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# KERES LANGUAGE LOSS IN THE SANTO DOMINGO PUEBLO COMMUNITY

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Christopher Chavez

American Studies

This thesis is approved and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication

*Approved by the Thesis Committee*

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KERES LANGUAGE LOSS IN THE SANTO DOMINGO PUEBLO COMMUNITY

By

Christopher Chavez  
Bachelor of University Studies

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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## Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the spirits that came to my aid as my time arrived for the presentation of my thesis. Through all the years I have been here on this Mother Earth, I have depended on you for all my needs and you came through.

I appreciate my Kewa Keres-speaking community for teaching me the traditions, culture and the oral stories that I still cherish. My community has raised me well and supported me in every path I have taken. My community has instilled in me a sense of pride, support and strength in all my endeavors. I have looked up to my people for advice and comfort and will continue to do so.

To all my elders that have crossed my path, Thank you, for you have shown me the way. As luck would have it, this was the true path that led me to the way. My elders, you taught me the essential ways of being Native, to look at the cosmology of spiritual, natural world, all around us.

To my grandparents, I appreciate your love for me and for always keeping track of me during my growing years. My grandfathers raised me to be brave and secure in whatever I attempt in life. My grandmothers fed me the essentials of life and taught me to be a good person who is respectful of everyone I meet.

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I want to thank all the people who continue to speak the Keres Language as it is my quest to carry forward the ancient peoples words of advice, "Don't leave your life as a Kewa man behind, don't come home to the spirit world with no socks on your feet. I appreciate the Santo Domingo Pueblo Council for their best efforts in protecting their people in whatever situations may occur. You are the only protection the community has and needs, so let's do our most important job.

## KERES LANGUAGE LOSS IN THE SANTO DOMINGO PUEBLO COMMUNITY

By

Christopher Chavez

Bachelor of University Studies, University of New Mexico, 2006

Master of Arts, American Studies, University of New Mexico, 2017

## ABSTRACT

## KERES LANGUAGE LOSS IN THE SANTO DOMINGO PUEBLO COMMUNITY

The purpose of this research is to consider the effect of the Keres language loss in the Santo Domingo Pueblo community and the need for language revitalization. The Keres-speaking community of Santo Domingo Pueblo has been adamantly opposed to instituting oral and written Keres language in the school system. The Santo Domingo people began to withhold information in response to the European intrusion into the Pueblo world. Isolating itself from the colonial powers served to maintain the unity of the Pueblo's traditions and culture. However, a revitalization of the Keres language requires integration with the global society. Without the written Keres language, the oral language is the only means of passing on and retaining the traditions and culture of the community.

This research will attempt to evaluate and answer the following: what is the Santo Domingo Council's justification for not teaching the Keres language in its school system; and what else can be done to save the Keres language? The following are major concerns with regard to the loss of the Keres language. With the loss of the language, who will carry on the traditions and culture? Do we, as a Keres-speaking people, have to eventually read from the written literature about our traditions and culture? Are we going to be just another part of the ancient history found only in museums and archives? Are we going to pray, sing our songs, and repeat our stories in another language? This research will focus on the language loss based on identity, perception and teaching.

Page Break

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## Santo Domingo Tribe

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR P.O. BOX 99, SANTO DOMINGO PUEBLO, NEW MEXICO 87052 TELEPHONE (505) 465-2214 / 2215 FAX (505) 465-2688

### Continue to preserve an ancient heritage

One of the unique and fascinating things about New Mexico, to both visitors & residents alike is the Pueblo Indians.

A thousand years before the first Europeans set foot in the Western Hemisphere, the Pueblo Indians had permanent, stable agricultural communities along the region's rivers.

Pueblo cultures date back to before 1,000 BC when Indian peoples settled in such places as Mesa Verde in Colorado, Canyon de Chelly in Arizona and Chaco Canyon in north-western New Mexico.

Exactly why the inhabitants of these prehistoric ruins abandoned their homes is unclear. Anthropologists speculate it may have been disease, marauding nomadic Indian tribes or severe drought in the late 1,200s that forced these peoples out of the Four Corners region.

In New Mexico over a period of hundreds of years, their descendants settled along the Rio Grande and its tributaries.

The earliest historical record of the pueblos was 1519 when Spanish explorers encountered active, thriving villages which had existed for hundreds of years.

There are 19 pueblos Taos, Picuris, San Juan, Santa Clara, San Ildefonso, Nambe, Pojuaque, Tesuque, Cochiti, Santa Ana, Santo Domingo, San Felipe, Jemez, Zia, Sandia, Isleta, Laguna, Acoma and Zuni.

One of the largest of the Pueblos, in both size and population, is Santo Domingo, about midway between Albuquerque, and Santa Fe on I-25, Exit 269.

The most recent federal census shows there are more than 4,500 Santo Domingo Indians. More than 3,600 of them live in their village along the Rio Grande just west of the Santa Fe Railway Line.

Under U.S. law, Indian Pueblos are sovereign. That means they are nations that rule themselves. The state has no jurisdiction on Pueblo Indian lands.

The Santo Domingo tribal government has four canes, which are symbolic of nearly 400 years of unbroken recognition of its people and their land as a sovereign tribe.

In 1598, Spanish explorer Juan de Onate presented pueblo leaders in

what was then New Spain Silver topped canes directly from the king of Spain. During a brief period of Mexican rule from 1821 until 1848 canes of authority were also presented to pueblo governments.

In 1883, President Abraham Lincoln presented representatives of New Mexico's pueblos with silver topped, ebony canes as a symbol of the U.S. government's recognition of their sovereignty. The pueblos have also received canes from New Mexico's governors that complete the chain of authority and recognition of their self-government.

The pueblo in New Mexico is governed by a tribal council. There is a governor, lieutenant governor and tribal officers, who are appointed yearly and serve to carry out tribal duties. These officials are responsible for all day-to-day activities of the tribe and Pueblo; however, the council makes the major decisions on the operation and administration of the Pueblos lands.

A close look at Santo Domingo provides a good example of how other pueblos are operated because although each pueblo is different and independent, their lifestyles are similar.

At Santo Domingo, for example the council oversees more than 96,000 acres of pueblo land and designates how it will be used for homes, grazing, irrigated farming and commercial use.

Long before the arrival of foreign governments to this region, the Santo Domingo people were actively mining turquoise from what is now known as the Carrillos mines and making turquoise necklaces which were used as trading materials with other Indian tribes.

Later, after the arrival of the Spanish, other materials, such as tin, copper, brass and some silver, were introduced to the Santo Domingo tribal culture. The Pueblo crafts people accepted these new

materials which were then combined with the turquoise in fashioning turquoise jewelry. The Santo Domingo became well known as turquoise and pottery traders throughout the world.

Because Santo Domingo was on the route between Albuquerque and Santa Fe and on the railway line

between the two cities, its people also became known for their trading.

Even today, many of the village's people make all or parts of their livelihood as crafts people making jewelry, pottery, moccasins and beaded handwork.

To broaden the pueblo's economic base, the council has built a gasoline station and convenience store on NM 22, just west of I-25 exit. In the future the council plans to build a crafts center where its people can sell their creations.

The Carrillos mines have long since played out and Santo Domingo crafts people find it harder and harder to get top quality turquoise, but their work is still well known and coveted.

The Spanish explorers who first visited the Pueblos brought missionaries and the catholic religion with them. Santo Domingo's Indians, as are the vast majority of other Pueblo Indians in New Mexico, are Catholic and celebrate the feast day for their patron saint as a major holiday.

Aug. 4 is also the day Santo Domingo celebrates its famous corn dance. Thousands of people from all over the world come to Santo Domingo to visit and observe the one day traditional celebration honoring their patron, St. Dominic.

The pueblo does not charge a fee or admission to observe the celebration. It is suggested that visitors offer some donation to help them with administrative costs, which would be appreciated.

Corn is the pueblo's most important agriculture crop and the feast is one of the most important of the year.

The Santo Domingo's like other pueblos in New Mexico, have adopted Catholicism, but they also maintain their native ancient religious beliefs. The two religions exist side by side.

The Indian religions revolve around nature, with all living things, including plant and animals having their place and spirit. Even inanimate things such as the river, the mountains and the sky have their place.

What you need to understand about pueblos' religions is that unlike Western or Eastern religions they do not order things

## Introduction

The Pueblo of Santo Domingo, over its history, has attempted to isolate itself from the Europeans in response to the anguish caused by the Spanish and American conquests of the Pueblo Nations. In particular, this reticence to communicate with non-native peoples is most pronounced in matters concerning Pueblo language, tradition and culture; a condition that continues today. On the one hand, it could be said that this vigilance has served to insure the survival of the Pueblo culture; e.g., by withholding information about the critical nature of traditional knowledge. While this diligence served the Pueblo historically, there continues to be a multitude of historical and contemporary pressures on the language and culture. I contend that the preservation of the Keres language requires overcoming this resistance to language revitalization.

Since the introduction of the European languages to the Santo Domingo Pueblo, there has never been any one single, more dangerous challenge to the culture, tradition, and especially the Keres language. The Keres language is a way of life for the community and the language is the single-most important element that holds it together and maintains its traditions and culture. The tribe has acknowledged the problem and is now trying to resolve this conflict by language revitalization.



## Background

The Pueblo Nations suffered many tragic events: disease, enslavement, relocation, loss of homelands, forced conversions to Christianity, forced assimilation, loss of language, culture and tradition.

The Spanish invasion also changed the Pueblo language by introducing new words of Spanish into the Keres language. Historical writers describe the non-disclosure among the Pueblos. Tracy Brown, “A second, related problem is this: since we are reliant upon what the Spaniards saw and documented in reconstructing Pueblo colonial history, how are the (individual and varied) voices of Pueblo people assessed? No unmediated Pueblo voice, or set of voices, exists in the documentation. Pueblo people were not literate at the time of contact, and even after contact with Spaniards for over two hundred years, did not leave behind their own documentation concerning the colonial period. Thus, all information is filtered through a Spanish lens.” (2013, 6).

Devastating results have come from the imposition of the European languages upon the Keres-speaking people. English usage totally altered the Keres language. The Pueblo communities try to keep the language and traditions intact and as close to the original way performed by the tribal members, but changes do occur within the community. Erin Debenport poses this situation, “As scholars who have examined Pueblo ceremonies have observed (Rodriguez 1996; Royce; Sweet 2004) and as Paul Kroskity details in his studies of ceremonial Pueblo speech and related language ideologies (Kroskity, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2009), innovation is discouraged in ritual contexts; songs and dances are said to be “successful” by

community members at San Antonio when the preferred forms are replicated exactly (2015, 212).

During the period of Spanish colonialism, the ancient oral stories were changed into stories to accommodate the Spanish language. These stories became a combination of the Spanish and the Keres languages. Most stories involved saints and spirits to fit the church and the Pueblo cosmology. One particular story is the loss of Matachines and Montezuma in an event that took place in Mexico City. This story is about how Montezuma lost his kingdom to Cortez; but the story told in Keres is different from the Spanish version. The Keres story is a tragic event, while the Spanish version is a happy Moorish dance. Charles Lummis mentions Robert Gish writing about these changes, "*Pueblo Indian Folk Stories*, in its English retelling of Spanish accounts of Tewa and Keres myth, affords intriguing linguistic lessons that not only enhance "local" but go beyond it to help capture the many cultural laminations of the region." (1992, xiv). The ancient Keres language oral stories were not always captured in the re-telling of the oral traditional stories as a result of Spanish language infusion, and later on, some English. Some stories used Spanish words in the story; other stories used whole stories with Spanish substituting the Keres language, especially in stories about the saints.

