



The Navajo's Resistance to the Suppression and the Assimilation of Their Language Navajo/Dine Bizaad in United States of America

Dr. Najia Almas¹

Abstract:

Some special aspect makes a language the Identity marker of a nation. Navajos used it for the coded talk to help America win WW2. Furthermore, Navajo nation showed the highest proportion of 86% of solely native of the 332,000 population of the Native Americans according to the U.S. Census, 2010. This makes them the biggest group of native American people and their language as the most spoken amongst all the native languages which is a fine reason to make efforts for the survival of this language. According to Benally and Viraj (2005) Navajo Language had been the most resilient native American language, however, there is a dramatic shift among the speakers of his language towards English due to mass media usage and the public education. There are other factors such as anti-bilingual and English Only movement hindering the progress and survival of the language which make the struggle of the speakers of Navajo harder than ever before. The suppression that started with the establishment of the missionary schools for the native American, has grown deeper effecting the decline of the language. Navajo people have a lot of modern challenges to fight for the survival of their language Navajo/Dine Bizzad.

Key Words: Navajo/Dine Bizzad, Indigenous Languages, The Proclamation Line, Civil War, Assimilation, 2010 Consensus, Missionary Boarding Schools, English Only/No Bilingualism, WW2

Introduction:

Language is the Identity Marker of any nation. This is any nation's cultural asset. Before the English gained powerful control in America (north and south) there were several European languages that came with their European colonizers. At the same time there had several native languages of the Red-Indian tribes also been prevailing alongside the languages of colonizers, including English. They continue to exist alongside one another for 5 centuries, between the Nordic settlement of Green Land that occurred in 11th Century and the visit of Columbus in 15th Century. These languages such as Portuguese, Spanish, English and Dutch were gradually dominating the native languages. The colonizers were the powerful rich people, had the part in government and thus official documentation was taken place in their languages in the united-nations states of America. Thus, the native languages were neglected but the real blow was yet to come to them and surprisingly it was not only for the native languages but also to the European languages. As after the government stabilized itself, there was a need of one official language instead of a number of European languages and thus English language took control and all the other languages were now in the background, no longer the dominating ones. Even today, according to Landsberry (2016), "Well into the twentieth century and it could be argued that even today, assimilationist policies have had and are having detrimental ramifications on the Navajo language and culture.". On the other hand, native languages for their speakers were their identity marker and so they did not want to let go of their languages and this resistance to protect their culture continued till today. Though Landsberry (2016) opine, "Several decades ago Navajo was still thriving, however, these days it is in a steady state of decline and all the domains where Navajo was once regularly spoken have been engulfed by English." This is the current status of Navajo/Dine which is affected by many factors.

Theoretical Frame Work:

¹ Assistant Professor in the Department of English
Sardar Bahadur Khan Women's University Quetta, Balochistan



According to Crystal (2003), “A language traditionally becomes an international language for one chief reason: the power of its people – especially their political and military power.” Thus, the language is not capable of existing by its own. It will only be successful only if it’s speakers are successful. Similarly, when a language can be powerful due to its speakers powerful position, other languages may suffer for their speakers being weak. Thus, the sublime status of any language is bound with the sublime status of the speakers of it. This remained the case throughout the history. Greek, Roman, Arabic, French, and English all had a powerful nation behind them that made these languages gained the status of a dominating ones over the other languages of their time.

Discussion:

Navajo language has faced many challenges since from the arrival of the colonizers till the English only and no bilingual movements in America. Following is the detailed description of these challenges the Navajos struggled through for the sustenance of their language.

The Historical Background of the Native Languages Suppression in USA:

Adams (2020) explained that when the line was drawn for the Indian free zone, they were accepted to practice their rights, culture, languages and the customs but the Whites needed their land and thus they were planning natives to assimilate and learn their language and culture with the help of government missionaries. It was the 1763 proclamation line is referred by Adams. This was followed by Indian Removal Act. And finally, their planning to breach the Indian territories came up to which the response of the natives was much aggressive as 10,000 native warriors gathered for the protection of their zone and thus the treaty of the Wyoming, by the title Wyoming Treaty happened, and due to which for the first time in 1851, both the colonizers and the Indians decided to live within their boundaries.



