



Linguistic Ideologies of Native American Language Revitalization [Doing the Lost Language Ghost Dance /

Leedom Shaul, David

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Social sciences Cultural heritage Anthropology Linguistic anthropology

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The concept of this volume is that the paradigm of European national languages (official orthography; language standardization; full use of language in most everyday contexts) is imposed in cookie-cutter fashion on most language revitalization efforts of Native American languages. While this model fits the sovereign status of many Native American groups, it does not meet the linguistic ideology of Native American communities, and creates projects and products that do not engage the communities which they are intended to serve. The concern over heritage language loss has generated since 1990 enormous activity that is supposed to restore full private and public function of heritage languages in Native American speech communities. The thinking goes: if you do what the volume terms the "Lost Language Ghost Dance," your heritage language will flourish once more. Yet the heritage language only flourishes on paper, and not in any meaningful way for the community it is trying to help. Instead, this volume proposes a model of Native American language revitalization that is different from the national/official language model, one that respects and incorporates language variation, and entertains variable outcomes. This is because it is based on Native American linguistic ideologies. This volume argues that the cookie-cutter application of the official language ideology is unethical because it undermines the intent of language revitalization itself: the continued daily, meaningful use of a heritage language in its speech community.

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Baratz Innovación Documental

- Gran Vía, 59 28013 Madrid
- (+34) 91 456 03 60
- informa@baratz.es