## Plan

My research question is: Will the Santo Domingo community establish a proactive agenda to revitalize the Keres language? This research will explore the historical narratives and the oral traditions of retaining the language. The results and findings may potentially be applied to solving the language loss problem. Santo Domingo Pueblo has many other problems including, water rights, land issues, infrastructure, education, etc., but the most vital problem is the Keres language loss. If the community does not intervene and resolve the language problem, the unity, traditions and culture of the Pueblo will no longer exist and its assimilation will be complete. There is no other way for the Santo Domingo Pueblo to confront this issue but to go forward with the Keres language revitalization project. The community must develop a vigilant attitude in order to accomplish a successful retention of the Keres language. This is my ultimate aim for this project.

### Methodology: Participant Observation

I am from the Santo Domingo Pueblo, born and raised on the reservation. It is logical that I use the methodological approach that comes from my position as a participant observer. Participant observation is an approach that is possible when the researcher is living in the community and collecting information about community issues and needs (Bogdan, 1972, 3). My direct observations of daily language use at Santo Domingo will inform my findings and are the basis for the major sections of this thesis. Kathleen DeWalt comments, "For anthropologists and social scientists, participant observation is a method in which a researcher takes part in the daily activities, rituals, interactions and events of a group of people as one of the means of learning the explicit and tacit aspects of their life routines and their culture." (2002, 1).

My study builds on a set of reflections stemming from my experience as a member of Santo Domingo Pueblo and as someone actively involved in the revitalization of the Keres language. I include a set of thoughts and reflections at the end of each of the four parts of the thesis. Each is a postscript that follows the title "What Happened to My Language and Community?" In these sections, set off in italics, I offer a number of experiences from my life that cause me to see and understand different moments that speak to the status of Keres in my community.

As a member of Santo Domingo Pueblo, I have served my community as church official twice, governor's tribal official twice, and recently as Lieutenant Mayor for the Santo Domingo Church. I am now a lifetime member of the Santo Domingo Pueblo Council. I am proud to serve in this capacity, with the knowledge

that I bring to the table, as an elder for the people. I am the youngest of the elders, but I have the knowledge learned from the grandfathers and grandmothers and I have also consulted a number of scholarly writings on language loss among the Pueblos. The combination of Pueblo knowledge and academic knowledge help me understand both perspectives and how to address the issues that come before the Council. I do this not for myself, but for the good of the community and the future of our children.

I have come full circle from my first thoughts on how to write about the Keres language. As a child, I recall my parents telling me not to write the language as our village was opposed to any and all ways of giving out information to the outside world. That generation of Pueblo residents was convinced that written texts meant betraying the traditional ways by giving away knowledge that was meant for the Pueblo people alone. At some point during my high school years, I decided to study linguistics and pursue a college education and take up matters pertaining to writing the Keres language. However, guidance from my parents led me to pursue the sciences, but I never stopped thinking about my language.

I had to delay college as the military draft took me away from my studies. The military sent me to Vietnam in 1968, but that duty as a Surgical Technician, and later Physician Assistant, gave me the opportunity to return to college. I went to different colleges during my working years, yearning to accomplish my career in Native American Studies. After my retirement, I returned to Santo Domingo Pueblo and joined my people in the tribal community life. Alongside of my community life, I

returned to the University of New Mexico where I had originally started my education.

I have participated in Pueblo social and ceremonial activities since my childhood and I continue to sing and dance with the rest of the community. I have witnessed the Keres language change along the way. I am a life-long speaker of the Keres language as spoken by the elders while I was growing up. I am bilingual in Keres and English. I have lived through many of the language shifts that I describe in this thesis. I have witnessed the language loss and a dramatic shift from Keres to English; this is especially evident among the Pueblo youth, in both daily and ceremonial interactions.

At this point, it is important to present the major periods in history to understand the impact on the Keres speaking people of Santo Domingo. The three major impacts were the Spanish period, the BIA/boarding schools' period, and the 1960's and subsequent decades.

The second major era of Keres language loss came with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Schools demanding Pueblo students speak English at school. These children were able to adapt to the changes, but retained some of their language and returned to their traditions and culture.

Yet another significant language shift occurred during the late 1960's and 1970's when Pueblo students returned home from the BIA relocation project. These Pueblo students were sent to vocational schools in cities far away from their reservations. The relocation project failed, so the students were left to fend for themselves. The jobs given to the students were not enough to keep them in the

cities, so they returned home. They were called “no-socks kids” with no money in their worn pants pockets. These kids were “smart” because they spoke “city” English and refused to speak their own language. I suggest that this may be the start of the most significant language shift and language loss.

I was one of those Native students offered a vocational relocation, but I refused the offer. I was told that I was not a college material; that I had barely passed high school and never opened a book. I responded that I was smart and that is why I did not have to open a book. This was the antagonizing situation that sent me off to college and I took the challenge head on. Presently, I am still in academia, opening books, learning how to write my language. Today, it is really sad to see the effects the “no socks” generation had on the children of Santo Domingo Pueblo, since later generations have ended up speaking mostly all English and almost no Keres.

In my thesis, I plan to include these general, but significant, observations coming from my regular interactions with adults and children within the community. These general observations were conducted without interrupting interactions among the people. The second part of the observations will include my immediate family members: parents, siblings and grandchildren. This will provide me with the more intimate forms of communication in the use and frequency of language usage—English and Keres—in a home setting.

## Significance

The prevalence of the use of the English language has diminished the practice of the Keres language and has resulted in tremendous implications for the Santo Domingo community. The Keres language is the foremost binding entity in the Santo Domingo Pueblo. In this situation, when the language is lost, all connection, identity, and sentiment will vanish. The worldview of globalization has witnessed a loss of many languages and the disappearance of cultures. With the loss of language, comes a loss of society, identity, and of ancient institutions of knowledge particular to that culture. Thousands of years have passed with the Keres language as the basis for a great civilization that existed and still exists in the Southwest. The significance of this research in Southwest Studies is that the wisdom and knowledge of the Keres language will not be lost for all time when the language revitalization is implemented. The contribution of this research to American Studies is to inject a discussion on how language loss affects the Keres-speaking Pueblos, along with other indigenous people globally. This research will further identify the dilemma of language loss as an American Studies point for future studies. This research will provide information, as a focal point of investigation, into language loss among other Native American communities.



## Research Results

Research results will be reviewed to establish baseline information on the Keres language loss. The research will be based upon the participant observation technique. Since there is no recorded or written Keres language, all interpretations have to be done in English. Keres was not written or recorded for this thesis. The reason is evident in the Pueblo's request to not write the language. I do honor that request with all due respect to the Keres community.

## Section One

### *Traditional Tribal Resistance to Writing the Keres Language*

#### Historical Perspective

#### First Contact/First Loss

Why did the Keres language speakers disengage as a conservative philosophy of withholding information? This pertains to the past and present history of disengagement. There is historical evidence that encroachment by the Spanish and American people created this particular withholding of knowledge. The first Keres language change occurred when the Spanish language was imposed upon the Pueblo and resulted in significant language loss. The beginning of these tragic events took place in 1492 when the Spanish arrived in the new world. The events that took place are described in Bartolome de Las Casas' narrative, *In Defense of the Natives*, "It is as if they held all the peoples of the new world shut up in cages or slave pens and would want to cut off as many heads as are usually sold each day in the market for the feeding and nourishment of the populace (I suggest this as a comparison.). But if they would consider that war and the massacre of this timid race has lasted, not for one day or a hundred days, but for ten or twenty years, to the incredible harm of the natives; that as they wander about, hidden and scattered through the woods and forests, unarmed, naked, deprived of every human help, they are slaughtered by the Spaniards; that, stripped of their wealth and wretched, they are driven from their homes, stunned and frightened by the unbelievable terror with which their oppressors have filled them through the monstrous crimes they have committed." (1992, 27). Bartolome de Las Casas won the court case in Spain that

established the Black Legend Law of the Indies, protecting the New World Natives from the cruel treatment.

These events as described by Oren Lyons, “Tzvetan Todorov, in *The Conquest of America (1982)*, continues that investigation with a review of the Spanish conquest and the Black Legend (which asserted the brutality of the conquest). The Spanish invasion of the Caribbean and the mainland was marked with an incredible ferocity that was recorded by the sixteenth-century Spanish historian, Bartolome de Las Casas. De Las Casas was horrified by Spanish cruelty and he reported with vigor the excesses of the conquistadors. Todorov investigates de Las Casas’ writings with a view to understanding Spanish treatment of “the other” as a mirror of Spanish civilization of the time. Previous generations of historians had reported the Spanish conquest as an event on the road to modernity with little reflection on the cost in human lives and suffering and the general trends in western culture which those costs implied. (1992,4).

Another narrative describes this event when the Spanish arrived in the region of the Pueblo Nations in 1539. The Spanish, under Coronado’s command, left for Mexico City and the Pueblos were left in fear of their return. Robert Silverberg comments, “In their two years in New Mexico, the Spaniards had taken the lives of hundreds of Indians, and the sight of their warriors being burned at the stake by Spaniards as a punishment for defending their villages would not quickly be forgotten. Nor would the Indians forget that the Spaniards had repaid hospitality with abuse, had received gifts only to ask for more. The turmoil caused by the Spanish intrusion had resulted in the abandonment of several villages in the Tiguex

region, and it was years before the Rio Grande Pueblos were back to normal. A somber thought remained: to the south, the Pueblo folk now knew, were strange white-skinned men, greedy and ruthless, who had come north for no reason that made any sense to the Indians, and had done great harm. Someday, the Pueblos feared, the cruel strangers might come again." (1970, 32).

Even though Spanish colonization lasted for three centuries, the people of Kewa persevered and while they adopted and absorbed Spanish and the Christian religion, Keres remained the language of the Pueblo. According to historians, the Spaniards entered the Pueblos around 1540, bringing with them significant changes to the Pueblos. In Alfonso Ortiz book, Albert Schroeder records this, "During this period, several exploring expeditions entered the Southwest, most of them spending little time in any one place. The exceptions were Coronado's army which spent much time among the Southern Tiwa in 1540 and 1541; the Castano de Sosa colonization venture of 1590-91, that camped a number of days among the Keres of San Marcos and Santo Domingo; and Gutierrez de Humana's party that spent a good part of 1593 among the Tewa of San Idelfonso. How much, if any, of the Spanish material culture or ideas could be or were obtained by the Pueblos during this period is not known." (Ortiz, 1972, 47).

In order to bring the people of Santo Domingo under Spanish rule, the Spanish mission was built in the Pueblo. Leslie White explains, "A mission was established in Santo Domingo at the close of the sixteenth century. Fray Juan de Escolana, Commissary of the Franciscan Order in New Mexico, built the first church in Santo Domingo; it was built between 1600 and 1605. Fray Juan died in 1607 and

was buried in the church. In the subsequent flood which destroyed the village, every trace of the church was swept away.” (1935, 14). The people of Santo Domingo who own and operate the church built the second church on higher ground. The oral story tells of the first church as a military fort, not a church. The first church was destroyed by a flood and by this time the people were indoctrinated into Christianity so they built another one. The second church was built to serve the Pueblo and the priests were invited to serve the affairs of the people. The church now belongs to the Pueblo not the Santa Fe Archdiocese and the priests are invited to perform Sunday Mass. The Spanish language was spoken in the church as a teaching method. Thus, the first Keres language change occurred when the Spanish language was imposed which demonstrated significant language loss.

My community is the Keres-speaking community of Santo Domingo Pueblo. The original name of the village, prior to the Spanish arrival, was Kewa. The name changed to Santo Domingo Pueblo with the introduction of the Spanish language and with the missionizing efforts of the Roman Catholic Church. The Church aimed to convert the Pueblo people and eliminate their Native customs. From that point forward, the Keres language began to change into an altered form of expression that changed the oral storytelling. This historical event turned the Keres language into a different destination of progressive language loss. The eventual acceptance of the new form of Spanish language brought about drastic changes that deepened as time passed. Kewa Pueblo became known as Santo Domingo Pueblo, dedicated to Saint Dominic, the patron saint of a Dominican Catholic order.

