

**Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera:  
Creating a Teaching Manual for Kanyen'kéha Adult Immersion Programming**

By

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BA (Honours) First Nations Studies, Western University, 2013

A Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

In the Faculty of Education, Indigenous Education  
University of Victoria

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We acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Xʷsepsəm/Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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## Abstract

The purpose of this project is to support the seldomly discussed demographic of adult immersion, namely the instructors. The question asked is: How can we best assist current and prospective instructors of Kanyen'kéha adult immersion schools and how can we make it easier for them to use the available pedagogical materials (the "textbook") in terms of timeline, sequencing, and teaching methods? To answer this question, I created a teacher manual, *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera*, designed to accompany the textbook of the first year immersion program of Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa. The 1<sup>st</sup> Year Program textbook contains 1000 immersion classroom hours of content and is divided into individual units of cumulative content. *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera* makes the textbook more accessible for instructors by telling them when and how to teach features and vocabulary, what classroom practices to use to maximize results, how to run drills in the classroom, how to provide corrective feedback, and other useful information essential to running an adult immersion program. This project establishes the need for this How-To guide for instructors at Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa, provides an analysis of the manual, including how it came to be and how it can be improved upon in the future, and discusses its value for current and future program replication efforts.

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## Acknowledgments

I could not have completed this project without the help of my family, friends, and academic supporters and I would like to send my heartfelt thanks to all of you. First and foremost, to my family and my community of Kenhtè:ke and the support that they have provided to me my entire life and to my wife Kanenhstiyohstha and her family who have taken such good care of me while I have been out here in Ohswé:ken.

To the late Karihwenhawe'kenha, Kawennanoron Procunier, the late Kanatawakhon'kenha, Tehota'keraton, Owennatekha, Tehahente, Oherohskon, and Karonhyawake who have taught me over the years and gave me my language.

To my co-workers at Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa, Holeigh, Karonhyoroks, Yenonhkwa'tsherayenteri, Nikarahkwa'a, and Tawit who have kept everything in operation while I've been rushing to finish this project. And, special mention to Kaien'kwinehtha, Otsitsia, Karonhiiotha, and Taiawentonti who jumped in to help my class on numerous occasions.

To my Uvic cohort, your support and friendship has been invaluable during this entire MILR experience. Completing this entire degree online during the pandemic was not easy, and I appreciate all of you and I look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

And to my supervisors Sonya and Ewa, your support and fast responses, especially these last few months, allowed me to finish this project. I also wish to extend a special mention to Megan Lukaniec for getting me organized and helping me develop this project in

the early stages and to Nicki Benson for always offering help with editing and tech support over the years despite being very busy.

Nyawen'kó:wa sewakwé:kon, nok ayá:wenhs tsi sewa'nikonhrayén:ta's tsi niyó:re  
takwaya'takénhas. Éhtho'k nikawén:nake.

## Introduction

*Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenniítshera* is a Teaching Manual for the 1<sup>st</sup> Year Program of Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa (referred to hereafter as OK), an adult Kanyen'kéha (Mohawk Language) immersion program located in Ohsweken, ON. The purpose of this project is to address the need for a Teaching Manual within the field of Indigenous Language Revitalization (ILR), to support the seldomly discussed demographic of adult immersion, namely the instructors. The 1<sup>st</sup> Year Program contains extensive pedagogical materials that are used by the instructors. However, there are few resources to support the instructors' use of these materials in their teaching. As instructors are an essential part of OK, and therefore an essential part of successful intergenerational transmission of Kanyen'kéha in Ohsweken, supporting immersion instructors equates to supporting language revitalization.

The question is: *How can we best assist current and prospective instructors of Kanyen'kéha adult immersion schools and how can we make it easier for them to use the pedagogical materials (the "textbook") in terms of timeline, sequencing, and teaching methods?*

To answer this question, I have created a Teaching Manual, which will provide effective interpretation of current OK curriculum and allow for more efficient program replication. Catering to the major challenges outlined below for instructors of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year program, the Teaching Manual provides a unit-by-unit breakdown of timeline, sequencing of vocabulary and features, as well as an overview of teaching methods and drills to better support the decision-making process of instructors. As well, this teaching manual can interpret the sequencing of the foundational developments, guide instructors on utilization

of effective forms of instruction, corrective feedback, and assessment, and allow new programs to better understand the program curriculum, therefore making the replication process more efficient.

In this project I include an analysis of the speaking demographic of Kanyen'kéha and its vitality, the role of OK in the revitalization of Kanyen'kéha and the challenges of its operation. This is followed by discussion of how *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* addresses these challenges through an analysis of its creation process, current version, and how it can be improved upon in future versions.

*Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* is developed to specifically cater to the 1<sup>st</sup> Year Program of Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa's curriculum and its derivations, to best assist teachers in their execution of the curriculum. This Teaching Manual is not presented as a solution to our language revitalization efforts as a whole, nor does it provide answers to all of the many challenges faced by immersion teachers in general. One very important topic that is not included in this version of this write-up is the trauma-informed teaching that inherently comes with teaching Onkwehonwe'néha (our languages) to our own people. This is not a hobby language that we are learning for fun or out of interest, this is a serious undertaking that has catastrophic consequences if we fail, the emotional weight of which is carried every day by instructors and language learners. At immersion schools located within our communities, instructors are perhaps the group most impacted by the negative consequences of this emotional burden, carrying not only their own trauma but also dealing face-to-face with the surfacing of their students' trauma, and that of their community. This Teaching Manual does not address this much-needed area of support for

teachers as that is another project within itself and goes far beyond the parameters of this one.

I will start this paper by locating myself and my work within the field of ILR, as is customary of my Nation and community. By doing so, I will also provide the context to what has led to the creation of this project. Secondly, I will provide a general overview about the vitality of Kanyen'kéha, the role that adult immersion plays in its revitalization, and also discuss the methodologies and curriculum of Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa. Thirdly, I will also address some of the key challenges of teaching adult immersion and demonstrate the need of this Teaching Manual as a supportive resource to address these challenges. Next, I will provide an overview of the Teaching Manual and define its role in the bigger picture of ILR, including the methods used during the creation process. Lastly, I will provide the conclusion of this project and discuss the limitations of the current version, and most importantly, the next steps to improving the project.

## Situating myself

Rohahiyo Jordan Brant niyónkyats, Kenhtè:ke nitewaké:non, táhnon Kanyen'kehá:ka niwakonhwentsyò:ten. Eh nón:we wa'katehyá:ron', nok ó:ni eh nithoné:non ne akhwá:tsire. Greg'kénha nok Gail ronwatí:yats ne yonkyén:'a, táhnon ne yónkhsosha ne Ron nok Deanna Brant ne Rake'ni'kénha nonká:ti, nok Doug'kénha nok Lola'kénha Doxtator nake'nihsténha nonká:ti. Ne ronónha, nok ó:ni ne Kenhtekehró:non, ne wa'onkeyehyá:ron'.

Wa'onkya'takénha', tahóntkahwe' nakwé:kon tsi nahò:ten tewakatonhwentsyó:ni, táhnon eh ne karihón:ni tsi wakatera'swí:yo tsi kkwényes ken' nikarihò:ten aonkyó:ten'.

My name is Rohahiyo Jordan Brant, I am Kanyen'kehá:ka from Kenhtè:ke (Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory). I was born and raised there, and that is where my family is from. My parents are Greg and Gail Brant, and my grandparents on my dad's side are Ron and Deanna Brant, and the late Doug and Lola Doxtator on my mom's side. It was them, as well as my community, who raised me. They supported me, provided everything that I needed, and it is due to their efforts that I'm so fortunate to be in this line of work.

I was not raised as a speaker, and neither were my parents or grandparents. The last first language speakers in my family, in my lifetime, were my great grandmothers Ella Clause'kénha and Ruby Maracle'kénha, who both passed away when I was young.

Although I wasn't a speaker, I was fortunate to be taught Kanyen'kéha in elementary school by Kawennanoron Sherry Procnier and the late Karihwenhawe Dorothy Lazore'kénha.

Although they were only scheduled to teach for a limited time each day, it was really through their efforts that I was able to hear language, learn language, and believe that it would be possible to become a speaker. Significant within the scope and purpose of this

project is the curriculum that they had available to them at the time, which was largely phrases and greetings, numbers, colours, and other nouns. In the next section of this paper, an analysis of the structure of the language will provide context as to why this curriculum would have been extremely challenging for instructors to utilize effectively to create speakers. It was their sincere effort and passion that really left a lasting impression on me, and it was not until my last year of university that this would be rekindled for me.

