakers to be their most cherished resource, and therefore worry a day may come when we will no longer have their support. This leads some to feel that much of the language will be lost with our elders because the majority of second language speakers are not becoming proficient enough to keep the language in its entirety. To reiterate what Kawennéhawe stated earlier when talking about aiming for high proficiency, she shares the sentiments of many participants saying:

The future of our language is in the hands of today's second language speakers. Without the efforts put forth by every second language speaker, the chances of the Kanien'kéha surviving into the future will sadly diminish with the eventual passing of all our present first language speakers...

(Kawennéhawe Fawn Deer)

Another pressing issue raised by participants is the feeling that elementary immersion needs to strengthen its approach and gravely focus on producing speakers, saying we are truly at a very critical state. Finally, some say that we need to strengthen all our efforts and we will see our grandchildren speaking in the future if we continue by building upon what is already here, as this young man simply states:

I definitely see the language being normalized once again **IF** the movement continues and expands. (Ro'nikonhkátste Norton)

Ro'nikonhkatste's response, I believe, points to the objective of this research project. Each voice within this research offers insight as to how the language movement in Kahnawà:ke will expand and evolve.

*Ientsitewatahsónteron - Committed to the Vision*

The vision for our next generations described by the participants brings us back to why so many of us are committed to this important language work, and shows that second language speakers share in a dream to see Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke thriving once again. They offer a variety of ideas as the means to make the dream a reality such as using technology, using Kanien'kéha signage, and producing newspapers in the language. In all respects, their responses reveal what motivates them to continue supporting language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke. To allow them to speak for themselves, without summarizing or analyzing, the following responses represent several themes of the collective voice of the participants.

#### Family of Speakers:

My vision is for my children and my grandchildren and beyond to be able to convers in Kanien'kéha freely and naturally and hold the language in their hearts. (Lynn Konwaia'tanón:wes Jacobs)

#### Community of Speakers:

My vision would be a community who bring their children up in our language once again, walking in the streets you hear people having conversations in the language. That would be my ideal. (Tehokwiráthe Cross)

#### A Nation of Speakers:

I think that we are strong and determined, and in time we will successfully revitalize our language... My vision is for a community and nation of Kanien'kehá:ka that speak Kanien'kéha as a first language. (Wahéhshon Shiann Whitebean)

#### Speakers Rooted in their Identity:

For second language learning to be unnecessary in a community of first language speakers who have a strong sense of Onkwehón:we identity. (Ro'nikonhkátste Norton)

### If Not In Our Lifetime, Then In Theirs:

Ideally, I would love for everyone in Kahnawà:ke to be fluent Kanien'kéha speakers again, if not everyone, at least the majority. I'm aware that most likely won't happen in my lifetime, but I'm hopeful that it'll be that way for my kids, grandkids or great-grandkids in their lifetime. (Kahsennókwas Reese Jacobs)

Their vision for the future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke fittingly brings the results section to a close. I have been diligent to tell the story of second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke and am truly grateful for all they have shared with me. I believe their voice is integral to the direction of language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke, as they are now the leaders of the language movement in Kahnawà:ke. What they will do to move efforts forward will be critical to the future of the language. As they have voiced, we are coming to a critical time, and they now need the most support to ensure they have the ability to carry the language on for the next generations - Á:se tahatikonhsontóntie raotirihwá:ke – for the faces yet to come.

## Chapter 6

### Kanonhtonnióntshera – Discussion and Reflections

I have approached this project with the belief that because the majority of all Kanien'kéha language programming is initiated, facilitated and maintained by second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke, community planning needs to continue its investment in adult second language speakers in order to insure highly accurate unabridged language will be passed on to the next generations. Additionally, because of my deep involvement in language revitalization in my community, I entered into this research knowing that recognizing adult second-language speakers as a high priority demographic is essential and timely, as many graduates of adult immersion combined with the first generations from elementary immersion now need the most support and motivation to raise their young families in the language. Relative to Fishman's graded intergenerational disruption scale (GIDS), Kahnawà:ke can be looked at as being on the threshold of stage 6 where most of the world's stable languages are described (Fishman, 1991). This is why I believe the next steps the community takes towards reversing language shift will be crucial in securing the language into the future.

This research is intended to inform future language planning by giving a voice to second language speakers in hopes of moving community revitalization efforts forward by identifying how second-language speakers can be supported in achieving very high proficiency. The community survey looked to find out:

How second-language Kanien'kéha speakers in Kahnawà:ke can be supported and motivated to continue on their language-learning journey to become highly proficient speakers.

This has resulted in the first study on the impact, successes and challenges of second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke. The past graduates of the Kanien'kehá:ka Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program were chosen to represent the growing demographic of adult second language speakers and they have offered great insight by sharing their personal experiences in becoming second language Kanien'kéha speakers.

As evidenced in the results section, the qualitative nature of the research gave a detailed look into the experiences and thoughts of the participants. Because I have offered brief discussions in summarizing themes throughout the results sections, I will elaborate on themes I feel to be most significant to this study.

