Orthography and Ideology: Examining the Development of Kaw Writing

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Introduction

This paper is concerned with how a group of language planners has gone about developing a writing system for a hitherto unwritten language, and also how this activity in general serves to codify and promote a particular linguistic ideology whose development parallels that of the orthography. The language is Kaw, also known as Kanza or Kansa, a Dhegiha Siouan language presently of Oklahoma. I begin with a discussion of language ideology and orthography development, followed by a section conceptually linking the two. Thus oriented, I offer a look at the process of devising a practical Kaw orthography. I conclude with a brief statement regarding some of the hidden ideological features of language planning.

It is perhaps fitting that defining language ideology can be difficult. It enjoys multiple definitions and applications in disciplines broadly ranging from linguistics and anthropology to sociology and political science. Many definitions compete with one another, resulting in a concept best defined by its use. That is to say, application of a linguistic ideology theory is necessarily ideological in nature. This self-referential quality of the concept has been present from the very start, as can be seen in early works by Foucault, regarded as a forebear of the movement's modern adherents: "Discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but *is* the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power to be seized [emphasis mine]" (Lippi-Green, 2004: 293). In other words, Foucault is describing a power ideology that is not only expressed in language, but one that is best described as language. The ideological range of use of the term can be seen in its many definitions. Lippi-Green (2004) and Thompson (1984), agree with Foucault, relating the term directly to power relations and social asymmetry as expressed through language. Kroskrity (2000: 5) offers a statement of comparative social neutrality, defining the concept as "speakers' ideas about language and discourse and…how these articulate with various social phenomena." Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (2006: 398) place it more in the realm of the individual's unconscious identity by defining it as "ingrained, unquestioned beliefs about the way the world is, the way it should be, and the way it has to be with respect to language." For additional definitions and applications of language ideology, see Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity (1998) and Kroskrity (2000).

In this work, I will use a more general definition of the term, based on Silverstein (1979: 193): A language ideology is a set (consistent or otherwise) of beliefs (conscious or otherwise) about the nature and practice of language, particularly in social contexts. This conceptualization is intentionally vague on the topics of (a) identification of the origin and seat of ideology—be it originating in the individual and visible in the group only by shared happenstance, or emanating from the group and only adopted by the individual by default through membership in the group, or some other mechanism entirely—(b) the relationships between the ideology, those who hold it, the language, and

those who use it—that is, this definition is general enough to encompass, say, English speaker's beliefs about Spanish speaker's use of Spanish in the US—and (c) competing ideologies at all levels of analysis—the definition allows for multiple ideologies at play even at the level of the individual.

Orthography as Ideology

Orthography is far more ideologically loaded than it first appears. It can be, for instance, a key factor in distinguishing one speech community from another. A good example of this can be seen in Urdu, the national language of Pakistan, and Hindi, one of several official languages of Pakistan's historic rival India. Katzner (1995: 179) says of Urdu and Hindi that, "the most important difference between them [is] that the former is written in the Perso-Arabic script, while the latter is written in the Sanskrit characters." Here writing is used to separate two mutually intelligible languages—or rather, alongside religion and politics, it serves as yet another way to separate the two speech communities. Nevertheless, Kachru (1987: 471) explains that the two communities share a common variety known as Hindustani. Owing largely to its tradition as an *unwritten* vernacular of the people, Hindustani was "adopted by Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress as a symbol of national identity during the struggle for freedom." In other words, the Perso-Arabic script has come to represent Pakistani nationality, particularly in contrast to Indian nationality. The Devanagari script of Hindi presently performs the same nationalist role for India. Yet the script-less speech of Hindustani once served to unify the two communities against British occupation in the pre-Partition period. Katzner speaks similarly of Croatian versus Serbian, Romanian versus Moldovan (both pairs distinguished primarily by the use of the roman and Cyrillic scripts, respectively), and Indonesian (Dutch-based roman script) versus Malay (English-based). In North America, Hinton (1994, 2001) says much the same of Hualapai and Havasupai. While different languages, they bear enough structural similarity to be written with the same orthography. Still, each has its own alphabet. Moreover, Schieffelin and Doucet (1994) describe how writing disambiguates French from Haiti's French Creoles varieties.

Writing also has the power to bring disparate speech communities together. What is commonly regarded as Chinese is in fact a complex of "several related but mutually unintelligible 'dialects' that share a common writing system" (Huebner and Uyechi, 2004). Li and Thompson (1987: 813) employ this commonality of writing as a major component in their justification for thinking of Chinese as a single language with a number of unintelligible dialects: "China has always had a uniform written language … This tends to reinforce the idea of 'dialects' as opposed to written languages."