Created by Articulate Eye Design, Saskatoon for J.R. Miller, *Compact, Contract, Covenant: Aboriginal Treaty-Making in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), p. 68.

The Proclamation line of 1763. This image is taken from Canada Watch. Peace (2013).

The Anther Math of the Civil War:

After the Civil War (1861-1865), there still was resistance on the part of the native red Indian tribes but this was becoming very difficult due to the network of the railroads, telegraph and due to the movement and plantation of the US army. One after another 16 of the native tribes were crushed by US government and thus their resistance on their fields came very closer to an end. Finally, when bison's herds of the native Indians were slaughters mercilessly, all of these combats, the battles and above all the conflict came to an end. Unfortunately, from here onwards another era of terror began for the native Americans.

The Forced Assimilation:

Government officials have always been speaking about the assimilation of the Indian tribal people. Even when the Proclamation line of 1763 was made, later when the Wyoming treaty was

signed, they US officials wanted the savages to learn the civilized ways of the whites. Adams (2020) inscribes that the agenda of the whites to civilize the native Americans consisted on three stages. It was to completely assimilate the natives. Following are the three stages.

1. Every individual from the natives will be given his own land to settle down.

The free spirit of these people who made them wander from one place to another and enjoy their connection with the nature are now to become the farmers.

2. US laws will be implemented on the tribal people.

They were the native Americans now, who always have lived the lives of the nomads and followed rules of the ancient tradition.

3. They will be Educated through schooling and thus the true assimilation would occur.

According to Coleman (2008) the last stage, the schooling, worked as changing factor for the native Indians. This further is explained by Spolsky (2002) that these schools destroyed the native languages. These schools and the educational system were a long promise made by the Whites and now it was the most suitable time to honor their promise. According to Alams and Mazhar (2024), "It was suggested if the White American have to make treaties with the Indian Americans, for the Indian tribes were nationalized; so, they had to teach Indians their language, religion, customs, citizenship and mechanic arts." Though there had been a hidden agenda behind this assimilation process offered by the native Americans. It will rather be not wrong to say that it was imposed by the Whites on the natives. According to Little (2017), the Whites striped these tribal people of their traditions, culture and languages and transformed them into the image of the Whites themselves. They found the best way to do it through education and religion. However, this learning came with the unlearning first. Almas and Mazhar (2024) put it, "Thus, the native students were prevented to communicate among them in their Native tongue, and there were severe punishments such as beating if they found engage doing so." Unlearning was not the actual target. It was to make the natives feel inferior first about their culture, values, tradition, believes, languages and thus about themselves.

Not only the third stage of the civilization but also the first one was lethal for the Navajo people. In-fact all three of these stages were interlined and synergized the next step. All these stages has several sub plans. According to Spolsky, (2002), one of the central aspects of the loss of the Navajo/Dine Bizzad was the demographic changes which resulted in the 1930s stock reduction plan. The government declared that the lands of the Navajos were over populated with the livestock herding. "Another central factor to the loss of the Navajo language and culture were the major demographic changes that resulted from the stock reduction plan of the 1930s. These heard were continued to be culled till 1960s. these herds were the backbone of Navajo society and their economy both and this forced reduction opened them a door to terrible suffering that affected their traditional way of life. Unfortunately, this added to their relocation that was already in progress and due to this they were now compelled to relocate to the urban lands leaving their isolated farms behind. They were now where English language was preferred over Navajo.

