

Chikashsha alhihaat Chikashshanompa' anompoli katihma: Chickasaws are still speaking Chikashshanompa'

Kari A. B. CHEW
University of Oklahoma

LOKOSH (Joshua D. HINSON)

EDITORS

Jorge Emilio Rosés Labrada (University of Alberta)

Sarah Shulist (Queen's University)

ABSTRACT

Holisso mako anompa toklo' ishtiiholissochitok, Chikashshanompa' micha Naahollimanompa'. Hopaakikaash Chikashsha móma'at _iyaakni' sipokni' áyya'shattook. 1837aash Naahollo _inaalhpisa'at pomokloshi' wihat kanallichittook. Pomokloshaat Hattak Api'ma' _iyaakni' onat tahattook. Pomanompa'at impállaminattookookya kaniya'bookya iláyya'shakmat Chikashsha ilittimanompohóli katihma. Chikashsha alhihaat ittimanompoli aaisa ki'yokittook. Chikashsha sipóngni'at imanompa' imaabahánchi bíyyi'kanattook. Mako'no imaabahánchi katihma. Pomanompa'at ikshoka'chi imahoobookya ki'yokittook. Anompa'at tibi' kolofa' chohmitttook. Ittonchololit ishtayattook. 2007aash pominko' Bill Anoatubbyat Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program ikbittook. Sipóngni', anompa' shaali' cho'maat ibaatoxsalit ishtayattook. Chikashsha alhihaat Chikashshanompa' anompoli katihma. Pomanompaat bílli'yacha billi'ya.

This Chronicle, written in both Chikashshanompa' (Chickasaw language) and English, reflects on the efforts of Chikashsha okla (Chickasaw people) to reclaim and revitalize Chikashshanompa'. Over time and for a variety of reasons—including Removal, English-only schooling, intermarriage with non-Chikashsha, and economic depression—many people stopped speaking Chikashshanompa'. Still, those who cared deeply for the language tended to it, making it possible for future generations to learn and to speak Chikashshanompa'. Because of the Chikashshanompa' revitalization and reclamation work, undertaken by many, Chikashsha alhihaat Chikashshanompa' anompoli katihma—Chickasaws are still speaking Chickasaw.

1. CHIKASHSHA POYA: WE ARE CHICKASAW

Chikashsha oklaat iyaakni' apiisahánchit Chikashsha hooittimanompolinattook. Chikashsha po'yacha Chikashshanompa' iishaali. Kari ishkaat Chikashsha. Inchokka-chaffa' holhchifoat Burris micha Ardmore, Oklahomma'ako aamintittook. Kariat himittahmat Californiako attattook. Chikashshanompa' ikhaklokitttook. Pokoli toklo afammihmat Chikashshanompa' ithanat ishtayattook. Himmako'si Kariat University of Oklahomma'ako intoksali. Lokosh inchokka-chaffa' holhchifo'at Imatapo. Imiksa'at Kowishto'. Lokoshat Abilene, Texas aahofantittook. 2000 paakfa Chikashshanompa' ithanat ishtayattook. Lokosh inchokka-chaffa'at Kemp micha Colbert. Achille, Oklahoma pílla aamintittook. Lokoshat Chikashshiyaakni' intoksalicha Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program imishkoboka'. Chikashshiyaakni'ako iláshwa.

Chikashshanompa', the Chickasaw language, lives in the relationships that we as Chikashsha okla, Chickasaw people, have to each other and to place. We begin by introducing ourselves as a way of practicing principles of this relationality in our writing (Chew & Hinson, 2021). We are citizens of the Chickasaw Nation and learners of Chikashshanompa'. Kari's mother is Chikashsha (Chickasaw) and comes from the Burris family of Ardmore, Oklahoma. Kari grew up in southern California and began learning Chikashshanompa' as a young adult in 2008. She is now an assistant professor of Indigenous education at the University of Oklahoma. Lokosh is of the Imatapo (Their Lean-To People) house group and Kowishto' Iksa' (Panther Clan), through the Colbert and Kemp families. Lokosh grew up in west Texas and began learning Chikashshanompa' in the early 2000s. Lokosh directed the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program from 2007 to 2022 and is now the executive officer of the Division of Language Preservation in the Chickasaw Nation's Department of Culture and Humanities. We both live with our families in the Chickasaw Nation.