In the case of previously unwritten languages, the most fundamental ideological arguments regarding orthography may be initial attempts to answer the question of whether or not these languages should be written at all. For many this is by no means a foregone conclusion. Both Leap (1981) and Watahomigie and McCarty (1994), for instance, describe Native American communities, or rather members from those communities, rejecting the notion of writing on the grounds that their languages were historically oral, and should remain thus. Other communities may base their rejection on religious grounds. Leap (1991: 30), for example, describes a Ute community with a

strong belief that their language was gifted to them by their Creator. As such, "if the language were meant to be written, written language would already have been provided to the Tribe." Hinton (2001), too, offers a pro vs. con approach to this question, and offers practical and convincing arguments to support either ideological claim.

Today these sorts of debates must, of course, presume the existence of writing at least as a concept. That is to say, very few communities nowadays are utterly unaware of the practice of writing and its uses, a position that separates somewhat the present age from much of human history in terms of the global saturation of this particular language medium. Most people, regardless of speech community affiliation, have seen in their lives what practical roles writing serves for other speech communities, and as such, would not have to develop writing as a concept from the ground-up. Thus, for some, the question of whether or not a language should be written is purely a matter of practicality and social need. Silver and Miller (1997: 118) express this notion by correlating the presence of writing within societies with "a need for the storing and transfer of information on a scale that cannot be handled by oral means." If this is true, then in the case of Native American communities, writing can be equated with either excessive social stratification for which the oral tradition can no longer suffice for proper information storage and transfer, as in the case of the pre-Columbian Maya and Aztec cultures, or the partial or complete breakdown—due to colonization, forced migration, policies of cultural eradication or assimilation, or what have you—of either the social order of the society or the oral tradition itself, as in the case of most other tribal communities that have instituted writing systems. In either case, it is easy to see how ideologies can emerge within the discourse of the affected communities.

Assuming a speech community—a term rarely applied to monolithic groups—can come to terms with the need for writing, additional ideological arguments may involve the questions of who will use the writing system (i.e., who is the orthography for), and how will it be used. In a monolingual speech community, older speakers may not need to use writing on a daily basis, having survived perfectly well without it. Furthermore, for a historically unwritten language, there is no textual corpus to read or teach from. Younger speakers may have to start from scratch to develop writing styles, standardized spellings if so desired, etc. Thus, for young and old speakers alike it is ideology that may be the most important factor governing their embrace of orthography.

As for how the writing will be used, this sort of question must necessarily be brought out of the hypothetical realm and into the reality of today's world. Unwritten languages today frequently fight for animal survival against the ever-present influences of some of the world's major languages. In many cases, these powerful tongues are spoken not only by the descendants of historic colonial powers, but even members of the same groups that claim heritage to the unwritten languages in question. This is especially true of Native American languages in the US, whose monolinguals are all but gone, whose aging bilingual speech communities shrink daily, and whose greater tribal membership is becoming overwhelmingly Anglophonic. Thus, in competing within the same linguistic marketplace as English, a Native American language set to writing today must accomplish two goals. Firstly, it must accomplish all that can be accomplished by English. In other words, the orthography can be used to write texts that will be read by

anyone today just as easily as it is used to write texts that will be read many years from now. All the while, the written Native language must invoke the same sense of modern relevance as English does. Second of all, it must accomplish for the speech community all that *cannot* be accomplished by English. It must index elements of the cultural context that are missed by the mainstream, and serve the daily communicative needs of a community that is by definition and practice not part of the English-speaking majority. This is a tall order for any language—that is, any speech community—let alone a language that is already faced with near certain extinction. Jaffe (1991: 819) sums up this paradoxical ideological position in her discussion of the Corsican speech community within France: "We can readily see this form of resistance, which defines and values Corsican as everything that French is not, as well as the opposing logic … which seeks to prove that Corsican is everything that French *is* [emphasis hers]."

The selection or design of the orthography offers a further set of complicated ideological hurdles. How exactly should the system represent the language? Should spellings be standardized? How should it look on the printed page? How should it work in a practical setting? Language planners within the community must come to terms with each of these questions, either directly or indirectly. Some planners have attempted to answer these questions once and for all, regardless of the speech community. Baker (1997: 93-95) summarizes and then sternly critiques a 1953 UNESCO report's heavily ideology-laden proposed strategy for globally standardizing this phase of orthographic development. The report recommends a strong correlation between spelling and pronunciation, phonemic agreement, typographic simplicity, pronouncements against diacritics and the potential overuse of "new characters," and pronouncements for digraphs and congruence with the prevailing languages of the nation-state. Baker portrays these principles as arbitrary, and overly favorable of colonially important languages, perhaps even with established literacy traditions. Hébert and Lindley (1985: 188), after Bauman, offer a similar recommendation for evaluating orthographies based on their "simplicity, economy, relationship of grapheme to phonetic, phonemic, or morphological language level, word length, redundancy, and internal consistency." However, even here, design feature concepts are open to ideological debate and influence. For instance, what constitutes simplicity? Is an alphabetic system more or less simple than a syllabic or logographic system?