I left home for Western University in 2009, and it was there that I pursued an undergraduate degree in First Nations Studies with hopes of becoming a lawyer like my dad. I was fortunate to be given the opportunity to pursue a university education, and I had viewed the study of Law as a way to assist back home with land claim negotiations and traditional harvesting rights. In my fourth and final year of my undergraduate degree, I was fortunate to have a Kanyen'kéha class with Kanatawakhon'kenha, who was also from Kenhtè:ke, wrote numerous books and dictionaries, and who was also the developer of the Root-Word Method (which will be discussed much more in depth later in the paper). We were having a talk after class and he asked me what my plans were next year. I told him that I wanted to go to Law School and that my LSAT scores would be very important, to which he responded with, "That's stupid. We don't need more lawyers, we need more speakers. Go and take my friend Brian Maracle's program in Six Nations called Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa and you'll be fluent in two years." I walked straight down the hall to the then Director of First Nation's Studies, Dr. Susan Hill and asked her about the program. She not only supported the idea, but also offered to let me stay with her family free of charge so that I would have a place to live. I moved out to Six Nations a day before classes started, and studied there

from 2013-2015, entering as a Novice-Low speaker and graduating as an Advanced-Low speaker (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages [ACTFL], 2012). Upon graduating I was offered a job there as a teaching assistant.

I worked solely as an instructor at Onkwawenna from 2015-2022, at which point I was appointed to Program Director and have also continued to teach the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year program. During this time, the curriculum of OK (1<sup>st</sup> Year and 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Textbooks) has been in a constant state of flux due to the need to create speakers at a faster and more efficient rate without hitting a point of diminishing returns (too much or too little content inhibiting the rate in which students attain fluency). This revision of the textbooks occurs every year during the 3-month summer interim session between cohorts, and it involves the entire teaching staff reviewing the fluency results of the previous year, discussing the challenges of each individual unit, the overall tempo or timeline established for each unit, and the drills/activities used in each unit. This curricular revision is therefore entirely results-based and is implemented only by the individuals who are instructors at OK with the goal of achieving stronger fluency results in the next cohort. For future instructors of OK, future replications of OK, and other interested language programs, the documentation of the current curricular sequencing, tempo and timelines, and delivery and sequencing of teaching practices could be a useful framework, and it has therefore led to the creation of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera: Teaching Manual*. To best understand how this Teaching Manual can be useful, we must first understand the state of Kanyen'kéha and the role of immersion school programming in its revitalization.

## Kanyen'kéha & Adult Immersion

### 3.1 Kanyen'kéha language context

Kanyen'kéha is the language of the Kanyen'kehá:ka, the Keepers of the Eastern Door of the Rotinonhsyón:ni (Haudenosaunee Confederacy). The most recent expansive survey conducted on the number of current living speakers estimates that there are currently 562 L1 speakers and 77 L2 speakers living throughout the 6 Kanyen'kehá:ka communities. This is indicated by the chart below:

**Table 7**

*Evaluating Kanien'kéha vitality in Kanien'kehá:ka territories 2021*

Language Vitality Evaluative Factors		Ahkwesáhsne	Kahnawá:ke	Kanehsatá:ke	Ohswé:ken	Tyendinaga	Wáhta	Total
<b>Vitality Metric Rating</b>	GIDS	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
	UNESCO	Severely Endangered	Severely Endangered	Severely Endangered	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	Critically Endangered	Severely Endangered
	EGIDS	8a Moribund	8a Moribund	8a Moribund	8b Nearly Extinct	8b Nearly Extinct	8b Nearly Extinct	8a Moribund
<b>Speakers on Territory<sup>1</sup></b>	L1 Speakers (advanced proficiency or higher)	350	150	60	0	0	2	562
	L2 Speakers (advanced proficiency or higher)	10	40	5	15	6	1	77
<b>Proportion of Speakers</b>	On territory	12,896 (2.8%)	7,950 (2.4%)	1,371 (4.7%)	5,535 (0.3%)	2,176 (0.3%)	157 (1.9%)	30,058 (2.1%)
	All membership	18,725 (1.9%)	10,905 (1.7%)	2,503 (2.6%)	11,259 (0.1%)	9,599 (0.06%)	796 (0.4%)	53,787 (1.2%)
<b>Intergenerational Transmission</b>	L1 Speaking Families	9	4	1	0	0	0	14
	L1 Children of L2 Parents	5	11	3	5	2	0	26

*Figure 1: (DeCaire, 2023, p. 44)*

Significantly, this chart indicates the role of L2 speakers raising L1 speakers. As indicated, there is a correlation between L2 speakers and L1 children, and the higher the number of L2 speakers, the higher number of L1 children being raised. This Intergenerational Transmission of language is primarily done by young adult L2 speakers, who must attain at least an Advanced-Low level of proficiency to raise L1 speakers of the language. This level of proficiency has been chosen as the program goal as speakers at this level can function completely in the target language in their everyday lives and are

therefore able to raise children in the language (ACTFL, 2012). The need for young adults to become proficient speakers in a timely manner is therefore critical for the survival of the language, and addressing this need is the sole purpose of adult immersion programs. A major site of full-time adult immersion is Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa.

### **3.2 Context for the project: Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa**

Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa (OK) is a full-time Kanyen'kéha adult immersion program located in Ohsweken, Ontario. Since its creation in 1999, OK has functioned with the Mission Statement *To revive and strengthen the Mohawk language at Grand River the way it used to be when our grandparents were young*. OK works to achieve this by admitting annual new cohorts of 12-15 students, with little to no language background, and creating proficient speakers (Advanced-Low) over 2000 classroom hours (1000 in 1<sup>st</sup> Year and 1000 in 2<sup>nd</sup> Year). This is achieved through intensive immersion, the Root-Word Method (RWM; Green & Maracle 2018), and the following of a structured curriculum. The intensive immersion environment is essential to the success of each cohort, and the maintenance of this environment is a challenge for both staff and students alike.

To create proficient speakers within the limited timeframe of 2000 contact hours, OK staff and students must maximize their time in the classroom. This maximization of time has been dubbed within the program as “time on task” – time spent speaking, hearing, and working in the language. All classroom time is therefore potential “time on task”, and this includes all time outside of formal lessons as well, such as lunch and breaks. Here is the breakdown of a standard day at OK:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Goal</b>
<b>9:00 - 9:30</b>	<b>Opening &amp; Story routine</b>	<b>Warm-up &amp; Formative Assessment</b>
9:30 -10:15	Lesson	Introduction to Daily Lesson
<b>10:15 -10:30</b>	<b>Break</b>	<b>Informal speaking time</b>
10:30 – 12:00	Continuation of Lesson & Supporting Drills	Foster understanding of target material
<b>12:00 – 12:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Informal speaking time</b>
12:30 – 1:45	Continuation of Lesson & Supporting Drills	Foster understanding of target material
<b>1:45 – 2:00</b>	<b>Break</b>	<b>Informal speaking time</b>
2:00 – 3:00	Supporting Drills & Informally start next day's lesson	Foster understanding of target material & informally start next lesson

Figure 2: "Time on task"

This figure demonstrates the generation of "time on task" throughout a standard day. The next paragraph will demonstrate the method of instruction in the classroom, the RWM, but bolded in this table is the "Informal speaking time" that occurs in the classroom. At OK, there is a curriculum that must be followed very strictly to give students the foundations of the language required to become lifelong learners of the language. One of the key components of the curriculum is the vocabulary. "Active Vocabulary" is in the textbook and is essential for the foundational and progressive development of students' vocabulary. This vocabulary is the focal point of all formal assessment. All other vocabulary is categorized as "Passive Vocabulary", vocabulary that is not in the textbook, is not taught in formal lessons, but is equally as essential to the development of students' lexicons. Essentially, "Active Vocabulary" can be considered what students need to know within the scope of the program, whereas "Passive Vocabulary" is what students want to know. For

example, the first 3 weeks of class, during Unit 1, include only 2 verbs in the “textbook” – *Like* and *Know*, and therefore any other verbs outside of these 2 at this time would be considered “Passive Vocabulary”. Within the immersion environment, where students are expected to stay in the language, lunch time vocabulary such as “Pass the salt.” or “Do you know what they have in the cafeteria today?” would be examples of “Passive Vocabulary” that is not formally assessed, but it essential for fluency development and everyday classroom participation. Perhaps unique in OK’s approach, when compared to other programs, is the emphasis on the importance of the development of “Passive Vocabulary”, which is developed extensively during the “Informal speaking time” sections of the day (see timetable above). For students to properly develop both “Active Vocabulary” and “Passive Vocabulary” an immersion environment is therefore essential, to generate the required “time on task”.