Punishment of Native Americans:

According to Whitt (2020), majority of African-Americans were forced to send their children to the boarding schools where they do the labor as their training and it was considered a step towards the civilization which would gradually make them come out of the darkness. Moreover adults, who were not willing to send their kids to these schools were jailed. 19 Hopi Indians were sent to the military jail on Alcatraz Island in 1894, for the violation of government law, which



was keep their kids from school, thinking that it would strip them off from their culture. These colonel agents always saw these red Indians as the savages who needed savings. Rehner (2010) explains that majority of Navajo children as well as the teens were compelled out of their homes, in order to send them in the boarding schools. A very few thought that learning the ways of civilized Whites were important. And only for the poor an orphan these schools became shelters. Unfortunately, as Spolsky (2002) opine, a lot of students educated in these schools deliberately abandoned speaking their native language for they were told that their language was devalued, inferior and evil. This is the reason these schools were the central places where this forced assimilation changes he natives forever and they were never the same again.

The Whites claimed that the natives American needed saving. The important point is that who they do need saving from? From themselves or from the civilized Whites who took away their identities from them in the process of forced assimilation and it was dome in the name of the education and civilization.

Navajo's and Navajo/Dine Bizzad's Special Status Among Other Native Languages:

There are a number of reasons that make Navajo people have some supremacy over the other tribes and Dine Bizzad over the other native languages. Following are the factors and characteristics that make Navajo as well as the speakers of it distinguishable among others.

Navajos are the Exclusive Ones:

i. The Traditional Ways of Navajos:

According to (Utah American Indian Digital Archive, 2008, as cited in Landsberry, 2016), “The Navajo people are believed to be descendants of the Southern Athabaskans who migrated from Canada and Alaska between 200 and 1300 A.D. Traditionally hunters and gatherers, they learnt to grow crops and developed a network of trade after contact with the Anasazi and Pueblo peoples of the south. They also began herding sheep, goats and horses with the arrival of the Spanish in the seventeenth century. By the time the white man arrived in the 1860s the Navajo had developed a complex culture of trade, animal-rearing and agriculture.

ii. The Aftermath of the Civil War (1861-1865):

Navajos like the other native tribes lost the war. The consequences were hard for them as they were imprisoned and were forced to walk 500 miles. Many of the people lost their lives during this journey they had to endure after the surrender.

According to Shonerd (1990) the after math of the Civil War with the Navajo, was hard for they were defeated by the Union Army. Many died and the rest were imprisoned and moved to new Mexico. After a few years in 1868 the government returned them back, after signing a treaty with them, to their lands. The Navajo nation was stablished in 1923 as the semi-autonomous and the largest territory in USA governed by the native Americans.

The assimilations happened and still there had been several people who were against the native languages. There was a no bilingual movement to refrain the natives to speak their own languages. Due to which many of the native languages were lost during the assimilation process but there was one special language that helped America win the Second World War. Now the No Bilingual policy was a treat to Navajo/Dine Bizzad also.

iii. The Most Interesting and Amazing Fact about Navajo:

Languages are the Identity Markers and they are import assets to their speakers. However, in the case of Navajo/Dine Bizzad there is another reason, due to which the Navajos want this language to survive among them alongside English. During the war it was very much important that the Japanese or the Germans (the Nazis) must not be able to understand the code messages that were



sent to the Allies. Now there was a need of a language that the Nazis did not know. What could be better than a native language. Thus, this was then the Navajo/ Dine Bizzad of the Navajo tribe. They volunteered as the translators on the both ends in the fronts and thus the Nazis were unable to understand the coded messages, even if they deciphered them. This worked and Allies had the lead over the Nazis throughout the war and thus Allies eventually won the Second World War. Today Navajos are looking for a workable solution through which their language find its survival. They expect some privilege to their language was the main reason that America won the war. Even during the protest against English Only movement, the Navajos displayed the banners with the slogan which meant that let their language survive for it made US won the war.

iv. Navajo/ Dine Bizzad:

According to Landsberry (2016), “Colonialism and its contempt for indigenous languages brought with it assimilationist policies, including punishment for speaking the native Navajo language, and a policy of “English only” education. The resulting loss of language produced a corresponding loss of identity for many Navajo, and resulted in immense suffering amongst the Navajo people.” The scholar continues to say that this issue was recognized by the groups of powerful people and then there were movements working towards the preservation of the language. However, it is unfortunate that the law and the federal policies were failed to implement those policies and so the survival of Navajo language has become a serious issue.