Finally, once these major ideological hurdles have been satisfactorily overcome, the real work begins: The writing system must be implemented. This, too, is an ideological exercise. How should it be taught? Who is to learn first? When is it not appropriate to use the writing system? Many of these sorts of questions may be answered indirectly by the speech community without much participation from active language planners. But they are nevertheless answered, and they are all ideological in nature. In the end, one may see the after-effects of these orthographic and ideological debates coalesce in the form of a shared group social identity among users of the writing system within the speech community. That is not to say that all orthography users will share the very same ideological positions, but that the ideology that has informed the orthography they use has also informed their *identities*, perhaps in the ways described above. In short, orthography and ideology affect social identity.

Case Study: A Practical Kaw Orthography

Background

Ideological consideration of Kaw begins with how the language is referenced. Scholars generally use the term 'Kansa,' pronounced as [ˈkʰænzə]. The tribe has an officially stated preference for 'Kanza,' pronounced as [ˈkʰanzə], as the English translation of the words *Kaáⁿze Íe* and *Kaáⁿze Níkashiⁿga*, 'Kanza language' and 'Kanza people,' respectively, but tribal members overwhelmingly use 'Kaw,' [kʰa:], to refer to both the language and the people. Because this latter practice is so widespread, I will use 'Kaw' in this work.

Kaw is a member of the Dhegiha branch of the Mississippi Valley Siouan languages, most closely related to Quapaw, Omaha-Ponca, and especially Osage, with which it is mutually intelligible. Reliable size estimates for the tribe vary depending on the era, but it was once spoken by as perhaps 5,000 or more individuals divided among several semi-nomadic bands in a Kaw homeland consisting of what is now central Missouri and southern Iowa, and later in a few semi-permanent villages scattered along the waterways of central Kansas, from Kansas City westward up to and slightly beyond the eastern border of Colorado in what was once their hunting territory. This territory shrank considerably until the 1870s, when the tribe was forcibly removed from Kansas to a small reservation in what is now north central Oklahoma (Unrau, 1971: 108). By the time of statehood in 1907, there were only about 200 Kaws, probably less than half of which were traditionalist full-bloods and speakers of the language. No fluent speakers were left by the mid-1980s, and the last full-blood Kaw died in early 2000.

What is known of the language comes primarily from two surveys conducted nearly a century apart. The first is that of BAE ethnographer James Owen Dorsey, working with the tribe a few years after their removal to Indian Territory. The second is that of Robert L. Rankin, working with three of the last fluent speakers of the language in the 1970s. Rankin collected nearly 60 hours of salvage interviews from this fieldwork, and has compiled extensive field notes, a brief grammar sketch, a 4,500-word lexicon, and numerous papers using Kaw data. It is from this body of work that the tribe has based its subsequent language revitalization efforts, with Rankin as consultant. The tribe currently maintains a two-person Language Department—including anthropological linguist Linda A. Cumberland as Project Coordinator and me as Director. We teach Kaw within the local community and via the Internet as a distance-learning enterprise.

It is important to note here that Kaw has no speech community. With fluency unattested for at least a quarter century, even partial speaking proficiency has long since shifted away, leaving the tribe 100% Anglophonic. All those who can now speak Kaw do so at beginner or advanced beginner levels of proficiency, and are either students or teachers involved with the tribal language revitalization efforts. Furthermore, the three professionals working on the language are all non-Kaw, and only one is of Native American heritage. This leaves the lion's share of the responsibility for the preservation of the language—and the ensuing orthographic selection, development, and implementation of interest here—in the hands of those who are affiliated with the tribe only by way of professional agreements to revitalize the language.

A brief history of Kaw writing

The earliest attested examples of written Kaw language are proper names and small vocabularies, all collected by non-Kaws and mostly written in the folk writing methods still employed by, say, English speakers attempting to sound out non-Anglophonic speech visually. These folk methods are of course personally conditioned, and are utterly inconsistent, often even within the same word. An example of this can be found in the 1902 Kaw Allotment Roll where the five-syllable Kaw name *Zá^{n}je Omá^{n}yi^{n}*, 'Walks in a Highland Forest,' is expressed as *So-Jun-Wah* by the agent compiling the list (Office of Indian Affairs, 1904).