### **3.3 Root-Word Method**

To maximize program time, the teaching method used at OK, as well as the curriculum development, is based on the Root-Word Method (RWM). According to DeCaire, “Kanien’kéha is much different typologically than English.... Most significantly, Kanien’kéha is often referred to as polysynthetic.” (DeCaire 2023, p. 23) This polysynthetic nature of the language means that it is largely verb-based, with an estimated +90% of the language being comprised of verbs. Verbs are created by the combinations of parts (morphemes) that join to create conjugations of these verbs. The RWM is a language teaching method that breaks down whole words into individual grammatical components, which are then used as foundations to build vocabulary. Learners become well versed in patterns, as opposed to

learning thousands of individual words, therefore allowing for rapid exponential acquisition of vocabulary and grammatical concepts (Green & Maracle, 2018, p. 146). As further outlined by Green and Maracle, “The main goal of RWM is to grammaticize a polysynthetic Indigenous language to reduce it to a simplified form in order to teach it to willing learners in second-language or immersion programs” (p. 147). RWM is utilized at OK as a way to maximize results with minimal effort; instead of learning on a word-by-word basis, students learn a few patterns that allow for not only the acquisition of massive blocks of vocabulary, but also fundamental patterns and grammatical concepts that progressively build throughout the program to create a toolkit for lifelong learning after students have graduated.

Here is an example of a beginning RWM progression:

<i>I like it</i>	<b>kenòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes me</i>	<b>wakenòn:we's</b>
<i>you like it</i>	<b>senòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes you</i>	<b>sanòn:we's</b>
<i>he likes it</i>	<b>ranòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes him</i>	<b>ronòn:we's</b>
<i>she likes it</i>	<b>yenòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes her</i>	<b>yakonòn:we's</b>
<i>it likes it</i>	<b>kanòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes it</i>	<b>yonòn:we's</b>
<i>you &amp; I like it</i>	<b>teninòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes two of us</i>	<b>yonkeninòn:we's</b>
<i>s.o. &amp; I like it</i>	<b>yakeninòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes you two</i>	<b>seninòn:we's</b>
<i>you two like it</i>	<b>seninòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes all of us</i>	<b>yonkwanòn:we's</b>
<i>two Ms like it</i>	<b>ninòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes all of you</i>	<b>sewanòn:we's</b>
<i>two Fs like it</i>	<b>keninòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes them Ms</i>	<b>rotinòn:we's</b>
<i>all you &amp; I like it</i>	<b>tewanòn:we's</b>	<i>it likes them Fs</i>	<b>yotinòn:we's</b>
<i>they &amp; I like it</i>	<b>yakwanòn:we's</b>		
<i>you all like it</i>	<b>sewanòn:we's</b>		
<i>they Ms like it</i>	<b>ratinòn:we's</b>		
<i>they Fs like it</i>	<b>kontinòn:we's</b>		
<i>I like you</i>	<b>konnòn:we's</b>	<i>you like me</i>	<b>takenòn:we's</b>
<i>I like him</i>	<b>rinòn:we's</b>	<i>you like him</i>	<b>etshenòn:we's</b>
<i>I like her</i>	<b>khenòn:we's</b>	<i>you like her</i>	<b>shenòn:we's</b>
<i>he likes me</i>	<b>rakenòn:we's</b>	<i>she likes me</i>	<b>yonkenòn:we's</b>
<i>he likes you</i>	<b>yanòn:we's</b>	<i>she likes you</i>	<b>yesanòn:we's</b>
<i>he likes him</i>	<b>ronòn:we's</b>	<i>she likes him</i>	<b>ronwanòn:we's</b>
<i>he likes her</i>	<b>shakonòn:we's</b>	<i>she likes her</i>	<b>yontatenòn:we's</b>

Figure 3: RMW Progression

This is the 40-word Admissions Test at OK. Prospective students need to memorize these words and be able to generate them without reading them. The tester asks these in a random order, in either Kanyen'kéha or in English, and the student generates the correct response. The root-word *-nòn:we's* "to like" is indicated here in bold, and the only difference between any of these words is the changing of the Pronominal Prefix. RWM uses colour-coding to help students differentiate between the Pronominal Prefixes, and there are only three colours to know: Red, Blue, and Purple. Red Prefixes indicate that an action is being performed from Someone to Something i.e. I like the dog, you like the dog, he likes the dog, etc. Blue Prefixes indicate that the action is being performed from Something to

Someone i.e. The dog likes me, the dog likes you, the dog likes him, etc. Purple Prefixes indicate that the action is being performed from Someone to Someone i.e. I like you, you like me, I like her, etc.

The next step for students is to negate these 40 words (which are equivalent to sentences in English), for example:

- *Yonkenòn:we's* – She likes me.
- *Yah teyonkenòn:we's* – She doesn't like me.

After applying negation to the 40 words with some minor changes, students have now doubled their vocabulary.

The next step is then to make these sentences into questions, and then negated questions:

- *Yonkenòn:we's* – She likes me.
- *Yah teyonkenòn:we's* – She doesn't like me.
- *Yonkenòn:we's ken?* – Does she like me?
- *Yah ken teyonkenòn:we's?* – Doesn't she like me?

Once these patterns are established, new root-words can be inputted, such as - *norónhkwa* (love). This verb fits the same pattern as *-nòn:we's* and can now be conjugated in the same way:

-nòn:we's (Like)		-norónhkwa (Love)	
Yonkenòn:we's	She likes me.	Yonkenorónhkwa	She loves me
Yah teyonkenòn:we's	She doesn't like me.	Yah teyonkenorónhkwa	She doesn't love me.
Yonkenòn:we's ken?	Does she like me?	Yonkenorónhkwa ken?	Does she love me?
Yah ken teyonkenòn:we's?	Doesn't she like me?	Yah ken teyonkenorónhkwa?	Doesn't she love me?

The progression outlined above has learners going from 40 words to 320 words very quickly, by combining verb components in different ways (40 words x 2 (negation) x 2 (question) x 2 (roots)). The patterns illustrated above are the first rules learned at OK, and they are also the first tools to be added to students' toolkits. As mentioned previously, with only 2000 contact hours available through the 2 Year Program, students must become lifelong learners of the language. To do so, they must learn how to learn the language in this pattern-based approach and be able to continue to do so independently after they finish the program. For the majority of the class demographic, learning the language in this manner is a new endeavour that requires the development of a brand new skillset to best absorb the content and learn the required patterns. Following the textbooks created for the OK program, students become not only good orators, but also readers and writers of the language. As well, due to the use of RWM, students also become talented problem solvers, able to face the linguistic challenges of continuing their lifelong language learning. RWM

therefore provides new students the tools and skills to begin their language learning, complete the 2 Year Program, and continue their language learning afterwards.

**3.4 Root-Word Method and relationship with Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa Curriculum**

At OK, RWM is the foundation of the curriculum. As mentioned previously, the vocabulary required for fluency is both “Active Vocabulary” (in the textbook) and “Passive Vocabulary” (everything else in the language). During the daily morning story routine, breaks, and lunch times, “Passive Vocabulary” is heard and acquired during class time on a needs-basis due to the immersion environment. “Active Vocabulary”, however, needs to be explicitly taught by instructors and is essential for a student to succeed in the program. This vocabulary is organized in the textbooks on a unit-by-unit basis, with each unit setting up the scaffolding to begin the next. Each unit is designated as either a *Foundational Unit* (new foundations and concepts) or as a *Companion Unit* (review of the former unit with different perspectives and vocabulary to reinforce the intended foundations). *Foundational Units* are generally 3-4 weeks in length, and *Companion Units* are generally 2 weeks in length.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Year Program at OK currently follows this design:

Unit Name	Sample Sentence from Test
Unit 1: Basic Verb Conjugation & Sentence Structure (Foundational)	I like her and I know that she likes me too.
Unit 2: Kinship Terms (Foundational)	My mother and father love each other very much.

