1. Category Justification:
Special Requests for Established Investigators’ Pilot Projects
This proposal is a special request, as Dr. Mary Hermes (PI) is new to working with Dr. Elane Tarone (CARLA), and like wise, Dr. Tarone is new to working with Ojibwe communities (new team.) Second, there is a very high likelihood for obtaining major funding for an Ojibwe immersion teachers training program. This research is fundamental to that effort.

2. Present Status of Knowledge:
Second Language Acquisition

Two fields undergird this study: Second Language Acquisition and Language Revitalization. How does the context of the acquisition of an indigenous language in the process of revitalization affect the processes of learning and teaching? Currently an overwhelming majority of research in this field has been done on the acquisition of living, vibrant foreign languages by Western European language-speaking adults and children. Research on the second-language acquisition of indigenous languages with few native speakers, in the context of cultures that are predominantly oral, is non-existent. While this project is significant for the community it “researches” it is also significant for the field of second language (L2) acquisition in that it adds a completely new type of learner and socio-cultural context that have been up to this point, missing from the field. What does the interlanguage of Ojibwe in immersion schools look like? As this is a pilot study, we will be gathering some of the first data in the field using task-based approaches to elicit samples of Ojibwe L2 learner language (interlanguage) in descriptive and narrative genres. We believe our data will provide evidence of acquisition over time across a number of linguistic levels, and generate more specific research questions to pursue in the next round of major funding. As a first step in understanding the acquisition of endangered, indigenous languages, this project will be groundbreaking.

Language Revitalization
Applied linguists and sociolinguists have steadily been responding to Krauss’ clarion call: out of 210 indigenous languages spoken in the United States and Canada, only 34 were still spoken by all generations (Krauss, 1988.) In this field, endangerment has been described in terms of stages (Fishman, 2001.) However, reserving language shift is much less well understood. Some scholars have questioned the narrative of “saving dying languages” and have instead re-focused efforts on working across the Academy-Native American (research/researched) community divide to engage in on-going revitalization efforts (Hermes, 2011; Maffi, 2003). Recent work in the Hawaiian and Maori immersion schools (Wilson, 2011) suggest that immersion alone is not enough for revitalization, the indigenous languages need to also become the vernacular, the language of choice used in homes. Cast in this light, our pilot study will be significant in this area in describing in detail what acquisition in immersion and home settings looks like. This can address the question of how to bridge the school and home domain. That is knowing what the developing language looks and sounds like in children at immersion schools will inform
what kinds of parent expectations and activities could support use of the language at home.

3. Plan of Work:

Timeline:
This work will start in the summer of 2014, at the first of three Ojibwe immersion teacher training sessions. This research accompanies a proposal to a series of Ojibwe immersion teacher training at two reservation sites: Red Lake and White Earth Ojibwe Nations, Summer 2014-June, 2015 (see letters of support). Drs. Hermes, Tarone and a graduate research assistant will introducing the participants to the process of measuring second language acquisition, through “exploratory practices.” This research method is also an effective tool for their own teaching and assessment. Six volunteer participants (teachers) will be recruited from the group of 20 to be a part of this study. Those participants will be visited twice again at their own teaching sites. The first visit will occur as a baseline in either October 2014 or December, 2015 (depending if they are either a new teacher or experienced teacher.) The second visits will occur in April or May, and used to determine the amount and kind of language acquired by the students at the immersion sites.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Summer 2014</th>
<th>Fall 2014</th>
<th>Winter 2015</th>
<th>Spring 2015</th>
<th>Summer 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer camp</td>
<td>Collect data at experienced teacher’s sites</td>
<td>Collect data at experienced new sites</td>
<td>Collect comparison samples</td>
<td>Write results, Discuss with participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ojibwe teachers work with Tarone and grad student as part of summer immersion teacher training</td>
<td>GRA and Hermes Collect audio baseline samples from 2 sites</td>
<td>GRA and Hermes Collect audio baseline samples from 4 sites</td>
<td>All 6 sites, Hermes and GRA collect second samples</td>
<td>Gather all teachers, second language camp, together discuss results.</td>
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<td>Transcribe: GA</td>
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<td>Analysis: Tarone and Hermes</td>
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History of the project
The idea for this project comes from the current Ojibwe community language revitalization movement. We are applying for funding to create teacher training for Ojibwe immersion teachers, meeting a need of the community. Many academics realize that endangered languages are vanishing. Not many academics realize that there is actually something substantial we are in a position to do. In Minnesota and Wisconsin, that is a very exciting grassroots, intellectual movement: The Ojibwe language revitalization movement. This community based drive is most pronounced in the effort to establish Ojibwe immersion schools. Dr. Hermes was on of the co-founders of one of the first schools, Waadookodaading, established in 2001. Currently tripled in size and budget, there are four other established schools, and three more set to open this fall of 2015, one (“Bdote”) here in the Twin Cities. Based on the successful Hawaiian language immersion nest model, these Ojibwe schools have gained national attention and are at the forefront of a world Indigenous language revitalization movement. Current teacher training models are not appropriate, and even current “immersion” models are not based on a community trying to revitalize an endangered indigenous language. Something new
is needed, something based on Ojibwe language, the history of loss and survival and the very best ideas in second language acquisition and teaching.

