

## ABSTRACT

*Garifuna Waguia:  
Conservation and Revitalization of Garifuna Language in the Southern Caribbean Coast of  
Nicaragua*

The Garifuna Nation is an afro-indigenous ethnic group that can be found throughout Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the island of St. Vincent. This project outlines the current status and community efforts towards the revitalization of Garifuna language in the Southern Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua, specifically the town of Orinoco. While there are an estimated 100,000 speakers of Garifuna across the world, there are currently only two fluent speakers in Orinoco, both of whom are elderly. Although language classes are given at the Manuel Mongalo Elementary School in Orinoco, Nicaragua, language education is not provided to those who are not enrolled in school. My thesis reports on community demands towards the implementation of a language program for the adults of the community who may not have the opportunity to learn the language otherwise. In order to meet the community demands and needs, this work draws from two approaches: a comparison between other indigenous language revitalization efforts throughout Latin America and the United States and the development of a Pedagogical Grammar for Garifuna, the latter of which aids adult learners with second language acquisition. The overarching objective of this study is to contribute to the ongoing effort of the Garifuna community in order to achieve an accessible pathway to the revitalization and conservation of the language.

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Southern Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua

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## “Au bun amürünü” -Garifuna Proverb

“Au bun amürünü” can be translated from Garifuna to English as “I for you and you for me.”

This Garifuna proverb is one of the core philosophies of Garifuna culture and one that I hold dearly throughout this project. I was first introduced to this term while having a conversation with a member of the Garifuna Nation in the town of Orinoco, Nicaragua. The Garifuna are afroindigenous and native to the island of St. Vincent, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. As a Nicaraguan-born Latina raised in the United States, most of, if not all, my exposure to Garifuna identity came from the stories I would hear about distant relatives who lived in the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua. Most of these stories were based on stereotypes and myths about Garifuna people.

These stereotypes and myths never really meant anything to me as I heard similar stereotypes about other groups, many of which I had come in touch with because my hometown, Miami, FL is so diverse. Still, as a child, I was always interested in learning more about the different ethnic groups and communities that lived in Nicaragua. Again, I came across these stereotypes time after time, but never encountered any factual information about the community. Fast-forward a couple of years and I am sitting in a college course, learning about an indigenous community that sounded all too similar. It wasn't until college that I discovered my father and his side of the family is Garifuna. Navigating a predominantly-white institution as a First-Generation, Queer, Latina immigrant already presented its set of challenges. Discovering that I had lived my whole life not knowing about my Garifuna roots, presented a new set of challenges as I had to learn more about the history of the Garifuna Nation and debunk the stereotypes and myths I had grown up hearing about this group, as well as learning about every aspect of the culture and language.

In addition to these challenges, I was also faced with understanding how someone could be afroindigenous while holding the privilege of being a light-skinned person who did not grow up in nor around a Garifuna community and what this means in terms of understanding the culture as an adult. All

of these questions and internal challenges inspired me to take it upon myself to learn more about my Garifuna identity and to have those initial conversations at home. While this project began as a way of trying to learn more about Garifuna culture, it turned into a linguistic project for two main reasons: 1. the Garifuna language in Nicaragua is critically endangered and 2. my background in Linguistics allows me to provide suggestions that may guide the revitalization effort as other community members do not have a background in Linguistics. It is my duty as a scholar to give back to the community with which I am establishing a relationship; especially if this community is one that is close to me.

The first step I had to take before I even began this project, was to have a conversation with my family about it. Speaking to my parents about Garifuna identity was a difficult one as my father tried so hard to deny it and my mother only spoke about the community based on the stereotypes that exist about it. When I expressed interest in working with the community and doing so by going to Nicaragua, I received a lot of backlash as they thought it was a dangerous idea since they withhold those stereotypes still. I was told by family members that by going into the “selva”, or the “jungle” I would meet savages and put my life in danger. These sentiments extended not only to the Garifuna, but to the afro-descendant population in the Caribbean Coast as a whole. Setting aside their comments about the community, I reached out to various friends who I know are doing scholarly work in the Caribbean Coast, and I was able to find out more about key people I should talk to.

After several years of not visiting Nicaragua, I was able to visit again in the summer of 2016, during which I was able to visit the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua, specifically the city of Bluefields, the town of Orinoco, and Big Corn Island. In Bluefields and Orinoco, I was able to meet with key people that would be able to offer me more information about the Garifuna culture and language status. The interviews provided me with a much better understanding of Garifuna history and how the Garifuna community in Nicaragua lives now. Due to globalization, many traditional ways of life are not practiced on a day-to-day basis, but there are many ongoing efforts that are striving to conserve those traditions and



culture. A common goal of all of these efforts are to revitalize and maintain the sense of pride tied to Garifuna identity.

Many Garifuna people in other Central American countries, specifically Honduras, often exhibit a very overt sense of pride in their Garifuna identity, a sentiment that was kept silent throughout generations in Nicaragua. This sentiment hits close to home as my grandmother was Garifuna but never spoke about her identity with my father. Having to migrate to the Pacific Coast in search of more opportunities, my grandmother raised my father in a community that was predominantly Mestizo. A combination of growing up away from a Garifuna community and my grandmother's fear that my father would be discriminated against for being Garifuna created the base for my father's lack of knowledge about his roots and his refusal to even speak about Garifuna identity with me up until I was 19 years old.

As someone who has always loved learning about cultures and who learned about intersectionality and other concepts in college, I was able to decide for myself that I did not want to continue this cycle of self-erasure for myself, which also extends to my lack of speaking the language. Although this project's main objectives deal with language loss and revitalization, the overlying main goal is to use language revitalization as a way of revitalizing Garifuna identity pride amongst many Garifuna people in Nicaragua as these are intrinsically interconnected.

In order to even begin this project, I had to follow a series of methods and steps that would bring me closer to a more authentic and feminist approach to this project. As mentioned, my first step towards even understanding the purpose of my project was to first learn about the history of the Garifuna in order to understand the historical, social, political, and economic factors that have and still affect the Garifuna Nation across Central America and those who live in the United States. This history and current state of communities who live in the ancestral lands as well as those in the diaspora communities would set the context that allowed to further understand how these factors also affect the vitality, or life, of the language and perhaps what has led to bigger populations of speakers in other countries than in Nicaragua.

Once I was able to see the interaction between these factors and their effects on Garifuna language loss in Nicaragua, I had to analyze the linguistic crossroads at which the Garifuna Nation lie. Before analyzing the effect that these linguistic crossroads have on the language status of Garifuna language, I first had to differentiate between certain concepts such majority and minority languages, native, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> languages, primary and secondary languages, as well as define bilingualism for the purposes of this project. After clarifying these terms, I focused on another factor, bilingual education by looking at the history of bilingual education in Nicaragua and what languages it focused on, as well as current bilingual education systems in the country and in the region where majority of Garifuna live. An analysis of bilingual education practices eventually led to raising questions as to why else Garifuna adults do not speak the language, which pointed towards issues of racial and linguistic discrimination. Another question that was raised during this investigation pertained to future patterns of language loss and what can be predicted if children are beginning to learn the language at a local school through a language elective but the adults in the community such as their parents or legal guardians do not? How could this affect the language retention of the younger generations? What possible steps could be taken in order to help bridge this intergenerational language gap? Most importantly, what does the community want and what steps do they deem the most beneficial for themselves and the future generations?

Given all of this, the objectives of my study are to 1. highlight the urgent need for a language revitalization effort of Garifuna language in Nicaragua as it is on the verge of extinction in the country, 2. analyze the linguistic gap between generations in order to assess possible next steps, 3. draw comparisons and lessons from other languages, such as Maori and Hawaiian, that share parallels with the endangerment status and demographics of Garifuna, and finally, 4. to identify ways to bridge the linguistic gap by proposing initial steps towards the implementation of a Pedagogical Grammar that focuses on adult language learner education.

Therefore; I provide an overview of the Garifuna Nation since the colonization period up to its displacement throughout the United States in the first chapter as well as aspects of Garifuna culture such

as gastronomy, religion, music, and relationship with the environment. In the second chapter I define the status and degree of endangerment according to factors such as number of speakers and use of the language for daily activities; as well as look at the linguistic politics that affect such status. I then state my role as a researcher and community member in the third chapter by providing community members with knowledge of what other languages have done, what has worked and what has not, in order to provide them access to the revitalization process so they can make better informed decisions for the community and themselves. As this is a collaborative effort, in the final chapter I provide specific and concrete steps that I believe will guide the community towards a successful revitalization effort of Garifuna language while still recognizing that they have the last word on decision-making for the community.

# Garifuna Nuguya -We are Garifuna

This chapter is a tribute to Titiman Flore's song, "Garifuna Nuguya", which calls for us to remember our history and not lose our language or culture.

The objective of this chapter is to introduce readers to Garifuna Nation history as a way of bringing visibility to the historical challenges that have affected the Nation since colonial times, many of which still affect Garifuna communities. Understanding this history is vital to the understanding of how Garifuna language has become endangered and why it is important to revitalize it as language revitalization is cultural revitalization. This chapter begins with the intermarriage between indigenous Arawak peoples and West African enslaved peoples on the island of St. Vincent, the displacement of original Garifuna communities by the Europeans to Central America, the current Garifuna population across Central America, and the diaspora communities across the United States. The chapter is divided into the following subheadings: Arawak and West African Intermarriage, Population and Racial Categorization, Displacement—which provides information about displacement patterns in each of the Central American countries—, Religion, Culture—including Gastronomy, Music, and Dance—, as well as Garifuna relationship to the environment.

Central America is bordered by Mexico to the North, Colombia to the South, the Pacific Ocean to the West, and the Caribbean to the East. It encompasses the countries of Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. With Nicaragua being the largest country size, spanning some 49,998 square miles and Honduras being the most densely populated country, with an estimated 17,005,497 population, Central America holds about 7% of the world's biodiversity and is home to different ethnic groups. While these countries are characterized by their environmental and cultural diversity, some ethnic communities are not as

visible as others, these mainly being afro-indigenous ones. One such community is the Garifuna community, an afro-indigenous community that can be found in the Caribbean Coasts of Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

### 1.0 Arawak and West African Intermarriage

The Garinagu<sup>1</sup>, are afro indigenous people whose history is rooted in and marked by migrations and displacement. The history of the Garifuna Nation begins in 1635, when two Spanish ships carrying Nigerian enslaved people sank near the coast of the island of St. Vincent, now known as St. Vincent and the Grenadines (Anderson 2009). Igneri natives, which belong to the Arawak family, lived on the island prior to any arrivals, and later, Kallinagu (Caribs) people immigrated to St. Vincent from what is now known as Guyana and Venezuela. Intermarriage between the Nigerian and Igneri natives came to produce the hybrid nation of the Black Caribs. St. Vincent was under British control in 1763 and there was much dispute about ownership between the British, French, the Caribs and Black Caribs<sup>2</sup>. However, tension and hostility between the groups lead to the Caribbean War in 1795, one that was lead by Garifuna hero and leader Joseph Chatoyer. Despite their resistance, the Caribs and Garinagu lost the war and surrendered in 1796. Many Caribs were deported to the island of Balliceaux, and island south of mainland St. Vincent, but they later returned to mainland St. Vincent. Meanwhile, in 1799, the Garinagu were exiled from the island and on April 11th, some 2,026 Garinagu arrived to the island of Roatán, Honduras (Agudelo 2013) (see Figure 1).

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<sup>1</sup>Garinagu: Plural for Garifuna.

<sup>2</sup> Caribs refers to the Native people who settled St. Vincent from modern Venezuela and Guyana, while Black Caribs refers to those of Native and African heritage, now known as the Garifuna Nation.



Figure 1. Map of Garifuna migration patterns (Morris, 2000)

The Spanish saw the Garifuna as avid fighters, skilled farmers, business people, and navigators. They also accepted the Garifuna in Honduras due to the shared hostility towards the British. However, in time, they began to perceive their uprising in St. Vincent as a potential threat as they foresaw Garifuna ideology influencing enslaved people. In turn, they expelled the Garifuna from Honduras, which led them to disperse along the coasts of British Honduras (current Belize), Guatemala, and the Mosquitia (Honduras and Nicaragua) (Agudelo 2013).

### 1.1 Population and Racial Categorization

According to the United Nations 2003 Human Development Report for Central America, there are an estimated 200,000 Garinagu in Honduras, 150,000 in Belize, 5,000 in Guatemala, and 2,000 in Nicaragua, for an overall approximation of 222,000 Garinagu in Central America. High rates of unemployment and lack of resources have led many to search for more opportunities, forcing many Garinagu to immigrate to the United States. These migration patterns have led to enclaves in cities such as New York, where there are an estimated 100,000, Miami, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, and New Orleans. However, there is not a precise

account for Garinagu in the United States, only estimates of a population equal or greater to that of Central America's, which yields an estimated 400,000 total Garinagu in the Americas (Agudelo 2013).

