

*in*Field Institute on Field Linguistics and Language Documentation



A biennial six week summer institute

COLANG

Institute for Collaborative Language Research



A biennial six week summer institute

Institutes to date

- 2008: UC Santa Barbara
 - Director Carol Genetti
- 2010: University of Oregon
 - Director Spike Gildea
- 2012: University of Kansas
 - Co-Directors Arienne Dwyer, Carlos Nash
 - <http://idrh.ku.edu/colang2012/>

Basic structure

- 6 week institute:
 - Late June through July
 - 2 weeks of workshops with a large group of participants
 - 4 weeks of a guided practicum with three much smaller groups
 - Intensive, but supplemented by fun evening and weekend activities

Audience



- Language activists

“I definitely approach my work and my studies with a more clearly perceived role: I am an activist. I also make a point of trying to spread this idea: if you are concerned about endangered languages and prepared to act towards their revitalization in any way,

you are an activist.”

Audience



- Language activists
- Community experts
- Linguists
- Students of linguistics

- Native speakers
- Latent speakers
- Heritage speakers
- All combinations

Workshops

- Two weeks of workshops on a variety of tools, skills related to language revitalization, documentation, and conservation.



Curriculum and scope: Workshops (a sampling)

- Steps in Language Documentation
- Models of Language Documentation
- Audio and Video
- Use of specific software for language work
- Data management and archiving
- Language activism
- Grant writing
- Ethics
- Intro to linguistics
- Pedagogical grammars
- Orthographies
- Lexicography
- Transcription
- Phonetics
- Survey methods
- Curriculum development

Guided practicum



Curriculum and scope: Guided practicum

- Four weeks of **intensive** work doing documentation/conservation as a team
- Based on courses in linguistic field methods
- Put skills from the workshops into practice with two native speakers and an instructor
- Group works collaboratively to build an archive of materials
- Community experts help define the goals of the project

Ideologies

- Cooperation and collaboration
- All are learners; all are teachers
- Blurring the lines between academic and non-academic; all are experts
- Empowerment

Modeling cooperation

- Co-teaching
- Hands-on class work
- Small group projects
- Collaborative research (in practicum)

All are teachers; all are learners

- Explicit statements
- Group projects: encouraging participation
- Listening and valuing stories; giving people a voice

Blurring the lines

- Community scholars as instructors
- Models workshop: An explicit voice
- Honoring community scholars
 - Acknowledging many years of dedicated and effective work
 - Explicitly recognizing their expertise and the centrality of their role in documenting and revitalizing endangered languages

Challenges of blended audiences

- Working with diverse constituencies
- Questions of ownership
- Alignment of goals
- Overcome distrust through:
 - Communication (speaking and **listening**)
 - Increasing awareness
 - Fostering understanding
 - Collaboration to allow goals to converge

Empowerment

- ***“Empowerment can be defined as ... a social action process that promotes participation of people, organizations, and communities towards the goals of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life, and social justice.” (Wallerstein 1992: 198).***
- Empowerment is at the heart of language revitalization

Dimensions of empowerment research

- Participatory
 - Cooperative: community members and researchers are jointly engaged and equal contributors within mutually-respectful strategic partnerships
 - Participants negotiate goals, methods, and outcomes
 - Grounded in relevant local knowledge traditions
 - Local capacity building: social research enhances and enables community initiatives
 - Achieves balance between research and action
- Minkler and Wallaerstein (2008: 9); Tsey (2010: 9)

InField/CoLang as empowering

- Puts knowledge, tools, and materials into the hands of community activists
- Develops skills capacity to revitalize/maintain languages, leading to strengthened communities
- Promotes effective work and participation
- Acknowledges, validates and inspires activists

Cooperative training strategies

- Necessarily participatory
- Participants negotiate goals, methods, and outcomes
- Grounded in relevant local knowledge traditions
- Local capacity building
- Research and action are mutually informative, mutually enhancing

Please join us in 2012!