It is clear that the people of Santo Domingo Pueblo were aware of the drastic changes taking place. Pueblo and non-Pueblo historians have concluded that one result was that the community started to withhold information, especially material concerning the traditional and cultural ceremony and areas of knowledge that were significant to Pueblo philosophy and worldview. At various times in the colonial period, the Spanish government and the Catholic Church outlawed all ceremonial events held in the village. In response, the community hid everything from the conquistadors and missionaries. The Spanish severely punished the people who dared to practice their ceremonies by subjecting them to torture; public flogging, parading them through the village for all to see, and starvation. The only way to receive food was through repentance and allegiance to church and government. This situation increased and intensified to such an extreme, that it led the Pueblos to unify and resume planning a revolt against the Spanish.

The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 was the culmination of oppression against all the Pueblos. The peaceful Pueblo people eventually unified to defeat the Spanish Conquistadors and the missionaries to prevent future oppression. Greg Cajete mentions, Vine Deloria, Jr., who concluded that these, "Early efforts by the Spanish were directed at transforming the Indian culture into an exact replica of church-dominated, administratively-controlled villages, cities and provinces that could be understood as an improved version of European society (1994, 11).

The Spanish returned in 1684 with even more determination to control the Pueblos. This led the Pueblos to hide their tribal cultural information from the Spanish church and government. Dr. Cynthia Lamar Chavez, a member of San Felipe

Pueblo, affirms that “Pueblo culture secrecy” came about as a result of colonization: “Pueblo people were not permitted to practice their ceremonies or rituals since it was considered idolatrous by the Spanish Catholics. In times of conflict, ceremonies, cultural objects and religious knowledge warranted protection especially when the Spanish threatened Pueblo people with death and persecution for practicing their dances and rituals” (2001, 75). Chavez’ dissertation provides a unique insight into the sensitive subject of Pueblo secrecy and a long-established pattern of the non-disclosure of sacred information to the non-Pueblo visitors, teachers, government officials and researchers. This subject of non-disclosure has been a long-standing, vital issue of misunderstanding and misinformation that Chavez critiques. Even as she was starting to write, her parents cautioned her about the antagonistic nature of the Pueblo world and to avoid writing anything about the Pueblo ways. Chavez states in her narrative that the position of non-disclosure of Pueblo information is strictly enforced throughout all the Pueblo communities. Chavez found a narrow path between the Pueblo cultural views and her thesis—an acceptable and negotiable solution to discussing the Indigenous intellectual heritage, ownership, and Western colonial exploitation.

With the advent of the pursuit of ethnological study, the Pueblo communities became the object of interest for a number of ethnographers entering the field. Anthropologists began to actively seek to document Pueblo traditions and cultural knowledge. These anthropological forays plundered vital ritual, ceremonial objects and in some cases hampered the continuation of ceremonies. They also contributed to the loss of language.

Jemez Pueblo author, Joe Sando, has also written about the matter of a non-disclosure position of the Pueblo Nations. Sando, from Jemez Pueblo, and the best-known Pueblo historian, has written extensively on the history of foreign intrusions, "Within the space of two hundred years, the Pueblos have lived under and been subjected to the domination of three forms of government: The Spanish, the Mexican and that of the United States. Living as they have under three flags, their accommodation to the bombardment of foreign cultures is little short of remarkable" (1992, 6). Dr. Sando also remarks on the language change, "As the two cultures merged, Spanish very quickly became the language used for trading, and thus the official language of New Mexico" (1992, 172).

In another narrative by Watson Smith, Archaeologist, an interesting point of view emerges concerning the Pueblo resistance to ethnographic studies, he states,

"The error would derive from a failure to take into account the important factor of Pueblo passive resistance to any very far-reaching attempt at an invasion of their privacy by inquiring anthropologists, their disapprobation of Quisling activities among their own number, and the persistent, almost pathologic, nurturing of the things of the spirit as the last cherished possessions of a people compelled by the logic of circumstances to accept the political and cultural compulsions of a dominant race, but steadfastly refusing to render unto Caesar those things that are not his to demand." (1990, 113-114).

Dr. Gerald Vizner, retired professor of American Studies, contributes to this narrative, "The English language has been the linear tongue of colonial discoveries,



racial cruelties, invented names, the simulation of tribal cultures, manifest manners, and the unheard literature of dominance in tribal communities; at the same time, this mother tongue of paracolonialism has been a language of invincible imagination and liberation for many tribal people in the postindian world.” (1994, 104). My thoughts confirm what the previous authors have addressed in my life with my people.

### *What Happened to My Language and Community?*

#### *A Community Perspective*

*In my own experience growing up in the community, I recall the Keres language was the main language of my village, even though one could hear it spoken with a little mixture of Spanish and English. Still, there was a sense of unity among the people conducting their daily affairs. I was fortunate enough to grow up during the time when the elders of the community were still speaking Keres and telling stories that they passed on to me.*

*Years before I started this research, I recalled that as a young boy, I was aware that the Keres language was slowly changing and being replaced as the language of daily communication. My life and the lives of others of my generation changed as my language turned into a new form of speaking a combination of Keres, Spanish and English. It takes ritual and ceremony to get things accomplished in our daily lives: good weather, good crops, good fortune, good dances, good food, good work and plenty of healthy children. The Europeans appear not to have this connection to nature and the spirits, but there is prehistoric and historic evidence that they had this*

*connection at one time. I have a personal connection through my teachings from my grandparents and the elders from the Pueblo of Kewa.*

*I think of those days on the reservation when my grandfather and I would start out early in the morning riding the wagon towards the river and the farm. There were lots of other wagons and farmers heading to their fields, but ours was special because we had the best wagon and the best horses. Grandpa would unhitch the horses and let one go out to graze while the other was hitched to the plow or other farm implements. He would switch the horses after a while so they could rest. I would get on the working horse while grandpa was plowing the field. Sometimes, I would help turn the horse around to the next row. These were the best times on the farm; especially when the rains came and the crops began to ripen and everything was going smoothly.*

*During lunchtime, all the men around the farm would come together under my special tree to eat, talk, rest and tell stories. Little did I know that, years later, I would remember those stories even though I played while they were telling their stories. After lunch, the men would go help one another if someone needed help. I would stay and guard the farm when grandpa would go help other farmers. We never asked for help because we were hard workers and good farmers—as grandpa would tell the others—which made me proud. Lunch was good; we had tortillas, dry meat, chili, and occasionally a fruit or hard candy for me.*

*Sometimes, we would walk to the field in the morning and stay overnight to protect the crops from animals and people. We would build a big fire and sit around the fire and he would tell me stories. Sometimes other men, including my father, would come and join us.*

*Grandpa would sometimes catch fish or rabbits to take home for grandma to cook; but only the women got to eat the catch. We ate the meals they had prepared for us, plus whatever was left of the rabbits or fish. The catch was meant for the women by tradition and custom, for they were the ones who brought us into this world. We men ate potatoes, beans, chili and tortillas. When I look back on those days, everything made sense—especially the stories.*

*Grandpas and grandmas on both sides of my family would give me lots of attention and love, for I was the first-born son in the family. I guess they expected a lot from me when I grew up. They would make me special dance outfits so I could participate in the village dances. Some of that regalia is still in use today by my nephews.*

*I remember speaking my language and years later people would say that I spoke the old language. They asked me how I learned the older language and my response was that I grew up with the older generation that spoke no other language. Spanish was spoken, but only by a few who traded with the people from neighboring towns.*

## Section Two

### *Anthropological Linguistic Approach*

#### *Early Anthropological Recordings of the Keres Language*

In this section, I explore why tribal prohibitions insisted that the Keres language should not be recorded and written. There is an explanation on the reasons and thoughts behind the linguist's, Franz Boas, determination to write the Keres language. The Boasian Linguistic Theory was based upon the assumption that language connection between Asia and the new world was a way to prove that the Bering Strait migration pattern could be traced through language patterns.

This section discusses why the Keres language should not be recorded and written. The Santo Domingo Pueblo resisted European encroachment through all the phases of Pueblo quotidian community life. As long as the Santo Domingo Pueblo oral-based storytelling culture has existed, writing the Keres language has been strictly forbidden and this ban strictly enforced. This explains how one major exception to this ban remains unknown to the Santo Domingo Pueblo. That exception occurred when the writing and recording of the Pueblo Keres language was violated by anthropologists in the 1930's.

This notable case is that of German linguist and Anthropologist, Franz Boas, who published *Keres Language Texts* in 1938. *Keres Language Texts* is a two-volume set that today can be found in the Center for Southwest Research in the Zimmerman Library at the University of New Mexico. Franz Boas had already researched and written the ethnography (a study of a community, their language, traditions, and culture) of all the Keres-speaking Pueblo communities. His ethnographic studies

were based on myth and folklore stories as told to him by the Pueblo informants. The stories are lessons on morality, ethics, tribal traditions and culture; these lessons are the heart of the corn maiden and coyote stories. Based on my experience, the sources used by anthropologists would have been elders who were knowledgeable storytellers.

I found no record of Boas travelling to the Southwest. More extensive research of Columbia University, the American Anthropological Association, and the Smithsonian Institution records is required. Boas was on the faculty at Columbia for 30 years and was President of the American Anthropological Association (Stocking, 1974, 301-302). It appears that other anthropologists completed the field research; therefore, more research is needed to find the sources of his information. There is hardly any information as to when Boas did the research on the narrative, "*Keresan Texts*", written in 1938. The apparent writing of the text was only done for the Keres-speaking language group in the Southwest. Boas probably used Keres-speaking informants, which was the usual tactic employed by the anthropologists, to obtain information.

In recent times, members of Santo Domingo Pueblo have become aware of Boas' research at the Pueblo in the 1930's. The fact that Keres language was recorded and written down despite the Pueblo's desire to shield the language from outside scrutiny still shocks the Pueblo Council today. Santo Domingo Pueblo wanted to preserve the integrity of custom and tradition by disallowing Keresan to be written. Members of the Council reacted with disbelief and grave concern when they were informed of this case.

As a result, in October 2014, the Santo Domingo Pueblo Council authorized then Governor Oscar Lovato and me, a Tribal Councilman, to look into the Boas case and to verify that the Keres language texts had been published.

I accidentally discovered the existence of Boas' text in 2013 while studying Archie Phinney and Franz Boas' research for a graduate class in the "Theory of Ethnography" taught by David Dinwoody. I was reading the Nez Perce language text by Archie Phinney that mentioned Boas' other writings, including Keresan text. My first reaction was: my language is already written; my people don't want it written; and we're still holding out against writing it. After locating the Boas text at the Zimmerman Library, Special Collections, I requested a meeting with Governor Lovato. I read the text in Keres, while he followed along with the English version.

A report of our findings was later presented to the Council so that all could be informed that the Keres language was indeed written down in 1938. This led the Council to seek a way to recover the texts and a lawyer, acting on behalf of the Council, was assigned the work of recovering and returning the texts to Santo Domingo Pueblo. Unfortunately, Council was informed that as a piece of scholarship and a form of written literature, Boas' book was the property of the author and the Zimmerman Library.

Since the Keres language is already written, especially written in the old traditional style, the tribal recourse is whether to repudiate or use the written language. One meeting of the Pueblo Council revealed the irony of this language conundrum. Members wanted to take action, but their desires were frustrated since it became clear that few were interested in reading the written language of the

stories collected in the Boas book. Despite their best efforts to resolve the question, the matter was tabled for future discussion.