This Chronicle is shared in both Chikashshanompa' and English. The text in English complements the text in Chikashshanompa' but is not a direct translation. For this reason, we chose to represent the languages in different fonts. Readers may read this Chronicle in Chikashshanompa', English, or both languages to learn about the interwoven relationships across place and time that hold pomanompa', our language. Because of the Chikashshanompa' revitalization and reclamation work, undertaken by many, Chikashsha alhihaat Chikashshanompa' anompoli katihma—Chickasaws are still speaking Chickasaw.

2. POMANOMPA' IISHAALI: WE CARRY OUR LANGUAGE WITH US

Hopaakikaash Chikashsha móma'at iyaakni' sipokni' áyya'shattook. Aba' Binni'li'at yaakni'aash ikbittook. Chikashsha okla imattook. Chikashsha oklaat yaakni' yammako apiisahánchi bílli'ya'shki. 1837aash Andrew Jackson'at pomokloshi' wihat kanallichittook. Chahta Mashkooki' Shimmanooli'

Chalakki' cho'ma wihat kanallichittoo. Pomokloshaat Hattak Api'ma' Iyaakni' onat tahattoo. Yaakni'aashoot Kitikiti'sh, Hasinai, Na i sha micha Ndee, Numunuu micha Cauigu' Iyaakni'attoo.

Chikashsha oklaat onahmat inchipota alhiha holissaapisa' pilachittoo. Naahollimanompa' ithana'ni bannattoo. Pomanompa'at impállaminatookookya kaniya'ookya iláyya'shakmat Chikashsha ilittimanompohóli katihma. 1970 paafka Chikashsha sipóngni' alhihaat Chikashsha himitta'at Chikashshanompa' ikanompo'lo imahooba. Haatokoot dictionary aachika holissochit ishtaya'na kanilahoot chipota himitta' ithanachit ishtayattoo, aachi.



Image 1: Map of the Chickasaw Treaty Sessions & Removal Routes of Chickasaw Indians, *Chickasaw Nation GeoSpatial Information, 22 February 2012*

The contemporary Chickasaw Nation is 7,648 square miles and is in what is currently south-central Oklahoma. Of over 70,000 Chickasaw citizens, 28% live within the boundaries of the Chickasaw Nation, 31% live in Oklahoma outside of the Nation, and 41% live elsewhere in the world (personal communication with Chickasaw Nation Tribal Government Services). Chikashsha okla were not originally from this place. The lands gifted to Posipóngni', our Chickasaw ancestors, by Aba' Binni'li', The One Who Sits Above, are in the southeast. In 1830, US President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act, which forced Chikashsha, Choctaw, Muscogee (Creek), Seminole, and Cherokee

peoples, and people and families of African descent enslaved by these Nations,¹ to leave these southeastern homelands. *Posipóngni'* arrived in Indian Territory, to the homelands of the Kitikiti'sh (Wichita), Hasinai (Caddo), Na i sha and Ndee (Apache), N̄m̄m̄n̄n̄u (Comanche) and Cáuigù (Kiowa). What was once called Indian Territory is now called Oklahomma' (Oklahoma), meaning red people in the Choctaw and Chickasaw languages.

Removal and other efforts of colonization eroded the relationships of Chikashsha okla to our Homeland and disrupted our kinship system of relationship to one another. Over time and for a variety of reasons—including English-only schooling, intermarriage with non-Chikashsha, and economic depression—many people stopped speaking Chikashshanompa' (for a full discussion of factors contributing to language shift, see Chew, 2016; Davis, 2018; Hinson, 2019). Lokosh has described the late 1960s and early 1970s as the nadir of the language. *Pomanompa'*, once a strong and beautiful tree, was now a stump. Those who cared deeply for the language grew concerned and began to tend to the withering tree.

3. POSIPÓNGNAAT ACHÓNNA'CHITTOOK: OUR OLD ONES PERSISTED

Chikashsha alhihaat ittimanompoli aaissa ki'yokittook. Chikashsha sipóngni'at imanompa' imaabahánci bíyyi'kanattook. Mako'no imaabahánci katihma. Pomanompa'at ikshoka'chi imahoobookya ki'yokittook. Anompa'at tibi' kolofa' chohmittook. Ittonchololit ishtayattook.

In the following sections, we introduce some of the people who contributed to early Chikashshanompa' revival and their work. From their efforts, new shoots emerged and reached “out toward the sun, the air, the rain—toward life—ittonchololit ishtayattook. ‘The new growth from that tree had begun.’” (Hinson, 2019, p. 92).

