

Hupa Language Thrives Through Online Resources

**K'iwinya'n-ya:n-qit'
'a:de:n!
(Say It In Indian!)**

By **CUTCHA RISLING BALDY**
Two Rivers Tribune

The Hupa language is not only thriving in the local schools and classrooms, but also on the Internet in an online community that is engaging with modern technology to encourage Hupa people to k'iwinya'n-ya:n-qit' 'a:de:n (Say it in Indian!). Hoopa tribal member Kayla Rae Carpenter recently started a YouTube channel with tutorial videos dedicated to conversational Hupa. The videos cover topics like "Introductions" and "Going to the store." Building upon this interest for Hupa language revitalization, the Hupa Online Dictionary and Texts website offers audio, video, and numerous stories told in the Hupa language, as well as a searchable database for finding words and phrases in Hupa.

Even though Carpenter's YouTube channel just went live, her first two videos have already been viewed hundreds of times. Carpenter is a Hoopa Valley tribal member who grew up on the Hoopa reservation. She has a bachelor's degree in linguistics from Stanford University and a master's degree in linguistics from U.C. Berkeley. She is currently a Ph.D. student specializing in Northern California Indian languages at U.C. Berkeley.

Carpenter's first video, "Introductions," was filmed in her apartment in Berkeley (please confirm that she lives in Berkeley). "Making a video is awkward," Carpenter said. "I like taking a long selfie, only my focus is on my speech. I can be a shy person so I try to get over that. I practice before recording, listening to recordings if needed. I try to honor the different teachers I've had, and if there is a difference, I present that variation."

Carpenter hopes her YouTube channel will encourage people to interact with the Hupa language through different mediums.

"I want to encourage people of all ages to speak from what they know, and to continue to grow from that. There is a lot of knowledge in the community about the language," Carpenter said.

"Different resources can be tools for helping people to speak. Widening the toolbox can help make the language more accessible to our people, though the greatest technologies sit within our own hearts and minds."

Carpenter is also one of the founding members of the Hupa language Facebook group Natinixwe Mixinc:whc (Hupa language). The group currently has more than three hundred members, who post questions and receive crowd-sourced answers. Other times people will post words of the day, or photos with accompanying words. Sometimes members will get into discussions about various ways to say a

word or phrase in the Hupa language.

"A living language has variation across speakers that can correspond to different styles, generations, families, genders, technical language with training, or occupation," Carpenter said. "There may be differences how formal or informal someone wants to be speaking, or how they are expressing a feeling within the moment."

Another online resource for the Hupa language is the Hupa Online Dictionary and Texts. Primarily led by U.C. Davis linguist Justin Spence, the website started as a web-based searchable version of the Hupa Language Dictionary, published by the Hoopa Valley Tribe in 1996.

"People can use the online version to search for Hupa or English words and phrases that they are interested in learning," Spence said. "The online version includes lots of audio and video recordings, so people can hear and sometimes see elders pronouncing many of the words they find. There are also a lot of stories and other texts linked to the dictionary, so when people find a word in the dictionary and want to know how to use it in a sentence, they can get lots of examples. Or people can start by browsing through the texts and get dictionary definitions of particular words that they find."

Many of the texts also have audio recordings, so people can hear how words are pronounced in full sentences rather than in isolation.

"I've been working with Hupa speaker Verdena Parker for the past few years, and many of the stories and recordings on the website come from her, but there are also recordings of Billy Carpenter, Marjorie Jarnaghan, Ned and Louisa Jackson and Minnie Reeves," Spence said.



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Spence is currently providing assistance to a community-based class offered this fall by the Mc'Dil Institute and the Sacramento Native American Health Center. Hoopa tribal member Mary Jane Risling and her husband, Jon Brooks, have organized the course in Sacramento as a way of teaching the language to Hupa people who are living in the area.

"The class is the result of opportunity and is about the importance of connection: connection to our tribal heritage and to our people, wherever located," Risling said. "We have thought about this idea since we relocated to the area a year ago, however, the spark that really gave this effort shape was the relocation

portunity to do that, which otherwise would be pretty much limited to the school system in Hoopa."