It is important to note that if schools can suppress a language they can give it a raise too (Polisky. 2002). So, According to Hornberger (1996) Rough Rock was the first Indian Community school established in 1966 and during 1980s, they worked on the bilingual educational system and today they have achieved their goal. So, this is this is they made it possible that languages can be given protection within the schools just by letting it prevail within the premises of the academic institutions.

v. The Status of Navajo as well as other Native Languages in US:

Following are the facts that are very alarming. Rehenr (2001) explains that published by SIL, in Ethnologue that out of two million plus Native American people in the US, only the 361978 will be able to speak anyone of the 154 indigenous languages still existing and mostly by the speakers who are in their oldest age. In 1492 these languages were twice in number in the land now called United States of America. Today, from seven of these 154 languages have an only speaker and this is an extreme issue. On the other hand, we find that out of 250,000, a handsome number of 148530 Navajos still speak their Diné language. This seems promising as a lot of effort was made to reestablish Dine² in educational institutes, however, two barrios halted all of the progress. These barrios were NCLB (No Child Left Behind) as well as the preposition 203, becoming a huge hinderance in bilingual education for Navajos. This is very unfortunate and Spolsky (2002) opine that Though Navajos were given the autonomy but still their education system is hugely run by BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs).

The Reason for Which Native Americans Want to Preserve Their Language:

When a language dies, the cultural wisdom of all the previous generations dies with that language. I still remember how I was overwhelmed by the sad feelings. It was as if I was engulfed by a strange kind of paralyzing numbness when I read in a news article in 2007 written

² The name of the Navajo language is Diné Bizaard

by David Crystal where he mentioned the death of the last speaker of a language. As I have discussed earlier, this made me very upset which my roommate noticed and enquired the reason. Even though she was a scientist, she herself turned very upset. For a while we talked sadly about the loss of the culture, historical event, poetry, literature, wisdom, philosophy and science of those people who spoke that language. We were painfully curious that all of this might have held within itself and that day with his demise all of that collected wisdom ended up. American Indians have foreseen this coming to their remaining languages and so Rehner (2001) writes that during a bilingual conference in Alaska he noticed a card which displayed these words "Every Iñupiaq is responsible to all other Iñupiat for the survival of our cultural spirit, and the values and traditions through which it survives. Through our extended family, we retain, teach, and live our Iñupiaq way (Rehner 2001)."

The other side of the card had the following inscription,

"With guidance and support from Elders, we must teach our children Iñupiaq values." Listed were the values of "knowledge of language, sharing, respect for others, cooperation, respect for elders, love for children, hard work, knowledge of family tree, avoidance of conflict, respect for nature, spirituality, humor, family roles, hunter success, domestic skills, humility, [and] responsibility to tribe (Jon Reyner 2001)."

If such traditional values and the languages extinct from a society the true essence of these communities will become history. There are certain means necessary for keeping a culture preserved. Today archeologist, linguists and experts are trying their best to restore the cultures through preserving the tombs, ruins, mysterious graves of the long-gone people. It is far better to keep intact a culture of long historical value, while its heirs still breathe. It is not wise to push deliberately the cultures towards extinctions and after decades, centuries or millennium, dig again into the past to restore what forcefully was destroyed or assimilated.