3.1 A CHICKASAW DICTIONARY (HUMES & HUMES, 1972)

Vinnie May “Sadie” Humesat 1903aash Coatsworth, Hattak Api'ma' *lyaakni'ako* alattook. Chikashshanompa' anopolittook. Holissaapisa' ayahmat Naahollimanompa' ithanattook. 1956aash Reverend Jesse Humes ittihaalallittook. Reverend Humesat toksali aaissachihmat Holisso Anompa' Takohli' holissochi bannattook. Mrs. Humesat ikbannokittookookya toksali katihmattook. Haatok_o oshi' imanompoli. Oshi'at Chikashsha *iminko'* ootook. Overton James holhchifottook. Oshi'at “Sashki”, Jess hashtáwwa'at Holisso Anompa' Takohli' hashibaaholissocha'ni sabanna. Hashtáwwa'at hachimponnana *ilihimóna'* ki'yo,” aachittook. Mrs. Humes micha Reverend Humesat aalhponi'

¹ The people enslaved by these Nations were freed following the signing of the Treaties of 1866 and became known as Freedmen or Freedpeople. To learn more, see Littlefield, 1980; Roberts, 2021; and Walton-Raji, 2019.

aatoksaliitook. Mrs. Humes Reverend Humes tá'at Chikashsha oklaat Chikashshanompa' anompola'ni bannatook. Haatokoot ibaaholissochit ishtayatook.



Image 2: Jesse and Vinnie Humes with Evelyn and Overton James 1963, Wapanucka (courtesy of Chickasaw Nation)

Mrs. Vinnie May “Sadie” (James) Humes was born in Coatsworth, Indian Territory in 1903. She spoke Chikashshanompa' and learned English at school. In 1956, Mrs. Humes married Reverend Jesse Humes. He also spoke Chikashshanompa'. When he retired, Reverend Humes wanted to create a dictionary. Mrs. Humes was supportive but still working. Then, her son, Chickasaw governor Overton James told her, “Mama, I want you to help Jess make that dictionary ... you and Jess are the most qualified people and we can't wait any longer. We have to do this now” (quoted in Green, 2009, p. 172).

Mrs. Humes and Reverend Humes worked on the dictionary in their kitchen. They used Webster's dictionary and translated the words into Chikashshanompa'. They made recordings and wrote the words down by hand (Green, 2009). In 1966, Reverend Humes passed away, just after they finished their first draft. Mrs. Humes continued to work. She typed the manuscript on a typewriter and submitted it to the University of Oklahoma Press. The dictionary was published in 1972 (Humes & Humes, 1972). Entries include the English word, the Chikashshanompa' word, and a pronunciation guide. In 2001 Various Indian Peoples Publishing and the Chickasaw Historical Society (CHS) worked to produce the Chickasaw Talking Dictionary CD-ROM, using Mrs. Humes' original audio recordings (Humes, 2001).

Mrs. Humes and her husband wanted to help people learn how to speak the language. In the dictionary, Mrs. Humes wrote: "My late husband, the Reverend Jesse Humes, and I began to wonder about our heritage. Would it be forgotten? Would our culture be lost? What could we, as individuals, do to remind the young Chickasaws that they have a proud heritage?" (Humes & Humes, 1972, p. ix). Today, this dictionary continues to be used by Chikashsha okla. Recently, the Chickasaw Nation created a website (www.achickasawdictionary.com), based on the Talking Dictionary, with a searchable version of the dictionary and Mrs. Humes' original audio recordings. Chikashsha okla are thankful to Mrs. Humes and Reverend Humes for this gift.

3.2 EARLY LANGUAGE AND CULTURE EDUCATION EFFORTS



Image 3: Geraldine Greenwood (courtesy of Chickasaw Nation)

1990 paafka Yvonne Alberson micha Geraldine Greenwood táwwa'at Chikashshanompa' imaabachitook. Posipóngni'at Chikashshaat ittimanompola'ni bannattookokoot imaabachit ishtayatook. Himmita' alhihaat imaaithananatook. Kanilahoot recordings aachika micha holisso ikbitook - Jerry Imotichey, Carlin Thompson, Pauline Walker, micha Joann Ellis. Moma'at Chikashsha himitta'at Chikashshanompola'ni bannatook.