Discrepancies and inability to accurately count for Garinagu in the United States and in Central America reflects current disputes when it comes to identity politics. It was in the 1960s and 1970s that there was a transition from using the terms '*Black Carib*', '*moreno*', and '*negro*' when describing the Garinagu, to the current term '*Garifuna*'. This term derives from the Garifuna language and is also used when in contact with other languages such as English and Spanish. Gonzalez (1976) suggests that the shift to the term '*Garifuna*' was influenced by the Black movements in the United States through Garifuna immigrants. However, the use of other terms to self-identify still persist and may account for an inaccurate census. While the Black movement in the United States has influenced politics around Black identity for the Garinagu, there is a sense of transnationality and nationality within the Garifuna community. In the case of Belize, due to the British model of Stateship, afro descendants were not recognized as the majority until two decades ago. In the case of the Mosquitia, this recognition clashes with strong British presence, the existence of other identities such as indigenous groups and Creoles, as well as failed governmental control in this area (Agudelo 2013). It is important to provide context about the current relationships between the Garinagu and their respective countries in order to understand the relationship between the Garinagu and aspects of their identity and culture.

## 1.2 Displacement

### 1.2.1 Belize

Creole people are recognized as the majority in Belize and since the 1960s have gained recognition and forward social mobility from the British until they gained control of the independent nation in 1981. This shift in autonomy also translated to the Garifuna as they gained

recognition and access to places of power. Along with these accomplishments, there was also an official Carib Disembarkment Day, now called Garifuna Settlement Day, which celebrates and reenacts the arrival of the Garifuna to Belize since 1797. In 1980, the National Garifuna Council mobilized in order to bring visibility to double cultural heritage: both African and Indigenous roots. These efforts eventually resulted in higher visibility of afro descendants in Latin America in an international context. In 2001, the petition to become an intangible heritage of humanity was accepted by UNESCO (Agudelo 2013).

### *1.2.2 Honduras*

The Garinagu in Honduras are known for being the biggest population of Garifuna in Central America. Efforts to gain recognition and status were headed by the National Fraternal Organization of Black Hondurans (OFRANEH) since 1977. From OFRANEH stemmed other organizations that advocated for inclusion of the Garinagu in the African Diaspora movement. Since the 1920s and 1930s the Garinagu were able to elect officials and other positions in government. However, during the Carias Tiburcio dictatorship, the Garifuna community of San Juan was accused of plotting against the dictatorship, something that led to the murder of many men from the community. To the day, this event remains remembered and written down in history. Another wave of activism was seen in the 1950s when labor unions resisted against fruit companies in Honduras (Agudelo 2013).

In 1972 we saw the creation of the Honduran Institute of Tourism, which promoted Garifuna culture throughout the nation, which then created a platform for the institutionalization of Garifuna culture. In 1996, the Honduran government declared April 12th as Black Ethnicity Day and declared the municipality of Punta Gorda as a National Monument. In 1997, they celebrated the 200th anniversary of the arrival of the Garinagu in Central America. One of the



biggest achievements that came out of Honduras was the declaration of 2011 as the International Afrodescendant Year. This brought along with it further movements for the inclusion and integration of the Garifuna in policies for afro descendants as well as granting citizenship for the Garifuna while recognizing their afro-indigeneity (Agudelo 2013).

### *1.2.3 Guatemala*

In comparison with the Garifuna population in Honduras, the population in Guatemala is dismal as there are only an estimated 5,000 out of the 13 million total inhabitants in Guatemala. Unlike the case of the Garifuna in Belize where they are the majority, the Garifuna in Guatemala interact with other indigenous groups such as the Maya and the Xinka. Since the 1980s they have been celebrating Settlement Day, called Yurumein, in the city of Livingston. In 1995, the Black Guatemalan Organization (ONECA) was born and pushed towards the implementation of National Garifuna Day on November 26th 1996. In relation to the State, the Garifuna emphasize their Africanness primarily, but prioritize their indigeneity when dealing with the State (Agudelo 2013).

### *1.2.4 Nicaragua*

The status of the Garinagu in Nicaragua differs from that in other countries starting with the significantly lesser population of Garinagu, which is concentrated in the Pearl Lagoon area, and the physical isolation from other Garifuna communities of Central America. However, it was during the 1980s that Garifuna leaders in Nicaragua were in contact with other Garifuna organisations in order to achieve recognition and mobilization there as well. These mobilizations would prove of utmost importance as the Garifuna community in Nicaragua mainly maintain the culture and history through traditional practices, but also see the loss of the language as generations pass by (E. Morales, personal communication, August 5, 2016).

Governmental collaboration was seen during the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) period between 1979 and 1999 as the government granted the Garifuna with recognition and inclusion through the National Constitution of 1988 and the Statute of Autonomy for the Caribbean Coast. While these efforts were made, the question of double identity still remains as the government currently marks a distinction between indigenous groups and ethnic communities. The Garinagu are grouped together with Creoles under an overarching afro descendant ethnic label; thus failing to recognize their indigeneity (Agudelo 2013).

### 1.3 Religion

Garifuna religious practices consist of diasporic roots and is not practiced by all Garinagu. Elements of African, Amerindian, and European influence are evident in practices by many practitioners and still remain truthful to the practices followed in the original homeland, St. Vincent. It is believed that ancestors return from St. Vincent and visit their living descendants in rituals (Johnson 2007). Due to migration from Central America to the United States, some of these practices have either been discontinued or have been mixed with other religions. In the case of the Honduran diaspora in New York City, many are becoming aware of and embracing the African roots of their practices. In the homeland of St. Vincent, it was believed that a spirit, Black Forest could be found at the foot of a volcano, the Lake, and the “Cavern of Death”. Specific landmarks are crucial to their belief system as spirit geography allows practitioners to trace the spirits and call on them.

Garifuna religious beliefs also place great importance in divination of illnesses through calling on the ancestors to provide the remedy. These divinations are lead by religious leaders or shamans known as boyés or buyeis, which are called upon the ancestors to lead the ritual. The ritual begins with the buyei smoking tobacco in order to enter a trance, and this way, the

ancestors' spirits are able to guide them and tell them where the illness needs to be extracted from. The spirit extracts the illness in a form of a small bone or a piece of wood. In order to appease the spirit, members of the family and the community must offer a food, mainly cassava bread, offering in a low table. The ritual is usually completed with the sound of three drums which guide dances for the returning ancestors (Johnson 2007). This religious practice is now known as dügü or wallagallo (Nicaragua) and is commonly mistaken for santeria or witchcraft by non-Garifuna people.

Garifuna religious practices were also influenced by Catholicism. For example, malignant spirits are considered to be manifestations of 'the devil' and positive spirits are associated with 'God'. Ninth-night masses are held in order to remember and appease the dead, a tradition adapted from Roman Catholicism. Although these influences carried throughout, there was much resistance from the Garinagu in St. Vincent early on because priests played a key role in Garifuna ethnogenesis (Johnson 2007). Nevertheless, by the time the Garinagu were exiled from St. Vincent, it is estimated 10% of them were baptized and by the time they got to Central America they at least became nominally Catholic (Johnson 2007).

#### 1.4 Culture

Culture in this context comprises of non-religious practices followed by the Garifuna community. Ancestral knowledge of the ocean is seen in Garifuna gastronomy, music, and dance as many of these incorporate sea elements and references to the sea and the Garifuna's voyage from St. Vincent to Central America.

##### *1.4.1 Gastronomy*

The main ingredients in Garifuna gastronomy include cassava, coconut, plantain, rice, fish, and seafood. Condiments usually used are black peppers, basil, garlic, coriander, onions,

ginger, and mint. Due to recent commercialization of artificial seasonings, many of these ingredients have been replaced. Typical dishes are as follows: baami or ereba (cassava bread) (see Figure 2), fufu or hudut (mashed plantain), cassava tortilla, fungy (cornbread), dashin dumpling (dumplings made of cassava), yuca tamale, pulali (coconut dessert), rice with coconut milk, and run down (a type of stew with coconut milk, vegetables, chili, and meat). Most foods are accompanied by fried plantains or fried breadfruit slices<sup>3</sup> (see Figure 3). Typical drinks include: hiyu (alcoholic drink made out of cassava bread crumbs; mainly drunk by men), ibo (alcoholic drink made out of almonds), cususa (alcoholic drink made out of fermented corn), corn atole (non-alcoholic drink made out of corn and coconut milk).

Garifuna foods are traditionally made with ancestral tools such as: egi (grater) (see Figure 4), ibisi (funnel) (see Figure 5), ruguma/woula (extractor), hana/maata (morter) (see Figure 6), arpones (fishing reel), ushnu (basket to put cassava) (see Figure 7), cayucos (fishing boats), and a firehead (a wooden box halfway buried on the ground that is used to smoke food). Due to globalization, most of these tools are no longer used, except in demonstration, and most foods are cooked using stoves and modern tools. Garifuna men typically practice artesanal fishing, while most women are the ones who cook at home, although they also learn at a young age in case men are not available (K. Sambola, personal communication, August 18, 2016).

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<sup>3</sup> These names appear as known by the Garifuna community in Nicaragua. Names vary between countries.



*Figure 2. Baami/ereba: cassava bread*



*Figure 3. Typical dish with coconut rice and beans, sliced breadfruit, and fish.*



*Figure 4. Egi: grater to grate cassava*



*Figure 5. Ibisi: funnel to milk the cassava bread*



*Figure 6. Hana/maata: mortar to grind corn*





*Figure 7. Ushnu: basket to store cassava bread*

#### *1.4.2 Music and Dance*

Garifuna dance varies from country to country, but the beats, steps, and movements are similar across. The most commonly known and celebrated Garifuna dance is punta, which originated in Honduras. Punta follows a duple-meter rhythm and is sung in Garifuna, which reflects the deep roots and origins of the Garinagu. Punta is a platform that allows folk artists to express social commentary. Traditional punta is danced with both feet parallel to the floor and a shaking of hips, while moving forward and backward by curling your toes. In the 1970s and 1980s, punta rock was born out of a need to mix traditional punta and urban social ideas (Greene 2002). Punta rock is what is commonly heard in many radio stations and danced at social gatherings. The dance form has shifted and is commonly danced while on your toes, similar to samba, and has become more sexualized than it originally was. Both traditional punta and punta



rock are sung accompanied by instruments such as skin drums, calabash rattles called shakkas, and conch-shell trumpets. Many Garinagu also commonly listened to other genres such as soca, reggae, and reggaeton.

### 1.5 Relationship to the Environment

Like many Native people, the Garinagu are very connected with the environment because of their use of natural resources as food and for religious purposes. Historically, the Garinagu have been displaced from their land, and ever since arriving to Central America, there has been constant land loss and displacement. Currently, the major cases of land loss are occurring in Honduras. Because most Garifuna communities are matrifocal and land has been passed down matrilineally, Garifuna women have been in charge of activist work to reclaim their stolen land. However, land rights are often depicted as solely indigenous rights and do not mention a gender gap at all (Brondo 2007). In the case of Nicaragua, the Garinagu are allocated ancestral land, specifically the Pearl Lagoon Basin and Corn Island (see Figures 8 and 9).



*Figure 8. View of Pearl Lagoon from Hostal Garifuna.*



*Figure 9. View of the main dock of Big Corn Island.*

However, due to deforestation, mining, and other extraction of natural resources, Garinagu land has been reduced. It is said that most buyeis can no longer find plants that are needed for rituals. Similarly, many traditional doctors (bush doctors) can no longer find plants and trees they use for traditional medicine. This has pushed many younger Garinagu to study agriculture, reforestation, and medicine at the university study (E. Woodward 2016, personal communication, August 5, 2016).

The history of the Garifuna Nation is one marked by constant oppressions, whether it be in the form of exile from Yurumein (the ancestral land of St. Vincent), to the current forced migration patterns to other countries in search of better opportunities. In the constant struggle

against the effects of colonization, globalization, and racism, traditions, customs, and ancestral knowledge have been threatened. It has been the work of Garifuna activists and other community members towards documenting Garifuna history that has led to a reclaiming of Garifuna identity and pride. Amongst other aspects of Garifuna culture and heritage, the focus that the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua has taken on revitalizing the Garifuna language in Nicaragua is one of the initial steps in the direction of reclaiming and taking pride in Garifuna identity. Although a history of colonization and displacement can be blamed for the endangerment of Garifuna language, there are many other factors that have played a role in such process. The following chapter discusses sociopolitical factors that have affected the vitality of Garifuna, such as bilingual education and linguistic politics.

