TRAINING COMMUNITIES, TRAINING GRADUATE STUDENTS: THE 2012 OKLAHOMA BREATH OF LIFE WORKSHOP

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- Participants in the 2012 Workshop, who represented seven languages and nine different tribes.

- Graduate students and faculty from five different universities.

Goals

- Briefly introduce the Oklahoma Breath of Life: Silent No More Workshops

- The Oklahoma Breath of Life Workshop presents a case study in training in which the goals of training indigenous community members and graduate students can take place simultaneously.
  - Graduate training was a major goal of the grant

- Offers a way to deploy limited resources effectively and train two diverse audiences

Doing More with Less

- How to balance competing demands of
  - an increasing emphasis on training in language documentation
  - an increasing need for training in language revitalization
  - with limitations on resources like personnel and funding.
- Big picture: Value of satisfying multiple goals in a single training venue is highly important.

Highlight Approach Through…

- ☐ Team Selection Process

- ☐ Mentoring

- ☐ Final Projects

- ☐ Reflections

Oklahoma Breath of Life: Silent No More Workshop

Tracy Moore, Ashley McKeever, and Rebekah Horsechief in Western History Collections, OU - OKBOL 2010 Workshop

BOL Instruction

- **Using Archives** (on-line and local)
  - Mary Linn & Nicholas Wojcik (OU)

- **Linguistics for Language Renewal**
  - Level 1: Colleen Fitzgerald & Mary Linn
  - Level 2: Dylan Herrick (OU) & Brad Montgomery-Anderson (NSU)

- **Language Renewal: Community and Family**
  - Daryl Baldwin (Myaamia Project)

- **Language Learning and Instruction**
  - Tracy Hirata-Edds (KU)

- **Introduction to Databasing** (FLEx)
  - Joshua Jensen (UTA)

2012 OKBOL Participants

Level 1: 7 Participants

- Wichita
- Shawnee (Eastern, Absentee, and STO)
- Natchez
- Alabama

Level 2: 9 Participants

- Natchez
- Cheyenne
- Ft. Sill Apache
- Myaamia

2012 OKBOL Mentors

- 7 mentors
  - 2 from OU
  - 5 from UTA

Instructors, Mentors, and GRAs

Morning Announcements

Mentor – Participant Teams

Helping a Team

Learning to Use Archives

Making New Resources

Visiting the Collections

Traditional Games and Cultural Activities

Feedback and Evaluation

- All Participants given a 3-page Feedback/ Evaluation
  - Questions submitted by us, mentors, and teachers
  - Covered all subject areas in addition to effectiveness of mentors and teachers
  - Time given during the last day and collected before they left
- All Mentors were asked to write a short reflection paper about their experiences/perspectives.

Recruitment & Team Selection

OU: Participant Recruitment

- GRA made 4 trips to language communities to do face-to-face recruitment (Fort Sill Apache, Eastern Shawnee, Eastern Delaware, Modoc).

- Also, called and emailed many other tribal offices, tribal and language representatives, sent out brochures, answered phones, and did follow-up information for any requests for more information and any leads of interested persons.

- 32 distinct contacts made with 22 different tribes.

UTA: Mentor Selection

- Lots of revitalization activities for prospective mentors to volunteer – and for us to learn more about their skills
  - ONLA activities as an opportunity for prospective mentors to volunteer.
  - April ONLA revitalization workshop as a way to see prospective mentors in action.
  - Participation in other training activities, such as FLEx demos on and off campus.

Factors Considered in Mentor Selection

- Expressed interest
- Traditional coursework and knowledge areas
  - Field methods
  - Language revitalization
  - Second language acquisition and pedagogy
  - Native American linguistic structures
- Participation in voluntary training activities as mentors (or as learners of software like FLEx)
  - Positive performance as mentors
- Personality traits such as people skills, maturity, patience, empathy…

Results

☐ Highly positive commentary from participants on their mentors

- ❑ My mentor displayed a sound knowledge of the information
  - ■ Level 1: Strongly agree (6), somewhat agree (1)
  - ■ Level 2:   Strongly agree (3), somewhat agree (1) agree (1)
- ❑ My mentor answered questions to my satisfaction
  - ■ Level 1: Strongly agree (6), somewhat agree (1)
  - ■ Level 2: : Strongly agree (6), somewhat agree (1), agree (1)
- ❑ I feel comfortable asking the teachers or my mentor for further help
  - ■ Level 1: Strongly agree (6), somewhat agree (1)
  - ■ Level 2: Strongly agree (5), agree (1)