The first serious attempt to capture the language with an internally consistent and regular writing system was made by Dorsey in the early 1880s, using the alphabet recommended for BAE field research. There is at least some evidence that he may have intended this writing system to be used by tribal members at some point: Among the 24 texts he elicited from Kaws in the field, he collected three would-be letters from Kaw adults written in the BAE system to others, including one to a non-Native off-reservation. This would seem to indicate that he believed that Kaw could serve everyday purposes in written form. His handful of adult male informants appeared to have agreed.

For the most part, Dorsey's Kaw orthography is systematic and fairly reliable, with exceptions arising from his failure fully to grasp Kaw phonology, including a four-way stop series. The stops include phonemes that are voiced, voiceless tense, voiceless aspirated, and voiceless glottalized. In the velar position, for example, Dorsey failed to perceive a consistent distinction between the first three of these. Thus, he represented the phoneme [g] as either *g* or *k̲*, the phoneme [k:] (voiceless tense, i.e., unaspirated word-initially and geminated elsewhere) as either *k̲* or *k*, the phoneme [k^{h}] as *k*, and the phoneme [k'] as *k'*. His treatment of vowels was similarly wanting in that he failed to perceive distinct secondary stress and phonemic vowel length, and tended to analyze [o] and [õ] as some variety of [u], a vowel that is unattested in Kaw. Thus, he represented these mostly as *u* and *u^{n}*, respectively. Despite these matters, and a few curious spellings (such as *c* for [š], *j* for [ž], *q* for [x], and *x* for [γ]) his adaptation of the BAE orthography for use with Kaw is still useful.

In the time between Dorsey and Rankin, the few extant Kaw writings were once more indicative of folk spellings. There were a few exceptions, such as the writings of A. B. Skinner, a BAE researcher working with the Kaws a few years after statehood. His system still owes much to the BAE system, but is far less consistent and reliable than Dorsey's attempts. Another example is from a decade or so later, but the actual writer is unknown. The specimen is the written text of a Kaw speech delivered by tribal member Pete Taylor at a monument dedication near Council Grove, Kansas. The orthography employed seems to be a marriage of folk and systematic writing. But this is the only known sample of such writing. The language then appears to go unwritten for another half century, during which time tribal language use tips toward English.

Rankin's work with Kaw begins in the early 1970s. Coming from a pure linguistics background, his initial Kaw text materials are written in a form of the IPA modified slightly to account for certain quirks of Kaw phonology, such as the geminate

consonants described above. His first publication on Kaw, a brief grammar sketch written about a decade after his fieldwork, refined this system somewhat. In this document, Rankin offers what has become accepted as the Kaw phoneme inventory:

Table 1, Kaw phonemes (adapted from Rankin, 1989: 305).

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Voiced stop or affricate	b	d	ǰ	g	
Voiceless tense	pp (p:)	tt (t:)	čč (č:)	kk (k:)	
Voiceless aspirated	ph (p^h)	th (t^h)	čh ($č^h$)	kh (k^h)	
Voiceless glottalized	pʔ (p')	tʔ (t')	cʔ (ts')	kʔ (k')	ʔ
Voiced fricative		z	ž	ɣ	
Voiceless		s	š	x	h
Approximant	(w)	l	y	(w)	
Nasal	m	n			

	Front	Middle	Back
Oral high unrounded	i		
Nasal	į (ĩ)		
Oral high rounded	ü (y)		
Oral mid unrounded	e (ɛ)		
Oral mid rounded			o
Nasal			(õ)
Oral low unrounded		a	
Nasal		ą (ã)	

It is worth noting that Rankin did not intend his orthography as a practical writing system for the Kaw tribal membership, but as a system of linguistic record and analysis. Likewise, his work on Kaw is intended for academic readers, not necesasarily Kaws.

It was not until the late 1990s that any efforts were made to promote written materials among Kaws. The first of these publications was a small vocabulary brochure and accompanying audiotape devised by the Kaw Nation Language Department in consultation with Rankin. For the brochure, an alphabet was devised based directly on Rankin's analytic writings. The only difference was the substitution of a post-posed superscript *n* for the nasal hook (or ogonek). The alphabet was quickly adopted by the tribe, and was used on the signage of at least one building on the tribal property. It is upon this background that the discussion of practical orthography development is set.