## Uwala Uwala Busiganu -Don't be ashamed of your culture

This chapter pays tribute to Pen Cayetano and The Turtle Shell Band's song that calls for a pride and awareness of Garifuna culture.

This chapter begins with an overview of general linguistic characteristics of the Garifuna language such as its alphabetic inventory, phonetic inventory and vowels. It then looks at the language endangerment status of Garifuna in a case by case manner, linguistic politics per country, and the history and current implementation of bilingual education in Nicaragua. The objectives of this chapter are to clarify the differences between terms that are often confused, such as minority and majority languages, native, first, and second languages, as well as primary and secondary languages, because it will help situate themselves and other community members along the spectrum. Another objective of this chapter is to compare linguistic politics in other Garifuna countries with those in Nicaragua in order to identify possible factors that feed into the disparity of language speakers in those countries and those in Nicaragua. A final objective of this chapter is to trace the history of bilingual education in Nicaragua and its current implementations as a way of understanding other factors that perhaps led to the loss of the language amongst various generations and what an inclusive bilingual education system may look like in the future.

Now, Garifuna is the cultural language spoken by many Garinagu across the world. However, due to migration and colonization, many Garinagu do not speak Garifuna and instead speak English and/or Spanish, with many of them speaking a Creolized version of English and/or Spanish. Although classified under the Arawak family tree, Garifuna itself is a result of long language contact history between West African, Arawak, Carib Indian and Indo-European languages. By the time the Europeans arrived to the Caribbean, Garifuna was a formed language following Arawak grammatical structure and word order (Verb-Subject-Object) but with usage of Carib and Arawak words (Ravindranath 2009). However, through contact with Indo-European



languages such as English, Spanish, and French, some loan words from these languages are currently seen in the vocabulary. There are an estimated 75,000 Garinagu who learned Garifuna since birth (Ravindranath 2009).

## 2.0 Basic Language Overview

### 2.0.1 Garifuna Alphabetic Inventory

a, b, ch, d, e, f, g, h, i, k, l, m, n, ñ, o, p, r, s, t, u, ü, w, y

### 2.0.2 Garifuna Phonemic Inventory

Table 2. Consonants and vowels (Haurholm-Larsen & Zúñiga 2016)

Consonants	<p>	/p/	[p]
	<k>	/k/	[k]
	<t>	/t/	[t]
	<b>	/b/	[b]
	<d>	/d/	[d]
	<g>	/g/	[g]
	<n>	/n/	[n]
	<m>	/m/	[m]
	<ny>	/ny/	[ɲ]
	<r>	/r/	[r]
	<l>	/l/	[l]
	<f>	/f/	[f]
	<s>	/s/	[s]
	<h>	/h/	[h]
	<ch>	/ch/	[tʃ]
	<y>	/y/	[j]
	<w>	/w/	[w]
Vowels	<i>	/i/	[i]
	<e>	/e/	[ɛ]
	<a>	/a/	[a]
	<o>	/o/	[o]; [ɔ]
	<u>	/u/	[u]
Diphthong	<ü>	/ü/	[i]
	<eü>	/eü/	[ei]

Garifuna has six vowels as shown in Table 1. The /ɔ/ vowel is the least frequent of the back vowels and there are two allomorphs to it: [ɔ] and [o]. Of these allomorphs, the first is found in

almost every environment, while the latter is mostly found in native words. The [o] does occur in specific contexts such as: to (feminine pronoun) do (modal), and inó (interjection), as well as loanwords from Spanish (Haurholm-Larsen & Zúñiga 2016).

Haurholm-Larsen & Zúñiga (2016) suggests that vowel phonemes are all symmetrical in their phonotactics and that there are no limitations to their distribution. Garifuna also has an estimated 13 diphthongs and most of them are regarded as VC or CV syllables that have a glide with /w/, /y/, or /r/. Honduran Garifuna, however, has one distinguishable diphthong: /eü/, which is written as <aü>. Word initial /w/ are expressed as [w] except when they are placed before a high front /i/ or a mid front /e/ (Haurholm-Larsen & Zúñiga 2016).

## 2.1 Language Endangerment Status

According to the Endangered Language Project, Garifuna is considered an at-risk of endangerment language as the vitality<sup>4</sup> shows there are about 100,000 speakers. It is important to note that this status of Garifuna encompasses the whole of Central America and the United States. However, when looking at the status in a case by case manner, one can see that this status shifts from country to country. In order to understand what the current status of Garifuna language in Nicaragua means for the revitalization and conservation of the language in Nicaragua, it is important to look at the status of the language and its contact with other languages in other Central American countries.

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<sup>4</sup> Vitality refers to the projection of the likelihood that a language will continue to be used in the future. An indicator of it is the use of the language in the home. A language with high vitality is one that is used extensively inside and outside the home by all, if not most, generations (SIL International, 2017).

### *2.1.1 Belize*

The Garinagu can be found in the southernmost parts of the country, mainly in the towns of Dangriga and Punta Gorda, as well as four villages: Hopkins, Seine Bight, Georgetown, and Barranco, with the majority being located in the district of Stann Creek. (Ravindranath 2009). While there is no official census of Garifuna speakers in Belize, Ravindranath (2009) points out that in the towns of Dangriga and Punta Gorda, Garifuna language is rarely spoken and monolingual Garifuna speakers can be found amongst elders. However, in Hopkins, some children and elder monolinguals speak it as well.

### *2.1.2 Honduras*

Garinagu can be found in 46 villages along the Honduran Atlantic Coast, which is divided into four districts: Cortes, Colon, Atlántida, and Gracias a Dios, as well as the department of Islas de la Bahía. Some of the first Garifuna settlements in Central America were San Antonio, Rio Negro, Santa Fe, Cristales, and Guadalupe. Although these were some of the first settlements, many people moved to other places such as Trujillo and San Pedro Sula in order to find jobs with fruit companies. Now, because Honduras is the country with the majority of Garifuna population in Central America, one could suspect that it is the country with the majority of Garifuna speakers. This does not necessarily mean that Garifuna is not on its way towards endangerment as Garifuna remains a minority language in Honduras. Like Belize, there is no official census as to what the population of speakers is, but as Escure & Schwegler (2004) point out, the majority of Garifuna speakers are over 40 years of age.

### *2.1.3 Guatemala*

The majority of Garifuna population can be found in the cities of Livingston and Puerto Barrios, in the department of Izabal, which borders Honduras and Belize (Gargallo 2000).



Although the population is smaller in Guatemala than in Honduras and Belize, there are some young speakers of the language as well as elder monolinguals. Again, there is not a census as to the number of speakers in Guatemala, like in the other countries.

#### *2.1.4 Nicaragua*

Nicaragua is the country with the least number of Garinagu and the enclave, which this project will focus on, can be found in the Pearl Lagoon area, specifically in the towns of Orinoco, La Fe, and San Vicente. The exact time in history that the Garinagu entered Nicaragua is not entirely known, mainly due to the incorrect use of ‘Carib’ when describing Garinagu and other indigenous people who were thought to be related. However, it is known that Garinagu worked in various factories in Nicaragua during the 1800s. San Vicente was the first of six Garifuna settlements in Nicaragua when a Garifuna from Honduras, Joseph Sambola, who worked in Greytown as a lighter, settled in San Vicente along with other Garifuna coworkers (Davidson 1980).

The final settlement, Orinoco, was established in 1912 when Sambola moved to Orinoco with his family. Orinoco is currently the biggest Garifuna community with about 2,000 inhabitants (K. Sambola, personal communication, August 18, 2016). This was the area in which most data collection for this project took place. In Orinoco, there are currently three fluent speakers of the language, two of which are elders and one who is currently a Garifuna teacher at Manuel Mongalo Elementary School, but is a second language learner of Garifuna (V. Lopez, personal communication August 18, 2016) However, there is no official census with number of speakers of the language in the country.

## 2.2 Linguistic Politics

In order to discuss linguistic politics around Garifuna, it is important to first understand Garifuna as a minority language. Minority languages can encompass different definitions, depending on the country in which the language is being contextualized. Minority languages are mainly spoken about at the local level, where many of them are spoken in a limited area in a state or nation, and others are spoken transnationally (Gorter, Zenotz, Cenoz, 2014). This does not correlate with language size, however, as some minority languages can be bigger than some dominant languages. For example, Quechua, a minority language in South America has over nine million speakers, while Greek, a dominant language has less speakers. Quechua and Catalan are just two examples of minority languages with many speakers, but in reality, most minority languages do have a low speaker population. Garifuna is considered a minority language in all of the countries it is spoken as it is not the dominant language and there are an estimated 100,000 speakers worldwide.

*Majority and minority languages* have a sociopolitical dependence in order to define them. A *majority language* then refers to a language spoken by the majority of speakers. *Majority languages* are usually official languages, although that is not always the case. A *minority language* can be defined as a language that is spoken by a minority ethnic community. It is important to understand that minority languages do not necessarily have to do with the number of speakers, but rather with cultural, political, or social implications (Montrul 2013). Minority languages are, for the most part, the focus point of many community or national efforts that seek the revitalization and/or conservation of it. These efforts have the end goal of passing policies that ensure the protection of the languages at hand.

A main push by many movements is that of the educational component to languages, meaning that education is seen as a safeguard for the revival of languages (Gorter, Zenotz, Cenoz, 2014). These efforts exist as a pushback to many national efforts of creating national cohesion through the use of one standardized language of communication. In addition, it is also important to create the distinction between terms such as *native language* or mother tongue, *first* and *second language*, *primary* and *secondary* language, *majority* and *minority* language, and the many forms of *bilingualism*. These concepts will be detailed below. Many of these terms stem from the concept of language planning.

Language Planning was defined by Fishman (1972) as “organized efforts to find solutions to language problems in society”, a definition that was later challenged and changed by other schools of thought. It has become a recent point of investigation from an interdisciplinary framework that combines the political, economic, and social factors of the community at hand. Early language planning began with a focus on multilingualism; however, as Ravindranath (2007) points out, when working with transnational communities such as the Garifuna community, these communities are often monolingual as they share one language in common, although the individual communities are bilingual or trilingual.

The Language Policy Statement of the Garifuna Nation was drafted in 1997 and is a document designed to detail the plans of the Garifuna Nation in order to ensure the maintenance of the Garifuna language. Part of their statement demands lexical expansion, which calls for an international committee to develop new vocabulary for items and concepts that do not exist in traditional Garifuna so that speakers do not have to resort to loan words. They also demand corpus planning, in which the orthography of Garifuna is finalized and standardized. Other demands include: training of teachers and others in the new Garifuna orthography, language

acquisition and use for children to learn ancestral knowledge, local programs for parents who do not speak the language, an establishment of forums that promote the language at all levels, resources and funding, linguistic documentation as a comprehensive grammar description that can be implemented in the classrooms, overall interest from linguists, and recognition and status by the governments of Belize, Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua (Langworthy 2002). According to Ravindranath (2007), this Language Planning document does not tailor the plan to specific communities, as they each have unique needs, as can be seen in the following subsections.

*A native language* can refer to the language that is learned since childhood at home or with family. A *first language* can refer to the first language that someone learns, thus being used interchangeably with *native language*. There is a marked distinction between *first language* and *primary language* in that a *primary language* is a language that someone uses more frequently and in many contexts, but does not necessarily have to be the first language learned. There can also be a *second language* or even a *third language*, which refer to the *second and third language* someone learned after the first language. There is also a distinction between *second language* and *secondary language*. A *secondary language* is the language that a speaker uses with less frequency than the *primary language* (Montrul 2013).

When approaching a definition of *bilingualism* it is important to also separate knowledge of a language and usage of it. It is equally important to recognize the degrees of knowledge of a language someone can have, which can vary from native knowledge to partial knowledge. Someone can be bilingual because they have an understanding of the language but not necessarily be able to read it or write it. Bilingualism also encompasses those who have more knowledge about one of the languages than the other (Montrul 2013). Still, many schools of

thought have different interpretations of *bilingualism*, which is why I refer to *multilingualism* instead, due to the various contact languages in Central America.

Montrul (2013) writes that bilinguals in Spanish and minority languages tend to have limited Spanish knowledge and a better knowledge and usage of their indigenous language. While this is true for many indigenous groups in Latin America, the Garifuna experience another level of language influence and shift, that is the influence of English and Creole English. Now, what happens when multiple languages are spoken in these countries? What languages come in contact with Garifuna on a case by case?