Other first language speakers of Chikashshanompa', including Yvonne Alberson and Geraldine Greenwood, continued the Humes' grassroots language efforts. They taught the language during the late 1990s at Tishomingo and Mill Creek Schools, respectively. They reached generations of Chikashsha students, both at home on the Chickasaw Nation, and beyond its borders. In the case of

Mrs. Greenwood, many of her grandchildren have become active participants in perpetuating the language and culture of our people.

During this same period the Chickasaw Nation established the Department of Cultural Resources and began active language education efforts, including contracts with Various Indian Peoples Publishing (VIP). VIP collaborated with Native speakers including Yvonne Alberson, Jerry Imotichey, and Carlin Thompson to produce Introduction to Chickasaw, a workbook and audio program designed to teach basic aspects of the language (Alberson, Thompson, & Imotichey with Howard, 1994). VIP also created a Chikashshanompa' audio program with first language speaker Pauline Walker (Walker, 1994), as well as an audio CD of Chikashsha social and ceremonial songs recorded with the Chickasaw Dance Troupe under the direction of Gary White Deer (Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma) (White Deer, 1994).

3.3 THE CHICKASAW ANALYTICAL DICTIONARY AND GRAMMAR (MUNRO & WILLMOND, 1994; 2008)



Image 4: Pamela Munro and Catherine Willmond (courtesy of Chickasaw Nation)

1977aash Reverend Oliver Nealat Pamela Munro micha Catherine Willmondᄁ ithanachittook. Mrs. Willmondᄁ McMILLAN, Oklahomma'akᄁ aamintittook. Chikashshanompa' anompoli. 1950aash Los Angelesakᄁ wihattook. Dr. Munroakookya Los Angeles attattook. UCLAakᄁ aatoksalittook. Ittapilat ishtayattook. Chikashsha alhiha' ibaatoksalittook. 1994aash Mrs. Willmond micha Dr. Munroat *Chikashshanompaat holisso toba'chi* holissochittook. Hattak Chikashsha anompolihoot holissochi

apilattook. UCLA aaimaabachittook. 2008aash *Chikashshanompa' kilanompoli'* holissochittook. Chikashsha alhihaat holissaasho aaitanahanchi biyyi'ka.

In 1977, Reverend Oliver Neal, who was Chikashsha, introduced UCLA linguist Pamela Munro to Catherine Willmond, a Chikashshanompa' speaker who moved with her family from McMillan, Oklahoma, in Marshall County to Los Angeles in the late 1950s (Munro & Willmond, 1994). The two began to work together. They also recorded Chikashsha speaking Chikashshanompa', including: Frankie Alberson, Adeline Brown, Vera Virgie Brown, Willie Byars, Onita Carnes, Mina Christie, Cora Lee Collins, Lizzie Frazier, Lorene Greenwood, Emily Howard, Mary James, Luther John, Tecumseh John, Jeff Johnson, Martha Johnson, Maybell Lacher, Caroline Milligan, Tennie Pettigrew, Eloise Pickens, Clarence Porter, Leola Porter, Flora Reed, Lee Fannie Roberts, Mary Ella Russell, Minnie Shields, Hattie Stout, Thomas Underwood, and Adam Walker. Other Chikashshanompa' speakers also contributed ideas and feedback, including: Edna Baken, Pauline Brown, Patsy Byars, Frank Christie, Jackson Collins, Joyce Cripps, Josie Crow, Pauline Fillmore, Thomas Frazier, Geraldine Greenwood, Amos James, Rose Jefferson, Annie Orr, Bill Pettigrew, Dan Pettigrew, Binum Pickens, John Puller, and Fanny Underwood. In 1994, out of this collective work, they published Chickasaw: An analytical dictionary (Munro & Willmond, 1994).

Munro and Willmond's dictionary complements and builds on the Humes' dictionary. It has a standardized orthography, includes both Chikashshanompa' and English sections, and provides detail under each entry. Entries include the Chikashshanompa' word, a definition, grammatical information and features, etymology, cross references to related forms, and, in some cases, examples. The Munro and Willmond dictionary has been invaluable to Chikashshanompa' revitalization.

After publishing the dictionary, Munro and Willmond continued to work together. They taught Chikashshanompa' linguistics courses at UCLA. The course materials they developed together became the foundation for a Chikashshanompa' grammar called Chikashshanompa' kilanompoli': Let's speak Chickasaw published in 2008 (Munro & Willmond, 2008). The grammar is accessible to non-specialists and offers lessons on Chikashshanompa' linguistic features. Both the dictionary and the grammar continue to be used in language programming and by language learners.