Results

- Survey responses suggest mentors could further participant's work on the heritage language
- from Level 1
  - 'Picking out specific sentences that the learner actually speaks and showing how those can be broken into morphemes'
  - 'More FLEx/more breakup of sentence structure'
- from Level 2
  - 'More work with our own languages with mentors help'

Mentoring the Mentors

Daryl Baldwin and Colleen Fitzgerald, in an informal mentoring moment with mentor Nathan Eversole. - OKBOL 2012 Workshop

Pre-Workshop Mentoring

- Co-Directors provided feedback to mentors after other workshops.

- Co-Directors had individual meetings with mentors from their institutions prior to the Workshop.

- Sunday morning (before start) mentor meeting with all instructors present.

Mid-Week Mentoring

- Baldwin and the Co-Directors saw a need to have a mid-week meeting with the mentors.

- We feel that this meeting was vital to the success of the program and to our students' emerging mentoring skills.

- We will schedule it in all future OKBOLs

Meeting Outcome

☐ Grad students were able to ask how to deal with specific situations, personalities, and bring up concerns.

☐ We were able to highlight some dynamics and challenges emerging in some of the teams and problem-solve with mentors on approaches.

  ◼ Baldwin brought his indigenous perspective and his personal experience to help strengthen the mentors.

☐ Hirata-Edds helped mentors bridge the gap between structures and teaching.

Learning to Be a Mentor

- From a mentor's Reflections:
  - "I learned that it takes work to get people comfortable with you. He and I walked around the museum and talked a lot about our families and his interest in [another Native language]. He was open to me giving linguistic examples from languages I've studied, and it helped us find some common ground."

Being a Mentor Means Finding Help

□ From a mentor's Reflections:

  ◘ "[Participant] didn't always seem particularly engaged in the sessions, was difficult to motivate about homework and the final project, so I tried to call in Tracy as a language learning/teaching material expert to help direct [participant] towards a goal."

Final Day Presentations

Terri Parton presents her final project for the Wichita language - OKBOL 2012 Workshop

Final Project Goals

□ Drawing from California BOL model participants shared a final project with all attendees.

- Designed to empower the participants to apply what they are learning

- Allow the co-directors and teachers to assess the success of the activities

Level 1 Presentations

- Wichita Pattern Book in PowerPoint (PP) Using pattern sentences:
  - What did grandmother want? She wanted a (animal name). What did grandmother get? She got a (animal name). This taught the patterns, animal names, and the realis/irrealis distinction in pronominal agreement.

- Shawnee Pattern Book: *Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?*

Shawnee Pattern Story

Brown Bear, Brown Bear
x2 m'kwâpamekwatwi m'kwa x2
What do you see
nehiwe ki neewa
I see a red bird
nineewa mskwawi -wiskilo
Looking at me
ki waapa me kwa
Red bird, Red bird
x2 mskwawi- wiskilootha x2

Level 1 Presentations

☐ Albaamo Innaałiilka (Alabama Alphabet Book)

■ PP with audio recording by the participants.

■ Teach words for the sounds, ex: 'el' = I

■ Teach sounds

■ Provide at least one word for each sound

■ Only in Alabama; no English translation

F – efka

fito

Level 2 Presentations

- ## Myaamia Making Miami Ribbonwork
  - PP introduction about ribbonwork and the vocabulary, followed by teaching basic steps in the language to a willing participant.

- ## Myaamia Environmental Lesson
  - Developed for week-long Myaamia summer camp, focusing on environmental vocabulary for use during daily hikes. With practices and extending the vocabulary for each day.

- ## Myaamia Poem
  - Written (and read) for their sister's upcoming wedding.

A Lesson in Ribbonwork

Learning Ribbonwork

Level 2 Presentations (cont'd)

- Chiricahua Apache Handling Verbs
  - Teacher says 'Pick it up' and the student must pick up the correct shape/texture from a variety of objects. There were several objects for each handling verb, so the lesson was not over too soon. The participant and mentor demonstrated and then without explaining, two people volunteered. The class figured out the idea of handling verbs and the classifications without overt explanation.