### **Adult Immersion – Re-thinking and Re-defining Success**

In searching for the next steps to move language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke forward, I have gained so much valued insight through the shared stories of the second language speakers who participated in this work. I feel it is very important to begin my discussion by recognizing that this project has affirmed that adult immersion has undoubtedly been successful in creating a new generation of Kanien'kéha speakers in Kahnawà:ke. In doing so, the adult immersion program has also successfully changed the community focus from a primarily elementary school based approach to a whole community approach for language revitalization. Further, through this research, I have



come to realize that a successful Indigenous language program cannot be measured solely by spoken proficiency outcomes, success can be measured by also considering the relationship between language, culture and identity. This became apparent as participants shared their motivation and goals for committing themselves to learning their language as adults.

Motivation to begin learning Kanien'kéha as an adult is very personal, as second language speakers strongly link learning Kanien'kéha to growing their identity in order to restore and rejuvenating their spirits as Onkwehón:we people. It is with much emotion when they describe learning their language in order to pass on our original language to their children, grandchildren and the coming generations. Drawing connections between Kanien'kéha language learning, identity and our future generations should continue to be a source of strength, motivation and encouragement for second language speakers. This implies that developing and evolving programs as well as teaching methods should strive to ensure language learning intentionally provides a space for rich cultural experiences. Many examples were shared in their responses as the participants described aspects of the Ratiwennahní:rats Immersion Program as well as other sources of their language learning.

The survey has confirmed that their levels of spoken proficiency are varied for a variety of reasons such as years spent as an active learner, opportunities to speak and their occupation. Yet for learners of all proficiency levels, the relationship between language, culture and identity is apparent as they shared how learning Kanien'kéha has afforded them greater cultural awareness and a strengthened identity as Onkwehón:we people. Their experiences confirm that

learning Kanien'kéha has given them a greater connection to our traditions, ceremony, community and to our ancestors. This underscores the importance of learning one's ancestral language by showing that language learning has indeed provided learners a path to healing, rebuilding, reclaiming and recovering our ways as Onkwehón:we people not only for them as learners but for their families as well.

With a renewed perspective on what successful language learning entails, I recognize the importance of re-defining success for Indigenous languages revitalization programming, where a successful Indigenous language program: 1) creates proficient speakers, 2) increases their cultural knowledge, 3) strengthens their identity, 4) enriches their worldview through an Indigenous perspective, 5) fosters intergenerational relationships in the language, 6) increases their connection to community, and 7) enables them to contribute to the greater effort of language revitalization.

Their feedback affirms what I have come to know as a second language speaker, that the language leads us back to our traditional medicines, our stories, arts, ceremony and strengthened spirituality. Regaining our language as adults is a source of strength, a journey of life-long learning, and an exploration of one's identity through language that connects us to the land, to creation and to each other as Onkwehón:we people. It enables us to see the world through the eyes and hearts of our ancestors. I feel it is of great significance to me as a learner and as a language worker to have re-affirmed what we already knew, articulated here in the context of creating a renewed definition of what we recognize as successful language learning.

### **Resources - Inspiring Higher Language Learning**

Participants affirm there have been many efforts to develop resources for teaching and learning Kanien'kéha, as they bring to light the effective resources they have relied upon in their studies to become speakers of the language. It is quite significant that these second language speakers confirm varying levels of spoken proficiency, as it helps recognize the need for resources and programming to support differing abilities. Their insight has shown a need for new resources, specifically to alleviate the lack of opportunities for more advanced speakers continuing to learn Kanien'kéha following their completion of the adult immersion program. Such resources would be especially timely, as the Ratiwennahní:rats program now has 142 graduates who will greatly benefit from additional supportive learning tools and opportunities.

Discussing their most relied upon resources also points us towards the importance of fostering a continued network of support which is integral to growing or maintaining their proficiency following adult immersion. Future planning for growing this support network must intentionally highlight the role of our elder speakers to foster a strengthened community of second language speakers.

It is especially paramount to address that, throughout the survey, participants continuously affirmed that elder speakers are their most relied upon resource for their continued language learning, yet, when discussing opportunities to learn from them they share that speaking with first language speakers happens rarely. This means that second language speakers use their language primarily with other second language speakers. Again, this affirms the importance for future language programming to include first

language speakers as part of a supportive network to encourage and provide rich language experiences for continued learning.

Finally, because our first language speakers are an aging population, every effort must be made to ensure we improve and strengthen those relationships while we still have the opportunity to learn from them. As language learners we know they are always ready and willing to tell their stories and guide us in our learning.

### **Domains – Successes and Struggles**

When discussing domains of language use past graduates of the Ratiwennahní:rats program report using Kanien'kéha most often with their children, grandchildren, extended families, and other learners within a variety of domains. Those employed doing language work are immersed in the language and using Kanien'kéha consistently with both students and co-workers, enabling them greater advantages to maintain and increase their language skills following their full time immersion experience. Domains they are using the language consistently are at the Longhouse, in community schools, on Facebook and at gatherings where language is the focus, with the Longhouse being described as a place speaking Kanien'kéha is expected.