It is now clear that Franz Boas was quite interested in acquiring Keres stories and capturing them in written texts. Boas had developed a methodology and linguistic model that required the collection of as many examples of the languages of the Indigenous peoples of the North American and Asian continents as possible. Walter Goldschmidt mentions, Melville Jacobs stating, "No professor matched Boas' efforts to produce fieldworkers in folklore and to support their researches and publications. He taught and influenced many people, who interjected his standards in research and publication. He often procured financial aid for their work. A remarkable quantity of folklore, as well as ethnographic and linguistic publications, were made possible by his teaching, example, enthusiasm, and fundraising. Huge amounts of manuscripts remain unpublished because no one will now prod their owners into working them up for press." (1959, 121). Boas hoped to show through ethno-linguistic evidence that a language connection existed between the two continents; something that would also support his ideas of migration theory. To support his theory, Boas found it necessary to examine examples of written and recorded forms of these many languages. Boas was also aware of and seems to have subscribed to the prevailing notion that native cultural groups around the world were vanishing and their languages and cultures were being swept away by the European Settler Colonial projects. Highly influenced by this thinking, Franz Boas set out to record as many native languages as possible before they disappeared. Boas' massive anthropological project mandated the recording of all native

languages through any means necessary. In his article, "Race, Language and Culture" Franz Boas stated, "Growing up in our own civilization we know little how we ourselves are conditioned by it, how our bodies, our language, our modes of thinking and acting are determined by limits imposed upon us by our environment. Knowledge of the life processes and behavior of man under conditions of life fundamentally different from our own can help us to obtain a freer view of our own lives and of our life problems. The dynamics of life have always been of greater interest to me than the description of conditions, although I recognize that the latter must form the indispensable material on which to base our conclusions." (1940, v).

The Boasian theory would eventually influence many areas of anthropology including the study of race, nationalism, eugenics, criminology, culture, education and modern life. In addressing the importance of cultures in transition, Boas once remarked on the strident example the Pueblos of New Mexico provided, "A remarkable example of adjustment between old and new is found among the Pueblo tribes of New Mexico who have consciously and as far as possible isolated themselves from the American life around them. Their daily life has been modified by the use of products of American manufacture. Woven goods, glass windows, and doors, agricultural implements, household furniture are in use; Catholic churches are attended on Sundays; the Saints' days are celebrated; and all this is assimilated to the older forms of life. The ancient house forms persist; in some Pueblos the former style of dress survives; as heretofore, corn is ground on the grinding stone; old types of Spanish ovens for baking bread continue to be used, and the ancient religious beliefs and ceremonials have been so adjusted that they continue, without



serious inner conflicts, side by side with Catholicism. The equilibrium is disturbed only when the general conditions of life make continued isolation impossible and the younger generation finds a new adjustment to altered conditions." (1986, 136).

Boas also found examples in Pueblo life to theorize about the way older forms of language and culture were passed from one generation to the next. Boas states, " The one feature of social life, however, that tends to keep the conservative attachment to customary actions before the minds of the people, is the education of the young. The child in whom the habitual behavior of his surroundings has not yet developed will acquire much of it by unconscious imitation. In many cases, however, it will act in a way different from the customary manner, and will be corrected by its elders. Anyone familiar with primitive life will know that the children are constantly exhorted to follow the example of their elders, and every collection of carefully recorded traditions contains numerous references to advice given by parents to children, impressing them with the duty to observe the customs of the tribe. The greater the emotional value of a custom, the stronger will be the desire to inculcate it in the mind of the child. Thus ample opportunity is given to bring the resistance against infractions into consciousness." (1965, 213). There is no doubt that Boas was aware of the importance the Pueblos placed on resistance to outside incursion and on the retention of their native languages. Boas sums this up, "It might seem that in primitive society opportunity could hardly be given to bring into consciousness the strong emotional resistance against infractions of customs, because they are on the whole rigidly adhered to." (1974, 29).

*Keres Language Texts* contains Keres customs and beliefs found in oral stories. For example, Boas' transcriptions include the well-known coyote and corn maiden stories, some of which contain items from the Spanish language. The oral stories written by Boas are the older stories--not so well known and without Spanish language. These older stories are of such great importance that they will lead the tribe back to recall and reclaim the language. These oral stories are the basis of passing on the traditions and customs and especially the cultural aspects of Pueblo language retention. Although some of the oral stories are lost, the majority of them are still told. An analysis of the texts in the *Keres Language Texts* reveals that most often they are composite stories; that is, they combine a rendition of one story with two or more informants supplying portions or versions of each story.

Douglas Coles wrote, "The method of enquiry into the history of uncivilized peoples was a study of customs and beliefs. No people had developed uninfluenced by their neighbors, yet all were remarkably conservative in retaining customs and beliefs even when their cultures underwent radical changes." (1999, 120). It is remarkable that Boas had even thought to research the Southwest and write the Keres language. Boas specifically chose to write the Keres language and was influential in the continued pursuit of this research. Through extensive investigation, I found no evidence that Boas actually visited Santo Domingo Pueblo or even the Southwest region.

Many of Boas' anthropology students came to the Southwest to study and write the ethnography of the Pueblos. Adolph Bandelier was the first anthropologist to live at Santo Domingo Pueblo, but there is no record of him writing the Keres

language. Bandelier wrote in his journals about the daily lives and activities in the Santo Domingo Pueblo community. Leslie White wrote the Keres language, but she consulted with the writings of Franz Boas. All evidence points to the anthropologists using informants from the Pueblos and secretly writing the ethnographic narratives. The work of Boas' students at Santo Domingo is equal in significance to the writings of other fieldwork. The most ambitious work of gathering all the Indigenous languages included the Keres language. Walter Goldschmidt mentions, Melville Jacobs, "Later and larger text publications were from Kwakiutl (1921), Keresan in the Pueblo Southwest (1925b), Bella Bella Kwakiutl (1928), and his Kwakiutl group again (1930a, 1935a, 1935b). The Keresan group is of special interest; both because it is his only Southwest field research and because he wrote its Indian transcription in longhand in order to circumvent letterpress printing costs." (1959,121).

The most common response to outside intrusion on the way of life in the Pueblos has been the position of non-disclosure. This is especially apparent when it comes to producing a written form of language documentation. At present, many Pueblos recognize their languages as being endangered and are seeking ways to revitalize their use. There are several issues of critical importance that pertain to writing the Keres language. The most important issue according to Leanne Hinton is that, "Among Pueblo peoples in particular, there is a long history of secrecy in religious practices, and this sense of both secrecy and sacredness applies to language as well. Some Pueblos have decided that having a writing system is

tantamount to losing control over the language. The written word can be circulated, copied, published, given to outsiders, sold or otherwise abused.” (2007, 52).

It is well documented that Franz Boas used native anthropologists, like Archie Phinney, to write and record languages. Phinney, in turn, identified and recruited Native informants to supply interviews for the project. Franz Boas and Archie Phinney met somewhere between culture conflict and culture conservation. They met at a point where they both recognized the advent of Native American language loss happening at a fast pace and that the disappearance of Natives themselves might also occur. While attending New York University, Archie Phinney met Boas and became Boas’ research assistant for several years. Boas was interested in recording Indigenous American languages and Phinney was the ideal candidate as he was experienced in procuring material related to the Nez Perce language.

Archie Phinney, who grew up on the reservation near Lapwai, Idaho, was sent to Carlisle Indian School. He completed his education and went on to write the, “*Nez Perce Texts*”, with Franz Boas’ influence. Sharon Malinowski states, “He was reared in a traditional Nez Perce home, where he learned to appreciate the cultural heritage of his people, often listening to the stories and legends of his people from his mother, “Wayi’latpu, who was noted for her great ability as a narrator.” (1995, 329).

William Willard recounts how this work proceeded among the Nez Perce; “The texts were collected on the Fort Lapwai Reservation, Idaho, during the fall and winter of 1929. Funds were provided by the Committee on Research in Native

American Languages, composed of Franz Boas of the Anthropology Department of Columbia University and Leonard Bloomfield and Edward Sapir of the Anthropology Department of the University of Chicago.” (2004, 236). It is likely that Boas probably could not find any native Pueblo anthropologist to write the Keres language since none of the Pueblos had individuals formally trained in anthropology or linguistics; so he turned to the work of finding Pueblo informants to reveal the oral stories. This is one of the many violations that took place in the Pueblos by the anthropologists. The Pueblos knew full well the inquisitive nature of the white man: an adamant attitude in pursuit of learning about the inner workings of the tribal culture. The Spanish historians wrote some narratives about the Pueblos and the Americans came to write more explicit narratives. The Pueblos gave the order of non-disclosure to all people asking for information. This policy of non-disclosure remains in use today among all the Pueblos.

The Pueblo Nations, as well as many other Native tribes, proclaimed their sovereignty by refusing to relinquish their Native languages and traditions. Some Native tribes, like the Cherokee, preserved their languages and culture by writing the language. William McLoughlin states in Juan Perea’s law book, “[The Cherokees] were the test case for a major re-examination of the “Indian question.” They were the prime example of how far a tribe of heathen hunters could progress under benevolent guidance in one generation. Their nation contained more mission churches, more schools, more farms, more Christians than any other. They had the most stable and republican form of government. They were the most prosperous and economically self-sufficient. If one needed proof of the potential of the Indian to

become a white American in everything but the color of his skin, the Cherokees provided it. For the people of Georgia, the Cherokees were a test case precisely because they were so successful." (2007, 198).

In most cases, Native tribes held deep reservations about writing down their languages and continued to transmit their stories, rituals and practices through traditional oral storytelling. The Pueblo of Santo Domingo refused to write and record any language or cultural affairs and persevered with storytelling. Many Native tribes lost their languages, but those that have written their languages have been able to recall and revitalize their traditions and cultures. With the Keres language, Boas' aggressive nature convinced other anthropologists to conduct further research on the Native Pueblos. Franz Boas convinced not only his students, but also other anthropologists from other schools to do ethnographic studies in the Southwest.

Anthropologist, Virginia Roediger, who studied the Pueblos states, "Their permanent homes allow room for storage of produce, clothing, and sacred ceremonial paraphernalia. Compared with other semi-permanent or roving peoples, they are rich in worldly goods. However, their concern is with tribal unity and not with personal prestige. Their lives are thoroughly formalized and highly ritualized, and they are greatly influenced by what we call superstitions. Despite centuries of white contacts, they preserve their native culture perhaps more completely than any other Indian group in North America. Particularly is this true of their religious life, about which the eastern Pueblos ... have built up an almost impenetrable wall of secrecy." (1961, 12).

Franz Boas also employed female anthropologists Ruth Benedict, Elsie Clews Parsons, and Gladys Reichard. These women were early feminists and among the first females to receive higher degrees in Anthropology. There is no doubt they were influenced by Franz Boas and recruited to conduct research on Native Americans. Fieldwork among the tribes, who also struggled with gender-related roles, supplied these anthropologists with notions that populate many feminist narratives. They wrote extensive feminist narratives and set out to prove their independence as educated women. Catherine Lavender wrote, “ These scholars – including Elsie Clews Parsons, Ruth Benedict, Gladys Reichard, and Ruth Underhill – created a feminist ethnography of the region that emphasized the roles of women in Southwestern societies in determining the norms of each culture. Southwestern Indians provided case studies of differing social and gender systems through which to build on a feminist critique of patriarchy. To do so they focused on ways patriarchy had come to define limited gender and sexual roles and identities, and “unnatural” ways of being. In contrast, this community of feminist anthropologists saw Native American cultures as providing multiplicities of genders and sexualities, and for a more “honest and natural” way of being. As part of their critique, of patriarchy, this community of feminist ethnographers set out to illustrate the ways in which women were united across cultures. While their experiences would be determined by cultural variations, these feminist anthropologists built an argument that social structures – such as patriarchy, patrilineality, matrilineality, - acted in roughly the same ways on women across cultural differences.” (2016, 26).