Unit 3: Basic Tense Conjugations (Companion)	I used to know Joe when I was a kid, but I don't know him anymore.
Unit 4: Being Here & There (Foundational)	She was at the mall last night and she will be at the movie theatre tonight.
Unit 5: Stative Verbs (Companion)	That boy was really sad all day yesterday, but we are all happy that he is in a good mood today.
Unit 6: Active Verbs (Foundational)	Those young men didn't work out yesterday, they studied at the library.
Unit 7: Te-Verbs and T-Verbs (Companion)	We asked them to tidy up the house, but they didn't respond.
Unit 8: Nouns (Foundational)	Did your dad really buy 3 brand new cars last week?
Unit 9: Food (Companion)	Those kids don't like healthy food, they only eat pizza and hamburgers.
Unit 10: Locations in the Environment (Foundational)	There is a big house on the north side of that meadow.
Unit 11: Body Parts (Companion)	Everyone in my family has long arms, long legs, and big ears.
Unit 12: Animals, Trees, Insects, and Birds (Companion)	Pickerel lay their eggs in the spring and are blind in one eye.

To hold students accountable to learning this, there is a summative assessment performed at the end of each unit that tests the students' comprehension and ability to use the vocabulary learned throughout the unit. "Passive Vocabulary" is not present on these assessments, which allows students to focus solely on the target content of each unit. As a polysynthetic language with so many variables and potential vocabulary to teach, this essentially gives students and instructors road markers for fluency goals and maximizes "time on task" with achievable goals and focused, deliberate instruction.

### **3.5 Root-Word Method & Indigenous Language Revitalization**

A major site of RWM is Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa (OK). Significant in the context of describing RWM is that none of the teaching staff at this site are L1 speakers; all teachers involved with the program are proficient L2 speakers of the language. As the instructors are graduates of the program, they are therefore well versed in RWM as well as Kanyen'kéha (Green & Maracle, 2018, p. 150). OK also relies on the use of various books and text materials, and students are therefore expected to become proficient speakers as well as readers and writers of the language (Green & Maracle, 2018, p. 148). When compared to two other immersion teaching methods of language, Mentor-Apprentice Program (MAP; Hinton et al., 2018) and Where Are Your Keys? (WAYK; Gardner & Ciotti, 2018), this emphasis on written materials is a prime example of the method's uniqueness within the field of ILR. This is also the primary difference between RWM and MAP and WAYK, as neither of the two latter methods relies so heavily on reading and writing to deliver material. Although there are certainly materials developed by the MAP program, the method is "orally based and utilizes immersion strategies in the normal settings of daily life" (Hinton et al.,

2018, p. 127). WAYK is not unlike the approach that MAP takes, as its focus is to stay in an oral immersion environment while using elements of ASL as the communicative medium, instead of having to switch to the non-target language (Gardner & Ciotti, 2018, p. 137).

Another difference between RWM and other approaches to ILR involves assessment. As described above, the goal of RWM is to create fundamental concepts to build upon for exponential vocabulary acquisition (Green & Maracle, 2018, p. 146). This is an important difference from the conversational vocabulary focus of MAP (Hinton et al, 2018, p. 127) and the teacher training focus of WAYK (Gardner & Ciotti, 2018, p. 139). A similarity between WAYK and RWM is the cumulative curriculum approach. (Benson, 2025, p. 53-56) The ‘fundamental concepts’ of 1<sup>st</sup> Year and 2<sup>nd</sup> Year are cumulative, and to advance in the program, students must have foundations to build upon. It is therefore essential to define these foundations, as well as the fluency goals of the program. To do this, we often refer to the ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) reverse-pyramid of defined levels of speaking proficiency:

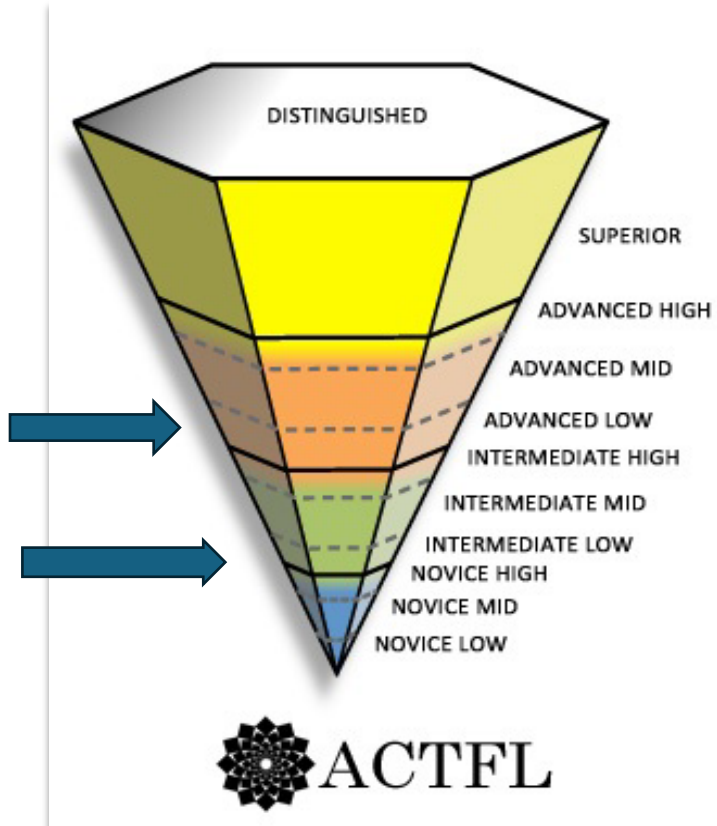


Figure 4: (ACTFL Scale)

This ACTFL scale is a useful visual aid for defining levels of proficiency.

Students starting at OK are usually at the Novice Low level, meaning that they may have some memorized phrases or sentences, but they are unable to communicate in the language with a speaker.

The goal of the 1<sup>st</sup> Year Program is to take students from the Novice Low to the Intermediate Low level, and then the subsequent 2<sup>nd</sup> Year is from Intermediate Low to Advanced Low.

(ACTFL, 2012)

To further define these road markers of fluency, Tehota'kerá:ton Green provides a more in-depth explanation of these levels and also the projected time on task required to reach them:

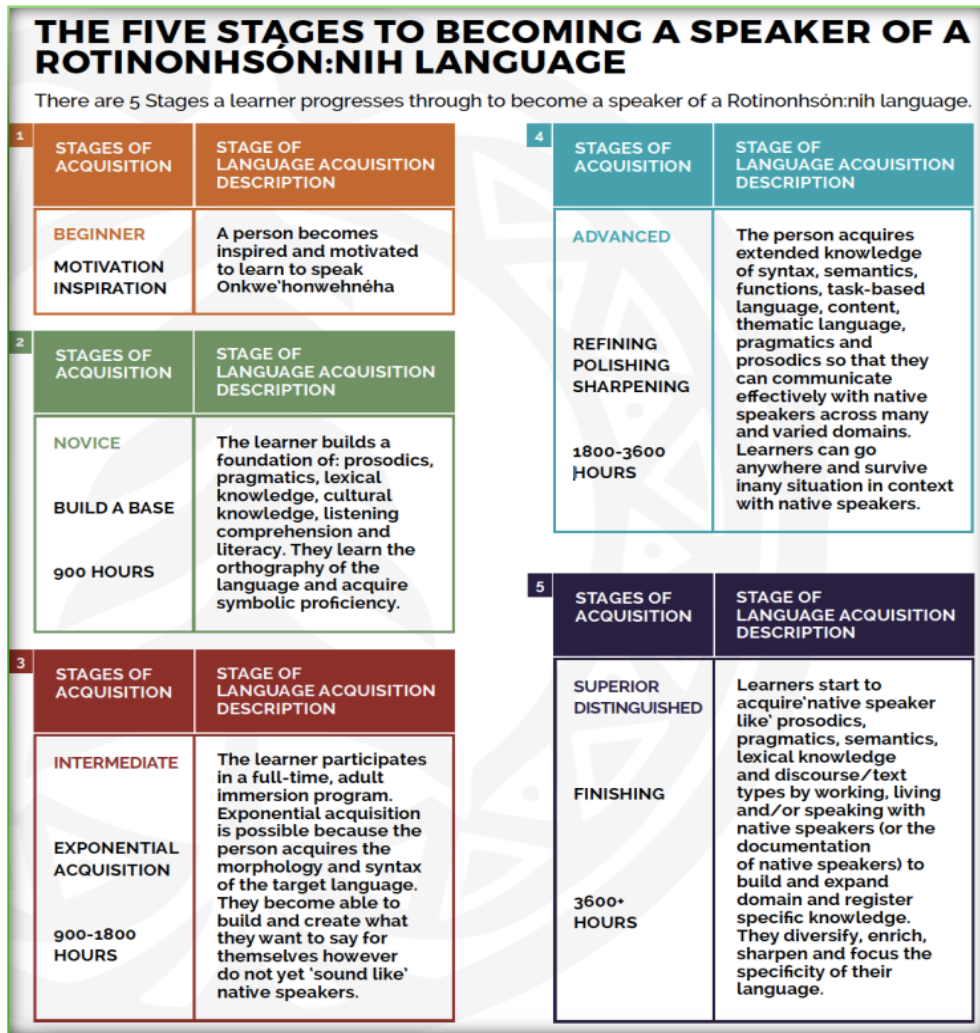


Figure 5: (Green, 2018)

In this chart, we can follow the journey of students through the two years of immersion at OK. Starting at Stage 2 (Novice-Low), students are developing their toolkits and acquiring the foundational features of the language. One difference between OK and this chart is that students start their full-time immersion journey at Stage 2, not Stage 3 as indicated. With a total of 2000 teaching hours over 2 full school years, Year 1 can therefore be represented by advancing from Stage 2 to Stage 3, and Year 2 can be represented by advancing from Stage 3 to Stage 4. As there are further stages to a students' fluency

journey that go beyond the capacity of OK, students must develop a toolkit for lifelong learning, and to do so, they must have the foundational concepts of the curriculum mastered. If students do not have mastery of these concepts, we can equate future learning to trying to build a house without a foundation. Due to the need to follow this curriculum and the fast-paced nature of teaching at OK, there are unique challenges that arise for the teachers; these are introduced in the next section.

### **3.6 Challenges of Teaching Immersion**

Three major challenges of teaching adult immersion are mitigating the variation in fluency levels of students, the small pool of instructors available to teach in programs, and the lack of guidance in the textbook about how to teach the content of each unit.

Variation in student proficiency is always a challenge for instructors, as past language experience, varying levels of emotional burdens associated with language learning, varying community-related lifestyle and opportunities, and varying work ethics exist within every single cohort. This variation is a reality of language teaching. As presented in the previous chart by Green (2018), acquisition of the Intermediate level of fluency may take between 900-1800 hours of immersion programming. As OK provides 2000 in-class hours, (1000 in Year 1 and 1000 in Year 2), students' fluency levels during the school year and upon conclusion of the program will be varied; some students will acquire Intermediate levels of fluency around the 900 hour mark, whereas others may require 1800 hours (Green, 2018). This is due to a myriad of factors such as language aptitude, previous experience in language, hearing ability, problem-solving skills, energy levels, work-ethic, and many others.

Although these are certainly factors that affect a student's ability to attain proficiency in Kanyen'kéha, a major determinant of student success is their ability to maximize their quality of time in the program. As DeCaire (2023) states, "Because study in an adult immersion program is so intense, it is important that students receive the necessary support in order to have fewer distractions away from meeting requirements and demands of the program." (p. 127) This indicates that distractions that affect the quality of learning in the program are a factor in a student's time required to attain proficiency; a single parent who has to work a second job to afford to take the program while managing a household will most likely have more responsibilities than a young student who lives with their parents and can make the program their only priority. Due to these factors, as students progress through the program, proficiency levels develop at different rates. This poses a significant challenge for instructors, as catering to these varying proficiency levels eliminates the ability to provide lessons and exercises that cater to the entire class at once.

Another challenge is the limited pool of qualified language teachers available to teach at the Kanyen'kéha immersion programs. Two major challenges of securing instructors at OK are the required specialized skillset and competition of the language instructor job market. As the goal of OK is to restore intergenerational transmission of Kanyen'kéha in Ohsweken, the timeline to achieve this goal is very finite. Adept instructors create proficient speakers, but if instructors fail to reach the program's fluency goals, this means that a year passes without significant contributions to the speaker demographic, and this negatively affects revitalization efforts. The role of instructors is therefore crucial to the success of the program. To create 12-15 proficient speakers of Kanyen'kéha over

2000 hours of instruction as part of a team is a demanding task that requires a specialized skillset. Academically, an instructor at OK needs to have an at least Advanced-Low (ACTFL, 2012) level of both spoken and written proficiency in Kanyen'kéha, have strong literacy and communication skills in English (many interactions about the program, outside of the program, are done in English), be well-versed in the OK curriculum and the Root-Word Method, be able to use modern word-processing and computer technologies for communication, reports, and resource-development for the program, and have very strong presentation skills. Personality-wise, instructors must have a strong work-ethic, be responsible and independent workers, be passionate about Kanyen'kéha revitalization, and have the kindness and patience required to develop student proficiency at the pre-determined tempo to ensure that program proficiency goals are being met. As previously mentioned in the 2021 language survey (DeCaire, 2023, p. 44), there are arguably less than 100 Advanced-level L2 speakers of Kanyen'kéha, and much fewer than that living in Ohsweken. The skillset required of the job therefore limits the potential applicants to a very small pool of potential individuals.

Potential instructors who have this skillset may also not work at OK due to the competition of the Kanyen'kéha instructor job market. As a grassroots organization, OK operates at a significantly lower budget than local academic institutions. This leads to a few employees occupying multiple roles, and also at a much lower pay rate than others working elsewhere. As stated by DeCaire (2023), "Adult immersion programs, in fact, often run on such low budgets that administrators and teachers need to take on multiple positions simultaneously.... while also agreeing to do so at pitifully low salaries" (p. 121).

This is certainly a deterrent for qualified individuals to apply for the instructor positions, and DeCaire continues, “most teachers are being asked to make a choice between working at the immersion program or seeking employment elsewhere with a more appropriate living wage along with additional employee benefits, such as in tertiary institutions” (p. 121). Qualified instructor applicants are therefore being pulled away from immersion programs into institutions that offer much more compensation and often do not require students to attain fluency in the language, creating a much more financially comfortable job with less overwhelming program goals. The instructors of OK work long hours with many responsibilities, sometimes working other part-time jobs on top of that, have a curricular timeline for each unit to adhere to, and must create fluent speakers by year-end. This can make the other job opportunities much more enticing, and this further diminishes the available candidates for prospective instructors at OK. With the requirement of this specialized skillset and the challenges of attracting instructors in the current job market, qualified instructors are difficult to find.

As a result of these challenges, the instructors who occupy the teaching positions at OK are very few, and this leads to a lack of support in many ways: Instructors do not have many colleagues who understand the job and the many duties that it involves, to ask questions to, to share resources and ideas with, and to benefit from having a supply instructor replace them if they need to be away or are sick. This irreplaceability, especially, places serious burdens and added stress onto instructors.

