

HOW CAN WE MANAGE DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE? –A CONSIDERATION FROM THE CASE OF HAWAI‘I–

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ABSTRACT. *Regarding native languages and cultures as a very basis of our identity, our quality of life is guaranteed by their secure existence. Here, we need to consider the relationship between one’s own language and culture and English language and culture, because English has the power to make minority languages and cultures disappear. The Islands of Hawai‘i are among the countries that experienced direct domination by the United States. Although traditional language and culture in Hawai‘i would disappear forever, people have tried to save them through Hawaiian Renaissance movement. In elucidating the effects of English domination in Hawai‘i, the author illuminates the relationship between language and culture of Hawai‘i and those of English. This case is used to represent an example of how minority languages and cultures can continue to survive under the wave of English domination. By looking at a case of Hawai‘i with interview data, this paper suggests that it is important to transmit the language into different generations through a daily use of the language for revitalizing minority languages.*

Keywords: English domination, Diversity of language and culture, Hawaiian Renaissance

1. **Introduction.** Nowadays, diversity is one of the key terms to describe a feature of modern society. Although people advocate an importance of linguistic and cultural diversity, a lot of minority languages and cultures are threatened. Regarding native languages and cultures as a very basis of our identity, our quality of life is guaranteed by their secure existence. Language and culture exist as a part of the very core of own identity. They are indispensable; the way we speak and how we live constitutes who we are. They are symbols of human being [1-5]. How can someone spend their life with full of satisfaction when their language and culture are being threatened? In other words, our quality of life is threatened if native languages and cultures are in danger.

Herein, we need to consider the relationship between one’s own language and culture and English language and culture, because English has the power to make less dominant languages and cultures disappear [6-8]. The Islands of Hawai‘i are among the countries that experienced direct domination by the United States in the past. Previously, The Hawaiian Islands were united as an independent kingdom with its own traditional culture and language. However, people in Hawai‘i started to use English as one of their official languages in addition to the Hawaiian language, and American cultural practices and lifestyles have widely penetrated the society. Traditional Hawaiian culture and language had faced extinction. However, many linguistic and cultural elements that were thought to have vanished forever are undergoing resurgence under the Hawaiian Renaissance movement.

In this paper, therefore, the author first presents a brief overview of the discussion of diversity of language and culture. Next, considering the present state and future of the Hawaiian language, the author introduces both historical flows of the decline of Hawaiian language and culture under the effect of the United States and the Hawaiian Renaissance movement. Finally, the author exemplifies the vitality of this movement with interview data collected from five interviewees at the University of Hawai‘i at Manoa, as well with a brief discussion with a Hawaiian language teacher at the same institution and concludes the discussion.

2. Research Question. We consider the situation in Hawai‘i, examining how English domination was processed there and describing how the people of those islands have maintained their traditional culture and language. Therefore, in this study, the author discusses how we can maintain and preserve diversity as a means of resistance to domination from the case of Hawai‘i. A case study of how people in Hawai‘i are trying to save their language and culture is used to represent an example of how minority language and cultures can continue to survive and flourish under the wave of English domination. Specifically, in this study, we investigate the current relationship of English dominance and the current Hawaiian Renaissance to illuminate how the Hawaiian language and culture coexist with English in present-day society.

3. Discussions on Diversity of Language and Culture. In the discussion of linguistic diversity, we have a well-known scale of the vitality of language. Fishman summarized the status of language vitality, so called *GIDS* – The Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale – [9] as shown in Table 1. It shows that level 1 is the highest level of language use; the least endangered languages. On the other hand, level 8 is the lowest level of language use; the most severely endangered languages. When a language moves from level 5 to 6, it means that language shift happens. On the contrary, when a language moves from level 5 to 4, it means that reverse language shift, or language revitalization, happens. After Fishman categorized the vitality of language into eight levels, Lewis and Simons expanded *GIDS*, which is called *EGIDS* – Expanded Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale – [10] as shown in Table 2. *EGIDS* represents thirteen levels of language vitality, and this scale contributes to *Ethnologue*, a catalogue of languages of the world. According to *Ethnologue*, we have 7,168 languages in the world; 3,072 languages are endangered, and 451 languages are extinct. What that means is that around 43% of the total language is “no longer the norm that children learn and use this language”, and about 6% of the total language is “no longer used and no one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language” [11].

Speaking of diversity of culture, we refer to one of the milestones of the long history of the discussion of cultural diversity: *The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* [12]. It was declared at the 31st session of UNESCO General Conference in November 2001. Among several articles, Article 1, 3, 4, 5 are significant to the discussion [13].