Writing about Gladys Reichard, Nancy J. Parezo explains, “Almost 20 years younger than Elsie Clews Parsons and 5 years younger than Ruth Benedict, Reichard was part of the extraordinary number of women who received Ph.D.’s from Columbia during the 1920s and 1930s. Reichard, through Franz Boas’ influence, obtained a position at Barnard College, where she taught for her entire career. During the 1930’s, she experimented with new forms of ethnographic and quasi-fictional writing; leaving several rich, descriptive accounts of Navajo weaving, family life, and ritual. As she focused more on the study of Navajo language and religion during the 1940s and 1950s, her monograph on Navajo prayer, Navajo grammar, and particularly large volumes on Navajo religion should have made her a major figure in Navajo studies.” (1993, 157).

Boas tried to convince the Bureau of Ethnology on the importance of the publication of the *North American Languages*. George Stocking points out the adamant request by Boas for a publication of, “*A Handbook of North American Languages*,” in a letter dated, April 4, 1901 (1974, 166).

The students of Franz Boas: anthropologists, linguists, and historians, began writing profusely the history of the Keres-speaking people without obtaining permission from the Santo Domingo Pueblo community. Adolph Bandelier, Leslie White and many other writers were anxious to describe the intricacies of the Pueblo’s protected traditions and culture.

Interest in Keres and Santo Domingo culture had started long before the anthropological incursions of the 1920’s and 30’s. In the 1890’s, Adolph Bandelier made an appearance at Santo Domingo. Charles Lange wrote about Adolph



Bandelier relating to his inquisitive nature, "Arriving at Pena Blanca on September 23, Bandelier was taken the next day to Santo Domingo Pueblo by Padre Ribera. There he was left in the priest's quarters, alone among a people who even today have maintained a reputation of coolness to outsiders that turns to outright hostility when one would investigate their customs and beliefs. Bandelier must have created quite a stir in the Pueblo with his insatiable curiosity." (1996, 29). Bandelier was welcome to stay in Santo Domingo Pueblo, but was later removed for mistrust and his writing about the Pueblo community. Edgar Hewett, quotes Charles Lummis praising Adolph Bandelier for his work; "The first American work—and the first real work ever done in America in the name of archaeology—was done by him in New Mexico, where he began his explorations in 1880. These explorations took him over the whole Southwest for many years." (1937, 256). Edgar Hewett, also an anthropologist, spoke about Santo Domingo in this manner, "Santo Domingo asks of the white brother or of Washington only the privilege of being left alone. It wants no schools, no advice about farming, no white man's medicine. Its extreme conservatism is maintained by an attitude of firm hostility which can become acute on slight provocation, such as photographing or sketching the dances, driving automobiles into the plaza when sacred performances are going on, etc." (1937, 110).

The most significant anthropologist in the 1930's was Leslie White, who came closest to recording the most revered and sacred elements of the Santo Domingo community. Leslie White wrote extensively about the workings and intricacies of Santo Domingo Pueblo. Her narrative, "The Pueblo of Santo Domingo,

New Mexico”, was an extensive in-depth history of tribal traditions and cultural affairs. White states that she was able to convince some informants to write the Keres language, “The data in this paper were secured from three adult male Domingo Indians. They received good wages for their services. But no amount of money alone would induce them to talk if they did not have confidence in the investigator. Sometimes a rather warm friendship grows up between the two, and the informant divulges “special things,” or does things for which he is not paid.” (1935, 8).

With financial aid from Elsie Clews Parsons and the consultation of Professor Franz Boas, it is not hard to understand White’s enthusiasm to study the Keres language. In the *Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association*, the book, “The Pueblo of Santo Domingo, New Mexico”, by Leslie A. White, 1935, White states, “Instead of writing a native term phonetically each time it appears in the text, I have prepared this glossary in which the native terms used most frequently have been written phonetically and arranged alphabetically. I have followed the Rules for the Simpler System of Phonetic Transcription of Indian Languages (Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, vol. 66, no. 6, 2-5, Washington, D.C., 1916.)” (1985, 8-9).

Anthropologists trained in linguistics and ethnography used the phonetic transcription method mentioned above. Evidence can be found in the writings of Franz Boas and Elsie Clews Parsons using similar writing. Evidence is also noted in my experience as a Keres-speaking member of the community with the full cognitive understanding, not only of the oral stories, but also the language. Other languages that were written were done in a similar manner.

*What Happened to My Language and Community? A Personal Perspective*

*I recollect a time when the white people with paper, pencil and recorders came to the village asking questions. There was an immediate reaction to these researchers and teachers asking questions about the community of Santo Domingo Pueblo. Meetings were held and the elders told the community that these English-speaking people were not to be told anything about the history or culture and traditions of Santo Domingo Pueblo. In exhorting the people to be cautious, the elders drew on their knowledge of prior incursions into the heart of Santo Domingo and explained to the community that the Spanish did damage to the village and these new people were going to do the same thing. The elders were right in their predictions—as I learned through my academic career. To my dismay, even though the Pueblo prohibited the writing of Keres, I later learned that the Keres language had already been written down in some text collected in the 1930s and yet my parents told me not to pursue my college career to study linguistics. I really wanted to write my Keres language and this is why I went to college. I believed I had come full circle when I recognized the fateful events taking place with the loss of the Keres language.*

### Section Three

#### *The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Its Impact on Native Languages.*

This section is an historical exploration on the United States government's approach to annihilate, assimilate and exterminate the Native Americans. What were the consequences? The language loss began with the BIA school system's insistence on their English-only policy. The Native children arrived at the school speaking their Native language and left speaking only English. These were the children that were part of the theory educating the Natives for assimilation.

The Spanish brought to the Pueblo world a language quite unknown to the natives and the natives adapted to the language with reluctance. The Spanish language altered the native language by introducing a lexicon for some things that were unknown to the natives before contact with Europeans. The Pueblo people inadvertently started using the Spanish language for trading purposes, prayer (as they converted to Christianity), but also storytelling. Some Spanish elements came to be part of the Keres language integrated through time and constant contact; first with conquistadors, later with the missionaries, and finally with Spanish-speaking traders, farmers and ranchers.

The use of Spanish in the Pueblos was not as intrusive as the use of the English language would become and continues until today. The Pueblos were forced to learn the English language for assimilation through the establishment of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Schools. These schools were meant to educate the children of the Pueblo communities with the aim of absorbing them into

mainstream America as one more element in the American melting pot. This came at a time when there was a major push to eliminate all Native languages throughout the western hemisphere.

Starting around 1874, the most adverse impact on Keres came about from the imposition of the English language through the work of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Boarding Schools. The Pueblo of Santo Domingo realized this vital language shift and the community reacted to solve the problem. This reaction to the change came about when the community requested a meeting with the Tribal Council.

A significant event for the Santo Domingo community occurred in 2004 when a group of Pueblo students requested that the Santo Domingo Pueblo Council enact a policy of revitalizing the Keres language. Notably, several of the Pueblo students—speaking in English—requested more support for Keres language revitalization. The majority of these students hardly spoke any Keres language. Their request so moved the Council that the proposal was passed unanimously. The Council voted to institute a return to teaching the Keres language to all tribal members. This was a major positive breakthrough in the rebirth of the Keres language. The agreement made at this meeting was an historical moment in the importance of Keres language revitalization. A resolution was signed and the Keres Revitalization Committee was established to carry out a plan for the Pueblo.

Santo Domingo Pueblo agreed to pursue the language revitalization aggressively, not only to save the language, but also to bring it back as a living resource for the younger generations. From the very beginning, it was thought that

this urgent need for language revitalization would require the efforts of all knowledgeable, experienced Keres-speaking Pueblo people to reclaim the language. Addressing the problem proved to be a difficult task. In prior years, the Santo Domingo Pueblo Council has previously rejected many ideas and solutions—including writing down the language and creating an official dictionary. In order for this campaign to move from a proclamation to real program initiatives, Council concurred that it was critical to seek out the assistance of the Santo Domingo people and other Keres-speaking communities with expertise in language revitalization

Fortunately, at present, there are numerous research resources and literature concerning other Keres-speaking Pueblo communities that document their struggles with their language loss. One model of action is the language revitalization program at the Pueblo of Cochiti. Their program is an exemplary illustration of community involvement by the people and the educated individuals from Cochiti. At Cochiti, community leaders and educators such as Regis Pecos, Mary Romero and Joseph Suina implemented what has come to be seen as a successful program that has renewed the use of Keres in a new generation of Pueblo children. These Keres-speaking Pueblo scholars have addressed the vital symptoms of the Keres language loss and the educational materials and program they implemented are vital resources in this research study.

The Santo Domingo Pueblo Council and the people convened to resolve this problem in a meeting at the Council chamber and produced a resolution for language revitalization. Following the resolution of the Tribal Council to work towards the revitalization of the Keres language, I sought permission from the Santo

Domingo Council to study the reasons for the language loss. The Council granted me permission to investigate what research was being done for the Santo Domingo Pueblo. The permission also permitted me to study other Keres-speaking communities and their efforts to revitalize their tribal language. As noted above, the Keres language revitalization program at nearby Cochiti Pueblo was an especially useful model to study as we started our work at Santo Domingo Pueblo.

I also began to reflect on the baseline information I was observing in periodic interactions with the adult Keres speakers, most of whom spent long periods at the Senior Citizens Center. I completed observations with the Santo Domingo Pueblo Veterans at their meetings and gatherings at the Veterans Center.

Over several years, I approached Keres-speaking adults and randomly recorded their views on the language shift and the Pueblo's efforts to bring Keres back to the center of community life. I spoke Keres to determine the extent of the individual's and group's comprehension of the Keres language. Most of these conversations revolved around the concerns regarding the language loss and the need for revitalization of the Keres language.

When visiting with the Pueblo students, some of who attended Santa Fe Indian High School, and others who attended the Bernalillo High School, I was able to listen to their ideas and concerns. My conversations in these settings provided me with a Pueblo viewpoint on language loss and revitalization. They shared with me whether or not they were speaking Keres, if they were fluent or not, and what changes they noticed regarding the use of the Keres language. I also heard about

their own language shift and how much Keres they heard others in the community speaking.

Taiaiake Alfred recognizes this fact, "Language loss is an indicator of social stress and happens in the context of a particular economic and political matrix. The dominance of one language over another is a single manifestation of the social and economic dominion of one group over another; this explains the growing global dominion of English, which is associated with the United States and the United Kingdom, over myriad other languages across the globe. One group's domination over another is itself a spiral matrix of the loss, defeat or death of population; land; political, economic, spiritual, and cultural independence, and language," (2005, 247). Many forces contribute to the loss of languages and make it hard to assign blame on one single cause.

Willard W. Beatty stated, "Once racial pride, self-respect, and cultural integrity have been destroyed there remains little upon which to build either a new culture or an integrated personality. Only when recognition of the survival value of the best elements of a minority culture is substituted for the cultural arrogance of the majority, which assumes there is nothing worth salvaging in the heritage of the minority, is there provided a stable base for adjustment either through assimilation or in parallel development with the major culture." (1953,116).

BIA schools had total control over the Native students that ended up in such schools. The curriculum of BIA schools was absolute in its power to force students to change their native ways and to become Americanized. Madison Coombs describes this condition, "Of those writers who did take note of boarding schools,



Salisbury (115) criticizes them for being regimented and not allowing pupils to make their own mistakes and grow up. Gaarder (46) says that, 'Indian children should preferably not be put in boarding schools, and in no case should children of different language groups be put together in such schools.' (Emphasis added) (1970, 20).

It is at this time that the schools were established, as Elaine Goodall Eastman writes, "Carlisle and Hampton – both growing out of the Florida "prison school" for captured warriors, inaugurated a revolution in government policy. This, at a period when red men were almost universally despised as an "inferior race" and hated as dangerous enemies." (1935, 8).