"This initial class series will be flexible as we explore and identify what works best. There is no age limit and we welcome participation of children, college students, and adults. On the one hand this is challenging, but on the other we value the importance of whima'yo', coming together as an important part of language learning. So far, we are all surprised by the level of interest and enthusiasm," Risling said. ■

Hupa Online Dictionary and Texts

Dictionary based on the Hupa Language Dictionary (Dinixwe Mixinc:whc), second edition, © Hoopa Valley Tribal Council, compiled by Victor Onda and edited by Ray Baldy, Louise Badgley, Ruth Deut, Calvin Carpenter, William Carpenter, Victor Onda, Janice Johnson, Minnie McWilliams, Elva Richards, and

Kayla Rae Carpenter's YouTube channel is available at

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Many of the texts also have audio recordings, so people can hear how words are pronounced in full sentences rather than in isolation.

"I've been working with Hupa speaker Verdina Parker for the past few years, and many of the stories and recordings on the website come from her, but there are also recordings of Billy Carpenter, Marjorie Jarnaghan, Ned and Louisa Jackson and Minnie Reeves," Spence said.

Spence is cautious about relying on online resources for language learning.

"Online resources like this can never replace face-to-face interaction with elders, teachers, and other learners as the best way to learn to speak Hupa and other languages," Spence said. "Revitalizing a language is fundamentally about developing a community of people who speak the language with each other, and on its own the Hupa Online Dictionary and Texts doesn't really do much in the way of encouraging interaction with other people. But it can be a tool to complement other things that people are doing to learn the language, by giving people a resource that they can use to advance their learning on their



Dining'xine:wh De:sxa:n 002 – The Store



own time and at their own pace."

Spence is currently providing assistance to a community-based class offered this fall by the Me'Dil Institute and the Sacramento Native American Health Center. Hoopa tribal member Mary Jane Risling and her husband, Jon Brooks, have organized the course in Sacramento as a way of teaching the language to Hupa people who are living in the area.

"The class is the result of opportunity and is about the importance of connection: connection to our tribal heritage and to our people, wherever located," Risling said. "We have thought about this idea since we relocated to the area a year ago; however, the spark that really gave this effort shape was the relocation of Tasha Norton to Sacramento, where she took a position with the Sacramento Native American Health Center."

The class is a pilot effort for the Me'Dil Institute, a non-profit organization that is run by Risling and Brooks. "Me'Dil is the Hoopa word for boat, that is, the redwood dug-out canoe traditionally used by the Hoopa tribe for cultural and ceremonial purposes. The name is also an acronym that sets forth the mission of the organization: Maintaining, Enhancing, Defending Indigenous Living," Risling explained.

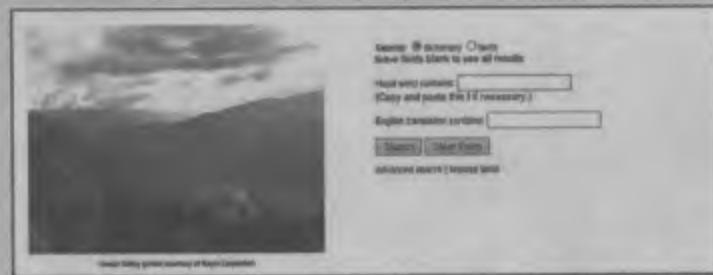
"We want people to be able to say a few things in their own language, the language of their ancestors," said Brooks. "This is an op-

portunity to do that, which otherwise would be pretty much limited to the school system in Hoopa."

"This initial class series will be flexible as we explore and identify what works best. There is no age limit and we welcome participation of children, college students, and adults. On the one hand this is challenging, but on the other we value the importance of whima:lyo', coming together as an important part of language learning. So far, we are all surprised by the level of interest and enthusiasm," Risling said. ■

Hupa Online Dictionary and Texts

- Dictionary based on the Hupa Language Dictionary (aka Shavon Mierle's wh' wa:wh' edition, © Hoopa Valley Tribal Council), compiled by Victor Gots and edited by Ray Gally, Louise Stogart, Ruth Black, Calvin Carpenter, Wilbert Coyarske, Victor Gots, James Jackson, Minnie McWilliams, Dale Rickels, and Herman Spence.
- Additional original content by the online resource provided by Verdina Parker
- editorial and technical work by Amy Caplanoff, Kosta Carpenter, Ramona Esomita, Andrew Gayest, Lindsey Newkirk, Ross Pynch, Cynthia Risling Field, and Austin Spence
- etymology, glossaries, and other textfiles in (source: all:wh:wh:wh)



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Kayla Rae Carpenter's YouTube channel is available at this site:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/takimilxwe>.

The Hupa Online Dictionary and Texts can be found at this site:

<http://nalc.ucdavis.edu/hupa/hupa-lexicon.html>.

The Me'Dil Institute website is:

<http://medil institute.org>.

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