Compounding the challenges that the teachers face, the curriculum of OK is organized into units that categorize features and vocabulary, but it does not give

sequencing as to how to approach the content within the units. For reference, provided below is the first page of content from Unit 6: Active Verbs, that an instructor would be responsible for delivering. This is a list of verbs that are separated into rows and each column contains derivations of the verb in different major tenses, with the English translation provided in the left column. Highlighted in blue, red, or purple are the pronominal prefixes attached to each verb. Although not every page of this unit is presented in the same manner, this example demonstrates a typical essential verb list that needs to be taught to students:

Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa 1 <sup>st</sup> Year Program 2024-2025 Unit 6				153
<i>get up</i> <b>A stem</b>	<b>satkétsko</b>	<b>katkétskwas</b>	<b>wakatkétskwen</b>	
<b>katkétskwas</b>	<b>wa'katkétsko'</b>	<b>akatkétsko'</b>	<b>enkatkétsko'</b>	
<i>This is a typical A stem verb. See chart on Page 158.</i>				
<i>happens, it</i> ni- + <b>A stem</b>	<b>na'á:wen</b>	<b>niyá:wen's</b>	<b>niyawén:'on</b>	
<b>niyawen'onhátye</b>	<b>na'á:wen'ne'</b>	<b>nayá:wen'ne'</b>	<b>nenyá:wen'ne'</b>	
<i>help s.o. (bodily)</i> <b>C stem</b>	<b>shyé:nawa's</b>	<b>kheyenawà:ses</b>	<b>kheyenawà:se</b>	
<b>kheyenawà:ses</b>	<b>wa'kheyé:nawa'se'</b>	<b>akheyé:nawa'se'</b>	<b>enkheyé:nawa'se'</b>	
<i>This is a typical C stem verb. See chart on Page 162.</i>				
<i>help (support)</i> <b>C stem</b>	<b>takya'takénha</b>	<b>kheya'takénhas</b>	<b>kheya'takénhen</b>	
<b>kheya'takénhas</b>	<b>wa'kheya'takénha'</b>	<b>akheya'takénha'</b>	<b>enkheya'takénha'</b>	
<i>The root word of oyà:ta (body, person) is -ya't-</i>				
<i>hide oneself</i> <b>A stem</b>	<b>satáhseht</b>	<b>katahséhtha</b>	<b>wakatahséhton</b>	
<b>wakatahséhton</b>	<b>wa'katáhsehte'</b>	<b>akatáhsehte'</b>	<b>enkatáhsehte'</b>	
<i>listen</i> <b>A stem</b>	<b>satahónhsatat</b>	<b>katahónhsatats</b>	<b>wakatahónhsatá:ton</b>	
<b>katahónhsatats</b>	<b>wa'katahónhsatate'</b>	<b>akatahónhsatate'</b>	<b>enkatahónhsatate'</b>	
<i>look (at s.t.)</i> <b>A stem</b>	<b>satkáhtho</b>	<b>katkáhthos</b>	<b>wakatkáhthon</b>	
<b>katkáhthos</b>	<b>wa'katkáhtho'</b>	<b>akatkáhtho'</b>	<b>enkatkáhtho'</b>	
<i>open s.t.</i> <b>C stem</b>	<b>senhotón:ko</b>	<b>kenhotónkwas</b>	<b>wakenhotónkwen</b>	
<b>kenhotónkwas</b>	<b>wa'kenhotón:ko'</b>	<b>akenhotón:ko'</b>	<b>enkenhotón:ko'</b>	
<i>prepare self</i> <b>A stem</b>	<b>satateweyennén:ta'n</b>	<b>katateweyennén:ta's</b>	<b>wakatateweyennéntá:'on</b>	
<b>katateweyennén:ta's</b>	<b>wa'katateweyennén:ta'ne'</b>	<b>akateweyennén:ta'ne'</b>	<b>enkatateweyennén:ta'ne'</b>	
<i>rains, it ~</i> <b>C stem</b>		<b>yokén:nores</b>	<b>yokennó:ren</b>	
<b>yokennó:ren</b>	<b>wa'okén:nore'</b>	<b>ayokén:nore'</b>	<b>enyokén:nore'</b>	
<i>rest</i> <b>A stem</b>	<b>satoríshen</b>	<b>katoríshens</b>	<b>wakatoríshen</b>	
<b>wakatoríshen</b>	<b>wa'katoríshen'</b>	<b>akatoríshen'</b>	<b>enkatoríshen'</b>	
<i>say (s.t.) irregular</i>	<b>tsi:ron</b>	<b>ká:ton</b>	<b>wá:ken</b>	
<b>ká:ton</b>	<b>wa'kì:ron'</b>	<b>akì:ron'</b>	<b>enkì:ron'</b>	
<i>This is an irregular verb. See chart on Page 164.</i>				

Figure 6: (Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa 1<sup>st</sup> Year Textbook 2024-2025)

Even a fluent instructor of Kanyen'kéha may find this presentation confusing, and students especially may find it overwhelming. Knowing when and where to start and end is a challenge for instructors, and a page such as this can create significant complications due to the layout and sheer amount of vocabulary displayed on a single page. As an instructor, one would need to make decisions about timeline (how much time is allotted to complete this page to stay within the timeline parameters of the unit), sequencing (the order in which each word and/or feature is taught), method (how to deliver the content in class) and, most importantly, foster understanding for students of this content so well that they are successful with the unit tests.

These outlined challenges that the textbook presents for instructors - establishing and following the timeline, sequencing of vocabulary and features within units, and also decision-making of which teaching method to use at which time while sticking to the targeted curriculum - are all significant to the success of OK. The goal of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera* is therefore to provide guidance on timing, sequencing, and teaching methods on a unit by unit basis, to mitigate these challenges, thereby providing support to the instructors responsible for delivery OK so that they can thrive in their roles.

## RWM Teaching manual

### 4.1 Methods

Much like the 1<sup>st</sup> Year textbook, *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenniíhtshera* has been created through extensive trial and error and was created entirely out of necessity. For reference, OK began operation in 1999, and it was not until the 2015 school year that a completed textbook was created. Prior to the textbook, the program was conducted entirely through handouts, which would be provided to students on a daily basis, and would be revised during the interim period between cohorts based on the fluency results. As outlined in Section 3.3 Root-Word Method, this was based on the RWM developed by Kanatawakhon'kenha, who developed the pattern-based approach to make the language more accessible for new learners. With the help of various instructors and speakers throughout the years, Owennatekha Brian Maracle has been instrumental in the sequencing of these units to maximize efficiency, which largely resembles a construction blueprint. With the blueprint established, and ever evolving, *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenniíhtshera* is a contribution to this line of work that makes this curriculum even more accessible. Initial work on this began when I was first promoted from Teaching Assistant to Instructor in 2016.

The first attempt at any kind of teaching manual was through my own documentation of every single teaching day in the classroom, which I was not tasked with but felt was important, as there was no teaching guide for this style of immersion teaching. I would write by hand what was taught, how it was taught, and also tertiary details such as how many guests visited the classroom (to see if that had effects on the class results), out

of the ordinary occurrences (fire alarms, community events, etc.), and also who conducted our traditional opening and closing speeches to start and close the day (to see if there were any correlations between the frequency of this and their results at the end of the year). As well, I would provide notes on the success of certain drills and lessons, especially new ones, so that I might be able to document the most effective drill for each feature being taught. This initial work was conducted without any bearing on what content would be important to record, and therefore everything taught within the classroom was recorded by hand at the end of the day.

Not being typed out and often including my own slang or terminology for certain drills and exercises, the hand-written documentation was largely illegible to other instructors or interested parties. As well, the information contained within this initial attempt was perhaps too dense to be effective, forcing the reader to wade through all kinds of observations and notes to find important and pertinent information. The day-by-day breakdown was also representative of a particular cohort of students, and the myriad possible variables on a daily basis made me realize that this format would not be useful for future cohorts. For future versions to be more effective, the teaching manual would need to be typed out, follow a unit-by-unit breakdown instead of the day-by-day breakdown, include a glossary for terminology, and overall be a much more focused, including a concerted effort to make the curriculum more accessible and guide instructors in the most effective way possible.

## 4.2 Output: Teaching manual

In its current version, the teaching manual is about 30 pages long, which is about 10% of the length of the textbook. It has two parts: the first part provides general information that is applicable to each unit, including a glossary and a description of drills, approaches to corrective feedback, etc. The second part includes one page for each individual unit, illustrated for Unit 1 in Figure 7.

To best provide an overview of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* (The Teaching Manual), this section will include an example of Unit 1 (the beginning of the program) and Unit 6 (the halfway point of the program) as Figures 7 and 8. Each cohort undergoes many changes in both their fluency levels and speed of language acquisition during this period, which require constant adjustments from instructors to cater to their advancing students. This timeframe will therefore give much insight into what kind of teaching adaptations teachers need make throughout the entire year in their teaching methods and corrective feedback. Preceded by a glossary for the terminology used, the following is the general layout of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* for each unit:

**Timeline:** The suggested duration of the Unit is based on the density of the content. Every unit is unique and is designated as either *Foundational* or *Companion*, which significantly impacts the designated timeline. This is very important to follow to keep on schedule for completion of all units by the end of the school year and to make sure that every unit is given the appropriate amount of classroom time to reach the established Goals.

**Goals:** The essential components of the unit that need to be acquired before moving on.

Some units are very dense and contain many pages of vocabulary and features, and it is therefore important that the core concepts always remain the primary focus.