The Punishment for Speaking the Native Languages at School:

There was a complete removal of their tribal identities the native students faced in the missionary schools, aided by the government. Soon after entering these schools, students were given the new Christian names, a new religion, new haircut, a new language and the western clothing. They were forbidden to speak their native languages. Students were heavily punished for speaking their native language/s at schools. There were other ethical and behavioral mistakes they were punished for and the punishments were severe sometimes. (Trafzer et al., 2006) reveal that the punishments were to deprive the students from food, belongings and privileges as well as to compel them to do the janitorial cleaning, marching, painting, removing the mud from bricks and similar humiliating jobs. They beaten by the teachers as well as the elder students or to stand on one foot or similar punishments. On the other hand, there were other troubles these students had to endure for intake extreme cold. Little (2017) opine that many of the students froze to death in their beds during winters as they were not allowed to go to their parent for years at times. Sometimes these students had to do some really hard, dangerous industrial work. This was part of the process of civilization. (Trafzer et al., 2006) opine that some students joined these schools willingly and some otherwise. Most of the times students and their families still would not like it even after studying in these schools. However, sometimes the governments' agenda worked and students found themselves at a wide distance from their culture and people after their schooling in these missionaries schools.

The Effect of the Treatment Students' Faced at Their Schools:

This brought psychological trauma to the students. Many of the students attained an experience that changed their lives forever. According to Little (2017) Oneida Nation's citizen Kiel believes that the experiences of the students' at the boarding school hold explanation to the fact that so many Indigenous languages are endangered, or even gone dead. Kiel speaks of his great-grandparents' generation, who attended these boarding schools once. His grandmother in her childhood heard her elders speaking the Oneida language, but she chose not to teach it to her children for it would traumatize them as it did this to her at the school. At her schools they were told that speaking this language Oneida was backwards, uncivilized, past, and there was no utility left in speaking of it.

Civil Right Movement:

In 1968 with the support and efforts of Congress the Bilingual Educational Act was approved. It was to the response to the Civil Rights Movements and soon after was followed by Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act in 1975 which helped Indian Americans to take control over the educational system of schools and also over the language policy for the schools because the native children there were in majority. However, (Barsh et al., 1975) opine that the policies designed to help Indians, often harmed them. In 1990 Congressmen helped once again to pass another Act that was The Native American Languages Act (P.L. 101-407). Appreciating this, Rehner (2001) declares that it is actually the government's responsibility to help Native Americans in a way that ensures their culture and languages survive. Not only this, but Government must also protect the rights, the languages and culture of the native Americans.

The Conflict of Native Languages, Their Equal Status to English and English Only Movement:

Establishing the native languages as an equal to the English was always cut short. For example, according to Ryan (2002) a millionaire of Silicon Valley, Ron Unz through California's 227, designed a ban on bilingual education. Two years later this was approving in Arizona and then Unz brought it to Massachusetts and also to Colorado. Unz strongly believed in assimilation and remained a great supporter of English only education in 1998. Mexican Immigrant as well as Native Americans were his chief targets. In 2000 another proposition 203 was presented to end the bilingual education which was taken as the cruelest attack on the native language by the people of Arizona. Brizz (2006) also believed that Unz English movement was a disrespectful cruel act to deprive the native from their rights, culture and language. In the reply to the 2000 petition Navajo's President Kelsey Begaye declared in a Press release that it was their right to preserve their language, traditions and the culture. These are Navajo's codes. Culture and tradition are transferred to their next generation through their language. There are several expressions that can only be found in their own language and not in any other. An English only system would not bring any good to Navajo nation.

I strongly agree to this notion that there are several words, phrases and expressions that are found in one language only and not in the other. For instance, in Urdu language there are two expressions, *Chorion ki khanak aor payal ki chanak*³. I have looked much for the fair expression in English that could explain the true meaning of these phrases but we couldn't find even one. Thus, bilingualism is essential in certain conditions such as one, where the true expression cannot be expressed in the other languages. However, Unz continued in his efforts to stop

³ *Chanak* and *Khanak* refer to the sound of the bangles and that of anklet



bilingual education and later in 2016 he again started a campaign to support English only movement for the teaching medium.