### *2.2.1 Belize*

Belize is the only Central American country that also shares direct ties with the Caribbean as it is a former British colony. It is also the only Central American country whose official language is English, although its lingua franca is Belizean Creole. Garifuna is officially recognized by the government as a language. In addition, due to proximity with Guatemala and Honduras, some parts of the population also speak Spanish, making them trilingual. There is currently one Garifuna school, “Gulisi Garifuna”, in Dangriga. According to the National Garifuna Council of Belize, there is a current undergoing project to expand a Garifuna radio station called Hamalali. There are also many young artists singing in a hybrid of Creole and Garifuna, such as artist Clayton Williams and his songs such as “Garifuna Nuguya”, as well as “The Garifuna Collective” and “Umalali: The Garifuna Women’s Project”.

### *2.2.2 Honduras*

The official language of Honduras is Spanish, although English Creole is spoken along the Caribbean Coast, as well as other indigenous languages. Garifuna is mainly in contact with Bay Island Creole in the Bay Islands, while it is more in contact with Spanish in mainland

Honduras. While Garifuna has official recognition from the Honduran government, it wasn't until 2013 that the first inter-cultural bilingual school, "Alfonzo Lacayo", was opened in San Pedro Sula, that six more centers received inter-cultural bilingual education in Garifuna (K. Sambola, personal communication, August 18, 2016). Hamalali radio network also exists in Honduras; however, it is under threat of being shut down by the government. In 2011, the radio station Faluma Bimetu stopped transmission after a series of threats. Garifuna music, such as punta, a ritual dance for the dead, has become commercialized by non-Garifuna artists, but many of these songs do incorporate Garifuna words. There currently is a Garifuna television station, "Garitv" that has a collection of performances, music videos, interviews, education, and cultural elements.

### *2.2.3 Guatemala*

The official language of Guatemala is Spanish, although there exist indigenous languages such as Maya, in addition to Garifuna. Garifuna inhabitants of border towns with Belize come in contact with Belizean Creole as well as with some of the other indigenous languages. In terms of social platforms, there is one radio station, "Labuga" that caters to Garinagu and plays punta, but mainly plays soca.

### *2.2.4 Nicaragua*

The official language of Nicaragua is Spanish, although English Creole, or Kriol, is spoken in the Caribbean Coast. Other languages spoken in this region are Miskito, Rama, and Mayangna. Garifuna is recognized as an official language, but there is no national television or radio station that transmits in Garifuna. However, there is one, Radio Carib that broadcasts Garifuna-related news. Most of the music that is listened to in this area is soca and reggae, with occasional punta. The Nicaraguan government has implemented inter-cultural bilingual

education for minority groups since 1984, starting with the Miskito and now expanding to the Rama and Mayangna (K. Sambola, personal communication, August 18, 2016). In the town of Orinoco, there is one Garifuna language school, the Manuel Mongalo Elementary School. The elementary school teaches in both Spanish and English Creole, but offers Garifuna as well. There is only one teacher for grades K-8. This teacher learned Garifuna in Honduras before moving back to Orinoco to teach. Within the Garifuna community there was a contract to send students from Orinoco and the Pearl Lagoon area to Trujillo in order to learn Garifuna in six months (V. Lopez, personal communication, August 18, 2016). The teacher began at the six-month interval but returned to study the language for five years. However, no efforts have been made to implement language immersion courses for adults in the community (V. Lopez, personal communication, August 18, 2016).

### 2.3 Bilingual Education

In Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras, contact with other languages such as Spanish, English, and other indigenous languages has created the phenomena of bilingual and even trilingual speakers in these Garifuna communities. However, in the case of Nicaragua, due to lack of speakers of Garifuna, bilingualism is only observed with Spanish and Kriol. The Manuel Mongalo Elementary school's Garifuna program is an immersion program in which students in grades K-8 spend an hour and a half learning Garifuna grammar and vocabulary twice a week. While this immersion program seeks to bring the younger members of the Garifuna community to a bilingual status, it is equally as important to help bridge the intergenerational gap between them and the older generations in order to facilitate this bilingualism.

When approaching a definition of bilingualism it is important to also separate knowledge of a language and usage of it. It is equally important to recognize the degrees of knowledge of a

language someone can have, which can vary from native knowledge to partial knowledge. Someone can be bilingual because they have an understanding of the language but not necessarily be able to read it or write it. Bilingualism also encompasses those who have more knowledge about one of the languages than the other (Montrul 2013). Still, many schools of thought have different interpretations of bilingualism, which is why for the purposes of this project I will refer to *multilingualism* instead, due to the various contact languages in Central America.

Montrul (2013) writes that bilinguals in Spanish and minority languages tend to have limited Spanish knowledge and a better knowledge and usage of their indigenous language. While this is true for many indigenous groups in Latin America, the Garifuna experience another level of language influence and shift, that is the influence of English and Kriol English. It is equally as important to distinguish between individual bilingualism and collective (social) bilingualism. Edwards (2013) proposes that individual bilingualism may be less permanent as what often occurs is a step towards monolingualism in one language. For example, a second generation immigrant may be bilingual in their mother tongue and in English, but by the third generation, there may be a shift towards monolingualism in English. On the other hand, collective bilingualism rests upon the need of the community to continue speaking in the languages because one of them may no longer be accessible and thus all the necessities that were covered in such language, usually being the mother tongue.

### *2.3.1 Historical Context of Bilingualism on the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua*

In the case of Nicaragua, bilingualism can be traced to the colonization by Spanish and British powers. While the Spanish colonized the entire land, the British mainly took control over the Caribbean Coast (also known as the Mosquitia). In 1687 the Jamaican king set foothold of



the Mosquitia and this established British control of the land through the rule of Miskito leaders (Shapiro 1987). In 1849, Moravian missionaries began formally studying Miskito language and transcribed it into formal writing, which led to the transcription of the New Testament and other religious documents into Miskito. Years later, the United States took over the land as they saw Nicaragua as a potential place to build an interoceanic canal. It was during this period that many English-speaking Black Jamaicans began settling in Puerto Cabezas and Bluefields. Moravian schools offered primary and secondary education in English to the English-speaking families, although not many of them could afford such instruction. However, public schools were institutionalized in the area and instruction was given in Spanish. This, in addition to historical tensions between the Pacific Spanish-speaking Nicaragua and the Atlantic English-speaking Nicaragua was fueled by the prohibition of English and Miskito instruction prior to Sandinista rule.

The Sandinista National Liberation Front won power on July 19, 1979, very much without the input of Black and Indigenous people from the Caribbean Coast. However, the revolution brought two policies that would greatly affect the Caribbean Coast from there on. The first one was the National Literacy Crusade which sought to eliminate the high rates of illiteracy in the country, and particularly in the region. The second policy was called the Cruzada de Alfabetización Paralela, which was initiated with English, Miskito, and Mayangna (previously known as Sumo) languages. This policy gave recognition to the importance of having native language education in the Caribbean region. This policy was successful in teaching 12,000 Miskito, Mayangna, and Kriol speakers basic reading and writing skills (Shapiro 1987). Collaboration with a Miskito grassroots group, MISURASATA eventually led to problems as

MISURASATA began a separatist movement and later moved towards revolting against the Sandinista government.

In December 1980, the Nicaraguan Council of State passed a bilingual-education law which obliged the Minister of Education to organize, plan, and evaluate the teaching of Miskito and English from pre-primary to the fourth year of primary school. This law also required that Spanish be introduced into this bilingual education system. While these bilingual education programs have been successful in the past, many organizers in the region worried that these programs would utilize the native language as a bridge as a way of facilitating a future exclusive learning of the dominant language(s), in this case either English or Spanish, or both (Shapiro 1985).

This last point brings us to the question of what constitutes a minority language in a multilingual context. As White (1991) distinguishes, in multilingual contact, there are geographical schemes to understanding the unequal strengths between languages. The first is among minority languages which are unique to a state, those of which are non-unique but are still subordinate in every context, and those which are minority languages in one context, but dominant ones in another. The second scheme involves the type of connection between speakers, meaning, are they adjoining (i.e. Quechua in Ecuador and Quechua in Peru) or non-adjoining (i.e. Spanish in Nicaragua and Spanish in Spain)? Lastly, the third schema raises the question of cohesiveness between a group, whether the speaker group is cohesive or noncohesive. These schemas apply to both indigenous and minority languages (Edwards 2013).

As can be seen in Nicaragua's history of multilingualism, each language that has shaped the country has had different levels of dominance. In the Pacific Coast, Spanish is the dominant language, while in the Caribbean Coast, Spanish was once a minority language that, due to the

influx of Mestizos, is developing into a dominant language for economic and political purposes. The dominant language for Mestizos in the Caribbean Coast is Spanish, while for the Garifuna and Rama, the first language has been Kriol English, leaving Miskito, and Mayangna as minority, adjoining, cohesive languages. Miskito, although still a minority language, is not at risk of endangerment to the same degree as is Mayangna or Rama. At the same time, Mayangna still has a group of speakers and is undergoing the revitalization process. Rama was thought to be extinct until a revitalization project was begun in the 1980s (Freeland 2003).

As Freeland notes, the Caribbean Coast's current linguistic status is still remnant of different treatments by colonial agencies which created a ethnolinguistic hierarchy with differences in the functional range and vitality of languages (Freeland 2003). Freeland presents such top-down hierarchy as: 1. Spanish (Mestizos) with the most speakers; 2. Kriol English (some Standard English) with the second most speakers; a third level that encompasses 3. Miskito, which has speakers but there has not been a standardization of it except in religious contexts, and has subsets of speakers which include Mayangna and Ulwa, the latter of which has descriptive grammars but the intergenerational transmission has been broken. However, Mayangna and Ulwa are not mutually intelligible. 4. Rama is also in the process of autonomy and has descriptive grammar, but the intergenerational transmission has been broken. Finally, there is 5. Garifuna, which only has some older speakers of it and has grammars, dictionaries, and other resources developed in other parts of Central America, but the intergenerational transmission has been broken in Nicaragua (Freeland 2003: 242). Freeland specifies that Garifuna is restricted to the eldest generation but usage of the language is mainly used for religious ceremonies, which as mentioned in Chapter 1, only occur few times a year.

### *2.3.2 Current Intercultural-Bilingual Education in the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua*

The Caribbean Coast's inter ethnicity clashes with the Coast's inter-ethnic practices, something that informs current policy in the region through 'linguistic autobiographies' by students at the Intercultural-Bilingual Education program at the Universidad de las Regiones Autónomas de la Costa Caribe de Nicaragua (URACCAN). In most of these 'linguistic autobiographies', the main languages that are recorded are Miskito, Rama, and Mayangna, but not Garifuna due to the lack of younger speakers of the language. The use of Garifuna for cultural practices is relevant as after the Sandinista movement linguistic-cognitive goals of 'mother tongue' education, the main focus was using the L1+Spanish and this brought the communities to decide when and where their heritage language would be included in education. Currently, Garifuna language and culture are being taught in primary schools as a subject, but their main education is still in the L1, in the case of the Garinagu, Kriol English. As Freeman proposes, this initiative places the revival of the language and culture on the community while allowing for expression of individual identities regarding the 'mother tongue'. The Language Law of 1993 stipulates that Nicaraguan State must recognize and support the rescue and preservation of indigenous and minority languages such as Miskito, Rama, Mayangna, Kriol, and Garifuna. While this is beneficial as it involves the community, these intercultural-bilingual education programs are supported by URACCAN and more often than not depend on short-term projects (Freeland 2003: 252). Thus, a future direction pertaining to Intercultural-Bilingual Education programs is to widen multicultural awareness and holding Intercultural-Bilingual Education as an example of autonomy of these nations and not just a symbol of said promised autonomy.

While Garifuna is offered as an elective for all students at the Manuel Mongalo Elementary School, V. Lopez states that most students tend to still use Kriol as the main mode of communication and that many express they would rather just learn Standard English in order to not be discriminated against outside of the Caribbean Coast (personal communication, 2016). One student mentioned that he is not interested in learning Garifuna because they even discriminate against him in the capital of Managua for being Black and speaking Kriol; therefore, Garifuna would be even worse. As Siegel (2006) argues, poor academic performance of students from marginalized groups is often not the result of poor teaching methodology, but rather the student's reactions to the education system. Many students may not want to participate in an education system and/or society that denigrates their language and culture. Siegel also suggests this may have attributed to students feeling as if they have to choose between the dominant language and their heritage language as a result of the push towards monolinguals seen in society. If Intercultural-Bilingual Education programs are effective in the way they position the community as the main ones involved in the process of revitalization of their language and culture, where does this leave the Nicaraguan State? Due to Nicaragua's recent involvement in this movement, not enough time has passed in order to truly see the effect of these efforts yet. However, there are plentiful examples in other Latin American countries such as Peru, Brazil, and Bolivia, as well as within Native American and Pacific Islanders nations. What can we learn about these efforts in order to move forward in Nicaragua?