Once the core goals of the unit have been achieved, the unit is complete. Adherence to these Goals is crucial to ensuring that assessment and other benchmarks are achieved by the established timeline.

**Sequencing:** The order in which vocabulary and features are taught. This can be thought of as a blueprint for building fluency, where simple concepts are taught first to act as building blocks to teach more complex concepts. For example, a sample progression in Unit 3 that occurs is taking the verb *-nòn:we's* (like) and adding in a tense conjugation as a suffix *-nòn:we'skwe* (used to like). To learn this feature, and to use this feature, students must know their pronominal prefixes prior to this feature being introduced (as outlined in Section 1). If they do not know their prefixes, they cannot understand nor use the feature, and therefore are unable to generate any meaningful *time on task* with the feature.

**Corrective Feedback:** The manner and frequency with which instructors provide corrections to students. This section also includes the *weight* of errors in the unit (this determines how significant the error is, and the more heavily *weighted* an error is, the more urgently it needs to be corrected). This helps to guide the instructors as to which errors to let slide and which ones to correct, as different units have different goals and any errors made that pertain to core concepts require particular attention. Overcorrection of student errors, especially in the early stages of language learning, can have disastrous effects. Knowing when, where, and how to provide corrective feedback is a developed skill, and this

section assists instructors by providing direction to which errors to focus their correction on. Also, as outlined by Lyster, Saito, and Saito (2013), the forms in which these corrections occur, Implicit (largely done in the target language) or Explicit (largely done in English), are important to the decision-making process of instructors. As the fluency and overall comfortability of the cohort evolves, forms of corrective feedback must change to adhere to students' current level, which often evolves to predominantly Implicit correction.

**Notes:** Important insights about the unit that assist the instructor with what to expect, allowing for more informed planning. These insights may include useful statistics or correlations between the unit and the overall fluency level upon graduation (e.g., 100% of students who have not been successful with the unit 1 test do not reach the fluency goals of the program), notes on changes that occur to the student demographic and suggestions on how to adjust lesson plans and corrective feedback (e.g., by Unit 7, students do not need Parrot Drills – drills that are simply having the student repeat after you in full complete sentences, and continuing to utilize these drills can be detrimental), and also environmental considerations due to the time of year that these units are occurring (e.g., it is important to start Unit 6 before the Christmas break to ensure that students have an understanding of the fundamentals so that they may study efficiently over the break).

To show how these sections are presented, provided below is an excerpt from Unit 1 of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera*. Accompanied by a teacher training course which would delve into this information in-depth, the *Notes* section of the page provides experience-based helpful reminders and at-a-glance information that is crucial to the success of the cohort.

## Unit 1: Prefixes & Sentence Structure (Foundational)

**Timeline:** 3 weeks

**Goals:** Set tone for immersion environment, establish schedule and expectations (especially for lunch), get students comfortable to speak, ensure prefixes are known inside and out, start Sequencing after “survival terms” : tó:ka, wakerì:wayen, oh ní:yoht ahsi:ron’, and oh nahò:ten kén:ton, and ensure basic sentence structure is understood.

### Sequencing:

- A. -nòn:we’s
- B. question
- C. negation
- D. táhnon
- E. tsi
- F. -ateryèn:tare,
- G. qualitative particles
- H. names to faces
- I. other particles
- J. Kanyen’kéha-ized names \*

**Corrective Feedback:** Prefixes, negation, & question inflection.

- Day 1 (Before “The Brain Talk”) is fine for Explicit Feedback, but Implicit after that for whole Unit. Keep correction very light.

### Notes:

- 100% of students who do not pass the Unit 1 Test have not been successful in completing the program.
- Make the infinite appear finite.
- Give “The Brain” talk.
- Adhere to “Parrot Phase” Progression for the beginning of every drill.
- The faster that students gain literacy, the faster they can interact with the resources.
- Board Writing & Dialogue Drills are the key to literacy.
- Whenever it gets stale, add in new particles.

Figure 7: (Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonyenníhtshera, 2025)

As a concrete example of sequencing guidance, in a different format from Figure 7, Figure 8 provides a visual comparison of how the instruction provided in

*Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonyenniítshera* makes the same page of information in the textbook (right) appear much more manageable. This can be thought of like putting a filter over the page, blocking out the non-pertinent vocabulary/features of the initial stage of instruction. This helps to focus the instructor on the essential building blocks and also forces them to not teach everything at once, which could overwhelm students. Still displayed are the definitions of the verbs, the *Stem* (the ruleset it follows), and also 3 essential tenses:

Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa 1 <sup>st</sup> Year Program 2024-2025 Unit 6				153
get up A stem	██████	katkétskwas	wakatkétskwen	
	wa'katkétsko'	██████	██████	
	██████	██████	██████	
happens, it ni- + A stem	██████	niyá:wen's	niyawén:'on	
	na'á:wen'ne'	██████	██████	
help s.o. (bodily) C stem	██████	kheyenawà:ses	kheyenawà:se	
	wa'kheyé:nawa'se'	██████	██████	
	██████	██████	██████	
help (support) C stem	██████	kheya'takénhas	kheya'takénhen	
	wa'kheya'takénha'	██████	██████	
	██████	██████	██████	
hide oneself A stem	██████	katahséhttha	wakatahséhton	
	wa'katahséhte'	██████	██████	
listen A stem	██████	katahónhsatats	wakatahónhsatá:ton	
	wa'katahónhsatate'	██████	██████	
look (at s.t.) A stem	██████	katkáhthos	wakatkáhthon	
	wa'katkáhtho'	██████	██████	
open s.t. C stem	██████	kephotónkwas	wakephotónkwen	
	wa'kephotón:ko'	██████	██████	
prepare self A stem	██████	katateweyenné:ta's	wakatateweyenné:ta'on	
	wa'katateweyenné:ta'ne'	██████	██████	
rains, it ~ C stem		yokén:nores	yokennó:ren	
	wa'okén:nore'	██████	██████	
rest A stem	██████	katorishens	wakatorishen	
	wa'katorishen'	██████	██████	
say (s.t.) irregular	██████	ká:ton	wá:ken	
	wa'ki:ron'	██████	██████	
	██████	██████	██████	
get up A stem	satkétsko	katkétskwas	wakatkétskwen	
katkétskwas	wa'katkétsko'	akatkétsko'	enkatkétsko'	
	This is a typical A stem verb. See chart on Page 158.			
happens, it ni- + A stem	na'á:wen	niyá:wen's	niyawén:'on	
niyawén'onhátye	na'á:wen'ne'	nayá:wen'ne'	nenyá:wen'ne'	
help s.o. (bodily) C stem	shéyénawa's	kheyenawà:ses	kheyenawà:se	
kheyenawà:ses	wa'kheyé:nawa'se'	akheyé:nawa'se'	enkheyé:nawa'se'	
	This is a typical C stem verb. See chart on Page 162.			
help (support) C stem	takya'takénha	kheya'takénhas	kheya'takénhen	
kheya'takénhas	wa'kheya'takénha'	akheya'takénha'	enkheya'takénha'	
	The root word of oyá:ta (body, person) is -ya't-			
hide oneself A stem	satáhséht	katahséhttha	wakatahséhton	
wakatahséhton	wa'katahséhte'	akatahséhte'	enkatahséhte'	
listen A stem	satahónhsat	katahónhsatats	wakatahónhsatá:ton	
katahónhsatats	wa'katahónhsatate'	akatahónhsatate'	enkatahónhsatate'	
look (at s.t.) A stem	satkáhtho	katkáhthos	wakatkáhthon	
katkáhthos	wa'katkáhtho'	akatkáhtho'	enkatkáhtho'	
open s.t. C stem	sephotón:ko	kephotónkwas	wakephotónkwen	
kephotónkwas	wa'kephotón:ko'	akephotón:ko'	enkephotón:ko'	
prepare self A stem	satateweyenné:ta'n	katateweyenné:ta's	wakatateweyenné:ta'on	
katateweyenné:ta's	wa'katateweyenné:ta'ne'	akateweyenné:ta'ne'	enkateweyenné:ta'ne'	
rains, it ~ C stem		yokén:nores	yokennó:ren	
yokennó:ren	wa'okén:nore'	ayokén:nore'	enyokén:nore'	
rest A stem	satorishen	katorishens	wakatorishen	
wakatorishen	wa'katorishen'	akatorishen'	enkatorishen'	
say (s.t.) irregular	tsi:ron	ká:ton	wá:ken	
ká:ton	wa'ki:ron'	aki:ron'	enki:ron'	
	This is an irregular verb. See chart on Page 164.			