The Protest of Navajos:

There was a long march in Pheonix against the anti-bilingual educational Act of 2001 and proposition 203 for they considered this an attack on their ethnicity. Berriz (2006) points out that knowing another language other than English was thought to be a hinderance in learning at schools. The notice of this protest was taken by the Congress and the Congressmen took care of it. According to Berriz (2006), “the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, the federal law that codifies the standards set by the US Supreme court in the 1974 by Lau versus Nichols decision.” After this families in Boston were given the chance for the bilingual education for their kids.

According to Almas and Mazhar (2024), “Fortunately, there are three very good things in The Native American Languages Act; Firstly, the policy of Indian self-determination. Secondly, it is a reversal of the historical US Government’s Indian Languages crushing policy. Thirdly, it was reaction against making English the official language of the USA. The Act holds very strong support of Indian people towards their native heritage, the need is for natives to gain support in the mainstream.”

Bilingual Education Makes Navajos Smarter:

Richard Riley in his speech on 15th March revealed that during his observation of multiple bilingual educational institutes he observed that bilingual students excel more than the monolinguals. Moreover, the students who had the chance of getting primary education in their native language learnt better and showed higher grades compared to the ones who had not. These students developed better understanding of the knowledge as well as better command over English language then the student who studied in the English-Only institutes (Rehner, 2000).

However, the hinderances kept on happening continuously and halted the progress of the native languages. For instance, the pressure on schools that their students should pass the national aptitude test is high. Thus, the time for the Navajo Language classes is robbed of for this kind of preparations and activities. In addition to this people’s attitude towards their own language has been changed now (Polsky, 2002). Certain issues hinder the survival of the native language.

Official Approval for Navajo:

Rehner 2001 opine that there always has always been a push to make English an only official language, still some encouraging things are also happening such as Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act signed and brought into law by President George W. Bush. This Act is a great support native language immersion program. However, more effort is needed in order to stablish the successful survival of Navajo language. Every picture has two sides and the other side of the picture requires a stronger helping hand from Navajo people and thus, certain steps must be taken by the them. Benally and Viri (2005) opine that four decades back in the Navajo Tribal Council almost all the communication was held in Navajo in the presence of an official Navajo-English interpreter. During 1980s, the code switching was common amongst all members but now it is English that is preferred for the official communication. Now it is the responsibility of the Navajo Tribal Council that being the Navajo’s leader, they should communicate and be committed to promote Diné language neglecting the generalized theory that government policies are easier to be conveys, only if the medium is English. Polsky (2002) believes that Christianity has also been another cause for the decline of



their language for Christian churches always opposed the teaching of Navajo language in schools. The reason was the different belief system of Navajo people, almost contrary to the Christianity. The spread of Christianity has usually worked against language maintenance and repeatedly Christian churches have opposed the teaching of Navajo in schools due to the language's connection to traditional beliefs. The need is to establish more churches that would offer the religious ceremonies in Navajo/Dine Bizzad to Navajos. Already established churches should accommodate Navajo language alongside English and promoting the bilingual system.

The Survival of Navajo Language:

According to Jon Rehner (2001), "Today Navajo language survives, in Navajo chapter houses, within the daily communication of old tribal people, and in some of the Christian churches." The scholar continues to say, the younger Indian American generation no longer speaks the tribal language mainly because of the schools, music, and the television that they watch are all in English. Furthermore, when this generation will have children, they raise them speaking only English, being an only language they themselves learnt to speak fluently. Thus, majority of Indian languages, that survived so far will be extinct in another generation or the next to it. According to Todacheeny (2014), by the year 2040 it is, "predicted that approximately 20 to 30 Indigenous languages in North America will remain as a spoken Indigenous language."