In conclusion, understanding factors that affect the intergenerational transmission gap are essential to moving forward as it brings us closer to possibly formulating ways in which to bridge this generational linguistic gap. Further, having the bilingual education model as an example allows us to critically analyze what methods and practices were successful and

beneficial to learning and which ones were not. The following chapter will highlight the importance of collaboration between the Garifuna community and I in order to achieve the community's goals and objectives of this revitalization project. The chapter will also draw parallels and cite examples of Māori and Hawaiian as these align with the specific status of endangerment as Garifuna language. In addition, it will look at local efforts taking place in other Garifuna communities by Garifuna scholars such as Salvador Suazo in order to understand what resources are available and how these resources can be used in order to further the process.

## Samina Humei -Think About It

Samina Humei pays tribute to Andy Palacio's song that served as a wakeup call about Garifuna land grab in Central America and the impact of foreigners on our land and their voice on our education.

One of the objectives of this chapter are to provide models that have been successful in other languages, such as Māori and Hawaiian, in order to learn what has worked and what has not, in order to implement the best approaches for Garifuna in Nicaragua. A second objective is to provide Garifuna language teachers, linguists, language activists, and community leaders and members with an understanding of their roles as they are involved in this process so that they have the tools to participate actively in the decision-making process. A final objective of this chapter is to provide criteria at the individual and societal level so that the community can set up

their own objectives for the revitalization process in general and the type of pedagogical grammar for Garifuna.

The topic of positionality will be covered in this chapter as well because it is important to recognize the privilege I carry going into the Garifuna community as both a researcher at a higher education institution and as a member of the Garifuna diaspora in the United States. Speaking on positionality informs why this project is structured the way it is and why it is written in a way that is accessible to people who are not in academia.

### 3.0 A Researcher Among Us

In order to understand the impact that linguists and researchers have on indigenous communities that are striving towards stabilization of their languages, we must first understand what knowledge linguists bring to the table. As Margaret Speas (2009) points out, most linguists, if not all, have expertise on linguistic properties that are not directly applicable to many language instruction textbooks and resources. Although they have knowledge of relative clauses, quantifiers, verb inflection, etc., and can analyze a language's characteristics, it is only the speakers of the language know how to speak it best and have the last word on their own language, which is why a Pedagogical Grammar will not only take into account the knowledge of instructors, but of the adults as well. It is important to keep in mind, however, that when working with a community, there are often times certain preconceived notions as to what the role of the researcher is. Historically, the involvement of linguists in communities has led to the belief that only linguists are allowed to interact with the language and that the community has nothing to add because many of them perhaps do not have a degree in Linguistics. Some of these misguided beliefs were identified at the 1994-1995 conference on Stabilizing Indigenous Languages. A very common misconception is that in order to master the language that is to be learned, that many

community members must give up on their own language in order to master another one and that they need special training to teach their own language to your children. Another common misconception is that schools can take over the job of teaching a language if families do not teach it, and finally that writing a language is what keeps it alive and thus must be the only way to learn it. Other misconceptions that have risen over time are that there is one “correct” way to speak a language, thus invalidating what is called descriptive language, or language that does not follow all the grammar rules and is more natural to the speakers. Another very common misconception is that being bilingual actually deters children from advancing in school as speaking two languages or more slows them down (Speas 2009: 25-26). Linguistic research has taught us, however, that these misconceptions are not at all true as bilingual children can easily learn two languages, spoken languages are alive and do not necessarily need to be written in order to stay alive, in order to learn a language, you can learn it through sentence patterns and not just words, descriptive language has its own implicit grammar rules and it is still as valid as the standard dialects, and children can learn language by just being growing up somewhere it is spoken and not necessarily having to get formal education.

Linguists who are involved in revitalization efforts often times try to debunk these misconceptions in the communities they are in, but it is important to note that this should not be done as it creates a context that portrays the linguist as an expert on all things language. This is often carried through the project and if the linguist is writing a grammar or dictionary of the language, community members might see the linguist as the expert on their language and not themselves. Therefore; it is of vital importance that linguists establish boundaries for themselves and how they interact with the community.



Now, these boundaries may come up when speaking with the community as instances may arise where community members ask linguists about some of the misconceptions that exist. For example, as Speas (2009) exemplifies, community members might ask a linguist what the correct way to speak a language is or what the “correct grammar” is. A linguist might feel obliged to not answer that question by saying there is no correct grammar or just ignoring the question directly. At the same time, as Speas (2009) points out, it is important to take this question seriously as although there is no “correct way” to speak the language, a parent might make this request in order to correct their child’s speech in order to make their speech more accessible to elders who perhaps speak the language fluently.

Another important point that Speas brings up is the fact that some linguists may only have theoretical knowledge and no experience with developing pedagogical materials or writing dictionaries; which makes us wonder, what can linguists without these types of training exactly contribute to the community? While some linguists may only have theoretical knowledge about language and not know how to develop dictionaries or pedagogical grammars, they still have privilege that they can use to further help advance the needs of the community. As Speas exemplifies with her own work with the Navajo community, as a linguist, she was more helpful to the community completing other tasks that were not directly related to linguistics. One of the main privileges is that we have access to people and resources who otherwise would not listen to people from these communities. This privilege may come in the form of institutional access to databases with more information, other scholars who have done previous research with similar projects, financial funds in order to carry out said research, and technology that may be beneficial to analyze the data at hand (Speas 2009: 30).

As Grenoble and Whaley (2006) argue repeatedly, successful revitalization programs heavily depend on the level of community involvement and ownership in the project. Dependence on the outsider can erase the community's ownership even if the outsider is a catalyst for change. It is always important to put the community's needs and demands first, no matter what level of linguistic expertise the linguist has. Give this, it is important for me to provide more information on my positionality as both an outsider and insider in the Garifuna community. As a Nicaraguan-born member of the Garifuna Nation, I am given 'insider' access to my community as the Garifuna community of Orinoco is very welcoming of its members and diaspora community. However, it is my responsibility as a researcher who both holds the privileges granted by my institution, college education, and of growing up and living in the United States as a member of the Garifuna Diaspora. It is still important for me to give priority to the demands of the community rather than tell them what I think is best for the community in Orinoco as I do not live there directly and the language loss is not an issue that presses me as it does for the community living in the ancestral homeland. Another privilege that is non-linguistic related but is relevant is my privilege as a light-skinned Garifuna member, which is a privilege given on any context, but that in this context serves of more relevance as my lightness can be of use as an activist for the Garifuna language. Grenoble and Whaley (2006) provide the example of most Hawaiian revitalization projects where most of the linguists, educators, activists, and/or literacy experts come from within a community brought into question who has authority to make language decisions considering educational and perhaps class privilege.

As Grenoble and Whaley continue to point out, "it is important for communities to determine the precise roles that are appropriate for such people" (2006: 192). With this in mind, and for the sake of transparency, this project began as a request by various members of the

community, among them one of the representatives for the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua, to write on the need of programs that help bridge intergenerational language gaps within the community. Specific requests were to bring light to the need of adult learning programs in the community of Orinoco and to the need of updating the lexicon, which will be explained later in this chapter.

### 3.1 Guidelines For Linguists In Revitalization Work

With this invitation, the guidelines I have adhered to for this project are the ones that were provided by the Assembly of Alaska Native Educators in their publication *Guidelines for Strengthening Indigenous Languages* (LaFortune 2000) which encompasses many of the guidelines Garifuna community elders have expressed. I am presenting and following these guidelines because they were designed with the purpose of providing assistance to those who are responsible for making recommendations regarding the heritage language in the community. As a researcher, I made a commitment to always be respectful of the community while still making suggestions to them because of my knowledge and background in Linguistics; therefore, I will use guidelines established by other Native groups in order to guide my own approach with the community. The first guideline points out that the researcher must identify and utilize the expertise in participating communities to enhance the quality of linguistic data. The second guideline states that the researcher must contribute appropriate linguistic expertise on language teaching, learning, policies, and planning in ways that are compatible with the heritage language aspirations of Native communities. In addition to this, the researcher must also provide encouragement and support for Native students interested in teaching their language/or becoming linguists and support, training, resources and technical assistance to language initiatives on-site in local communities so that maximum heritage language revitalization can be achieved. If the

researcher has the proper linguistic and/or educational background, another facet in which they can help is by helping prepare linguistic materials and templates of basic planning documents that are of direct benefit to indigenous people in their heritage language efforts. The last two guidelines encourage assisting in the development and use of linguistically appropriate computer software and fonts that facilitate electronic composition and communication in the heritage languages as well as assisting in the conservation and preservation of heritage language materials, including appropriate media and storage facilities.

As a researcher, I am bound to all of these guidelines and try to meet them to the best of my ability by drawing from the research on language revitalization and Linguistics that I have found; however, the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua expressed explicit interest in the first three guidelines. The first step that I must take before delving into these guidelines is providing and understanding of what exactly encompasses language revitalization. As Tsunoda (2005) explains, in order to even conceptualize language revitalization and whether or not it is possible, it is important to a) define language revitalization and b) establish the aim of a given revitalization program. In order to define language revitalization, Tsunoda emphasizes looking at the degree of language endangerment and death as well as the intactness of the language structure. This can be difficult to pinpoint at a given time due to the spectrum that exists when classifying the degree of language endangerment, ranging from “weakening” to “extinct”. Even within a language, these degrees can vary from region to region, as seen with Garifuna in Nicaragua versus Garifuna in other countries where Garifuna communities can be found. Intactness of the language structure refers to maintaining or restoring the language as it is/was spoken traditionally by fluent speakers. This, however, is not as sustainable as language is always shifting and changing.

Now, determining the aim of the language revitalization effort at hand brings in different key elements that determine the activities carried out during these programs. The first step that needs to take place is sorting the amount of documentation that exists for that language, whether it be audio recordings, written text, dictionaries, etc. It is vital that this information is known before beginning a revitalization project in order to assure what materials would be best to use, if they exist. If there is not much documentation, this would lead to seeking for sources or solutions that can provide the information requested by the community.

Another key component involves the aims of individuals who are trying to learn the language. Perhaps some community members aim to at least know the basics of the language in order to hold some level of conversation or knowledge of the language. On the other hand, other community members may aim to speak the language fluently, perhaps like their ancestors did. This information is also important to know as a mix of different aims can help determine what path and at what pace a program may be designed in order to try to meet everyone's aims.

In addition to these factors, there are two levels on which language revitalization exists: the *societal level* and the *individual level*. Tsunoda states that the societal level has various factors as well, as pointed out by McKay (1996). The first, second, and last factors are often the most important ones for communities who are striving to begin a revitalization program, the first of which is knowing the current viability of the language as a full communication system; as well as the number of speakers, the integration of language use, and the isolation of their community. Another factors lies at the economic and political levels as the economic situation of the speakers and the political status of them and their language need to be taken into consideration. Other factors that need to be taken into consideration is the use of the language in areas such as

religion, education, media and, most importantly, the attitudes of the speakers to their language and to the dominant language.

McKay (1996) also identified various aims in one of his surveys in Australia, which may be too ambitious for certain languages. Many of these have an end goal of helping learners achieve complete fluency. However, many languages, such as Garifuna are not ready to achieve those goals and perhaps may just aim towards more realistic goals for the time being. One less ambitious goal would be the one that he identified as (c) obtaining and preserving knowledge about the language in a reaffirmation of links with the group's cultural heritage (1996: 175). This last goal is currently being implemented in the Garifuna community across Central America and in Nicaragua as well. A way in which they are carrying it out is by following a program model suggested by McKay as (d) language reclamation programs that operate in a situation where very little of the language is still known or remembered within the community but where there is a reasonable amount of documentation on the language (1996: 176).

This last program is very telling of the stage at which the Garifuna language is under in Nicaragua. Fishman (1991) states that language endangerment can be categorized by 8 stages. The first stage states that some language use by higher levels of government and in higher education while the second stage points that language is used by local government and in the mass media in the minority community. By the third stage, the language is used more locally as it is used in places of business and by employees in less specialized work areas. Stage four is reached when the language is required in elementary schools, while stage five is when the language is still very much alive and used in community. The last three stages are those that hint towards reaching possible endangerment and loss. The sixth stage is when there is some intergenerational use of the language, while the seventh is reached when only adults beyond

child bearing age speak the language. The final stage is the most alarming as there are only a few elders speak the language.