Figure 8: (Onkwawenna Kentyohkwa 1st Year Textbook 2024-2025)

This visual comparison illustrated in Figure 8 demonstrates the starting point for the unit, highlighting the exact vocabulary and features that the instructor needs to teach first. Once these fundamentals are established, the learned patterns can be applied to the other vocabulary on the page much more easily. This gives instructors an exact starting point that

is both accessible and effective and also gives students a feasible and attainable first goal within this complex unit.

## Discussion

The purpose of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera* is to make the curriculum more accessible for instructors to interpret, and this will influence two major domains outside of the OK classroom: current and future adult program replications, and the affiliated community language programs and elementary immersion schools that have been founded and are maintained by OK graduates.

OK has been successfully replicated twice in Kanyen'kéha (Shatiwennakarátats in Kenhtè:ke and Á:se Tsi Tewá:ton in Ahkwesáhshne), where the curriculum, teaching methods, and infrastructure have been delivered as fulltime programs in these other communities by graduates of OK. With three programs operating under the exact same curriculum and infrastructure, this triples the potential speaker creation and allows students to take the program in their own community. As these programs already follow the OK standardized curriculum, *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera* would provide their instructors with an exact layout of sequencing within a unit, teaching methods and drills, and helpful insights for each unit, based on lived experience of other instructors, to help guide their own lesson planning and teaching. This inter-community standardized curriculum has already been beneficial to each program as instructors are all teaching the same content at the same pace, allowing for helpful communication, support, and resource sharing for both instructors and students (see 3.6 on teaching immersion). As well, this has allowed for instructors to teach at other programs, as they know exactly what students have been taught and what the next steps are, allowing for educated and

informed lesson planning, effective corrective feedback, and overall, more efficient substitute teaching. *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* contributes to this inter-community relationship by making the curriculum more accessible. Perhaps most importantly, it could be added to and improved by other programs and instructors to collectively deliver the most effective immersion programming possible.

As of today, the other 5 languages of the Rotinohsyón:ni (Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, and Tuscarora) have translated at least the 1<sup>st</sup> Year textbook into their language and have associated programs that operate in various capacities. Due to the close linguistic relation of all Rotinohsyón:ni languages, this was accomplished relatively quickly. Recent replication efforts have also been undertaken with the community of Listaguj for the Mi'gmaq language, which is linguistically unrelated to Kanyen'kéha. This replication has required extensive meetings and sessions with speakers and linguists to first demonstrate the layout of the textbook and then the sequencing of the content within each unit. Future replications of OK curriculum, especially those into unrelated languages, would occur much more efficiently if that sequencing was laid out in an accessible manner. The teaching methodologies and drills contained within *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* would be a productive accompaniment during the replication process.

Although there are current benefits to both the instructors at OK and the replication process, there are currently areas for improvement to be addressed in future versions of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera*. Currently catered to the 1<sup>st</sup> Year textbook of OK, the obvious next step for future versions would be expansion to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year textbook

(DeCaire, 2023). As the 1<sup>st</sup> Year textbook is designed for the fluency development of absolute beginner speakers to the *Intermediate* level, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year textbook is designed for fluency development to the *Advanced* level (ACTFL, 2012), the fluency level of students is vastly different between Year 1 and Year 2, and therefore requires a completely different teaching approach. Whereas there is a significant amount of explanation and examples in the Year 1 textbook, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year textbook is largely lists of vocabulary and brief explanations of the new features of each unit, based on the presumption that students have acquired the linguistic foundations of Year 1. Due to this lack of explanation and description, Year 2 instructors are arguably even more in need of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera* than Year 1 instructors.

Another consideration for future versions of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera* is the addition of a program infrastructure section that will assist with the operation of a fulltime adult immersion program. This current version is predominantly academic and is meant as a reference guide for in-class delivery of OK curriculum. Although it has a Notes section for each unit, it does not offer any guidance on program infrastructure. Attendance policies, staffing, grievance and bereavement policies, and many other program infrastructure details are laid out in OK's *Student Handbook*, but the rationale and reasoning behind these policies, and how to implement them, would be very useful for instructors to reference and would also assist in the program replication process. As well, this infrastructure section could be the beginning of establishing a standard for required training, counselling, and/or other services promoting a healthy approach to ILR immersion practices.

## Challenges

All areas of immersion programming are in a state of constant change to improve as quickly as possible. Staffing, curriculum, infrastructure, methodologies, and other areas were therefore very difficult to write about as they would be changing while *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* was being developed. Since the purpose of the manual is to interpret the curriculum and provide best practices, it must also change to adhere to these constant revisions. Focusing the project on a single snapshot of a point in time of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* and spending significant time providing a subsequent write-up of this snapshot was challenging due to the fact that this information could be made obsolete in the near future.

Once the project was decided upon, making *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* accessible, easy to interpret, and useable, was a major challenge that is still prevalent. Selecting which sections to include or exclude in this write-up, how to display the information in a presentable yet accessible manner, and how in-depth to explain each section still leaves much room for improvement. With the writing of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* itself, the decision was made to omit some of the in-depth information and simply utilize the manual as a quick reference guide to accompany RWM teacher training workshops. This allows *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* to exist as a guide after these workshops provide the in-depth explanations and demonstrations of the methodologies, drills, and rationale for sequencing.

As both Program Director and 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Instructor at OK, the available time to write this report for the Masters Major Project in addition to creating the *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyennihtshera* was the primary challenge to completing this MILR project. This is unfortunately the reality for those working in grass-roots Onkwehón:we language immersion programs as the demands of the job and the overwhelming amount of necessary work hours restricts the ability of the individuals involved to make time to formally document their work. Similar workload issues across communities and language programs has contributed significantly to the lack of available academic resources on adult immersion within ILR, providing a significant challenge to my research process for this project.

The research process was challenging due to the limited amount of documented immersion material and this led to the challenge of deciding on a single research question or project. Earlier versions of this project, for example, were designed to assist in the future replication process (as the aforementioned replicated programs did not yet exist at that time) but they exceeded the required parameters of this project. The programs were replicated successfully during this time, which required me to change my project entirely. This also highlights the constant state of flux and change within adult immersion programming, which provided yet another challenge to the completion of this project.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, support is needed for instructors of Onkwehón:we adult immersion programming, and *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenniíhtshera* provides this support by making the OK curriculum more accessible. To best summarize the impact of the manual on ILR, this final section will re-iterate the ‘big picture’ that *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenniíhtshera* was designed to cater to and also to discuss current and future applications.

The ‘big picture’ primary objective of OK is to restore intergenerational transmission of language by creating adult fluent speakers of Kanyen’kéha who are capable of raising L1 children in the language. To accomplish this, OK needs students who are willing to learn and work hard and instructors who are ready to do the same. Strong instructors foster strong program results, and strong programs contribute to intergenerational transmission. Supporting instructors therefore contributes to intergenerational transmission, and this is the role of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenniíhtshera*. Although the program is based in Ohsweken, programs in other communities (both replicated and independent) are also contributing to this restoration of Kanyen’kéha, and this manual assists with these efforts as well. By making the curriculum easier to interpret and replicate, revitalization efforts are expedited and can continue to grow in the future.

To better contribute to intergenerational transmission, future use of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenniíhtshera* can go beyond the adult immersion realm of ILR. Graduates of OK have been contributing to areas beyond adult immersion for many years now, and language community efforts such as the founding of Skaronhyase’kó:wa

Everlasting Tree School (Kanyen'kéha immersion elementary school), the Kanyen'kehá:ka Kanónhses (Mohawk Longhouse for conducting our ceremonies), as well as other community contributions catering to more demographics than the adult cohorts of OK, have continued to operate. If *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* could expand to support the integration of OK curriculum to elementary and language nest immersion education, it would create a community-wide collective revitalization effort which all generations of Kanyen'kéha speakers would benefit from. The pursuit of intergenerational transmission goes well beyond the walls of OK, and it is hoped that the contribution of *Shakotirihonnyén:ni Karihonnyenníhtshera* assists with the restoration of Kanyen'kéha as our first language again.

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