The survey has also revealed that second language speakers are regularly using Kanien'kéha throughout the community and in their daily lives. They speak Kanien'kéha whenever they encounter other speakers and are making efforts to create social situations primarily to speak the language. This shows that they are taking advantage of opportunities to use Kanien'kéha regularly and therefore, contributing to the vitality of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke.

It is also clear that most challenging for second language speakers is reinforcing Kanien'kéha in the home. It was quite revealing when all but one participant reported English to be the main language spoken in the home. This finding is imperative to address for many reasons. Most obvious lies within the research on Indigenous languages revitalization, reminding us that language survival ultimately depends upon intergenerational language transmission in the home where the language is vibrant spanning three generations.

Placing family as a priority also stems back to their motivation to begin learning, where they envisioned themselves one day passing Kanien'kéha on to their children. Because they are struggling to accomplish this, second language speakers feel a sense of failure despite their amazing achievements learning their language. This feeling of falling short of their ultimate goal weighs quite heavy on these learners. Supports to encourage Kanien'kéha speaking families would be extremely impactful in moving efforts forward and growing a whole community approach by focusing on bringing generations together. Future language planning in Kahnawà:ke will need to seek out specific solutions to target and support second language speakers in fostering Kanien'kéha speaking homes.

### **Kincentric Language Learning**

Many past graduates of adult immersion are continuing their learning as they reach for higher proficiency. They collaborate with other new speakers to overcome challenges as they move their language learning beyond the classroom into their everyday lives. The camaraderie between second language speakers and learners is quite apparent, as they have developed a growing circle of support. This is very encouraging as the next

steps to move the language forward will need an aggressive approach from these speakers. Additionally, it is important to reiterate that because elders are our treasured language keepers, efforts must include nurturing closer relationships to our first language speakers.

Researching the topic of domains has shown me that Kanien'kéha language use is primarily mediated by the relationships second language speakers have with other Kanien'kéha speakers and learners, more so than by domains. They use Kanien'kéha in all domains when Kanien'kéha speaking relationships are fostered, be it with their family, friends, fellow students, or elders. It has led me to realize that Indigenous language learning must be rooted in a kincentric<sup>6</sup> paradigm where we honor and strive for Kanien'keha speaking relationships with all our relations including that of the natural world and spiritual world. I believe this concept can be applied to our approach in Indigenous language revitalization, by taking a kincentric approach to language planning we would inevitably address our concerns about language use in the home, cultivating a network of speakers, working closer with our elders and keeping our spiritual connection to the natural world.

### **Second Language Speakers Contributing to the Vitality of the Language**

Second language speakers are heavily involved and committed to growing community language efforts, this is why recognizing their valued contributions to revitalizing Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke is vital in supporting the sustainability and

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<sup>6</sup> The term kincentric was introduced by Salmón (2000) to describe Indigenous peoples' relationships to the natural world, where the author describes how Indigenous worldview sees all the natural elements of their ecosystem as kin referring to this as "kincentric ecology".

evolution of the language movement in Kahnawà:ke. Because of their ongoing efforts to increase the vitality of the language, there is overwhelming evidence of the demand for Kanien'kéha speakers in a variety of occupational fields. This means that becoming proficient Kanien'kéha speakers entails increased opportunities for employment both locally and non-locally. These findings are of great importance in helping to address a recurring issue facing adult language learners, as there is very little financial support for adults to attend a full time immersion program despite the ongoing successful outcomes the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program has shown.

Successful Kanien'kéha language planning has enabled second language speakers to continue the work of those before them. They strive to bring Kanien'kéha into the future and are motivated by seven generations thinking, as Rotinonhsión:ni ways teach us to always be looking ahead to the faces yet to come. The future is promising when all participants are of one mind saying that second language speakers should continue learning and aim to become highly proficient speakers of Kanien'kéha. Their desire to become better speakers is so important to the future, as they will one day be the elders that new speakers will look to for support.

The study also reveals that the majority of second language speakers are not only concerned with raising their own Kanien'kéha proficiency but they are also trying to find ways to support others in their learning, primarily their families because of their strong desire to maintain a Kanien'kéha speaking home. This implies that because these speakers have aspirations to improve their Kanien'kéha skills, motivating them to continue learning may not be an issue as much as finding ways to support them in achieving their learning goals.

Finally, on their path to reclaiming their language, these second language speakers have shared how learning Kanien'kéha as an adult can lead to a continuous search for more knowledge – knowledge of tsi niionkwarihò:ten, meaning knowledge that encompasses all that makes us who we are as a people. This is also a reflection of why second language learners proclaim learning Kanien'kéha to be a life-long journey.



