

E Ola ka ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i: As the Vision Unfolds, A Hawaiian-Medium Model for Language Revitalization

Keiki Kawai‘ae‘a, University of Hawai‘i at Hilo

In the early 1980’s, Hawai‘i was in the midst of a cultural renaissance of rediscovery. It was a time of reawakening and addressing issues concerning identity, land, culture and language loss. With less than a few hundred native adult speakers of Hawaiian remaining, (mostly elder age) and only a handful of children who spoke Hawaiian as their mother tongue, “E ola ka ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i” became the platform that catapulted the Hawaiian language revitalization movement.

This presentation will discuss the Hawaiian language revitalization movement through its 30 years of growth and development to ensure the survival of the Hawaiian language. Highlights will focus on an educational system that now spans programs serving students from infant-toddler to Ph.D through a model called Ho‘ona‘auao Maui Ola Hawai‘i. The presentation will focus on the kaia‘ōlelo or Hawaiian-medium environment approach used for Hawaiian language recovery and revitalization, including its issues, successes and challenges.