This pilot project is written to support the larger effort of creating Ojibwe immersion teacher education. Future funding includes the aim of housing this program at the University of Minnesota. Immediately, this project would support “Creating Ojibwe Immersion Curriculum and Teachers,” a proposal submitted to the State of Minnesota, Dakota Ojibwe Language Revitalization (DOLR) funds. This project would research the effects of language acquisition on the students of the teachers in that project. That is,

- How does students' Ojibwe interlanguage develop over time in response to teachers' use of content-based and proficiency-oriented instructional techniques?
- What results (in terms of language acquisition) do teachers get with students within one year of immersion?

Currently, in the field of second language teaching and in Ojibwe language teaching and learning, the overwhelming use of the grammar-translation method by linguists is pervasive although research to date has shown it to be relatively ineffective in comparison with more proficiency-oriented “direct” methods used in content-based and immersion classrooms. This project would address this confusion. The data gathered in the current study would allow teachers (and funders) to see the results of proficiency-oriented “direct” methods for indigenous language instruction, and do so in an objective manner. The data and research would clearly show in what way the immersion teaching is effective or not effective [INSERT] in fostering age-appropriate systematic and sustained acquisition of Ojibwe as an indigenous language.

**Elements of the project you expect to complete during the grant period**

1. Building rapport between Drs. Hermes, Tarone; Tarone and Graduate Assistant to Ojibwe immersion community
2. Gather data
3. Transcription
4. Analysis
5. Distribution and discussion with Participants
6. Written results for publication
7. Written results for major grant application

**Methods**

Exploratory Practice

The methods used by teachers for studying learner to improve instruction are called “exploratory practice” (Alwright and Hanks, 2009). Briefly, two sets of audio recordings will be collected, one early on in the school year (a few months in for new immersion students and teachers) and then at the end of the year. The interviewer will ask questions about two pictures. For example, if pictures used are simple drawings depicting a story, the student could be asked re-tell the story. The audio sample will be transcribed and analyzed using standard measures of interlanguage development such as fluency, error analysis, morphosyntactic development, lexical type/token ration and syntactic complexity. Time One and Time Two samples will be compared for each individual as well as across learners.
Second Language Acquisition at Ojibwe Immersion Sites
Hermes

Our sample size is 12-18 pre-school and early elementary students, (6 immersion teachers’ classrooms, with 2-3 students from each room.) Student’s age will vary depending on the teacher we are working with, mostly concentrated in the 3-5 year range, but with one class of advanced 3-4 grade students. Audio recordings will last approximately 10 minutes. All recordings will be transcribed and analyzed for both quantity and quality of Ojibwe spoken. For example, number of different Ojibwe utterance, lexical items, complicity of morphology, sentence structure and repairs.

Hypotheses
Does teacher’s use of oral proficiency oriented direct-method result in language acquisition of Ojibwe for children? The hypothesis is that through specific skills workshops for rising immersion teachers (see accompanying Dakota Ojibwe Language Revitalization Grant) immersion teachers will see language acquisition resulting in gains oral productivity for small children. Exactly what kind of gains, what the early production looks like, and how it varies dependent on the immersion teacher, are all question to be explored.

Likelihood of Success
Given that this project of creating language immersion schools is supported by all of the Ojibwe tribes in Minnesota, the State of Minnesota and the Native American Language Revitalization Act, and most importantly, the majority of Ojibwe people themselves, the creation of Ojibwe immersion schools is likely to continue. The groundswell of participation in revitalization and language learning is unprecedented, with more a moment caused by a cadre of proficient Ojibwe language learners. Many of these scholar/ activists were started here at the University of Minnesota.

The shortage of immersion teachers (those second language learners of Ojibwe with high proficiency and immersion teaching skills) is a piece of this work that the University of Minnesota can contribute to. The combine skills of Elaine Tarone (knowledge of second language acquisition and work with immersion teachers) and Mary Hermes (an Ojibwe community member and advanced Ojibwe speaker with 15 years of teacher education experience) make the success of researching the development of language in immersion an extremely likely outcome of this project. Both Hermes and Tarone are major thinkers and well published in their fields, making future funding for Ojibwe immersion teacher education at the University very likely.

4. Need Justification:
Recent attention to the “achievement gap” does not consider attention to issues deeper than testing and assessment. This project meets some of the people not currently served by the educational system in an area in which they are excelling: Ojibwe language acquisition. Second language acquisition is an intellectual accomplishment, Ojibwe is a difficult agglutinating language. These efforts should be explored and supported as a potential solution to more systemic problems. However, funding for issues at this level is more scares than solutions which are more superficially easy to express.

• No internal funding for this project.
• No uncommitted funds over $50,000.

Current and future funding opportunities:
• Mille Lac Band of Ojibwe
• Dakota Ojibwe Revitalization Grant ($84,000 pending)

Recent funding applied for and rejected:
• Dakota Ojibwe Language Revitalization Grant: (Ojibwe immersion teacher training at Mille Lacs Reservation) November, 2013, $76,165
  National Science Foundation: November 2012, $449,577

Past funding:


5. Word Count: Please provide the word count of items 2-3 above.
Words: 1,973
References:


Tarone, E. (forthcoming 2014). Enduring themes from the interlanguage hypothesis. In ZhaoHong Han & Elaine Tarone (Eds.) Interlanguage: 40 years later. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.


Websites:

Grassroots Indigenous Multimedia: www.grassrootsindigenousmultimedia.net