Charles Eastman, a Native American physician and Elaine Eastman's husband, agrees with her, "Strange as it may seem, it is true that the proud pagan in his secret soul despised the good men who came to convert and to enlighten him". (1911, 20). Carmelita Ryan explains, "The establishment of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in 1879 initiated the first American experiment in the use of education to assimilate the American Indian into Western civilization and culture. The idea of establishing this off-reservation boarding school for Indians originated with Richard Henry Pratt, then a lieutenant in the United States Cavalry." (1962, ii). Linda Witmer also comments on Lieutenant Pratt's mission, "Pratt's active involvement in Indian education had begun. Accustomed to hard work since boyhood, Pratt believed in "regular toil for daily bread. He creatively established opportunities to develop prison industries and to provide outside employment." (1993, 6).

At this time, one sees the second largest and most extensive loss of the Keres language. BIA educational policy required that Keres-speaking Pueblo communities accept instruction in the English language forced upon them by the United States government. The government's effort to assimilate Native Americans into American society was part of the policy of assimilation. The English language replaced the Keres language as the primary language form of communication. In order to replace the Keres language, the BIA established the Santa Fe Indian School, and brought the Santo Domingo children to that school. When the children returned home, the majority spoke English to their parents and grandparents. Consequently, a severe language shift and language loss developed and became a major problem for the Keres-speaking people. Felisa Gulibert states, "Santa Fe, New Mexico, lies at the southern terminus of the Rocky Mountains where the mountains and the desert meet, in the Rio Grande Valley near the western edge of the Great Plains. Nineteen distinct but united Pueblos are scattered within 200 miles of this city of 60,000 people. Near the center of Santa Fe lies the Santa Fe Indian School, administered by the Pueblos, and attended by Indian students from more than 40 Native - American tribes, predominantly comprised of Pueblos. The campus is set in a residential neighborhood, which is bisected by Santa Fe's busiest commercial thoroughfare, delineating the southeastern border of the 104 - acre campus. The campus buildings were constructed from 1890 to 1962 and have a distinct Pueblo - Southwestern adobe character." (2006, 10 ). This was the place where Santo Domingo Pueblo students were taught to speak the English language, replacing the Keres language.

Along with the BIA schools in Santa Fe, there was Saint Catherine's Indian School run by the Catholic Church, indicating the presence of government-funded religious organizations. Brian Collier says the evidence points to this, speaking of Father Stephan, the Director of the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, "So sure was Stephan that he could control things from afar that he believed he could also operate the school on the finances appropriated to him via the contract system. He observed, "... the \$15,000 which we get for 100 boys from the government for St. Catherine's Mission will be sufficient to pay all. He also wanted to ensure that the nuns controlled the property, as he believed them to be better managers of schools". (2007, 83).

Vine Deloria, Jr., a Native American PhD, political scientist and historian, states, " Indian education is somewhat unique in that it has always been premised upon the idea of assimilation without regard to socialization. From the very beginning, first missionaries and later government teachers, sought to erase the cultural backgrounds of Indian children with the naïve belief that once a vacuum was created, Western social mores and beliefs would naturally rush in to replace long-standing tribal practices and customs." (2001, 80).

An English-only policy was in effect in the BIA Schools and intensified the language loss and the assimilation process for natives. This has been the case in all boarding schools as well as our modern day public schools. Charles L. Glen addresses this, "The 'acids of modernity' work powerfully against native languages and family patterns; the expressive individualism fostered by the electronic media in which most Indians, as much as anyone else, are submerged everyday makes it

less and less rewarding to devote the time and energy required to maintain traditional communal ceremonies and other interactions, much less languages that few can speak and vanishingly few as their only or dominant means of communication.” (2011, 7). Schools are not the only culprits, but the modern age of computers also contributes to the language loss.

Glenabah Martinez quotes indigenous scholar, Mary Eunice Romero, PhD, and a member of the Cochiti Pueblo: “In the academic environment where competitiveness and self-promotion are accented, cooperation, reticence, and modesty, the characteristics of a successful Pueblo child, are not often recognized as positive learning attributes. The bright and reserved Pueblo child who reflects signs of being gifted from a traditional Native perspective may be overlooked in a formal school setting or he/she may not excel. Chances that the traditionally gifted Pueblo child would be recognized in the school setting become slim. Often times, these highly talented or gifted individuals who do not do well in school often do quite well in the community and are the traditionally gifted people in the Pueblos who play a vital role in the maintenance of the Native culture.” (2003, 244).

This situation is also addressed by Sally J. McBeth who says that, “The history of Indian education parallels the history of federal Indian policy. The Indians were expected from the beginning to adopt the ways of Euro-American living and to become economically self-sufficient rural farmers in the American tradition. Civilizing and assimilating the Indians became the point of education as it became the policy basis of Indian administrators.” (1983, 7).

Clifford E. Trafzer, Jean A. Keller, and Lorene Sisquoc, authors of *Boarding School Blues*, comment, "In 1820 the government began designating specific annuities to Indian tribes for education, and in 1824 the secretary of war reported the existence of twenty-one Indian boarding and day schools with an enrollment of approximately eight hundred students." (2006, 10).

We continue to see now in the public schools the same ideology of the United States Government's policies towards Native Americans. Many lawyers, including the native lawyers, have addressed this problem of the BIA Schools that forced children off their homelands to far away places from their families. Charles Wilkinson, Attorney Advocate, Federal Indian Law, was well aware of this situation; "BIA officials and school administrators used coercive recruitment tactics, ranging from zealous persuasion to withholding rations and annuities from families that kept their children at home. Authorities assigned the children proper Christian names and forbade them from wearing traditional clothing and hairstyles and speaking their native languages. The teachers meted out stiff discipline, including flogging." (2005, 53). Wilkinson also wrote several law narratives and has been an attorney for Native Americans.

In the context of the boarding school experience, many students were disgruntled and had to survive the experience. As we have seen, BIA schools were for all practical purposes, designed for Native students to abandon their cultural ways and their tribal identities. Clifford E. Trafzer states, "Originally, the United States created boarding schools as a sphere of government power, not of Native power. Non-Indian policy makers and administrators designed the institutions to

swallow up American Indian people and transform them into “civilized” human beings. As Richard Henry Pratt, the creator of the modern American Indian boarding school system, put it, white Americans should feed “the Indians to our civilization.” Students fought the monster, struggled with it, and many survived the experience. Indian children who lived through their boarding school days were transformed. Many learned to speak, read and write English, and they shared this and other knowledge with people back home... But most Indians did not turn their back on First Nations people or discard their cultural identities as Indians.” (2006, 3).

One of the main effects of the returning BIA school students on Santo Domingo Pueblo was that Keres language use fell significantly in these generations. These young people were cut off from traditional situations where Keres was spoken in the exact way Boas describes it. Further research reveals the exact examination into the lives of all tribal communities as a condition of resistance and language retention. Franz Boas brings this into his narrative as such, “It might seem that in primitive society opportunity could hardly be given to bring into consciousness the strong emotional resistance against infractions of customs, because they are on the whole rigidly adhered to. There is one feature of social life, however, that tends to keep the conservative attachment to customary actions before the minds of the people. This is the education of the young. The child in whom the habitual behavior of his surroundings has not yet developed will acquire much of it by unconscious imitation. In many cases, however, it will act in a way different from the customary manner, and will be corrected by its elders. Anyone

familiar with primitive life will know that the children are constantly exhorted to follow the example of their elders, and every collection of carefully recorded traditions contains numerous references to advice given by parents to children, impressing them with the duty to observe the customs of the tribe. The greater the emotional value of a custom, the stronger will be the desire to inculcate it in the mind of the child. Thus ample opportunity is given to bring the resistance against infractions into consciousness.”(1965, 213). This is the historical event that occurred with the children from the village of Santo Domingo Pueblo. I, on the other hand, did not go to the BIA boarding school, so I did not really understand the full implications of this history.

### *What Happened to My Language and Community?*

#### *A Personal Perspective*

*When I go around the village or meet someone on the street, the greetings are mostly in English and a few words in Keres. I question this odd language shift to English rather than speaking the old Keres language. Is it easier to speak English or is it a matter of convenience? Is it because everyone else is speaking English and one must speak it due to peer pressure? Is it easier to conduct a conversation in English or is English a better form of communication? I have so many questions about the reasons behind all that is causing the language change in my community.*

*Historically, our community was known as the most conservative of the Pueblo villages in keeping the language intact and keeping our traditions alive. At present, it appears that large segments of Pueblo residents have forgotten the basic outline of our language and have replaced it with another language. The Spanish tried to change*

*our language without much success, but this English language change has overtaken the community. Why haven't we resisted this change as we did with the other language imposed upon us?*

*I do not remember playing with other kids, except once after a rainstorm when all the kids went out to play in the rainwater. There were other times and other games, but this is the one I remember. As a pre-school boy, I found myself in a basement classroom at the day school. I was helping another boy with a pencil and telling him not to cry. How I got to this place, I do not remember; but I do recall my mother coming into the room crying and looking for me. I probably followed the other kids to school, even though I did not know what school meant. I guess I just wanted to play with other kids.*

*I remember the spoonful of some awful stuff they gave us to swallow along with a large white pill. We also drank milk, which I liked the most. I always drank the milk the others did not drink. To this day, I love milk and put it in my coffee; but I do not drink other people's leftover milk.*

*My grandparents encouraged me to go to school and learn something so that when I came home I could teach them what I had learned in school. Grandpa would always say, "I went to school, but I got kicked out because I grabbed the teacher by the beard. Today, I can only spell dog, cat and rat. What would I be now if I had gone to school? Maybe I would be a politician in Washington or a teacher or something". Grandma would only laugh and say, "Come and eat and tell us what you learned at school today".*



*I started learning the English language by reading books about kids like Dick and Jane and their dog, Spot. My first English words were spoken in urgency, "teacher, restroom". Soon after I learned to say: Thank you, Hello, Yes, and Good Morning. The best thing I learned was "I don't know, Teacher" and this got me off the hook many times.*

*I enjoyed telling my grandparents what I learned in my own language. It was interesting to go from English to Keres. It was hard to say certain things and convey ideas at first, but it became easier as time and learning progressed. I continue speaking to my people in my language wherever I see them and I encourage other people who speak other languages to learn my language*

## Section Four

### *Native-American Scholars and Others Interested in Language Loss*

Currently many Native and non-native scholars are addressing the issue of Native-American language revitalization. Among the most concerned are Native-American scholars. Native-American citizens have become involved in the process of active participation and have offered advice on the proper approach to this language revitalization. Narratives by Native-American scholars addressing this issue will be used to find the information.

Santo Domingo Pueblo community members have recently shown an interest in the language revitalization. Some of the tribal members have come forward and offered their advice to the community. These individuals were working on this issue long before Santo Domingo decided to address the language shift and loss.

Estefanita Calabaza, a member of Santo Domingo Pueblo with a Masters Degree in American Indian Studies, has this to say about the importance of the Keres language, "Despite the introduction of two dominating languages in Pueblo linguistic history, first the Spanish followed by English, Keres is still spoken among all age groups. I recall the prominence of the Keres throughout the village. English was not spoken. In fact, speaking English in the community was frowned upon to speak, and it was always discouraged. I can recount one time that someone who spoke English and not Keres was told to be quiet and not say anything during lectures and dances. If English was uttered, especially in the *Kivas* or plaza it was a sign of disrespect, for you were in the presence of spiritual entities that did not understand English. This was the way the collective community maintained language usage. As I reflect on

the importance of the Keres language to my family and community demonstrated through such community restrictions on the use of English, I understand that everyone in our community is a gatekeeper and has the responsibility to not only protect but guide and teach other Santo Domingo enrolled members our language and cultural ways. The historical and social disturbance – the imposition of learning these dominating languages – that was experienced when the Spanish and Americans made contact with the Pueblos left a lasting impact. The Pueblos desire to maintain their mother tongue; it is the language that keeps them connected to their Puebloan deities, mothers, and the Puebloans ways of life. Without the Keres language, Santo Domingans believe that their prayers will not be heard, resulting in a disturbance in our harmonious state.” (2011, 55-56). Estefanita Calabaza was born and raised on the Santo Domingo Pueblo Reservation; lived as a Native child and grew up learning the Kewa, Keres language. Her narrative description of following the good path defines her identity and awareness of belonging to the community. She is a member of a community of traditional Pueblo people who explains her life in the community through an autoethnographic narrative.