Garifuna language in Central America is currently undergoing stage 6, where there is some intergenerational use of the language, particularly in Honduras. However, when looking at Nicaragua, Garifuna meets the requirements to be classified under stage 8. This is due to the fact that there are only 2 fluent speakers of the language, both of whom are elders. Although there is a third speaker of the language, this speaker is not as fluent as the elder speakers and knows enough to be able to teach basic Garifuna concepts that tie into ancestral cultural practices and beliefs. Most of the language lessons in school and in community events are geared in a way that offer more information about the ancestral culture, which signifies that the aim of the community is indeed one of obtaining and preserving knowledge about the language in a reaffirmation of links with the group's cultural heritage.

While all of these efforts are occurring at the societal level, there is much to be said about individual goals and efforts of community members in regards to their level of proficiency in the language. Daniel Rubin identifies five degrees of fluency that individuals in a community may aim for (1999: 179). At the highest degree that can possibly be reached, the creative level, speakers are able to understand and speak the language fluently in ways that create new word usage and structures, showing a deeper understanding of the language and its potential new uses. The following degree is fluency, where speakers are able to understand and speak the language with confidence and skill, with understanding of normal syntax, grammar and rules of form, and an extensive and growing vocabulary. At the functional degree, speakers are able to speak the language, with basic understanding of its syntax, grammar, and rules of usage and a minimal vocabulary. If speakers are only able to use common phrases and sentences in formal settings, as

symbols of language participation and cultural ownership, then it can be said that they reached the symbolic degree. Lastly, the passive degree is when speakers are able to understand common words or phrases, with or without deeper comprehension of their meaning.

One of these aims cannot be generalized as the consensus that everyone in the community has reached as the aims vary by person. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize the degrees on the spectrum in order to try to appeal to each aim. It is as equally as important to recognize that all of these aims, specifically the creative and fluent degrees may not be met in the moment, but that they will take more time to reach.

### 3.2 Problems Encountered in Revitalization Projects

In order to reach these aims, communities may follow different activities which come with their set of problems. Tsunoda (2005) proposes eleven problems that may be met in revitalization activities. These include: complexity of the language, which although it exists in the manner of complex grammatical systems being difficult to teach to language learners that already have a grasp of grammar, it is still problematic to call some languages more complex than others because of the stigma associated to being more simple. Another problem that may be met is the presence of other language(s) to revitalize, which does not apply to the case of the Garifuna language. A third problem is the distribution of speakers, which means that having speakers be widely spread makes it more difficult to centralize the language education. This is also not the case of the Garifuna community in Nicaragua as majority of the community members live on the same land.

A fourth problem is the number of speakers, meaning that a language has a better chance of continuing to exist if it has more numbers of speakers. A fifth problem is dialects and standardization of said dialects. This does not apply to the Garifuna community in Nicaragua as



there are no dialects of Garifuna in Nicaragua. However, there are differences across the Garifuna spoken across Central America, none of which are significant enough for them to impede communication between speakers. A sixth problem is language documentation, which may include a grammar system, dictionaries, and texts. Due to efforts to conserve the language in other countries, such documentation is existent for the Garifuna language and most of the resources that are used at the Manuel Mongalo Elementary School are from Honduras. A seventh problem, is government support. This support can come in the ways of recognition of the community's human rights, including their language, as support for the inclusion of the language and culture into schools, funding for programs that benefit the community, and political non-interference by the government.

An eighth problem deals with many educators' inability to respect the communities where they are teaching. In the case of the Garifuna community in Nicaragua, this does not pose a problem as the Garifuna teacher is a member of the community and fosters the love for learning about the culture and the language. A ninth problem are language problems. Language programs require joint efforts between community members and the government. However, often times there is not a strong enough support system by the government and sometimes parents are not willing to put in as much effort either. These programs are often underfunded as well, which leaves the programs as an elective. This lack of funding also reduces the hours in which educators are allowed to teach, lack of resources and materials that may be used for pedagogical purposes, lack of trained teachers and native speakers that may aid in the effort, lack of knowledge in the community on planning and executing a language revitalization project, lack of advice from experts on language revitalization and educators, and limited or no opportunity to hear the language being spoken, all of which apply to Garifuna in Nicaragua.

A tenth problem is way of life, which deals with reclaiming that traditional or ancestral way of life, which very much parallels with the use of language. This however, is a problem as many communities are undergoing neoliberalism, urbanization, and industrialization.

A last problem proposed by Tsunoda is attitude and behavior towards language and language revitalization. Members of a community are either interested or not in the effort to revitalize their language. For those that are enthusiastic about learning it, often times what occurs is that they become very optimistic about learning the language that they aim towards being fluent in it quickly, which more times than not, does not happen. Others, specifically elders, may have an idea of language purism, which is based off on the idea that languages cannot change and must remain intact as the ancestral language did. Once again, it is of utmost importance to recognize that languages change constantly and are always being reinvented. Some of the most pressing issues within this willingness to revitalize the language are shame, lack of confidence, identity, and pride.

Many of these potential problems do not directly apply to the Garifuna Nation in Nicaragua. Still, there are problems that the Garifuna Nation could potentially face in the process of revitalization. The first and most tangible one is the low number of speakers of the language. As previously mentioned, there are only two native speakers, both of whom are elders in their 90s and one of them has Alzheimer's. There is a third speaker, who learned Garifuna in an immersion school in Honduras and is now the language instructor for children at the Manuel Mongalo Elementary School. When the elders pass away, there would only be one speaker of the language in the country; therefore, leaving the language at an even more alarming state of endangerment.

Another problem which deeply affects the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua and can hinder the revitalization process is lack of substantial governmental support. For the sake of transparency, it must be mentioned that the Nicaraguan government recognizes the Garifuna Nation as a Nation and their ancestral land, has made an effort to support the inclusion of the Garifuna language into the Garifuna school, and funds various programs that benefit the community, such as providing tap water and electricity to the community for the majority of the day. In addition, the government has supported the Garifuna community through a program of cultural exposure where tourists are allowed to visit the area and learn about the Garifuna, which has impacted economic growth in the community. However, the government still allows the interference of different companies to use ancestral land for resources such as woods, which has caused a deforestation and reduction of the land available to the Garifuna. This in turn has eradicated many of the native plants that were used traditionally by Garifuna healers as well as the agriculture area as many foods such as manioc and coconuts are not as available as they once were. Land grab of Garifuna land and displacement of Garifuna communities is an issue that has been ongoing throughout Central America, which is why I titled this chapter Samina Humei, as Any Palacio's song is a reminder of the land grab in Central America and the impact of foreigners on our land and their voice on our education. This displacement and lack of ancestral land, along with other factors such as state-sanctioned violence, has played into the forced migration of many Garinagu to other parts of the country and to the United States. In a country that already has such a small community of Garinagu, continuously perpetuating land occupation practices hinders any culture and language revitalization efforts as people constantly leave.

Other potential problems are the underfunding of programs that aide in training teachers, way of life of the community, and attitude and behavior towards language and language

revitalization. The underfunding of programs in Nicaragua can be seen as there is only one Garifuna language immersion program and only one teacher for such program. Lack of funding has not allowed for more teachers to be brought to the area to teach Garifuna and this has led the language instructor to be overworked. Fortunately, her passion for the language is what has kept her, although this system is not sustainable long term.

The other problem, way of life, deals with reclaiming or lack thereof, of traditional lifestyles. This is a problem faced by the Garifuna community across Central America and the United States. In Nicaragua, many community members have to find jobs in industrial areas, this causing a migration to these places. Many youths are exposed to pop culture, which in Nicaragua is mainly Soca music, hip hop and rap, as well as exposure to technology such as Television and Smartphones. These current practices and ways of life stray many community members from speaking the language as often times the language does not encompass many of the tools and phenomena that are existent in mainstream culture. This is why many Garifuna community members are pushing for an updating of the lexicon, or simply adding words in the native language that equate with modern times. This process will be analyzed more in depth in the next chapter.

The final problem that the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua faces is attitude and behavior towards language and language revitalization. Due to years of discrimination and current discrimination, many Garinagu feel ashamed of being called Garifuna. Years of efforts by local community leaders have helped reestablish a sense of pride in the Garifuna identity. K. Sambola (2016) mentions that in the past, many community elders spoke the language in ceremonial or decision making contexts, to which children were not invited. As a middle-age adult now, she reminisces on the discrimination she faced growing up Garifuna, and what it meant to be both

indigenous and afrodescendant in a predominantly Mestizo country. When visiting the neighboring city of Bluefields, other Black folks would shame Garifuna members for speaking Garifuna. When visiting predominantly Mestizo cities, they would be discriminated against for being visibly Black and for speaking the language. This history of discrimination and prejudice led many parents to not impart the language to their children in fear that their children would be discriminated against. In terms of a generation or two, Garifuna adults in Nicaragua do not speak the language. They can be called the first generation that did not grow up learning to speak the language nor understanding it, although some use Garifuna words for things such as foods, drinks, and dances. Due to their lack of Garifuna language knowledge, their children in turn did not learn the language either, although they are now learning the language at school. Now, if this is the current state of the Garifuna language, what can we learn from other initiatives with languages such as Māori, and Hawaiian? The following section will talk more about the revitalization processes with these two languages.

### 3.3 Examples from Other Languages

Of all the languages that are undergoing revitalization efforts, I chose to cite from Māori and Hawaiian as they share very close parallels with Garifuna in the language status and demographics of speakers. Not only this, but some of the steps they have taken towards revitalizing the language are steps that the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua show interest in. The Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua aims to have a program in place that focuses on language education of the adult generations as well as an updating of Garifuna vocabulary so that it encompasses terms that are reflective of modern times. Both the status of the languages and interests align with the cases of Māori and Hawaiian. Māori is endangered as there are an approximate 30,000-100,000 speakers of the language and language efforts in New Zealand have

focused on both teaching the language to the youth through immersion schools as well as middle-aged adults through adult language learning programs. Similarly, Hawaiian also shares the status of endangered as Hawaiian speakers can mainly be found on the islands. As with Garifuna and Māori, native speakers remain mainly in the oldest generation, some in the youngest generation as the result of immersion schools, but only seldom middle-aged speakers. Despite this, Hawaiian managed to begin a lexicon updating committee, which will be looked at as it is of interest to the Garifuna community in Nicaragua.

The Māori community in New Zealand is of particular interest for the purposes of this project as adult second language learners form the majority of the proficient speakers of the language and they hold a worldview that encourages engaging with the Māori language. Māori is the only indigenous language of New Zealand and it has been at the center of revitalization efforts since the 1980s (King 2009). Although the majority of fluent speakers belong to the oldest generation, much of the push towards language nests have come from speakers in the younger generations. Jeanette King (2009) worked with the Māori in order to find out what were the main factors that encouraged language revitalization amongst them. Her research concluded there were four main elements: a quasi-religious worldview, New Age humanism, connection with ancestors and Māori culture, and a connection with a kaupapa Māori philosophy.

The first element reveals that many members of the community felt that learning the language provided a spiritual dimension and a spiritual journey through the exploration of identity. The second element, New Age humanism is one that was important for many Māori as the idea of transformation and personal growth was channeled through language learning. Association with ancestors and culture is practiced by learning the language as the ancestral language provides a link to the past and to the traditional style of life. An important observation

when speaking about a connection with ancestors and culture is that although intergenerational transmission of the language has not been passed through this, a desire to learn has and can be passed intergenerationally (King 2009: 101). Finally, the fourth element is adherence to a kaupapa Māori philosophy, which encourage self-determination, cultural aspiration, preference for a culturally preferred pedagogy, amongst other. Many community members become aware of the philosophy through language immersion teacher programs. The kaupapa Māori is linked with aspiring to have Māori sovereignty (2009: 102).

Language planning and revitalization efforts have been led by both the government and various tribal groups. Officials who sit on these boards are well versed in international literature that speaks on language revitalization and are aware of what roles need to be met when it comes to planning language revitalization efforts. One group, the Ngāi Tahu aim to have 1,000 homes that speak Māori in their tribal district by 2020 (King 2009). One of their efforts has been the creation of a website that has information on creating an environment in the home that is conducive to language immersion. They have also designed various advertisements that highlight the importance of community involvement in the linguistic revolution. In comparison to North American situations of language revitalization, while most people involved with language revitalization efforts in North America report that their main motivation to learn the language is because they feel a sense of responsibility to the language and the continuance of their people, most Māori report that the number of speakers affects their motivation (King 2009). Language planners in New Zealand play a role in the intergenerational transmission of the language as parents and/or teachers of the future generations. One of the main focus points is recognizing that adult second language learners are necessary as well as the youth to bridge the intergenerational transmission gap observed in many communities. As King (2009) suggests, perhaps it is more

useful to focus on what learning the language can do for the community members rather than what the community members can do for the language.