Need recognized

The need for a practical orthography became immediately apparent when I took over the directorship of the Language Department in 2001. After more than two years of active community language teaching using the Rankin orthography, the tribe's own Language Teacher at the time, Kelly Test, had insufficient productive grasp of the system. Her receptive skills were similarly less than ideal, but were more than compensated for by her mastery of Kaw vocabulary acquired aurally from the salvage interview recordings. My sense was that she had learned hundreds of Kaw words and

phrases, selected a few for use in class, and memorized their spellings, which were taught to her directly by Rankin. Accordingly, the writing of these vocabulary items was little more than an afterthought to the departmental teaching materials, added awkwardly to the bottom of otherwise clear visual aids. But the inclusion of Kaw writing on the materials would remain foreign to her students and not promoted as a medium on par with speech.

My suspicions were confirmed again and again in my dealings with former students of hers as well as those who had purchased the brochure and audiotape. They appeared unable to use the Rankin orthography at all, especially in keyed media such as email. I had one such communication with a tribal member who had learned what vocabulary she knew from that first brochure. She was unable to ask me an email-based question regarding the pronunciation of a Kaw word she had seen because she simply could not key it into her email client. Some students seemed perplexed that words should begin with a pair of the same consonant, such as *tta* for 'deer,' which they were unable to pronounce satisfactorily. Some could not guess what sound *c?* represented—or even *?* for that matter. Some failed to notice stress marks, which at the time were written as stand-alone characters after the stressed vowels, but noticed the apparent space they made between syllables, and simply reinterpreted stress marks as spaces. Some saw the superscript *n* as double-quotes. Still others were confused by the very real similarity between *γ* and *y* on the printed page. It was at this point that the Language Teacher and I set out to reform the orthography. We also arrived at our first ideological principle:

(I) Kaws should be able to read written Kaw with minimal difficulty.

This in turn assumes a higher-order principle:

(II) Kaw language should be written.

But if it was to be written, what would it be used for? And who would use it? As for the first question, we had the sense that if Kaw was ever going to be revitalized as the heritage language of the Kaw people, it would have to be relevant to their lives today. This meant it would have to be used for daily communication such as writing notes, making lists, and other ordinary orthographic tasks. Thus, our next principle:

(III) Any orthography for the Kaw language should be practical.

Moreover, we already had a technical spelling system for recording and analyzing Kaw data. A practical system would ideally suffice for technical use, but would simply be easier to deal with. Nevertheless, its real purpose would be for communication.

As for the question of who would use a practical orthography, it must be reiterated that Kaw is a language without a speech community. There is no Kaw speaker to whom language planning questions can be directed, and no speaker intuition to guide language planning processes. The average Kaw tribal member enjoys no sense of familiarity with the sounds and rhythms of the language whatsoever. It is as foreign as the most exotic African, Asian, or Australian language she may have heard of but never heard—more foreign even than Zulu, Khmer, or Walpiri, all of which may have been heard on television or in the movies. As such, we were in a unique position. We needed to carve out a future speech community to include both our potential body of students and oursleves—one for which neither our prospective students nor we were presently members—all with no speech community to have as a model. We were therefore forced to assume a role similar to that of an established speech community for the Kaw

language, even though we were not speakers! This fact led us to our next principle:

(IV) We Kaw language planners must be informed gatekeepers. As such, we must master its systemic knowledge, including its orthography.

In other words, if the task of devising a practical Kaw writing system was on our shoulders, we should master it.

Initial attempts

Having discovered the need for reform and with no speaker community for guidance, we turned to practical matters. What would reform of Rankin's system entail? What would need to change? How should change look? At this stage of the Kaw revitalization efforts, the amount of printed material was minimal. However, we were unwilling to alter substantially Rankin's lexicon, the one work of great size and import. This document was fundamental in our growing understanding of the language. If it was to be of future help to us, it could not be altered beyond the point that the consistency of its Kaw forms was lost. Our work cut out for us, we were left with another principle:

(V) A practical Kaw orthography must be maximally congruent with the available linguistic material on Kaw.

In practical terms, this meant the lexicon was our starting point, and that our reforms should be 1:1 substitutions of the Rankin orthographic characters with new characters.

We started with some of the problems we had noticed. Double stops seemed to confuse learners. This was aggravated by the fact that Rankin wrote stops as single letters after fricatives, yielding *tta* for 'deer' but *xta* for 'love.' Since the use of single stop characters was already used to represent unaspirated stops, it seemed only logical to drop a redundant character in the double stops. Thus, *tta* became *ta*. We simply had to stipulate that Kaw *p*, *t*, and *k* (and *č*) were tense consonants, and as such, were not pronounced the same as English *p*, *t*, and *k*. This is the essence of our next principle:

(VI) Most potential Kaw speaker/readers will have English speaker intuitions that must be indexed in some manner when English and Kaw orthographies are incongruent.