Following are the Reasons that make Navajo an Endangered Language:

According to Benally, A., & Viri, D. (2005), "On several levels the language appears to remain strong and viable, but on others the telltale signs of impending extinction are becoming apparent." This is obvious for there are a number of reasons that make a language go weak. Some of which in Dine Bizzad's case are as follows.

i. Navajo is Also Among Endangered Languages:

Every picture has two sides. At present these Indian Americans of the current generation are becoming a misfit generation in America. They are like diaspora who are not fit in the world of White, neither in their own communities. Whites also do not fully accept the Indian American because they are "red" and because they had fought many wars with them. On the other hand as cited in Jon Rehner (2001), "Kluckhohn and Leighton reported that 95% of Navajo children "went home rather than to white communities, after leaving school, only to find themselves handicapped for taking part in Navajo's life because they did not know the techniques and customs of their own people." This happens because rules are, like always, were made by the White people and imposed on Indian Americans to follow them, and it was a continuous common practice in history.

In addition to the above-mentioned fact, (United States, 1975, as cited in Rehner 2001, Pp. 126-127) reveals that Navajos, in fact, have been excluded from the decision-making process in this school system that was long set for their children to get education from. There have been a variety of educational policies unrelated to the Navajo community and thus the Navajo language and culture have been largely ignored in the curriculum offered to Navajo students. So, this is the main cause that a large number of Dine's speakers are reducing after every one decade. If the Navajos are given the chance to participate in curriculum planning and allowed to work toward the reform in the educational system, in favor of bilingual education, things would change from decline to progress.

On the other hand, according to Todacheeny (2014), according to the Census of 2010, 3.2 million people out of 5.2 million native people reported being the native with the combination of other race categories such as Black, White or the both. The ones who White, Black or both made 84% of the multi racial group. During one decade from 2000 to 2010 increased from 1.6 million to 2.3 million which is higher than the ones who were solely from Native decent. However, the Navajo nation had the highest proportion of 86% pure native of the 332,000 population (U.S. Census, 2010). This is a vivid description not only shows of the huge number of the solely native, Navajo people in the United States but also points out to a fact that if population grows bigger and then the speakers of the language should also grow but it unfortunately declines. The reason is that there are no true policies to protect the decline of the speakers or to protect the language.

It is important to save Navajo Language; the identity marker of the indigenous people who once have fought alongside America who win the war. This is not the only reason that makes Navajo's Dine Bizzad special. There is always something which makes each language unique. For example, during the patrician of Indo-Pak sub-continent, Urdu for Muslims and Hindi for Hindus became the Identity Markers. This made both of them to fight for their separate identities. According to Almas and Mazhar (2024) the American Indians also believe in the same notion and hold their languages as their identity markers, this makes them to fights for their languages to survives and thus this will make their culture, values and identities to survive also. Here it is important to note that Navajos add up their help as the code talkers during WW2, to the uniqueness of their language. This help became the identity marker of their language and eventually the identity marker of its speakers too.

Thus, these are the reasons that Navajo people want their languages to survive for they find it as their cultural asset and also their Identity marker in many regards. Furthermore, Navajo is also the vehicle for their tradition and culture to be carried to their next generation.

The Progress Weakened:

(Rehner, 2001) opine that Navajo is spoken in the chapter houses as well as in their Christian churches also. Unfortunately, the future of this language is uncertain for this generation being fluent in English is not communicating in Navajo/Dine Bizzad due to their exposure to English schooling as well as television and social media. In a few decades Dine Bizzad may totally go extinct. After carefully examining this statement, I believe that this may happen but may be not with the next generation but eventually it may happen. This diaspora generation is the product of the assimilation. Besides this there are also other factors. In addition to this (Rehner, 2001) explains that the Navajos were never given the right to speak for themselves by authorities during the decision-making process, more specifically when the curriculum is designed in the schools. Furthermore, according to Spolsky (2002), "A study 25 years ago of prospects for the survival of Navajo placed most of the blame for the spread of English on increasing access to schools. Reconsidering that evidence and recent developments, the central role of the introduction of Western schooling is seen still to be highly relevant. But other factors have worked through the school, the major effect of which has been the ideological acceptance of English." The scholar goes on to say that there are multiple factors such as the vernacular literacy, the political structure, introduction of the religion, as well as the economic changes all supported the threat to the language. Moreover, according to Benally and Viri (2005), "Until about 20 years ago, the Navajo language was one of the most resilient American Indian languages in modern U.S. history. Today, at the dawn of the 21st century, that has all changed.