4. CHIKASHSHANOMPOLI: THE CHICKASAW LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

2007aash pōminko' Bill Anoatubbyat Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program ikbittook. Sipóngni', anompa' shaali' cho'maat ibaatoksalit ishtayattook. Sipóngni'at anompa' shaali' imaabachina anompa' shaali'at hattak ilahō imaabachi. Anompa' shaali'at sipóngni' imaithana makilla, sipóngni'at iklawo'shootokō. Nittak fokha'chikmā anompa' shaali'akilla'at Chikashshiyaaakni' imanompa' imaabahanchi makilla'chi. Himmak nittakā hattak alhiha' himitta' alhiha cho'mā ilimaabachi.

Nannookya pomáyya'shakma ishtilimaabachi, kanila ithana bannaho. Rosetta Stone Chickasaw, technology aachika, nannookya ithanachit iyuuzimanko.



Image 5: Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program ANOMPA logo
by Ryan RedCorn (Osage)

In 2007, Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby established the Chickasaw Language Revitalization Program (CLRP). For over a decade, the CLRP has continued the work to ensure that Chikashshanompa' will be spoken for generations to come. Currently, the CLRP has 11 full time staff and works closely with academic and tribal partners. The CLRP efforts are urgent as fewer than 50 people speak Chikashshanompa' as a first language. Below, we talk about some of the CLRP's key initiatives.

4.1 CHICKASAW LANGUAGE COMMITTEE

At the core of all the CLRP does is the Chickasaw Language Committee. Composed of 25 first language speakers, this advisory committee assists in directing all aspects of program development, including creation of anompa' himitta' (neologisms), Chikashshanompa' publications, public signage, and direction concerning language use (Hinson, 2019).

4.2 CHIKASHA ACADEMY ADULT IMMERSION PROGRAM (CAAIP)

The Chikasha Academy Adult Immersion Program (CAAIP) is a two-year, full-time language immersion program that supports small groups of adult learners (Morgan, 2017; Hinson, 2019). First piloted in 2015, CAAIP evolved a Chickasaw Master-Apprentice Program (for more about MAP, see Hinton, Vera, & Steele, 2002; Hinton et al., 2018). Because of the small group size and structured language learning model, CAAIP has been more successful than the Chickasaw MAP at retaining

learners and helping them achieve higher levels of proficiency. To date, six learners have formally participated in the CAAIP:

Ofi (Jason Burwell), *Mahli* (Sheina Wind), *Chilita* (Margeaux Smith), *Iknokchi'to'* (Kendra Farve), *Kinta* (Nicholas Underwood), and *Labaachi'* (Noah Hinson).

Graduates go on to work in the CLRP or in the Department of Culture and Humanities in various capacities (Hinson, 2019).

4.3 YOUTH CAMPS AND CLUBS

The CLRP early recognized the need for language enrichment programs and services. It began those efforts by convening youth language clubs and camps to increase younger generations' exposure to and interest in the language. Since 2009, the CLRP has hosted a monthly children's language club and an annual language camp for families. From 2009-2017, for-credit Chikashshanompa' classes were offered at Byng High School, an Oklahoma public school located within the Chickasaw Nation.

4.4 CHICKASAW PRESS PUBLICATIONS



Image 6: Chickasaw Dictionaries (courtesy of Chickasaw Nation)

The Chickasaw Nation operates Chickasaw Press. Founded in 2006 by Governor Bill Anoatubby and currently directed by Chikashsha author Wiley Barnes, the press tells Chikashsha stories under two imprints: Chickasaw Press publishes research and scholarship, and White Dog Press publishes fiction. The CLRP works closely with Chickasaw Press, both publishing and reviewing texts in and about the language. Some notable texts include: *Chikasha stories* (Galvin, 2011, 2012, 2013), a series of bilingual texts sharing stories from our oral tradition in both Chikashshanompa' and English;

Anompilbashsha' asilhlha' holisso: Chickasaw prayer book (Chickasaw Language Committee, 2012), a collection of prayers offered by language speakers in Chikashshanompa' and English; A concise Chickasaw dictionary (Hinson, 2015), an updated version of Mrs. and Reverend Hume's dictionary with entries also presented in the Munro and Willmond orthography; and Koni (2019), a children's book and the first monolingual Chikashshanompa' text released by the Press.