## Chapter 7

### Nahò:ten Ó:nen Entsonkwaió'ten – Conclusion

#### **Impacting Language Revitalization in Kahnawà:ke**

There is no doubt that second language speakers are impacting the future of Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke as teachers, language workers, parents, supporters and users of the language. Because they are now the leaders of the language movement in Kahnawà:ke they are already fostering the next generation of both first and second language speakers. They are using the language in all domains of the community as well as developing Kanien'kéha resources and programs to support the growing language movement.

The impact second language speakers have had on the community thus far is profound. Their successes are a result of the dedication and foundational work our elders have done to ensure we would have opportunities to regain our language. After four decades of commitment the language is slowly beginning to be used across generations. The voice of the participants is clear, saying we need to strengthen all our efforts, and we will see our grandchildren speaking in the future if we continue building upon what is already here. The solutions to our present challenges lie in addressing the needs of advanced learners by supporting them to bring rich language into the home, the community and the future.

#### **Recommendations – A Kincentric Approach**

This project has led me to conclude that the future of language revitalization entails taking a kincentric approach to language planning. By taking this approach we

would honor and strive for Kanien'keha speaking relationships with all our relations including that of the natural world and spiritual world. This would also add to our thinking about why and how we are learning our ancestral language.

Applying the concept of kincentric language revitalization we would be taking an approach rooted within an Indigenous paradigm, an extension of our worldview, as we view and see all elements in our world as kin, interconnected and interrelated. By doing so we would inevitably address our present needs and concerns for intergenerational language use in the home, cultivating a community of speakers, working closer with our elders and keeping our spiritual connection to the natural world. These identified needs form the themes I will address in the following recommendations.

*Family – Intergenerational language use in the home.*

It is very encouraging that second language speakers are motivated to bring the language into the home. Their struggle to achieve a Kanien'kéha speaking home seems to lie in two areas. The first is maintaining and growing their own proficiency, and second is overcoming the extensive use of English in the home primarily because they are the only speaker in the household.

Encouraging Kanien'kéha speaking families has to be a priority. This is because they are already using the language with family to varying degrees and they have the goal to maintain Kanien'kéha speaking homes. I would like to propose several measures to support their needs:

1. Family oriented gatherings to bring Kanien'kéha speaking families together to provide opportunities for intergenerational interactions in the language. This can

- be simple as a community dinners to socialize in the language or larger-scale events such as storytelling gatherings.
2. Adapting methodologies similar to the One Parent One Language Method (OPOL) and/or the Minority Language at Home (ML@H) approach to meet the needs of Kahnawà:ke's Kanien'kéha/English speaking families. For most, immersion in their home environment is not yet possible because only one parent speaks the language, the OPOL method could help to offer strategies for those parents who would like to pass the language on to their children (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). The ML@H approach can also be beneficial for those who have two Kanien'kéha speaking parents in the home (Multilingual Parenting) as it also offers strategies to ensure children become confident speakers of their minority language.
  3. It would be beneficial for families to have informational and guiding workshops to help them develop a family language plan. Just as individuals follow a learning path to proficiency, families should be aware of the options available and decide what would be best for them dependent of their specific and unique needs. To support this, a guide such as the Family Language Learning: A Guide to Bringing SENCOTEN Into Your Home (Thornburn, 2016) can be developed to give advice and resources to support families in their Kanien'kéha language goals.

*Speakers and Learners - Cultivating a community of speakers.*

It is clear that second language speakers need support to maintain and increase their Kanien'kéha skills following their time in adult immersion. Because many lack opportunities to continue learning or to use the language regularly, especially those not employed doing language work, there is a concern their proficiency has regressed. This is why efforts are needed to bring speakers together specifically to socialize, continue learning and to use the language outside of classroom settings. In some aspects it is so simple, the answers lies in remembering our ways of knowing as Onkwehón:we, where we visit, talk and listen to the stories of our elders. Many solutions were offered to create a network of speakers, some of which are reiterated here:

1. Consistent, organized talking circles for both first and second language speakers to converse and socialize in the language would create an outlet for maintaining their spoken proficiency, as well as encourage continued language learning.
2. Because there is already an immergence of advanced language study groups where proficient second language speakers are working with elders, this model can be highlighted and promoted in community.

The shortage of learners who have become highly accomplished speakers is not due to lack of motivation to learn but reflects a shortfall of resources and supportive programs targeting advanced speakers. Growing a network of speakers and learners needs to also focus on growing supports for advanced second language speakers.

3. Kahnawà:ke will also need to offer advanced classes and intensive learning opportunities for second language speakers, and begin by targeting those who are already teaching and doing language work. Focusing on this demographic of speakers will help to ensure unabridged language will be passed on to our next generations.

*Working closer with our elders.*

Our elders have been our most cherished resource in bringing the language into the future, therefore, adult language learners need to be encouraged to continue their learning through meaningful interactions with the elders. There are various reasons why this is difficult for some, such as being the only Kanien'kéha speaker in their family, this is why organized opportunities need to be offered. I suggest several options here:

1. There needs to be strong focus on ensuring elders are part of adult language learning. In order to encourage learners to build closer relationships with community elders, it would be beneficial to compile a list of elder speakers who would be willing to assist learners with their language learning. Learners could draw upon this list for one-on-one learning or to invite elders into small study group sessions.
2. Methodologies can be shared with Kahnawà:ke's advanced learners to ensure they are using effective learning strategies for conscious language learning with the elders through storytelling and natural conversations.