The language revitalization efforts for the Māori language are an example of initiatives that include adult second language learners and how this population is often left out of the conversation as much of the focus is placed on early childhood language acquisition. In the community at hand, the Garifuna Nation, it is precisely the adult second language learners that are of focus as there are efforts being made to teach the language to the children. This is one of two main focuses for this project as it was one of two demands made by the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua. The second demand expressed was a potential updating of the Garifuna lexicon, which is believed to attract the involvement of more Garifuna youth. As there is not a current updating of the lexicon for Garifuna, it is important to look at what approaches other indigenous languages have incorporated in their revitalization efforts. One such language is the Hawaiian language.

After the overthrow of the Hawaiian Nation in 1893, there was a 90-year ban on the language as a medium of public schooling (Counciller and Kimura, 2009). This ban led to a movement towards language and culture revitalization, which thus led to the creation of the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee which is housed under the Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian Language Center at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo's Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'elikōlani College of Hawaiian Language (Counciller and Kimura, 2009). This committee, along with the immersion preschool program have worked on creating new Hawaiian words which eventually led to the publication of the dictionary Māmaka Kaiao in 1996, 1998, and 2003. The dictionary has compiled over 6,500 new word entries. This dictionary was created because of plans to start a Pūnana Leo Hawaiian preschool program. In order to create the dictionary, a small team of Hawaiian



curriculum developers gathered to create the content for the dictionary. The team consisted of Hawaiian language educators and eventually incorporated native speaking educators. Later on, in 1988, a portion of the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education aided the program as it allowed to bring in seven native elder speakers as well as second language speakers (Counciller and Kimura, 2009).

A challenge the committee faced was the creation of words for the sciences as many of them became longer and less practical for everyday use. Another challenge was that many elders could not create a word, which led second language speakers, most of them younger, to create a word and then ask for the approval by the elders. After many of the original elders that were consulted for this project passed away, the committee became the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee in 1989. By this point, most of the committee members were second language speakers, although some consultations were made with the few elder speakers that were available (Counciller and Kimura, 2009). Another very pressing challenge faced was that many speakers could not create words for current technology and other objects that are the product of globalization and tightly tied to English.

In order to create new words, the Committee had to analyze the context of the word through its semantic and structural meaning. The Committee also had to be knowledgeable of the creation of verb form which can also be used as a noun. Once the Committee clarifies the word, it submits it for analysis. If it is approved, it is revised a second time and submitted, which if approved, the Committee then releases it to the public.

### 3.4 Local Garifuna Efforts

Now that we have seen the examples of these two language revitalization efforts, it is time to focus on current revitalization efforts with the Garifuna language in Honduras. A pioneer

of these efforts is Salvador Suazo, a self-trained Garifuna linguist who speaks the language and has taken it upon himself to help spread the knowledge about the Garifuna language. The following section takes a look at one of his books, “Conversemos en Garifuna: Gramática y manual de conversacion”, where the learning of the language is seen from the perspective of a Native speaker.

Salvador Suazo is one of the leading intellectuals, politicians, social researchers, and linguists active in the efforts for the revitalization of Garifuna in Honduras. In addition to this book, which serves as a self-teaching book for those interested in learning the language, he published the dictionary “Lila Garifuna”, which is a Garifuna-Spanish dictionary. Suazo, born as Eusebio Salvador Suazo Bernardez, was born in the Garifuna community of Cusuna, Colon, Honduras. Although he attended school in the capital, Tegucigalpa, he returned to Cusuna to receive his Masters in Education. In the 1970s he enrolled in the National Autonomous University of Honduras at Tegucigalpa, where he received a degree in Business Administration. He later joined the Honduran Academy of History and Geography.

It was during this period in which he began an intense interest in the Garifuna language, which eventually led him to hold a position under President Zelaya’s presidency in 2005. Suazo also participated in the creation of Bilingual Education Program of the Education Department of Honduras which was created in the 1990s. As an activist for the Garifuna Nation, he was one of the principal leaders in proposing that the Garifuna Nation were part of UNESCO’s World Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2001. One of his main motivations for revitalizing the language were having the collective knowledge of the 1937 massacre of a Garifuna community. Due to his fierceness in the Garifuna activist scene, he was unfortunately removed from his position as the Vice President of Culture during the 2009 coup d’etat.

The book was first published on February 1991, a second edition was released in November 1994, and third edition was published in February 2002. The book begins with Acknowledgements and a foreword, both written in Spanish. Then there is a Warning that reads: “It is warning to the reader that in order to obtain an excellent pronunciation of the words in the Garifuna language, they must take the following into consideration: Every word that is read in Garifuna, must be pronounced slowly, putting emphasis on each syllabic component” (Suazo, 2002). The book consists of ten chapters divided into two sections. The first section contains chapters 1-8, while the second section consists of two chapters.

The first chapter provides a brief ethnohistory of the Garifuna language, beginning with a breakdown of the language structure. This includes dichotomous words which compare Arawak and Carib words, as well as loan words from English that were incorporated into Garifuna. The second chapter provides a breakdown of the Garifuna phonetic system, beginning with the alphabet, pronunciation according to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), continuing onto an application of vowels and consonants. It then provides the rules for accent markings, use of uppercase letters, diphthongs, and triphthongs. Chapter 3 is titled “The Process of Immersion”, which then covers the use of articles, nouns, gender, adjectives, plurals, and demonstrative adjectives. Chapter 4, titled “Formation of New Words” covers noun formation, demonyms, -due, and -habu word endings, possessive adjectives, the use of le, to, and ha, which can be used as articles, pronouns, or demonstrative adjectives. It then covers the use of ‘to be’, nominal adjectives, verb adjectives, adverb adjectives, pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, and personal pronouns.

Chapter 5 delves into the study of numbers. Chapter 6 covers irregular verb conjugation, ‘to be’, regular verbs, noun verbs, instrumental nouns, suffixes attached to regular

verbs, progressive verbs, use of the indicative, varieties of the past perfect verb, the use of the subjunctive, variants of the imperfect past, the perfect past, future subjunctive, and imperatives. Chapter 7 focuses on adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. Chapter 8 then delves into Semantics and sentence order. Then the book breaks into the second section, which is the conversation manual. The first chapter of this section provides basic expressions in Garifuna, such as “Hello, how are you?”. The second chapter then covers basic terminology for conversation. These are split up into terminology used by men and terminology used by women, ranging from words used in contexts of the household, to words used when referring to the weather. The final pages of the book are the index, which provide a general outline of the content of the book.

As one of the pioneering linguists and activists involved in the revitalization efforts of the Garifuna language, I hold Mr. Suazo with high respects as his work has been extremely beneficial to the Garifuna communities in Central America. His work, especially “Conversemos en Garifuna” and “Lila Garifuna” have been of much help to me as I try to learn Garifuna because as a member of its diaspora, I feel it is my responsibility to learn the language and impart it to the next generation. Removing myself as a linguist and just focusing on the book as someone trying to learn the language as a second language learner, this book is helpful in the sense that it provides information about the language that I can access only because I have knowledge about grammar.

I think about community members in Orinoco who perhaps did not receive an education and that may not understand what a subjunctive is or how to use it. I also think about those who perhaps did receive an education but perhaps do not remember any of these. “Conversemos en Garifuna” may be beneficial to educators who have a good command of linguistics, but it is not

as accessible to learners of a language. If this is a resource that may only be accessible to those with a linguistic background, what then is needed in order to make Garifuna language learning more accessible to the Garifuna community in Nicaragua? Although community leaders and members are the decision makers, there is some guidance and expertise needed in terms of possible next steps, which is why I offer my knowledge and insight of linguistics and language revitalization.

With this in mind, I propose that the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua first determines what their objectives are for the revitalization of Garifuna language—does this look like completely fluency for all learners or would learning basic terms suffice? Once these objectives are established, the next step would be to determine what kind of instruction they want to implement—is it formal classes at the school or workshops at a community center? Following this, it is important to establish where their materials and resources will be brought from. Due to the lack of trained Garifuna language instructors in Nicaragua, will teachers be invited from Honduras or the other countries? Speaking long term, what steps can be taken to form/educate teachers? The final step I propose is to determine what kind of pedagogical grammar is wanted and what the learning goals of this will be. Pedagogical grammars can provide them with communicative, cultural needs, and meaningful situations. This can take the form of learning the tools to interact with each other, with their children, to provide them with communication situations that are meaningful to them such as learning about traditions. Part of this final step also includes establishing whether the instruction method will only focus on oral communication or if it will encompass written communication as well and what the activities will look like on a daily basis.



## Lidan Aban -Together

This last chapter pays tribute to the song “Lidan Aban” by Andy Palacios and the Garifuna Collective which calls for us to “raise our voices together.”

The last three chapters have collectively served this overall project by highlighting the urgent need for a revitalization effort given the Garifuna Nation’s history and current social, political, and economic status and by taking a look at the history of bilingual education and linguistic politics in Nicaragua, we have been able to analyze the linguistic gap between generations, and compared these demographics and status of endangerment with languages that share parallels with Garifuna but that have been able to implement programs similar to those wanted by the Garifuna community.

This final chapter aims to identify concrete ways in which to bridge the intergenerational linguist gap through the lens of a Pedagogical Grammar; therefore, the main objectives of this chapter are to recommend that the Garifuna Nation first holds a community meeting in which they identify and establish their goals and objectives for an adult language learner project, that collaboratively, we reach out to the Garifuna Coalition USA asking for materials, language instructors, and other linguists. In this chapter I also propose that there should be teacher training workshops at the University of the Autonomous Region of the Nicaraguan Caribbean (URACCAN) and the Bluefields Indian and Caribbean University (BICU) for those interested in one day becoming Garifuna language instructors. The final step I recommend the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua follows is defining what kind of Pedagogical Grammar for adults it is that they want. The chapter first defines Pedagogical Grammar as a way of making this information accessible to the community and then expands more on my recommendations to the Garifuna community in Nicaragua.

#### 4.0 What is Pedagogical Grammar?

Pedagogical Grammar is a term whose definition is often unclear amongst linguists; therefore, before defining pedagogical grammar, we must first define grammar. Newby (2003) provides the definition of grammar according to David Crystal (2006) which is “the study of all the contrasts of meaning that it is possible to make within one sentence” (Crystal 161). Although this is a possible definition of grammar, it is important to clarify that it is not the study of these contrasts but rather the knowledge and use of them, thus leaving us with the final definition of grammar as one that includes the knowledge and use of the contrasts of meaning possible within a sentence.

On the other hand, Newby (2003) defines pedagogical grammar as “measures that are taken by teachers, learners, materials designers, grammarians, etc. to facilitate the development of grammatical competence and the skill of using grammar” (2003: 1), a definition that involves key players in the learning and use of grammar rather than just focusing on knowledge and form of grammar. In order to implement a pedagogical grammar, it is important to first have a principled view of what grammar entails and how it functions as a system of communication. The main difference between ‘linguistic’ grammars, which focus on natural acquisition of language and ‘pedagogical’ grammars is the output of the description, as stated by Newby (2003). Allen (1974) defines it as “a comparatively informal framework of definitions, diagrams, exercises, and verbalized rules which may help a learner to acquire knowledge of a language and fluency in its use” (1974: 60). Odlin (1994) defines it as “the types of grammatical analysis and instruction designed for the needs of second language students” (1994: 1). Finally, Dirven (1990) defines it as “a cover term for any learner or teacher-oriented description or prescription of foreign language rule complexes with the aim of promoting and guiding learning processes in the



acquisition of that language” (1990: 1). Throughout all of these definitions, it can be understood that the overarching goal of pedagogical grammar is for the learner of the language and for the teacher of the language as well as they facilitate the lessons. Due to the fact that language teachers facilitate lessons that aim for students to learn the language, Newby (2003) describes them a series of main tasks that Pedagogical Grammar follows and which instructors should follow too. The first task is to find a theoretical model(s) of language that will serve as the basis for a description of the grammar. This model could either be a linguistic one or an applied one that uses a communicative approach. After a model is identified, then the instructor may describe the grammar based on this model. Following that, instructors should delimit the areas of grammar that will be presented to the learner with the purpose of presenting them with complete knowledge. Then, instructors should decide how to present and structure the description; how to specify grammatical objectives; how to formulate rules and exemplify grammar; use of terminology, etc. In terms of grading, they should establish criteria for the sequencing of grammar, such as materials or syllabus design. In addition, instructors should find a theoretical model of learning that will serve as the basis for the methodology to follow and devise methodology to facilitate learning (presentation forms, exercises, activities, etc.)