Article 1: Cultural diversity: the common heritage of humanity

Article 3: Cultural diversity as a factor in development

Article 4: Human rights as guarantees of cultural diversity

Article 5: Cultural rights as an enabling environment for cultural diversity

After this declaration submitted, *Main Lines of an Action Plan for the Implementation of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity* was set for the actual implementation of this declaration, and *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* was adopted in October 2005.

TABLE 1. Fishman’s graded intergenerational disruption scale

Level	Description
1	The language is used in education, work, mass media, government at the nationwide level.
2	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services.
3	The language is used for local and regional work by both outsiders and insiders.
4	Literacy in the language is transmitted through education.
5	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form throughout the community.
6	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language.
7	The child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it with their elders but is not transmitting it to their children.
8	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation.

TABLE 2. Lewis and Simons’ expanded graded intergenerational disruption scale

Level	Label	Description
0	International	The language is used internationally for a broad range of functions.
1	National	The language is used in education, work, mass media, government at the nationwide level.
2	Regional	The language is used for local and regional mass media and governmental services.
3	Trade	The language is used for local and regional work by both insiders and outsiders.
4	Educational	Literacy in the language is being transmitted through a system of public education.
5	Written	The language is used orally by all generations and is effectively used in written form in parts of the community.
6a	Vigorous	The language is used orally by all generations and is being learned by children as their first language.
6b	Threatened	The language is used orally by all generations but only some of the child-bearing generation are transmitting it to their children.
7	Shifting	The child-bearing generation knows the language well enough to use it among themselves but none are transmitting it to their children.
8a	Moribund	The only remaining active speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation.
8b	Nearly extinct	The only remaining speakers of the language are members of the grandparent generation or older who have little opportunity to use the language.
9	Dormant	The language serves as a reminder of heritage identity for an ethnic community. No one has more than symbolic proficiency.
10	Extinct	No one retains a sense of ethnic identity associated with the language, even for symbolic purposes.

4. English Domination in Hawai'i and the Hawaiian Renaissance Movement.

Historically, English has been existing in a dominant position. For example, the United Kingdom dominated in commercial and military spheres in the 19th and early 20th centuries [14], or so called direct domination [15]. From the 21st century, the United States has been dominated in political, military, and most significantly cultural spheres [16]. This can be called indirect domination as opposed to direct domination [15]. This is a new form of domination, and the dissemination of English language and culture generated a new type of imperialism; linguistic imperialism [17]; cultural imperialism [18]; and English domination as a whole [19].

Hawai'i was not an exception. A lot of influences were brought by the United States upon traditional Hawaiian language and culture. English was the medium and basis in all public schools, and the Hawaiian language became secondary [20]. The practice of Hula, one of the most traditional cultures of Hawai'i, was banned as Haole, Caucasian, considered that Hula was 'too sexual' activity. Traditional language and culture of Hawai'i were almost gone by these influences, but people there have been revitalizing them with the Hawaiian Renaissance movement.

The Hawaiian Renaissance is a resurgence and revitalization of traditional Hawaiian language and culture. It has been started from the 1970s, and there have been various practices, for example, Hawaiian language immersion programs, traditional Polynesian Hokule'a voyaging, traditional products by Hawaiian craftsmen and artists, the revival of Hawaiian music, local radio stations, TV broadcastings, and resurgence of hula [21-25].

Regarding a part of the renaissance, we find Hawaiian language expressions in many places and a lot of cultural exhibitions in town. We especially focus on a promotion of Kaka'ako cultural revival movement: promotion of "Our Kaka'ako"; "SALT at our Kaka'ako"; "POW! WOW! Hawaii"; "Honolulu Night Market". "Kaka'ako's history is rooted in industry, entrepreneurship and cultural diversity" [26]. Pa'akai Marketplace at Kaka'ako brings artists, crafters, cultural practitioners, and performers of Hawai'i together and celebrates Native Hawaiian culture. A collaboration event with PA'I Foundation; the aim is "to preserve and perpetuate Hawaiian cultural traditions for future generations" [27].

5. Methodology. To answer the research questions, this study adopts an interpretive paradigm as the methodology of this study. Qualitative analysis seeks to build an overall snapshot, analyze words and expressions, and depict respondents' views and perspectives in detail, thereby enabling them to speak and express themselves in their own voices, thoughts, and feelings [28]. The purpose of a qualitative research interview is "to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena" [29]. The author conducted interviews, and the collected data includes a brief discussion with a Hawaiian language teacher at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and interviews with five students at his class who were considered part of the revitalization process voluntarily participated in this study. The author designed a semi-structured interview, which is a more flexible version of the structured interview that "allows depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses" [30]. Each interview lasted 30-60 minutes, and the data were qualitatively analyzed to glean various types of efforts for revitalizing Hawaiian linguistic repertoires amidst English domination.