Indigenous scholars Rebecca Benjamin, Regis Pecos, Mary Romero and others from the Pueblo of Cochiti have established a language revitalization program. They assert that the work is vitally important by noting, “We focus on the oral nature of Cochiti society, on the abilities needed by its members to understand particular cultural symbols and thereby participate in Cochiti intellectual traditions.

This tradition is an integral aspect of the ceremonial life of the community in which most members participate continuously throughout the year.” (1995, 115).

Other tribes, such as the Tewa-speaking Hopi community, have taken a different stance with their language revitalization. The Hopi have authorized language specialists to write and record the Hopi language and to produce resources, most importantly, in the form of a dictionary. Here is an example of a Tewa-speaking community seeking documentation and curriculum materials to be used in the work of language retention. Paul Kroskity, linguist anthropologist at University of California Los Angeles, supports the idea of producing a dictionary for the Tewa community. Kroskity states, “Recent and on going research in the village of Tewa (N. Arizona Kiowa-Tanoan language family) designed to produce a practical dictionary in support of the community’s language renewal efforts provides some examples of the need to contextualize the project within the community and to understand the pervasive role of language ideologies when working collaboratively. This research project aims to promote and fortify lexical documentation so that the practical dictionary is an adequate guide for future community members, while still conforming to cultural protocols about lexical representation and circulation, both within and outside the language community.” (2015, 140).

Tiffany Lee, Native American Studies Professor at the University of New Mexico, weighs in on the matter of language loss, “Native youth recognize messages in their communities about the importance of retaining cultural and linguistic knowledge for cultural sustainability, and they recognize messages about the importance of English and Western education for achieving success in life equated

with U. S. mainstream goals, such as job security and material wealth. Often the two are perceived to be in opposition, as though one cannot be both successful in the larger society while also maintaining Native languages and cultural lifeways. Both positions about retaining the Native language from the community and the importance of English emanating from school and society represent powerful influences on Native students' language choices and sense of identity." (2007, 308). Lee goes on to note that other Native researchers, while expressing concern about language loss and Native youth, insist they, young people, are negotiating what it means to be a Native person in today's society with or without their language.

David Margolin believes more is at stake, "For the people affected by such a break in linguistic tradition, the social, cultural, and emotional implications can be enormous. Being unable to speak the ancestral language may well affect concepts of personal and tribal identity, as well as evoking emotions of grief at the loss of an essential connection with the past. As a non-dominant language becomes functionally and structurally restricted, the role it might play in a person's life in the modern world becomes correspondingly problematic."(1999, xii).

Professor Teresa McCarty notes the following about language loss; "It is commonly believed that when a language dies, much more is lost than the language itself (Crawford, 1995; Fishman, 1996b). Indigenous peoples are among the many who feel there is an integral link between their language and culture (Hinton, 1994). They believe their culture is expressed through their language and cannot be adequately represented by any other language." (2006, 254)

The question of language loss is also a concern among Navajo people, as Teresa McCarty explains in her book, "In the context of this recent work, we have observed an alarming shift in children's use of and proficiency in Navajo. More and more come to school each year with only passive knowledge of the community language. Yet, even as their knowledge of English increases, they are still stigmatized as "limited English proficient," and they experience considerable difficulty in school."(2002, 15)

In all these cases, there is a common urgency to revitalize Native languages. Mary Romero, a Cochiti tribal member concerned with the language shift in the Pueblos, states, "One of the most alarming outcomes of these changes has been a shift to the exclusive use of the English language in Pueblo homes and communities." (2003, 7).

In addition to the Pueblos, all tribes in the United States as well as throughout the Americas are experiencing language shifts on one level or another. Robert St. Clair recognizes the situation, "After more than a century of witnessing the demise of their Native language, many tribal groups in North America are beginning to make a concerted effort to reverse this process." (1982, 4). Dr. Christine Sims, an Acoma Pueblo Native and a PhD in Education, agrees with the previous statements. She states, "Acoma Pueblo has begun to see a gradual erosion of its language, with education policies and practices greatly accelerating the process of language shift and loss over the past quarter century." (2005, 66). Dr. Sims also found that tribes from the Klamath River area in Washington state experience a similar problem, "Once part of a thriving network of Indigenous groups

located in the remote regions of Klamath river country, the Karuk Tribe today numbers approximately 2,300, among whom it is estimated that only 10 to 12 speak the native tongue." (1998, 132).

Dr. Beverly Singer, a faculty member in Anthropology who works with film and video, has this to say, "The kind of stories that we are telling in films are different from the kind of stories that I think of as traditional or ancestral ones. Native filmmakers are searching for ways to recollect our memories so that we can restore the feelings of safety and happiness that I experienced in my youth. When I watch a Native-produced film or video, I strongly identify with stories that reconnect me with the Native community, particularly those that demonstrate a struggle to rescue and protect cultural knowledge and history." (2001,90-91). The issue of language loss has also been addressed by Dr. Joseph Suina, a tribal member of the Cochiti Pueblo, "When the minority and the dominant cultures come together, the latter usually dominates and places a higher premium on its language and its culture. In the United States, this is supported by the economic fact that it is the dominant language and culture which are prevalent." (1982, 4). Dr. Suina identifies the problem by commenting, "Language shift among New Mexico Pueblo Indians threatens the loss of their oral-based cultures. Language revival for many Pueblos has resulted in school programs in which students are easily accessible and teachers are accountable to tribes rather than the state." (2004, 281).

## *What Happened to My Language and Community?*

### *A Historical Perspective*

*Our community, at one time, was united in adamantly opposing this erosion of language and customs. I remember the old people telling the children to speak Keres at home and speak English at school. Those elders are gone now and no one is left to tell the youngsters to speak Keres at home. I suppose, since I'm now in the shoes of the people who taught us, I should urge the children to do the same. I do speak my language to all whom I meet, but it is hard to convince someone else to do the same. It is even harder to tell the children to speak Keres, for when the parents find out, they confront the situation with anger. They feel that their children must get ahead in this world and to do so, they must learn to speak English.*

*The parents in our community protect their children so much that it is hard to convey to them what was taught to us by the elders. How can we, as elders, carry on teaching the children what we know when the parents will not allow us to advise them. This situation exists even in my own home. When I give advice, the parents stop bringing their children to my house. My siblings do not bring their children and grandchildren to my house anymore for fear that I might get after them. The only thing I require in my house is that you speak Keres and listen to what I have to say. When someone speaks English in my house and they can speak Keres, I ask them if they are buying jewelry. They reply that they are not tourists and they do not buy jewelry; only tourists buy jewelry. My reply is that jewelry buyers speak English; so if you are not buying jewelry, why are you speaking English. If you are not a tourist, try speaking*



*your own language. Other Indigenous peoples are still living in the old tradition and we, as a community of old traditional ways, should retain our heritage.*

*The finest example of this is the Yakwa documentary “Banquet of the Spirits” about the Yakwa people of Western Brazil that demonstrates the traditions and customs of their way of life (Valadao, 1995, film). This video touched me deeply and personally in that the Yakwa people have the same devotion to worshipping and thanking the spirits for all the good things in life, just as we do in our Pueblo Nations of the Southwest.*

*The Yakwa people take us through their daily rituals to include worship and devotion to nature and the spirit world. All ceremonies are completed according to traditions and customs. Food preparation, prayers for a good fish catch, and the subsequent celebration take a great deal of time and effort. The spirits of the world come and join the people throughout their daily lives. There is no separation of the people from the spirits; they are one and the same in a common bond.*

*Europeans think of us as savages in a world totally alien to them, yet it makes sense to Indigenous peoples of the world that this is the true way to live. We know what it is to live with Mother Nature and the benevolence of the spirits. This is a direct connection to Indigenous people in the Americas and the world.*

*Throughout the thesis, the main concern has been the loss and diminished use of the Keres language at Santo Domingo and in other Keres-speaking communities. While linguists and scholars generally concur that Keres as a language is used less now than in the past, I have arrived at a similar conclusion from my own daily interactions and from informal interviews (conversations) with members of my community at the*

*Pueblo of Santo Domingo. As a participant observer, I have witnessed a considerable language loss among the youngest generation, people between the ages of four and fifteen years old. These observations were conducted throughout the years, but the most significant time was the year 2010. At that time, I estimated there was an eighty per cent loss of Keres in this group. Children in this group are still aware of their native names given at birth, their clanship ties and membership, and what I call rote or repeated daily forms of language. These children can respond to simple Keres such as, "good morning, how are you", or "what are you doing?", but they respond in English! These children either do not understand Keres or just don't want to speak Keres at all. However, when I ask, as I often do, questions about language use and preference; or when I address them in Keres, the children often will respond: "I'm sorry, I don't know what you are saying." Confusion about language use other than English is so marked that I have even heard one child say, "I don't speak Spanish."*

*The teenagers from fifteen to eighteen years old seem to have more command of Keres. When speaking to them, I could count on many being able to give complete answers to questions I asked in the Keres language. Still, they would rather answer the question in English. Again, in 2010, I estimated there was a sixty percent loss of Keres in these children. While many in this generation are able to speak the Keres language, many were reluctant to show their cognition by responding to the questions asked in English. This condition is the result of some deep ambivalence in their thinking about what it means to speak Keres publically and openly. This reticence comes from language expectations they get from public schooling, the media, and lack of others in their peer group who speak the language, and a kind of confusion over what is the*

*right language combination to speak in any given circumstance. This group will speak Keres mixed with English in different combinations as appropriate for school, with friends and in the Village. The schools require their students speak and write proper English; peer groups insist on speaking English, and the Pueblo community expects them to speak proper Keres at play and in certain situations that requires proper Keres speech. Many of these children are familiar and are in contact with the language because they sing the dance songs in the Keres language that are a major part of ceremonies carried out during the year. There is a difference between the young people who participate in the Pueblo ceremonies and those who do not, as participation affects their fluency in Keres.*

*The majority of high school students can speak the language and carry on a conversation with some hesitation on pronunciation. These children have been through the cycle of life in the Pueblo community and they know the traditions and culture. These high school students are going through intense times to adjust to American society, but also to retain their connection to the Pueblo community. When these young people have the opportunity to experience the daily events and the major cycles in the community, they absorb the fullness of the language and comprehend the traditions and culture of the community. The difference here is the participation and connection that gives them the total exposure to the life cycle pattern in the community.*

*The post-high school generation, ages eighteen to twenty, many of whom are now parents, prefer to speak English to their children. An assumption one can make is that these parents want their children to get an education so their lives will be better*

*than what the parents have. Another trend among this age group is that they are the people who speak English to each other in everyday conversation. This group of community members speaks Keres only when necessary and when they must in order to participate in ceremonies.*

*I have observed the next oldest generation, many of whom are the grandparents of a generation of children born between 2000 and 2010. These grandparents are knowledgeable in Pueblo traditions and culture and fluent Keres speakers, but their English-speaking children and grandchildren influence them. This generation retains the intricacies of the Pueblo functions and oral stories. They can speak and understand the traditional forms of Keres in both daily and ritual settings. I am one of these grandparents who understand the Keres language and knowledge. Still the language decisions of the younger generations impact the grandparents. Many times people in this group do not want to feel excluded from the family and community conversations, so they join the language majority formed by the English-speaking group.*