*Keeping our spiritual connection to the natural world.*

Learning Kanien'kéha as an adult leads many to a continuous search for more knowledge, knowledge of tsi niionkwarihò:ten, where learning becomes a life-long journey. Many find motivation for learning their language rooted in ceremony, both to gain a greater connection to our ways and to contribute to carrying our ceremonies into the future in our original language. My final suggestion is addressed to the People of the Longhouse:

1. Some second language speakers are focusing their learning on contributing to traditional Longhouse ceremony. To support this strong interest for such specialized learning, we can draw on the example of the Seneca Nation's Faithkeeper's School which is intended to foster their next generation of ceremonial leaders (Faithkeepers School Part 1 of 3) This will create an opportunity to foster a specialized group of speakers with strong focus on ceremonial oratory and higher language learning lead by our knowledgeable elders. This will ensure the Longhouse will continue to be a place where rich language can be heard in ceremony, political settings and social gatherings.

*Final Thoughts*

I have been diligent to tell the story of second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke and am truly grateful for all they have shared with me. I believe their voice is integral to the direction of language revitalization in Kahnawà:ke, as they are now the leaders of the language movement in Kahnawà:ke. What they will do to

move efforts forward will be critical to the future of the language. As they have voiced, we are coming to a critical time, and they now need the most support to ensure they have the ability to carry the language on for the next generations - Á:se tahatikonhsontóntie raotirihwá:ke – for the faces yet to come.

Thók niwakhtsikhé:tes.

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## Appendix 1. Description of Language Resources Presented in the Survey

Resource	Description
Mohawk: A Teaching Grammar (2007 ed.)	Originally written in 1976 by Nora Deering and Helga Harries Delisle, it was developed primarily for teaching adults in a classroom setting and to assist individuals learning independently. The 521 page text is comprised of 20 chapters, each consisting of dialogues, lessons, exercises and vocabulary complete with accompanying audio for dialogue and vocabulary. The end of each chapter provides grammatical explanations as well as cultural information. Updated in 2007 to reflect the Kanien'kéha orthography which was standardized in 1993.
Kanien'kéha Okara'shón:'a - Mohawk Stories (1976)	A compilation of community legends, histories, anecdotes and poetry submitted by 10 Kanien'kéha speakers from several Kanien'kéhá:ka communities. Written in Kanien'kéha with 2 types of translations in the second section, where literal translations are written directly below the Kanien'kéha words, all 33 entries also have an English re-telling of the story written at the bottom of each page.
KORLCC Elder Interviews	A result of a documentation project of the KORLCC the audiovisual interviews depict many elders from the community sharing stories and life experiences all in Kanien'kéha.
Sose tánon Leo Noon Hour Talk Show	Sponsored by the KORLCC, this talk show features Joe McGregor and Leo Diabo, two fluent elders, telling stories and sharing their everyday experiences all in Kanien'kéha. Airing live on K103 radio every Wednesday at noon, it is also accessible through live streaming and shows are uploaded to soundcloud.
Rosetta Stone – Kanien'kéha Version (2009)	The software uses thousands of real-life color images to convey the spoken and written phrases in the program with audio in the voices of community members and elders. Developed through Rosetta Stone's Endangered Language Program, this language learning software was sponsored by the KORLCC.
Ratiwennahní:rats Grammar Book (2015)	A Kanien'kéha grammar resource for students of the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program developed over several years by Akwiratékha Martin, one of the teachers of the program.
Finding Our Talk Series (2009)	A series on Indigenous language revitalization highlighting efforts from around the world. Season 3, comprised of 13 episodes, was skillfully dubbed in Kanien'kéha with the option to view with or without subtitles. Produced by Muskeg Media in association with