6. Results and Discussion. Roles of people who passionate about resurgence of the Hawaiian language and culture are to stimulate, include, and educate the younger generations; they always look toward the future. Regarding this point, we focus on some representative answers. For example, interviewee A answered, "I think now a lot of the students, the younger generation, they understand that this is something a responsibility

that we have to carry on”. Concerning an importance of younger generations, interviewee B pointed out that “the biggest factor would be the younger generation, as only way that the language and culture can continue to survive. Because if they don’t take interest in language or the culture, then it’s gonna die with us”.

Although younger generations start to realize and understand a meaning of learning their roots based on language, involving and stimulating them are not so easy. Interviewee C suggested that popular culture would be a good start: “people are translating a Disney movie, *Moana*, from English to Hawaiian. When it’s done, the movie will be shown to children at *Ke Kula Kaiapuni*, an immersion school. They have already known Disney and interested in Disney movies. I want them to watch those movies in Hawaiian and to be interested in Hawaiian. Meanings in English and Hawaiian are different and difficult, but those triggers can be useful”. This ‘trigger’ can be more familiar and accessible especially very young ages. In this case, *Moana* is set in Hawai‘i, and thus the topic itself is also more familiar to them.

Not only people themselves are important, but another interviewee referred to the connection between language and the way of thinking in broader terms. Interviewee D mentioned, “my concern is trying to preserve the Hawaiian thinking not just the language itself but how the language reflects a certain type of way of thinking”. We invoke that language exists as a part of the core of own identity, and the way we speak and how we live constitutes who we are. Language is a symbol of human being; the Hawaiian language is a symbol of Hawaiian people.

All interviewees certainly realize that the Hawaiian language and culture connect the past, the present, and the future. They also recognize that language and culture of Hawaii are very important part of their identity; they exist as a very fundamental part of people’s identity passed down from generation to generation. People have started to realize that Hawaiian language and culture are significant part of their heritages and attempt to maintain them with the movement. We see that people are eager to preserve traditional Hawaiian language and culture in various ways with the Hawaiian Renaissance movement. The use of a variety of social networking services as an information tool or a communication device is an effective way to involve and enroll younger generations: namely, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and many more.

We cannot deny that majority of people in general are accepting English. With people’s positive attitude, English certainly has a power to make minority languages and cultures in danger. However, Matsubara suggests that the most important thing for revitalizing minority languages is to transmit the language into different generations through a daily use of the language in the language community [31]. A case study in Hawai‘i shows that there are several keys to tackle the supremacy of English: people who actually learn or willing to learn the Hawaiian language and culture; parents who want their children to acquire the Hawaiian language and culture; teachers who are eager to teach the Hawaiian language and culture to the next generation [32]. It is important 1) to use traditional language in a daily life; 2) to make inherited culture a habit for people; 3) to have a public support from government and subsidize a civil action or movement. Support from government is an important supplemental factor. We see that Section 4 in the Article X of the Hawaii Constitution sets and promotes the study of Hawaiian culture, history and language. The States officially provides “for a Hawaiian education program consisting of language, culture and history in the public schools”, and “the use of community expertise shall be encouraged as a suitable and essential means in furtherance of the Hawaiian education program” [33]. Here, people, community, and the government tie together to support the perpetuation of the Hawaiian language and culture.

Whether it is an intrinsic or an external factor, these are the most important key elements not only for revitalization of Hawaiian but for minority languages and cultures as well. In this study, the analysis of the interview data from the Hawaiian language

learners similarly reveals that we have three important factors for revitalizing or saving them from disappearance: 1) Not what we think, but how they act; 2) Do not be passive, but be active; 3) Do not stop, keep moving. The first point is that, like the Hawaiian Renaissance, we need to keep in mind that actually there are the people who actually act. Thus, they need to have a responsibility for own language and culture. The second point is that being active is also one of the keys to moving forward. Passing their spirits from the past generations onto the coming generation is significant in order to maintain and manage their language; having the connections beyond the generations. As all the interviewees pointed out, the next generation or the younger generations are one of the most important factors among the other things. Stimulation, inclusion, and education for the younger generations are key elements. Therefore, people should not stop, but keep moving and looking toward the future. We take the situation in Hawai'i as an epitome and consider this study as one of the endeavors for saving endangered languages and cultures from English domination and for securing our quality of life.

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