4.5 TECHNOLOGY

Image 7: ANOMPA Chickasaw Basic application, www.chickasaw.net/anompa

The Chickasaw Nation and the CLRP have long used technology for language learning and teaching. The free ANOMPA Chickasaw Basic application for web (www.chickasaw.net/anompa) and iOS was released in 2009. It includes several word lists (such as animals, kinship, and kid's phrases) with audio recordings. Also freely accessible, chickasaw.tv is a video-rich platform that centers around Chikashsha okla and offers language content. This content includes interviews with and profiles of speakers and CLRP staff and language lessons. In 2016, Chickasaw Nation released the first level of Rosetta Stone Chickasaw, an online self-paced course and app for learning Chikashshanompa'. Rosetta Stone Chickasaw is discussed in more detail below.

These initiatives have led to an increase in the number of Chikashsha engaging in language revitalization. In 2015, about three percent of citizens were involved in language classes, camps, clubs,

and other language learning activities. As of 2021, the number has increased to about ten percent of citizens who are learning Chikashshanompa' in some form. Roughly a dozen of these learners are emerging as new highly proficient speakers of the language.

5. CHIKASHSHA OKLAAT INTALI' LOPI'A POMANOMPA' AAITHANA: CHICKASAWS USE TECHNOLOGY TO LEARN OUR LANGUAGE

Chikashshiyaakni' micha Rosetta Stoneat ittapilatook. Rosetta Stone Chickasaw ibaaikbitook. Hattak alhihaat alhpila' imatook Rosetta Stone Chickasaw ikbikat. Rosetta Stone Chickasaw ishonakmā Chikashshanompa' ishtithana'at lawakat áyya'sha. Holba' kanalli ishpisa'hi bíyyi'ka. Anompa' ishithana'hi bíyyi'ka. Chikashshanompa' imaabahlcha'hi bíyyi'ka. Rosetta Stone Chickasawat chokmahookya hattak alhihaat chaffa bíyyi'kakmat ittimanompola'hi bíyyi'ka ki'yo. Hattak alhihaat ittimanompoli banna. Hattak alhihaat ibaaithana. Kana_ila' mat Chikashshanompa' ithanakā tali' lopi' ishtibaa-anompola'hi bíyyi'ka. Chikasha Academy Adult Immersion Programaak hattak_iloat Rosetta Stone Chickasaw aaimaithanacha nannanoli' ittimanoli. 2021kmā Byng holisso pisa'at holissaapisa' aithana'chi.