	APTN and Maori Television.
KORLCC's Creation Story (2011)	Developed in-house, a version of the Rotinonhsión:ni creation story, written completely in Kanien'kéha.
Mohawk For Beginners	Developed by Josie Horne, this book was developed to help learners build a Kanien'kéha language base through dialogues and domain/task based lessons. Dialogues and vocabulary are supported with audio.
Thanksgiving Address Books	The KORLCC as well as the Kanien'kéha Curriculum Center have developed several resources of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen. Many versions from sister Kanien'kehá:ka communities also exist in community as well as online.
Thanksgiving Address Audio	There are many resources available of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen either accompanying existing texts or from ethnographic documentation efforts. Many versions are available in a variety of formats.
Ceremonial Literature	There are many resources available to learners from a variety of sources, developed in Kahnawà:ke or sister Kanien'kehá:ka communities. There are many resources available resulting from ethnographic documentation.
Ceremonial Speech Audio	There are many resources available to learners from a variety of sources, developed in Kahnawà:ke or sister Kanien'kehá:ka communities.
Jake Thomas Great Law Audio	This is a 12 disc collection with a 7 day recital of the Kaianerehkó:wa in Kanien'kéha by the late Cayuga chief, a great orator who spoke several Rotinonhsión:ni languages.
Various Dictionaries	Many Kaien'kéha dictionaries are available which were produced in Kahnawà:ke, Kanehstà:ke and Ahkwesásne. Those produced following 1993 employ the orthography established through Mohawk Standardization Project (Lazore, 1993).
Bible Translations	There are several versions/texts developed through a collaboration of elders from several Kanien'kehá:ka communities most of which took several years to complete.
Kanien'kéha Household Labels	A package of various household nouns produced by the KORLCC intended to help beginner learners use Kanien'kéha in the home environment.
Tota Tanon Óhkwá:ri DVDs	A community based children's series produced completely in Kanien'kéha shown on the community cable network, now in it's 12 <sup>th</sup> season with all past seasons available for purchase.
Karonhianónhnha	A multitude of workbooks and storybooks developed by

Workbooks	the Kanien'kéha Curriculum Center to support the Karonhianónhnha Tsi Ionterihwaienhstáhkwa elementary immersion program.
Other Resource Identified:	Iontstha'shón:'a w/flash cards – A teaching resource developed for the adult immersion program consisting of basic nouns organized by noun stem to lead into future lessons of noun incorporation. Full set of flash card images to accompany each noun.

## Appendix 2 Letter of Information and Implied Consent



University  
of Victoria

Letter of Information and Implied Consent

Wa'tkonnonhwerá:ton,

You are invited to participate in a community survey to see how second-language Kanien'kéha speakers in Kahnawà:ke can be supported and motivated to continue on their language-learning journey. The survey is being conducted by Kahtehrón:ni Iris Stacey as partial fulfillment of the requirements for her Masters in Indigenous Language Revitalization at the University of Victoria.

You have been chosen to participate because you are a successful graduate of the Kanien'kéha Ratiwennhaní:rats Adult Language Immersion Program. The past graduates will represent the demographic of second-language Kanien'kéha speakers in Kahnawà:ke. Excluded from this research are those who did not complete the Ratiwennahní:rats program and those who have learned through various methods other than adult immersion.

For this research Kahtehrón:ni is focusing on the role of adult second-language speakers in reversing language shift in Kahnawà:ke. Kahtehrón:ni chose this area of research to inform future language planning by giving a voice to second language speakers in order to determine how they are using Kanien'kéha in community, how they are continuing their language learning and what resources have been useful for their language maintenance or growth. Kahtehrón:ni's phone number is 514-679-7694 and her email is [kahtehronni-@hotmail.com](mailto:kahtehronni-@hotmail.com). Please do not hesitate to contact her if you have any questions regarding her research or her studies at UVIC.

Participating in this research means completing the survey and returning it to the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC). The survey consists of 37 questions and takes 60-90 minutes to fill out. Questions are to share your experiences as a second-language learner/speaker. Completed surveys can be returned by mail in the pre-paid envelope provided to the offices of the KORLCC. The survey is entirely voluntary and you are not required to identify yourself if you choose to remain anonymous.

Once your completed survey is returned, you will have the opportunity to withdraw your survey up to one month after the close of the survey if you have provided your name on the survey. There will be no opportunity to withdraw your responses if your survey was submitted anonymously. You can contact the researcher directly through telephone or email and a release for your survey will be granted respectfully. The data compiled from the survey will be coded and grouped for analysis so that all surveys submitted anonymously will remain anonymous throughout the study.

The results of this work will be shared by Kahtehrón:ni with the community as well as for academic purposes. In the future Kahtehrón:ni may use this data to further this

research, to support further research on Language Revitalization in Kahnawà:ke or other Indigenous language research.

*By completing and returning this survey you consent to participating in this survey.*



## Appendix 2. Community Language Survey Questions

### **Community Language Survey - Adult Second-Language Speakers in Kahnawà:ke**

February 26, 2016 – March 25, 2016

This survey is intended to help in identifying the needs of adult second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke.

Wa'tkwanonhwerá:ton,

Kahtehrón:ni Iris Stacey niwakhsennò:ten, wakeniáhton tánon Kahnawà:ke nitewaké:non. University of Victoria kateweiénhstha ne Masters of Indigenous Languages Revitalization enwakhiatonhseraién:ta'ne.

My name is Kahtehrón:ni Iris Stacey, I'm turtle clan from Kahnawà:ke and I'm presently studying at the University of Victoria for my Masters in Indigenous Languages Revitalization. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for my degree I have chosen to conduct research within my community in the form of a community language survey focusing on the role of adult second-language speakers in reversing language shift in Kahnawà:ke.