*The elders of the community, people over 50 years of age, are one hundred percent fluent speakers of the Keres language and carry an enormous load of knowledge to pass on to future generations. I have experienced how in the past the elders were respected and admired for their oral stories. Now it seems like they are left alone at home or sent off to nursing homes to fade away without telling their stories. This is the saddest part of this research, although it is not the main issue.*

*The overall assessment is a combination of fear for the Keres language loss; hope that the community recognizes the gravity of the potential loss; and that the*

*village government will lead by example to change the direction of the language use. The word "hope" is used in all the prayers by the Pueblos to convey strong blessings upon others. This prayer of hope extends to all people world wide so that all will be blessed throughout their lives.*

*The second part of my observation included my parents, siblings and the offspring. It was evident that everybody in the family spoke English and occasionally a word or two of Keres interjected into the conversation. At the dinner table, there was laughter, joking, gossip, and general conversations about anything--all in English. My mother, who was in her late eighties, would try to converse in Keres but eventually fell right into English as everyone spoke to her in English. She knew that the Keres language was changing and she wanted the children to speak Keres. At one point, she told the children that it was important they speak the Keres language because someday they will need to use it. One of the kids asked grandma why she spoke English if she wanted them to speak Keres. She responded with a quick harsh answer: I am speaking to you in English because you don't understand Keres and if you want anything from now on, you have to ask in Keres!*

*My father spoke Keres, Spanish and English very well. He fought in the World War II Normandy invasion in 1944. He wanted everybody to speak Keres and was adamant about it for good reason. He wanted to see the children grow up to be fluent in Keres as the beloved language. My older sister tries to speak Keres, but she gets carried back into English fast. She went on the government relocation program right after high school, and returned well enough to get a job with the BIA as a secretary in the finance office. All my other sisters were at one time good speakers of Keres, but*

*soon changed to English because the children were constantly speaking English. My brothers all know the Keres language well, but only use it as necessary for conducting special meetings or completing special tasks. All the relatives: aunts, uncles, cousins that came to the house spoke Keres, but they too got caught up in English conversations.*

*My boyhood friend, a Native of Santo Domingo, who was born in Chicago, came home with his parents and could not speak a word of Keres. I was trying to teach him to speak and understand, but he just could not pick up the language. He went into the Marine Corps, returned home with PTSD, and died not knowing how to speak Keres. These are the situations where I witnessed the language loss. These impressions are the driving force behind my intense pursuit in regaining and retaining the Keres language.*

## Section Five

### My Edge: Reseeding the Community with Keres

I want this thesis to reflect my own introspection and express my dire concern for the future of Keres language retention. I want this research to assist in the work of recovering Keres and once again see it come to life through language revitalization programs. Santo Domingo Pueblo needs to reverse the current trends by aggressively changing attitudes about language loss. To do less is to face a distinct possibility of total loss of the Keres language. A reversal of the demise of the language must happen within the next two generations.

Santo Domingo and other nearby Pueblos receive some funding for language revitalization in the public schools through the Federal Language Revitalization

Program. Even with Public Law 1209-394, Federal Language Revitalization Program, there is no guarantee or assurance of progress towards recovery. I would argue that the future health and permanence of Keres depends on the internal affairs of the community, as it is the responsibility of the Tribal Council and the citizens. The community has to pursue its traditional and cultural integrity by taking the younger generation by the hand and leading them back to the normal way of life. My major goal is to find ways to save our most cherished and precious cultural gift, the Keres language, along with its traditions and culture. How do we, as a Tribal community, endeavor to return to our Keres language? The answer lies within the internal reconstruction of the community.

First of all, Santo Domingo Pueblo has to understand how drastic the situation is and realize that hesitation to act could mean the death of Keres as a language! Only when this is understood, will it be possible to engage the community to return to the task of language revitalization. My desire to retain this language is part of my identity as a member of a unique people with a connection to all universal thought processes. We have the direct connection to spiritual moments and that would be the most painful loss. We can and have contributed to the global entity some of our information that has been, for the most part, beneficial to all the people of this planet Earth. Perhaps the spiritual moment has placed us on this Earth, as I describe it, Petrie Dish, a project to see if we, as one human entity, will survive as one.

Additionally, this research is significant because Santo Domingo Pueblo will need some reference for the application of government funding grants. This

research will be used to obtain the grants needed to continue the program, Keres language revitalization.

One of my professors asked us to prepare a paper as to how we arrived at what we are researching. What I have done here is to connect all the academic knowledge as a contribution to what I have learned and how I see that all my classes were vital to this research.

The loneliest times in my life were the times when my father would disappear for weeks at a time. Mother would address it as a job-related absence. During these times, my grandfather would teach me his skills as a farmer, hunter, rancher, and especially storyteller. Many days would pass before my father would appear with gifts of toys, candy and especially, books to read. I did not learn to read until much later than most kids. My father, in those precious brief times, would read to us and tell us stories about the world outside of the Pueblo reservation. He would tell us of the places where he was working. My father was a plumbing engineer and worked as an inspector for the state of New Mexico on large-scale plumbing projects.

I did not realize until much later, that my father was well educated and spoke English, Spanish, and Keres fluently. Sometimes people would come from Albuquerque or Santa Fe to visit with my parents. The conversations would last for hours until the visitors would finally leave. I could not understand what the conversations were about. Sometimes the conversations included laughter and sometimes there would be raised voices about things I did not understand.



My grandfather was gentle and mild-mannered. He approached everything in a teaching manner; explaining things to me so I could understand why things had to be done in a certain way. One day he caught me trying to smoke, so he took me back to the house and taught me why he smoked. He smoked for the spirits, for rain, good weather, good crops, good hunt, good for the people, for good health and many other things. He gave me the rolled tobacco and told me to smoke. After two puffs, I got sick to my stomach and never again tried smoking without a prayer or two.

My father, on the other hand, was a strict disciplinarian, teaching me to be tough in a military style. My father served in the military in Germany and participated in the Normandy invasion in World War II. My grandfather said his son came home from the War a different person. My father and I compared our experiences in war when I came home from Vietnam. He told me I was braver than he because I was a medical specialist without weapons and he had been able to protect himself with rifles, grenades and bayonets. I still admire him for his bravery and fighting for a nation that did not appreciate him.

When it was time for me to attend high school, my parents had refused to send me to a boarding school in Santa Fe; instead they sent me to the Bernalillo Public School. They wanted me home everyday to take care of the farm animals, since grandpa was getting old. The students at Bernalillo consisted of Natives and Mexicans so rough and tough that you were counted absent the day you were not involved in a fight. During my second year of high school, my girlfriend asked me to come to Hayward, California to go to school with her. In Hayward, I learned of the difficulties in succeeding at the high school level. The Hayward school taught

college material to the students and I, of course, was unable to handle it. This was a crucial awakening that made me return to Bernalillo to finish high school.

Just before graduation, my counselor asked me what I was going to do after high school. I told him I was going to attend college and become an engineer like my father. My advisor told me that I was not ready for college and perhaps I should go to a vocational school because Indians got free vocational training through the relocation project or join the military to learn a skill. My response was, "Mr. Gonzales, you are not my advisor anymore. I am going to college! ". I could not wait for graduation and I never looked or turned back, but I did keep his statement in mind. Through all these years, I have been attending colleges and universities because of my desire to learn.

The Indian high school graduates were getting free vocational school training in auto mechanics, building trades, and other types of schools for good jobs. I understood that this relocation was another way to get Native kids away from the reservation--an attempt to assimilate the Natives into the mainstream of American society. My older sister went to Oakland, California and could not make it out there, so she came home. She was able to make a good living in New Mexico making and selling jewelry. Many of the Santo Domingo Pueblo students failed at the relocation sites and became street people. Those that made it back home became successful in farming, ranching, and jewelry making; living well on their own reservation.

My interest in the medical field began when I worked as an assistant dog handler at the Albuquerque Veterans Hospital during my junior year in high school. What I saw and learned piqued my interest in a career in the medical field. With the

combination of my experience and my parents' advice, my thoughts about the things I learned were significant enough to keep me on the path to a successful career. All through this time, I thought of writing my Keres language and returning home to my reservation and my people. I retired as a Physician Assistant in Emergency Medicine. I am currently attending the University of New Mexico in the American Studies Program. Now I feel like I am in the right time, space and place to start my writing career. When I completed my undergraduate degree in Native American Studies and Anthropology, I considered a teaching and writing career. My writing career would deal with Native American legal history and contemporary issues. This path has brought me new thoughts and ideas in approaching the way Native Americans think and deal with modern world affairs.

Professor Gabriel Melendez posed a question, "Is there such a thing as luck?" My answer is what I have always carried with me. Serendipity, as "Cronon's Luck" is interpreted in the Native way, is a predetermined spiritual process from birth to death. The question, "Why am I here and what is my purpose in this life?" is not defined as luck, but a spiritual answer of balance with nature. Cronon states quite clearly, "Here I will offer what is probably the most important lesson of this narrative: scholars and writers come to many of their most important projects quite by accident. Or rather, the work we do is the predictable result of our own experiences and passions, but it is no less surely the *unpredictable* result of being at the right place at the right time." (2003, 176).

With my history, I am now prepared to seek a future of writing and addressing the issues that intrigue me the most. My writing will address an

audience who wants to learn and perhaps further their studies. The following is a brief of my significant history:

In the spring of 1949, on a small Indian reservation called Kewa, Santo Domingo Pueblo, grandfather did not imagine his grandson would someday become a well-educated man in a white man's world. He watched his grandson play around the farm implements as if working and farming.

I was born, March 6, 1946, and after a long career in the medical field, I am now pursuing another career. This time it is a career in the American Studies, Masters Degree program. With this academic training, a bright future lay ahead for the year 2013. After four years, I will prove that scholastic studies and interests will result in a successful career change.

Although it is a hard and tough road ahead, this is the path I have chosen to get a better understanding of the world. My plan is to research the complex issues of Native Americans and the affects of colonialism. This most pressing critical issue is the driving force.

In four years, I see myself in a teaching position, much like Professor Gerald Vizner, in American Studies, addressing the Native American critical issues of survival and victimization. The Professors in American Studies and Native American Studies at the University of New Mexico have also influenced my research.

One significant research project, The Epistemology of Manifest Destiny: The Native American Perspective, will be a personal endeavor. This research will cover the theories and the philosophical headwaters of the chance or predetermined destiny taken by this unique ideology. These headwaters of knowledge will include

the European ideas of man's destiny and the Native Americans ideas of man's destiny.

In the professional arena, I will work as an agitator, instigator, litigator, motivator, and a person of high integrity, searching the historical truth. Through agitation, I will address the critical issues that confront my field of study. Through my writing, I will instigate matters and concerns of importance to the subject. I will also gather together those knowledgeable individuals and organize discussions much like the Grecian philosophers and the Native American Council of Chiefs. Through litigation, I will address the political perspectives and the laws that affect the Native Americans and other people in the global setting. In the most important role, motivator, I will motivate others to follow the agenda and research the ideology and the issues of Native Americans. I will continue to research, analyze, critically address, discuss, and write about Native American issues in the correct and proper narrative.

Throughout all this hard language, I will show love for all mankind in the modern age. Within the two worlds in which I live, there is so much negativism between the European-Americans and the Native Americans that needs to be addressed and negotiated. We must coexist for we all live on a small single planet called Earth. The narrative I will write, "Our Planet Earth, The Petrie Dish Dilemma". This narrative will be a comparative analysis between the Earth as a single planet that will not survive when we as humans don't take care of it as in a laboratory plate of biological specimens containing different types of bacteria, fighting for space and nourishment.



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