**Topic Area**  **THE POWER OF WORDS: LIFE, LANGUAGE, AND LEARNING**

Words make up the fabric of our lives. They permeate our experiences, influence our choices, drive our destinies, cultivate our landscapes, and empower and express our utter being and existence. This topic area focuses on life, language, and learning, as they converge and are experienced. It proposes to examine the diversity of languages, the desire to preserve and learn them, and the use of language in communication and learning for today and tomorrow. Through language, we create our present and future realities by recording and analyzing our histories and by making choices to accept or decline opportunities, include or exclude others, celebrate or mourn events, praise or condemn actions, and seek justice or be a bystander.

Linguists capture oral languages as written words to prevent the extinction of languages and cultures. Language preservation and renaissance movements serve to re-establish and maintain cultural and political identities in the face of historical colonial suppression. Citizens rise up against injustices by speaking out to one person or the world. Suppressed minorities fight for the right to education and make their voices heard. The experiences of past and current newcomers who shed their mother tongues, cultural practices, and ways of learning for that of a new land are brought to light. Children arrive in our classrooms to find teachers unfamiliar with their backgrounds and unprepared to help them cross the bridge. Today’s dramatic impact of technology on communication and learning all over the world leaves this question unanswered: Are these new tools really improving our lives?

**We will accept proposals in the following areas:**

- The diversity of languages; language as a reflection of our culture and identity;
- Indigenous languages, language preservation and renaissance; indigenous versus colonial languages;
- Language and learning as a means to opportunity and changing the political/social/economic status quo;
- Education and second language learners in our schools; the ELL experience;
- Cultural learning styles at conflict; formal versus informal learning; the language of instruction in schools;
- Technology, communication, and learning, both inside and outside of the classroom.
We welcome proposals in any presentation format. Please see presentation formats on our webpage at: http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/submissions/presenters/formats/. Please check the criteria for each format and ensure that you have the appropriate number of presenters for your chosen format. You may submit proposals online at: http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/submissions or send your proposals via email to prcall@hawaii.edu.

For more information please contact the topic area chairs – Loryn Gum, loryn@hawaii.edu; Chuan Chang, chuanc@hawaii.edu; Caryl Hitchcock, chh@hawaii.edu.

For general information on the conference, please contact Charmaine Crockett at cccrocke@hawaii.edu, (808) 956-7539.

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