It is my belief that because the majority of all language programming is initiated, facilitated and maintained by second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke, community planning needs to continue its investment in adult second language speakers in order to ensure highly accurate unabridged language will be passed on to the next generations. This research is intended to inform future language planning by giving a voice to second language speakers in order to determine how they are using Kanien'kéha in community, how they are continuing their language learning and what resources have been useful for their language maintenance or growth.

I will respectfully carry out my research in hopes of moving community revitalization efforts forward by identifying how second-language speakers can be supported in achieving **very** high proficiency. As a second language speaker and lifetime learner, my motivation to strive for the continuance of highly accurate language is rooted in our Rotinonhsión:ni teachings as we always look ahead seven generations tsi nonkwá:ti ne á:se tatakonhsontóntie (towards the new faces yet to come). What is our vision for them, and how will we ensure the great peace, strength and good mind of our people will be everlasting?

I am truly grateful for your thoughtful consideration in participating in this language work.

Niawenhkó:wa Sewakwé:kon,

Kahtehrón:ni Iris Stacey

**Community Language Survey –  
Adult Second-Language Speakers in Kahnawà:ke**  
February 26, 2016 – March 25, 2016

This survey is intended to help in identifying the needs of adult second language speakers in Kahnawà:ke in order to answer my research question:

*“How can second-language Kanien’kéha speakers in Kahnawà:ke be supported and motivated to continue on their language-learning journey to become highly proficient speakers?”*

(Optional) Name:	
Year of enrollment:	
Years in Adult Immersion:	1 year <input type="checkbox"/> 2 years <input type="checkbox"/>
Age:	
Gender:	

1. **Approximately** how much time have you dedicated to studying Kanien’kéha?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Less than one year
<input type="checkbox"/>	1-3 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	4-6 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	7-9 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	10 years or more
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure

2. What was your main goal when you first began learning Kanien’kéha?

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3. Do you feel that you have accomplished that goal?  
Yes  No  Somewhat

Please explain:

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4. Have you ever had a Kanien'kéha language assessment through an ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI)?

Yes  No

**If yes**, then what was your level of Kanien'kéha spoken proficiency recorded as? Please check one

<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced-high
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced-mid
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced-low
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate-high
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate-mid
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate-low
<input type="checkbox"/>	Novice-high
<input type="checkbox"/>	Novice-mid
<input type="checkbox"/>	Novice-low

**If no**, then what do you feel is your spoken proficiency **range** in relation to the ACTFL scale? Please check one

<input type="checkbox"/>	Superior
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced-high
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced-mid
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advanced-low
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate-high
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate-mid
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intermediate-low
<input type="checkbox"/>	Novice-high
<input type="checkbox"/>	Novice-mid
<input type="checkbox"/>	Novice-low
<input type="checkbox"/>	I don't know

Please explain why you have evaluated yourself to be at that level of proficiency:

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5. Are there any areas of your Kanien'kéha language abilities that you would like to improve upon? If so, then what?

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6. What challenges have you faced in maintaining or improving your language proficiency?

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7. What is the main language spoken in your home?

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8. How many people reside in your home? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you have children?

Yes  No

10. How often do you speak Kanien'kéha in your home? Please check one

<input type="checkbox"/>	Always
<input type="checkbox"/>	Almost always
<input type="checkbox"/>	Throughout the day but not consistently
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely
<input type="checkbox"/>	Never

11. In what situations do you use Kanien'kéha most in your home? Please describe.

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12. How often do you speak Kanien'kéha at work? Please check one

<input type="checkbox"/>	Always
<input type="checkbox"/>	Almost always
<input type="checkbox"/>	Throughout the day but not consistently
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely
<input type="checkbox"/>	Never

13. Are you presently employed doing Kanien'kéha language work in a community school, program or organization?

Yes  No

If yes, then what is your role?

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14. Other than in your current position, do you feel that your Kanien'kéha language skills have helped you to gain employment in the past? Please explain.

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15. Do you feel confident using your Kanien'kéha skills at your current workplace? Please explain.

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16. Aside from work, in what situations do you speak Kanien'kéha in community?

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17. How often do you speak your language with friends in social settings? Please check one

<input type="checkbox"/>	Always
<input type="checkbox"/>	Almost always
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometimes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rarely
<input type="checkbox"/>	Never

Please explain:

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18. How often do you speak Kanien'kéha with first language speakers? Please check one

	Always
	Almost always
	Sometimes
	Rarely
	Never

Please explain:

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19. When do you use your language most often?

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20. In what situations do you hear Kanien'kéha being spoken most often?

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21. How many hours per week do you presently dedicate to learning Kanien'kéha? Please check one

	2 hours or less
	3-5 hours
	6-9 hours
	10 hours or more
	I am not studying at this time

22. What types of language learning activities do you presently engage in? Check all that apply.

- |                          |                                |                          |                             |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Community classes              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Language nest               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Listening to recordings        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Web based language lessons  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Learning from elders           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Dictionary study            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Researching old words          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Independent grammar studies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Reading Kanien'kéha literature | <input type="checkbox"/> | Private study group         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Master apprentice program      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Workplace language classes  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Learning ceremonial speeches   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Adult immersion             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Word searches on social media  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reviewing old assignments   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Listening to speakers          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Other(s):</b>            |

23. **After completing** the Ratiwennahní:rats Adult Immersion Program, have you used any of the following existing language resources? Please check all resources that apply.