Stress marking had to be changed. It was currently marked *after* stressed vowels, creating divisions in words. A word like *ni`skü´we*, 'salt,' looked at a casual glance like three words linked by apostrophes. We instead placed stress over vowels using diacritics. However, this facilitated the dropping of dieresis (umlaut) from *ü*. But since Kaw has no [u] sound, and we could simply stipulate that Kaw *u* is fronted. Thus, *ni`skü´we* became *nìskúwe*. We then questioned how necessary stress marking was for single-syllable words. The vast majority of these words receive primary stress in the language. We were coming to regard extraneous diacritics as something of a nuisance, so we felt justified making the ruling that the stress was unneeded for monosyllabic words—note that we would later regret this decision. This led us to our next ideological principle:

(VII) Diacritics are a necessary evil restricted to situations for which no other practical solution exists.

This caused us to question of the use of hacek in *č* (we had already halved *čč*), *čh*, *š*, and *ž*. We figured Anglophones would recognize English digraphs more easily than new ones. This quickly yielded *sh* and *zh*, which we assumed would pose no problems for

English speakers, even if they co-occurred in a word with h (such as *Hishá*, 'Caddo'). But we stopped short of substituting *ch* for *č*, which would force *chh* in the case of *čh*; we thought this just as confusing as the existing symbol. We initially questioned the value of retaining *č*, and proposed the use of *c*. However, we felt that English speakers were likely to pronounce *c* as either [s] or [k^h] rather than [č:]. Furthermore, *c* was already used in *c?* for [ts']. So, we retained *č*. Again, we would later regret this. Nevertheless, we had a new principle, something of a complement to principle (VII):

(VIII) English speaker intuition is valuable. Appeal to it when possible.

Like hacek, we regarded the use of glottal 'pothook' *ʔ* as problematic. This character is simply not a part of an English speaker's ken. Furthermore, IPA represented ejectives with an apostrophe without undue difficulty. Since we had already dropped apostrophes from the marking of stress, they were available again. We were revising *c?* anyway, so we felt comfortable in changing it to *ts'*. Our justification for this is that *c* is simply an ambiguous character, one to which English speakers have set no default value. Or, rather, if there is such a value in the mind of some, it is certainly not [ts].

There is no convenient way to write nasal vowels in the roman script. One strategy was to insert to *m* before labials and *n* before velars. Such environments give rise to audible epenthetic glides, which students perceive and therefore expect. But what to do with nasal vowel-final words, nasals before alveolars, and so on? Speakers of some languages have agreed to assign double duty to *m* and *n* in all cases, even in vowel-final syllables, such as Portuguese *sim*, 'yes,' and French *fin*, 'end.' But this is not an English practice. Adopting it for Kaw would pose problems for a word such as *iná*^{n}, 'mother,' where *n* would serve as both a consonant and half of a vowel digraph in a spelling like **inán*. This creates unacceptable ambiguity in V_1V_2 environments where V_1 is nasal:

(IX) Kaw spellings should be unambiguous, allowing only one reading.

Still, we saw no good way to reform the use of superscript *n*. While not consistently easy to type on an ordinary keyboard, we allowed for character substitutions. When not available, a capital N or a tilde (~) could mark nasalization. This gave us leeway on other difficult characters, such as *č* (substituted with *c*), accented vowels (which could revert to apostrophes with minimal ambiguity given Kaw's vowel-final syllable structure), and *ɣ* (replaced by gh). This led to our next principle:

(X) The Kaw orthography must be easy to type. When characters pose difficulty, they should have dedicated substitution characters.

Our final reforms regarded discursive conventions. After all, orthography is not simply a spelling system, but a full writing system. We chose to maintain all punctuation and capitalization conventions of English, simply because of familiarity. Some are actually redundant with certain features of Kaw grammar, such as oral punctuation at both the sentence and discourse level and a system of quotative/reportative particles. Nevertheless, we felt that a printed page of Kaw text should be identifiably structured, giving Anglophonic Kaw students a graphic snapshot of the material in a familiar format. This led to our eleventh principle:

(XI) Kaw writing should resemble English to provide a sense of familiarity.

We did not change several elements of the Rankin system, including the Euro-centric use of *a*, *e*, *i*, and *o* for oral vowels. While innocuous to scholars, this practice is a

source of consternation to many exclusive Anglophones. We retained these spellings not only because of convenience, but also to maintain continuity with other Dhegiha language materials (sweeping changes to the Osage orthography came later):

(XII) Due to the high degree of intelligibility among Dhegiha languages, the Kaw orthography should be similar to other Dhegiha orthographies.

