

Workshop:  
Hawaiian Immersion language teaching

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The establishment of the first Pūnana Leo Hawaiian immersion pre-school in 1984 marks the official beginning of the revitalization movement of Hawaiian language. More than thirty years later, it is currently estimated that there are approximately 2,000 students in immersion schools (K-12) throughout the state of Hawai'i and the total number of fluent speakers is said to be around 7,000 to 10,000 (Wilson and Kimura 2014). This is indeed a drastic increase compared to the estimate done in the early 1980's, less than 35 speakers who were under 18 years old who were able to speak Hawaiian (Wilson 1998). This workshop focuses on immersion language teaching following the way it is taught at various Hawaiian language immersion programs such as Pūnana Leo (Hawaiian medium pre-school), ke kula 'o Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u (Nāwahīokalani'ōpu'u Hawaiian medium elementary to high school), and Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani (College of Hawaiian Language at University of Hawai'i at Hilo). This workshop is an attempt to show how a typical early stage Hawaiian language immersion class is conducted. Utilizing pictures and objects, actual usage of the target language by both teachers and learners is achieved from the very early stage of instruction even without much understanding of its syntactic, semantic, or phonological structure of the language by the learners. The workshop attendees should be able to walk away with some very fundamental understanding of the structure of the language, ability to produce a few useful expressions, as well as a bit of sense of an immersion language classroom in Hawai'i.

References

Wilson, William H. 1998. I ka 'Ōlelo Hawai'i ke ola, 'Life is found in the Hawaiian language'. *International Journal of Sociology of Language*. 132: 123-137.

Wilson, William H. and Larry Kimura. 2014. Personal communication. Hilo, Hawaii.