- |                          |                                  |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mohawk Teaching Grammar          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Thanksgiving Address Books   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Kanien'kéha Okara'shón:'a        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Thanksgiving Address Audio   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | KORLCC Elder Interviews (DVD's)  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ceremonial Literature        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sóse tánon Leo via Soundcloud    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ceremonial Speech Audio      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rosetta Stone                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Jake Thomas Great Law Audio  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ratiwennahní:rats Grammar Book   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Various Dictionaries         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Finding Our Talk Series          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Kanien'kéha Household Labels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | KORLCC's Creation Story          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Tóta Tánon Ohkwá:ri DVD's    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mohawk For Beginners by J. Horne | <input type="checkbox"/> | Karonhianónhnhha workbooks   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bible Translations               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Other(s):</b>             |

24. Please describe which resources have been most helpful to improve or maintain your language proficiency.

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25. Please check all that apply. When learning from elders do you:

	Listen to stories
	Learn traditional skills
	Learn ceremonial teachings
	Ask for translations
	Document old words
	Just visit to talk in the language
	I don't have elders to learn from
	Other:

26. What types of additional learning resources do you feel would benefit you most?

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27. Do you have a language-learning goal this year?

Yes  No

Please explain:

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28. In what ways do you feel that learning Kanien'kéha has contributed to your cultural awareness?

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29. Has learning your language strengthened your identity as an Onkwehón:we person?

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30. We are often told that language and culture are intertwined. What aspects of language do you feel will help most in preserving Rotinonhsión:ni worldview?

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31. Do you feel that second language speakers should continue learning in order to become highly proficient speakers? Please explain.

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32. As a second language speaker, do you feel that you have made a contribution to community efforts in language revitalization? Please explain.

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33. How do you see the next generations continuing to carry on the language in the future?

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34. What is your vision of the future for Kanien'kéha in Kahnawà:ke?

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35. Would you consider participating in future Kanien'kéha research initiatives to help identify practical tools in Indigenous language revitalization such as best learning resources, effective teaching methods and/or innovative language and cultural program models?

Yes  No

36. To highlight important points of this survey, can the researcher respectfully quote your responses in the final research report?

Yes  No

37. If yes, can the researcher respectfully quote your responses in the final research and attribute your response to you by name?

Yes  No

Niawenhkó:wa for your valued time and thoughtful consideration in your responses.

Skén:nen kénha'k,

Kahtehrón:ni Iris Stacey

## Appendix 3. Human Research Ethics Board Certificate of Approval



Office of Research Services | Human Research Ethics Board  
 Administrative Services Building, Rm B202, PO Box 1700 STN CSC, Victoria BC, V8W 2Y2 Canada  
 T 250-472-4545 | F 250-721-8960 | uvic.ca/research | ethics@uvic.ca

## Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Iris Kahtehrón:ni Stacey	ETHICS PROTOCOL NUMBER	16-015
UVic STATUS: Master's Student	Minimal Risk Review - Delegated	
UVic DEPARTMENT: LING	ORIGINAL APPROVAL DATE:	24-Feb-16
SUPERVISOR: Dr. P. Jacobs; Dr. P. Rosborough; Dr. A. D'Arcy	APPROVED ON:	24-Feb-16
	APPROVAL EXPIRY DATE:	23-Feb-17

PROJECT TITLE: **The lentsitewate'nikonhraié:ra'te Tsi Nonkwá:ti ne Á:se Tahatikonhsontón:tie – We Will Turn Our Minds There Once Again, To The Faces Yet To Come. Second Language Speakers and Language Revitalization in Kahnawà:ke**

RESEARCH TEAM MEMBER: None

DECLARED PROJECT FUNDING: None

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the protocol.

**Modifications**  
 To make any changes to the approved research procedures in your study, please submit a "Request for Modification" form. You must receive ethics approval before proceeding with your modified protocol.

**Renewals**  
 Your ethics approval must be current for the period during which you are recruiting participants or collecting data. To renew your protocol, please submit a "Request for Renewal" form before the expiry date on your certificate. You will be sent an emailed reminder prompting you to renew your protocol about six weeks before your expiry date.

**Project Closures**  
 When you have completed all data collection activities and will have no further contact with participants, please notify the Human Research Ethics Board by submitting a "Notice of Project Completion" form.

**Certification**

This certifies that the UVic Human Research Ethics Board has examined this research protocol and concluded that, in all respects, the proposed research meets the appropriate standards of ethics as outlined by the University of Victoria Research Regulations Involving Human Participants.

  
 Dr. Rachael Scarth  
 Associate Vice-President Research Operations

Certificate Issued On: 26-Feb-16

16-015  
 Stacey, Iris Kahtehrón:ni