Except by dropping duplicates we opted not to change the spellings for the stops, despite the fact that English speakers tend to pronounce *p*, *t*, and *k* as aspirates—Kaw's *ph*, *th*, and *kh*. Here, principle (XII) guided us, but the solution is not perfect. Kaw has far fewer aspirated stops than tense stops, making the latter more important for students to master. We have never been able to solve this problem to our satisfaction.

In Dorsey's time the aspirate [t^h] was undergoing a transition that had come to fruition before the birth of the last generation of fluent speakers. It had merged with [$č^h$] before front vowels and [k^h] before non-front vowels. Thus, Dorsey gathered only a scattered few examples of [t^h] while Rankin recorded none. Why then preserve it in the orthography? Likewise, the glottalized stop [t'] occurs in exactly two words in Kaw, which are probably loanwords—for this reason, Rankin does not list it as a Kaw phoneme. Nevertheless, the words and the phone were known to both Dorsey's and Rankin's informants. Should it be preserved? We decided, no, the first did not have a place in the orthography while the second did—hence, our (seemingly) final principle:

(XIII) Kaw writing should reflect the language at the time of its emergence.

A few refinements

This orthography served for several years. However, its limitations gradually became obvious. First was the retention of *č* and *γ* despite the substitutes *c* and *gh*. True, we had rejected use of *c* on grounds of ambiguity, but users found *č* no easier to read or write. Opting for *gh* over *γ* was to distinguish the latter from *y*, especially in italics. Implicit in revisiting a seemingly final orthography is another ideological principle:

(XIV) The Kaw writing system should be flexible enough to accommodate changes when necessary.

Another change was to discontinue use of on-the-line *m* and *n* to represent nasal vowels before labials and velars. While the glides are produced in speech, we were unable to teach students when to write the nasals one way as opposed to another. This was further complicated in word-formation processes such as verb inflection. For instance, a verb form may consist of a nasal vowel-final prefix, a velar-initial and nasal vowel-final root, and a labial-initial suffix. An example is *ank'ímbe*, 'we packed it on our backs,' with the pronoun prefix *a^n(g)-*, 'A1D/P,' root *k'i^n*, 'pack on the back,' and aspect suffix *-(a)be*, 'NON-CONTINUATIVE.' Here it is difficult to explain why the headword forms of the morphemes may be listed with superscript *n*, while the surface form bears no superscripts. Instead, we opted to spell all nasals with the superscript to avoid confusion, turning *ank'ímbe* into *a^nk'i^nbe*. This is the nature of our final ideological principle:

(XV) Kaw spellings should be predictable and regular for production as well as reception.

Note that we did not abandon the use of the inconvenient superscript *n,* partially out of deference to the practical Omaha and Ponca orthographies that retain this character and

partially out of handiness—capital *N* is a consonant and ~ is choppy on the printed page.

A few nagging questions—especially phonemic vowel length and stress patterning—notwithstanding, today we have a 36-letter alphabet consisting mostly of single characters, but with several digraphs, and one trigraph: *a*, *a*^{n}, *b*, *c*, *ch*, *d*, *e*, *g*, *gh*, *h*, *i*, *i*^{n}, *j*, *k*, *kh*, *k'*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *o*, *o*^{n}, *p*, *ph*, *p'*, *s*, *sh*, *t*, *t'*, *ts'*, *u*, *w*, *x*, *y*, *z*, *zh*, and *'*. The only nonstandard characters in this orthography are the superscript *n*, more or less unambiguously replaceable by either *N* or ~, and stressed vowels, ambiguously replaceable by vowel plus an apostrophe (*'* is reserved for the glottal stop).

Critical review

After our orthographic review process, we were left with much more than an alphabet, but with a set of guiding principles and beliefs about Kaw writing. These principles, restated and rearranged somewhat, can be expressed as follows:

The Kaw language should be written (II).
The Kaw orthography should:
...be practical (III).
...be easy to read (I).
...be unambiguous (IX).
...be predictable and regular for both production and reception (XV).
...be congruent with the available Kaw literature (V).
...be congruent with the other Dhegiha orthographies (XII).
...be congruent with the English orthography (XI).
...appeal to English speaker intuition (VIII).
...provide stipulations for incongruence with English orthography (VI).
...provide dedicated substitutions for inconvenient characters (X).
...provide opportunities for revision (XIV).
...reflect state of Kaw language at time of its emergence (XIII).
...use diacritics only when necessary (VII).
The Kaw language planners should master the orthography (IV).