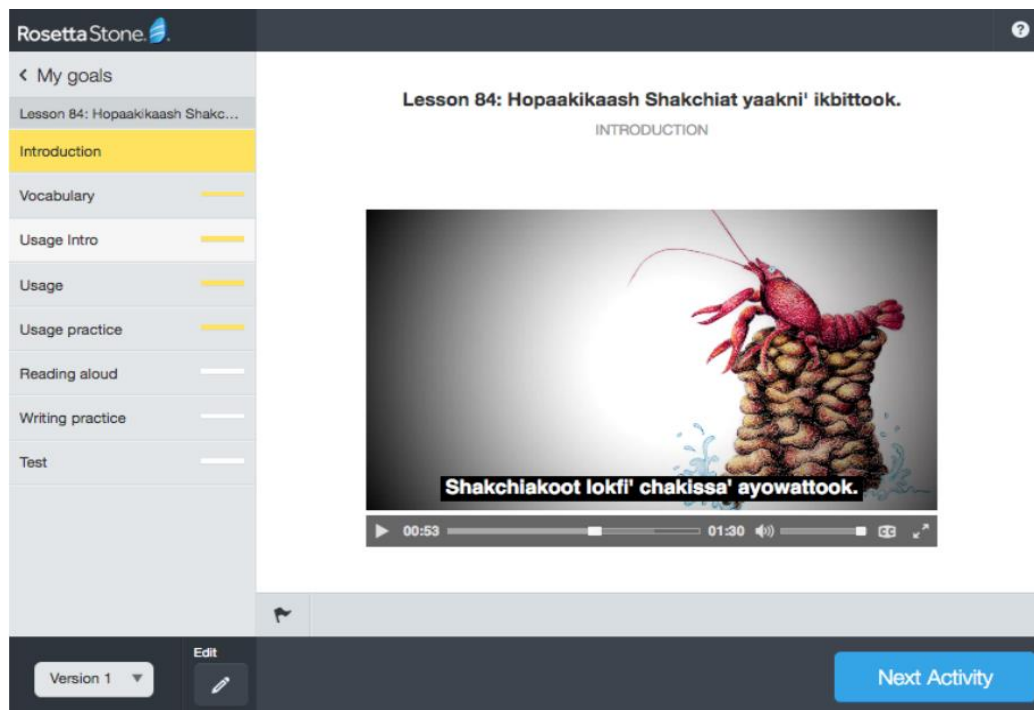


Image 8: Rosetta Stone Chickasaw

Rosetta Stone Chickasaw is a partnership between the Chickasaw Nation and language learning software company Rosetta Stone. It is the first comprehensive, multi-level language learning program created by the community to support the development of new communicative speakers. It is accessible

online and free of charge to Chickasaw Nation citizens regardless of where they live. Others can purchase the program (<https://chickasawpress.com/Store/Other/Rosetta-Stone.aspx>).

Rosetta Stone Chickasaw has four levels, each containing 40 one-hour language lessons. Each lesson contains an introductory video fully in the language, vocabulary flashcards, a supplemental video with more information about a particular topic related to the language or culture, direct grammatical instruction in English, multiple choice review/assessment, and optional reading, writing, and speaking practice.

The development process is guided by a speaker committee composed of Rose Shields Jefferson, Pauline Brown, Luther John, the late Jerry Imotichey, and the late Stanley Smith; Chickasaw Nation leadership including Secretary Lisa John and Executive Officer Lori Hamilton; and a team of linguists and educators Dr. Kari A. B. Chew, Dr. Juliet Morgan, Lokosh (Dr. Joshua D. Hinson), and Marion Bittinger from Rosetta Stone. The process also includes work with Chikashsha actors Kara Berst, Neveah Smith, Jason Eyachabbe, Jeriah Eyachabbe, and Rose Shields Jefferson, who star in the introduction videos. Levels 1-3 were released in 2016, 2018, and 2019, respectively. Level 4 is in development.

While the program is designed to support independent study, Chikashshanompa' is a language that lives in the relationships that people have to one another. Several efforts have emerged that reflect peoples' work to take language back off the computer/smartphone and to actively use it with others.

5.1 STUDY GROUPS

Independent study groups have emerged on social media, created and led by Chickasaw citizens. We Speak Chickasaw, a Facebook language learning group created by Chickasaw citizen Sherrie Begay has 1,000 members. Sherrie apprenticed with first language speaker JoAnn Ellis and additional language speaker Brandon White Eagle and now teaches approximately 40 students a week, using Rosetta Stone Chickasaw as a springboard leading to conversational proficiency. Additionally, five graduates of her courses are now teaching their own online community study groups. During the COVID-19 pandemic Lokosh has taken a similar approach to adult language education in offering two online grammar-intensive courses for Chickasaw Nation leadership and advanced students at large. Additionally, he offers a weekly conversational class based on Rosetta Stone Chickasaw for Chickasaw Nation leadership.

5.2 CHIKASHA ACADEMY ADULT IMMERSION PROGRAM (CAAIP)

Rosetta Stone Chickasaw is also being used in the Chikasha Academy Adult Immersion Program. Lessons based on the content in each lesson are scaffolded through storytelling, leading to advanced conversational proficiency in familiar environments. Based on the experiences of the workbook and

story-focused approach of the Adult Salish Language Program, under the direction of Chaney Bell on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana, CAAIP curriculum builds off each lesson in Rosetta Stone Chickasaw, ultimately reusing the vocabulary from the product to craft new stories designed to lead to conversational proficiency. Since March 2020, CAAIP has used this approach three days a week via Zoom. This virtual approach will continue through summer 2021, with a projected return to in-person learning in fall 2021.

5.3 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

An “expansion curriculum” for Levels 1 and 2 of Rosetta Stone Chickasaw is being developed by Kari A. B. Chew with input and feedback from Lokosh, Mahli, Iknokchi'to', Delaney Lippard (Byng High School), Susan Lewis (Chickasaw citizen and K-12 educator), and the Rosetta Stone Chickasaw speaker committee. This expansion curriculum is for use in Oklahoma public high schools and students will be able to earn world language credit required for graduation. Currently, one local partner school, Byng High School, plans to pilot the curriculum during the 2021-2022 school year. The curriculum includes time in Rosetta Stone Chickasaw paired with collaborative activities that support students in using the language they have learned with each other. Additionally, students learn about the work of Indigenous Language Revitalization, exploring careers and college majors related to language education and linguistics and the work that other Indigenous communities are undertaking around the world.