Apache Handling Verbs

"Give it to me" Verbs

- shńtį́į́h   long thin non-flexible object
- shń'aa   compact object
- shńłtsúús   flat flexible object
- shńká   container and its contents
- shńlé   rope-like object or 2 objects
- shńłtéé   single animate being
- shńjaash   plural objects
- shńndííł   plural objects (in a group)
- shń'įį   unknown object(s)

What Michael used and said…..

- shńtį́į́h
- shń'aa
- shńłtsúús
- shńká

Level 2 Presentations (cont'd)

- Cheyenne Pronunciation of Cheyenne sounds not found in English.
  - PP with minimal pairs and near minimal pairs to help potential teachers and learners practice long vowels versus short vowels among other sounds. It had built in vocabulary tests as well.

- Natchez Traditional Tale
  - Audio recorded in Natchez and English to be put on their website.

Cheyenne Pronunciation: How to Tackle Tough Sounds

What sound does x make?

- not a sound that occurs in English
- Best way to explain: make a [k] and then let some air get through your mouth
- should be able to hold it, kind of like a sh sound
- think German "achtung"
- Try practicing this sound with some Cheyenne words

Words with x

- xao'o

Words with x

- koka'axe

Results for Projects

- Participants expressed the following for their own future activities as a result of the week's workshop:
  - "I plan to make changes in the way I'm presenting information. I am also changing the type of initial information currently being presented."
  - "To be able to speak our language and teach others. Thank you for everything. Our mentor was very good."
  - "To begin a language class/Had some ability of the tools but did not know how to make use of them"
  - "More activities to do with the youth of my tribe"

50 Mentor Reflections

Mentor Reflection

□ Principles of service-learning pedagogy include reflection, ideally before, during and after the service activity (Fitzgerald 2009, 2010).

□ Although the mentors were not doing this as part of a course, reflection offered a way for the graduate students to process their own experience, as well as what they observed of the participants' experience.

Types of Commentary

- Several types of commentary from the mentors:
  - Role of the mentor
  - Being a mentor
  - Logistics (not discussed here)
  - Final Project (not discussed here)

Mentoring is not just Linguistics

☐ "…given that this was my first interaction with Native American community members, I feel that I would have benefitted from understanding more of the sensitive cultural mores beforehand. As it was I felt I had to play catch up to understand some of the cultural attitudes toward intellectual property and general views of the place of language within the community. I was able to navigate these issues by the end of the week, but a brief orientation to these issues beforehand might have made me a bit more comfortable at the outset of BOL."

Being a Mentor

☐ "I believe that the mentor/community member partnership format was instrumental in helping me to understand the personal value of language revitalization to a particular community…. Breath of Life was a life-changing experience for me as a mentor and one that I will always remember fondly."

Conclusion

Traditional foods for lunch on our last day- OKBOL 2012 Workshop

Conclusions

- There is no better training than doing it (both for mentors and participants).

- Pre- and post-planning to workshops like the 2012 OKBOL allow resources to maximized in a thoughtful way.

- Formal evaluations and reflective writing allow participants and mentors to actively shape future workshops and related activities.

Conclusions

- Mentoring is a continuing collaboration.
  - Work towards long-term mentor – participant and academic – community relationships.
  - Continual grassroots training activities help keep participants and mentors involved throughout the off-years, as well as generate new prospects for both groups.
    - Social media, like Facebook, allows us to keep in touch with participants after the workshop ends…

https://www.facebook.com/ Native.American.Languages.Lab

Native American Languages Lab
May 25, 2012 ·

Terri Parton, of the Wichita Language Program, with UT Arlington PhD student Jessica Rohr. The Wichita team at the 2012 Oklahoma Breath of Life Workshop. — with Terri Brown Parton in Norman, OK.

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👍 Priscilla Zadoka, GI NA, Connie Mills and 16 others like this.

Henryetta Ellis I will never forget this week! I want to learn more!!!!!!
Saturday at 10:05pm · Unlike · 👍 1

Terri Brown Parton It was a great week. I was looking at the Immersion Workshop flyer and noticed that was my picture from a year ago. I haven't gotten to work with our language lately. I miss it.
Saturday at 10:15pm · Unlike · 👍 1

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Thank you!

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