Some changes can be attributed to the normal dynamics of cultural transmission that affect language use. Some others, such as the dramatic shift toward English that is occurring—largely due to the agency of public education and mass media—are jeopardizing the survival of the Navajo language.”

According to Combs and Nicholas (2012) during the past few decades a number of legislations were approved to protect the native languages, but unfortunately the governments have totally ignored the Navajo’s autonomy, revitalization of their native language as well as their human rights and their control over their own schools.

In addition to this the Navajos’ must also enthusiastically work for the progressive survival of their language. Benally and Viri (2005) opine, that one of the lethal enemies that hinders the maintenance of the Navajo language is negligence of its speakers towards their language for many of the bilingual Navajos now take their language for granted assuming that it will remain unaffected forever. The reason of this negligence is again the same that they are educated and surrounded by English language more than their own, being unaware of the fact that the decline of their language is bound with their failure towards their native language. More specifically if they do not teach this language to their children the situation will become more intense. According to Landsberry (2016), “The language is relying entirely on the Navajo people themselves for its survival and if it can’t be saved it will be a loss for the entirety of humankind.” Furthermore, according Landsberry (2016), “Over the next thirty years, with the passing of each bilingual old soul and the birth of an English monolingual new one, the Navajo language will continue to dwindle until it is silenced forever.” The scholar continued to say that within the span of 30 years this language will somehow exist in some way such as the intaking of the greetings or the tribal introductions but only a few will only be able to fully converse fluently in Dine Bizzad/Navajo. The scholar continued to predict that if the current situation prevails, eventually the language of Navajos alongside its wisdom, thoughtfulness and culture will extinct. However, she prays that it would be far more satisfying if her prediction/foreseeing goes wrong.

Conclusion:

Almas and Mazhar (2024) opine, American Indians hold their language very dear and precious for believing this to be their identity marker and like other nations they fight for the sustenance of their identity. They believe that their language is not only part of their identity but also part of themselves. Thus, if English only/no-bilingual formula takes over Navajo is not spoken extensively by its speakers then their believe, identity and Identity marker will be devastated. Furthermore, Rehnar (2001) explains that the patriotism of the Native Americans can’t not be questioned. The code talkers of Navajos, Sioux and some others natives used their languages in order defend America. Serious efforts such as Esther Martinez are needed to support the Indian Nations, despite sending the message to the native Americans that they are not considered the real Americans as long as they keep their culture and language intact or by bringing the anti-bilingual and Official English divisive. This is obvious that there is no need for anyone to shed their culture and the languages in order to win the tag of being the real American. More specifically they used their language as the most important weapon to win the Second World War. So, if there are such policies as mentioned above will help in securing these languages as well as they will help in restoring the spirit of the Native Americans. Little (2017) opine that even after the Federal assimilation policies and the establishment of the boarding schools, still there is some hope left. The scholar believes that the native languages, belief system and culture when combined with the counseling techniques will bring them healing. However, Benally and



Viri (2005) opine, “The Navajo language is at a crossroads; it can still be renewed among the growing number of non-speakers so it can be strengthened, or it can continue to decline in its use.” It is important to note that there are several hindrances when it comes to the survival of the Navajo language. Strong policies are essential to support the cause of Navajo people. Reyner (2010) argues that there is a need of legislations, declaration on federal and international level for the protection of the rights of the natives and they must be provided with the supportive means more effective than only the rhetoric. Revitalizing the language via language classes at school would work effectively though there had been anti bilingual bills to put a full stop to the progress and development of Navajo language, still, all is not lost. The language/s can be fully restored to function within their community/communities, as long as its speakers are actively putting their efforts for its survival.

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