For the Chickasaw Nation, technology has long played an important role in language learning and teaching efforts. Asynchronous learning programs like Rosetta Stone Chickasaw are accessible to Chikashsha okla who live all over the world and do not have access to in person language education spaces. In addition to accessing the language, Chikashsha okla want to connect to each other around the language. By forming communities, telling stories, learning collectively, and otherwise supporting each other, Chikashsha okla demonstrate remarkable agency in ensuring the continuance of Chikashshanompa'.

6. NANNAHQ KANIHMICYA CHIKASHSHA OKLAAT POMANOMPA' ANOMPOHQLI

BÍYYI'KA'CHI: NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS CHICKASAW PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS SPEAK OUR LANGUAGE

COVID-19at abikoppolo'. Abikoppolo'at ilibaatoksali inkatablimankō. Chikashshaat technology aachika yuuzi bíyyi'ka. Websites, social media, email aachika ishtilimanqli Chikashsha moma'hō. Haatokoot technology pomaashtokoot ishtilithahánachi bíyyi'ka. CAAIP, chipota inclubs, family camp aachika Zoomakō aaitafama'hi bíyyi'kookya Rosetta Stone Chickasaw ishtitoksala'hi ki'yo. Pōsipóngni' iicho'maat ilittihopaaki makílla COVID-19at bíyyi'kahootokō. Yammāt yahmikiyi. limōmakat

COVID-19 relief aachika ilintoksalit kanihmikma anompa' ilimaabacha'hi biyyi'ka ki'yo. Vaccine'at pomaashakmat sipongi' alikchi' abiikapiisachi' cho'ma' tingba' ilima. Nittak fokhakma anowa' ilittafama'hi biyyi'ka'chimanko.

At the time of writing, the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed or altered much of our language work. As a Nation, we are fortunate that we have already made great investments in technology for language learning and teaching. This has allowed in person work to pivot online more easily.

Initiatives like the CAAIP, kids' clubs, and family camps are taking place on Zoom. Still, there have been challenges. Other projects, like Rosetta Stone Chickasaw, are postponed for the protection of our Elder speakers and community. Many language program staff have been reassigned to support emergency response efforts, which has also impacted the CLRP's capacity for language work. The Chickasaw Nation is prioritizing public health first and foremost. As vaccines arrive, the Nation has prioritized language speakers among health care providers and frontline workers. We look forward to a time when we can gather together to speak Chikashshanompa'.

Chikashsha okla live all over the world and, in some ways, the shift online has made the language more accessible. For this reason, we anticipate that some adaptations to enable language work during the pandemic will remain into the future. For example, the Rosetta Stone Chickasaw expansion curriculum was originally intended solely for in-person classrooms but has now been adapted for use in both in-person and online learning environments so that it can meet the needs of more students. Further, during the early months of the pandemic, there was a notable increase in people requesting Rosetta Stone Chickasaw accounts. While Chikashshanompa' learners have long used video conferencing technology to connect with each other, synchronous online learning group meetings have increased and will likely continue to support both experienced and new learners.

Before he passed on, Jerry Imotichey reflected that the efforts of the CLRP and those especially committed to learning the language gave him hope. He stated of emerging speakers of Chikashshanompa', "they'll be the ones to carry it on" (Chew, 2016). Other Elder speakers, some of whom have also left us, echoed his sentiments. As language learners, we feel an immense sense of responsibility to our Ancestors, our Elder language teachers, each other, and to future generations of Chikashsha who will also carry the language.

Pomanompaat billi'yacha billi'ya Chikashsha alhihaat Chikashshanompa' anompoli katihmahootoko.

7. ACHÓNNA'CHI: KEEP ON GOING

As individuals who have worked for many years to reclaim Chikashshanompa' and to support language revitalization efforts across Nations, we conclude with words of encouragement: achónna'chi—keep on going! The journey of language reclamation is hard, but it is also fulfilling.

We ended the previous section with the Chikashshanompa' words “Pomanompaat bílli'yacha bílli'ya Chikashsha alhihaat Chikashshanompa' anompoli katihmahootoko.” In English, this sentence means “Our language is forever and ever because Chickasaws are still speaking Chickasaw.” If we, as Indigenous peoples, continue to love and to use our languages, pomanompaat bílli'yacha bílli'ya—our languages will be forever and ever.

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