A few questions about our orthographic development process remain. For starters, is it done, or is there more work to be done? We consider the process semi-organic. We Kaw language planners recognize how disconcerting is the prospect of revising the orthography again, making years of language materials irrelevant. Nevertheless, we are always learning more about the language, and we may learn something that will cause us to change our thinking on the orthography. Vowel length and stress issues demonstrate this. But we feel we cannot wait until we know everything before acting.

Another question concerns the ideological principles themselves. Did they arise from the development process, or did the development process arise from them? This paper's initial argument connecting ideology and orthography would seem to indicate that ideology of higher order, a concept that merely results in symptomatic orthographic choices. Yet, in the Kaw language discussion, it may appear that ideology fell out of our orthographic choices. Truth be told, this is mostly irrelevant. In the end, the two can be shown as correlative and co-influential. That is to say, ideology informs orthography just

as much as the reverse. This can be seen in shared outlook or group social identity common to the speech community. With Kaw, however, there is simply no community to speak of. Not yet, anyway.

This raises other questions. Was our development process exclusively top-down language planning? If so, how applicable is it to other language planning scenarios? Greater still, what relationship should the language planner have to the speech community? These are difficult questions. The answer to the first is, yes, Kaw writing was regrettably developed with little community input. Equally unsatisfying is our justification: Most Kaw language knowledge accrues to a Language established by the tribal administration to make language decisions on behalf of the people. Applicability is another issue altogether. While not directly applicable to other communities, the ideological (and practical) issues we faced are similar to those faced by any community without written language. Plus, the products orthographic development processes will be the same: Orthography and ideology. As for the language planner's role in the speech community, any answer will be ideological in nature. As such, there is no single solution; the question must be asked and answered for each language and speech community.

The last set of questions regards identity formation. I have so far argued that orthography codifies ideology with social ramifications, especially with respect to group social identity. If so, what identity issues arise from our development of a practical Kaw writing system? Is it exclusive, i.e., does it favor a particular group? Is it a good match for the social situation among the Kaws today? Again, we are unable to give satisfactory answers here. The newest version of the orthography is new development. The number of students advanced enough to have worked with it to any degree is around ten, only six of which can use it for both reading and writing. Thus, we do not yet have sufficient data to answer. If our efforts continue, we expect to observe the burgeoning of a shared outlook or sense of community among students. Regarding exclusivity, the answer is sadly yes. The system seems to exceed some sort of threshold beyond which it is sufficiently different from English writing as to pose difficulties for adults who have never studied a second language, presumably because of conflicts with their English speaker intuitions (which, of course, we have made efforts to appeal to). To date we have found no solution to this exclusion. We lack sufficient tribal demographic data to say how large a segment of the Kaw population falls into this category, but if intuition serves, it is substantial. So, the best we can say is that the orthography is a less than perfect fit for the *tribe*. However, we know it works for the *language*, and we have seen progress in the writing skills of at least two younger advanced students for whom Kaw is only the second language they have studied. Perhaps the fit skews toward Kaw youth. If so, prospects are good that writing can develop with increased tribal youth-targeted pedagogy.

Conclusion

I have attempted to demonstrate the connection between orthography and ideology firsthand. I have shown how the development of a practical writing system for the Kaw language entailed the development of a system of beliefs about Kaw language and its use. It still remains to be seen how the two products will affect the future of Kaw language revitalization efforts. But given the social effects of orthographic selection in

other speech communities, particularly for identity formation, we Kaw language planners expect to see effects of our actions at some point, probably in terms of a shared outlook or sense of community among student users of the orthography.

The case of the Kaw language planning ideology may have sounded far-fetched just a few decades ago: A tribe with no living speakers of their heritage language hires outsiders first to learn the language and then to teach it to tribal members. Furthermore, the ideology presented above is a very specialized application of the concept involving, not speakers, but language planners whose knowledge of the language is only slightly less tenuous than their students. Nevertheless, these are the facts in the case of Kaw. Bear in mind that Native American languages continue to fall out of use while some tribes gain more resources through economic development and grant opportunities, and that language planning professionals tend to come from outside of the Native American community by simple statistics. Thus, such odd pairings are likely to become more common in the coming years than ever before. Thus, word of caution is in order. Language planning is a necessarily ideological enterprise. The language planner—whether or not she is aware of the fact—is an ideologue. Her decisions may seem innocuous, but they code for a particular set of beliefs that she intends will guide the future of the language and speech community by helping to form group social identity. Accordingly, it is best for such individuals to be cautious of their actions. In the case of orthography development, the unintended exclusion of possible writers and readers is a real concern, which also affects identity formation. It is therefore wise to keep in mind the premises of the ideological arguments whose conclusions are codified in orthography.

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