As can be seen by these main tasks, and as Wang (2003) states, pedagogical grammar needs to cover all aspects of grammar, such as prescription, description, and explanation (2003: 66). Wang’s (2003) research presents a series of main objectives proposed by instructors who are involved with pedagogical grammar. These objectives focused on developing grammar knowledge (familiarizing teachers with the pragmatic structures of the language, building an inventory of terms and concepts that talk about grammar from traditional, structural, and functional perspectives), teaching grammar, or suggesting techniques for teaching the grammar,

discussing methods and problems of teaching it, developing a teaching practice, understanding and analyzing learner grammar, tasking material evaluation and development, explaining grammar, and finally, finding ways in which to assess.

In this same investigation, Wang asked what are the main components and emphases of a course. Participants, many of them teachers, reported that in their courses, more emphasis was given to language structure than any other feature of language learning such as semantics. Given this, it is important for teachers to at least be knowledgeable of the theory of grammar teachers so they are able to then teach grammar in an effective and accessible way. Newby (2015:15) proposes that teachers understand language as a system of communication specifies the content and teaching objectives of a pedagogical grammar, as well as the syllabus design and basis for use-based methodology. Theory of learning/acquisition should also be recognized as understanding acquisition processes, cognitive, affective and functional needs of the learners is vital when designing a curriculum, etc. In addition to theory of grammar and theory of learning/acquisition, it is also important that teachers have a knowledge of methodology reflected in the various methods and techniques to use in the classroom, as well as how to apply them. Newby (2003) suggests that following a Cognitive + Communicative Approach can help teachers reach practices of pedagogical grammar that are adequate when designing their grammar materials and planning activities. However, Newby encourages that the view of the communicative approach is expanded and includes the four principles that were coined by Richards and Rodgers (2001: 161) as recognizing language is a system for the expression of meaning whose primary function is for interaction and communication. The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses as the primary units of language are not

merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meanings as exemplified in discourse.

Approaching pedagogical grammar from a communicative approach allows us to look at the pragmatics of it, its context-based direction, while the cognitive approach tries to explain how exactly humans process information, specifically linguistic information, through a series of processes. This field, psycholinguistics, maps these processes onto communicative ones in order to come to an approximation of a complete picture of language processing.

#### 4.1 Recommended Next Steps

It is because pedagogical grammar can be defined as a grammar that is designed for learners, mainly adults, of a foreign language that I propose Pedagogical Grammar could be a possible way to teach Garifuna language to adults of the Garifuna communities in Nicaragua. There already is an interest amongst community leaders and members in beginning an adult language learning project; therefore, the development of a Pedagogical Grammar, in addition to the early childhood immersion initiative, could be beneficial to the effort of bridging the intergenerational linguistic gap. Not only would having adults learn the language help bridge this gap, but learning the ancestral language would also potentially mean reclaiming the culture and way of life. Some community leaders expressed that it is important for everyone in the community, especially adults, to learn the language in order to be involved with religious ceremonies. In many of the wallagallo practices, the buyei would benefit from knowing the ancestral knowledge in order to call on the ancestors and keep a stronger connection. The last buyei in the community belonged to the generation that spoke the language fluently. Since, there has not been a buyei who was able to interpret what the ancestors tried communicating. As

wallagallo practices are extremely important for the wellbeing of community members, having a buyei who speaks the language would ensure that these needs are met.

Given that there is only one Garifuna language teacher in the town who works with the youth, asking her to also teach adults would lead to possible burnout. Lack of resources such as Garifuna language instructors, linguists involved with the Garifuna language, pedagogical materials, and funding from institutions are what I have identified as reasons why in the current moment, developing a Pedagogical Grammar is not attainable. However, I propose that the development of one is kept in mind as a long-term goal. As initial steps towards developing a Pedagogical Grammar, I recommend to the Garifuna Nation, that goals and objectives for the community are established by all members of the community in Orinoco. A second step that I recommend is taken is to reach out to the Garifuna Coalition USA asking for pedagogical materials and/or language instructors. This step can be met with collaboration between community leaders, members, professors at URACCAN and BICU, the language instructor, other scholars working with Garifuna communities, and myself. A fourth recommendation I propose is applying for grants from UNESCO and/or more governmental funds. Again, this step will include collaboration between different people with various areas of expertise. This step could eventually lead to a long-term implementation of university courses or workshops at URACCAN and BICU that offer training for those who are interested in becoming language instructors. The last recommendation I propose is defining what activities and structure community members interested in learning the language would want.

#### *4.1.1 Establishing Community Objectives*

As we saw in the third chapter, in any language revitalization effort, goals and objectives must be established by the community in terms of their hopes and expectations for the process. I cannot answer this for the Garifuna Nation in Nicaragua, which is why I recommend that there is a community meeting in one of classrooms at the Manuel Mongalo School or in the Moravian church by the dock. Not only are these the largest spaces in the community, but they also hold significance to the Garinagu as it is from there that celebrations of our independence commence. The conversation around what the community objectives and goals are may be one that brings up many triggering experiences for the adults as inevitably, in order to move forward, many will have to recognize the past. As a way of mediating and navigating these feelings, I encourage that community leaders such as K. Sambola, V. Lopez, and E. Morales facilitate the meeting as they expressed interest in leading such effort. While the goals and objectives will be whatever the community wants them to be, it would help to answer what degree of revitalization they would want the language to reach as revitalization of the language can vary between being contempt with some expressions to reaching almost native-like fluency.

#### *4.1.2 Reaching Out to the Garifuna Coalition*

Once these objectives are established, it becomes easier to put them into writing and include them in any official documents thereon that deal with the language. My second recommendation is that collectively, community leaders, language activists, and anyone else interested in this revitalization effort collaborates on drafting a proposal to the Garifuna Coalition USA requesting additional resources. The Garifuna Coalition USA is a Bronx-based non-profit whose advocacy work centers Garifuna culture. Since its foundation in 1998, the Coalition has been able to raise awareness of the Garifuna community in NYC and proclaimed a

Garifuna-American Heritage Month in the Bronx. Recently, in 2016, assemblyman Luis Sepulveda and Senator Ruben Diaz were able to propose an amendment of Section 801 of the New York State Education Act to include the history of the Garifuna people. A challenge that the Garifuna community in Orinoco faces, is that there is no internet tower in the community, which would make communication via email nearly impossible and would require that community leaders who have access to email such as K. Sambola to make frequent trips to the city of Bluefields. As someone deeply invested in this effort, I offer my access to easier communication and network with other Garifuna scholars at the University of Texas Austin and University of California San Diego in order to communicate with the Garifuna Coalition USA. On a local level, I recommend and encourage that professors at BICU and URACCAN, such as Francisco Sequeira Rankin, Eduardo Siu, and Leonard Joseph aid in the process of drafting a proposal that asks the Garifuna Coalition for help locating materials either from the United States or from other countries such as Honduras and Belize. In addition to materials, they may also be more familiar with finding language instructors in any of the three countries that may be invited to teach in Nicaragua.

#### *4.1.3 Reaching Out to UNESCO and the Nicaraguan Government*

Due to lack of enough funding allocated to the Garifuna Nation, this may be a difficult goal to reach, which is why I then propose applying for grants by the UNESCO and/or governmental funds. The Garifuna community in Nicaragua holds the status of an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and was given a 10-year plan to revitalize certain aspects of the culture. The Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua has been successful in revitalizing aspects such as gastronomy and dance, but now they are at the 5-year mark and left with the last pillar to revitalize, the language (K. Sambola, August 18, 2016, personal communication). The

Nicaraguan government has been involved in this process as well as they have included Orinoco as a touristic destination, not only because of its lush jungles and proximity to reefs where tourists may snorkel and dive, but also because the Garifuna Nation fits the requirements for there to be ethno tourism. Tourism in this area has increased the economy of the Pearl Lagoon Basin, but it has also led to the displacement of many families to make way for hotels and resorts on the banks of the lagoon. While I think it is a great idea that the UNESCO has given the Garifuna Nation of Nicaragua status as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and while the Nicaraguan government has extended certain services to the community such as electricity and tap water, it is the responsibility of these two entities to continuously fund the Garifuna Nation. Both UNESCO and the Nicaraguan government have stated that they are committed to ensuring the revitalization of Garifuna culture; therefore, they must act on these statements by offering resources such as qualified Garifuna language instructors and materials, as well as financial support. If they are not able to meet the first, then they should be able to compensate for such financially so that the Garifuna Nation has enough finances to allocate towards buying pedagogical materials and hiring Garifuna language instructors from the United States, Honduras, or Belize.

#### *4.1.4 Preparing Future Educators*

Speaking from a sustainability view, in the long run, instructors from other countries may not be needed if there are enough adults or youth who speak the language and are interested in becoming teachers themselves. In the community, there is already a group of five students at the Manuel Mongalo School between the ages of 15 and 17 who express interest in being Garifuna language instructors one day. This is an age group that will soon leave school and are eager to continue learning the language, since they have only been learning it for a year. With resources

available through the Education department at URACCAN and BICU, there could be potential partnership between these institutions and the Garifuna community to hold trainings and workshops for those interested in becoming language teachers in the near future. Programs like this can potentially create an incentive for both the youth and those adults who want to be further involved in the language revitalization effort.

#### *4.1.5 Defining What Activities Are Wanted*

Sustainable goals and practices will be attainable if initial steps are taken immediately, which is why my last recommendation to the Garifuna community in Nicaragua is that they also define what a Pedagogical Grammar could potentially look like for them. I have identified three areas which can be thought about when thinking of future development of a Pedagogical Grammar or other adult language learning programs. The first area deals with the type of activities that will be done. Language teachers and learners should come to an agreement as to what activities they both think would be the most beneficial. This of course, varies between age groups. Activities done with children perhaps are not of interest to adults. Activities for adults could revolve around task-based community projects like building canoes, learning cooking recipes, going fishing, planting traditional plants, learning cultural myths, as well as celebrating the anniversary of our settlement in Central America. The second area I have identified is more communicative and in order to design activities in this area, it is important that learners determine for themselves whether they want to communicate with each other on a day-to-day basis in the language or if they just want to learn how to communicate with their children. Communicating with their children can even include activities such as reading to them or singing songs with them. The final area that I identified focuses more on cultural needs. Designing activities around cultural needs include learning Garifuna history and aspects of the culture in the



language. This can be especially beneficial for those who perhaps never had access to this information and are interested in learning more about their history and culture.

This chapter provides certain initial steps that I have been able to identify according to my conversations with members of the community in Nicaragua and those in the diaspora. However, because I am not an expert in Linguistics, neither theoretical nor applied, I am limited in the suggestions I provide in this project as I am sure they do not take into account many other possible next steps. I do recognize that language revitalization efforts will not always succeed in every aspect. The initial steps I provide here perhaps will not assure complete success, but they are an addition to the conversations that are being had in the community. It is my hope that these conversations continue to happen and that, as the title of this chapter says, there is even more collaboration between Garinagu so that we may raise our voices together as we move forward in our journey of existence and resistance through learning our language.

## AWANDUNI -Resistance

“Luagu lidise wéibugu wasandirei lihürü wanügü” is a Garifuna proverb that can be translated to “it is as we proceed on our journey that we feel the weight of our burdens.” It has been throughout this journey of conversations and reflections with other Garifuna members, that I, as well as them, have become more aware of our roots and have taken the initial steps towards reclaiming our traditions. Reclaiming our traditions and customs as well as engaging with language revitalization efforts is one that way in which we are taking pride in our Garifuna identity. Healing individually and collectively has been one of the most important outcomes throughout this project and it is something that will hopefully continue to happen as a community we take further steps in the joint effort of revitalizing and conserving Garifuna language. While this effort brings with it many rewards, both personal and communal, it also brings with it a set of challenges at all levels.

Asking oneself and reflecting on questions of identity and history, coming to realize the challenges that affect many Garifuna communities all at once are burdening questions. However, it is an important step in the journey towards self and collective liberation. After all of the research and long months spent on understanding the linguistic crossroads, sociohistorical and political factors amongst all of the factors that have led to the loss of Garifuna language in Nicaragua, the step in the project that has brought me the most happiness is that conversations around language conservation and what each of us as Garínagu can contribute are being held in the Garifuna community of Orinoco as well as other Garifuna communities in Central America and in the diaspora communities in the U.S.

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