

Steps Toward Strengthening the Miccosukee Language Revitalization Program

Creation of culturally relevant standards, oral language assessments, and curriculum maps.

Dr. Charles Stansfield, Dr. Jill Robbins, & Dr. Aileen Watts

2LT SECOND LANGUAGE
TESTING INC.



Phone: (301) 231-6046 - Fax: (301) 231-9536 - www.2lti.com - 6135 Executive Blvd. Rockville, MD 20852

Introduction

Second Language Testing, Inc.

A Berlitz Company

- Based in Rockville, MD
- Test Development
- Test Translation

Our previous BIE work

Assessment and Standards Development with:

Cherokee
Choctaw
Laguna
Lakota

Miccosukee
Navajo
Ojibwe
Yakma

2LT SECOND LANGUAGE TESTING INC.



Phone: (301) 231-6046 - Fax: (301) 231-9536 - www.2lti.com - 6135 Executive Blvd. Rockville, MD 20852

Overview of Standards and Curriculum Development

- **Stage One:**

Initial standards developed by Tribal representatives & educators at Miccosukee Indian School.

- **Stage Two:**

Revised initial standards – comparison to other standards.

- **Stage Three:**

Incorporation of standards into year long curriculum maps for each of the grade levels

- **Stage One:**

- 1) SLTI did a review of the initial standards developed by Tribal representatives & educators at Miccosukee Indian School.
- 2) Collaborative review in consultation with Tribal representative and MLA teachers at Miccosukee Indian School during first site visit
- 3) Objectives for revision of the MLA standards:
 - Observable Behaviors in descriptors
 - Horizontal and Vertical Alignment

- The process of aligning content standards vertically and horizontally prevents educators from overlapping or skipping content that is essential to meeting state and national standards. Standards alignment also facilitates communication among educators as they plan for alignment of the curriculum and assessments.

- Horizontal

Horizontal alignment is the alignment of the curriculum being taught by teachers **within a common grade level** (i.e. pacing guide). Horizontal alignment provides teachers with a guide, or goal, for their instruction. It also helps students by ensuring that each student is adequately prepared for the next grade

Vertical

Vertical alignment of curriculum is planning curriculum **across the grade levels**, from Kindergarten through high school, building upon instruction based upon standards. Correct vertical curriculum alignment improves student performance by decreasing the amount of instructional time consumed with re-teaching concepts and insures that important content is not omitted.

Stage 2: Revised Initial Standards

Original 1st Grade Standard

“The student uses speaking strategies effectively”

Sample of performance indicators
for 1st grade:

- Read aloud familiar stories, poems and passages
- Name the letters of the alphabet in front of a group of their peers as part of a timed activity.
- Recite Miccosukee alphabet using correct emphasis

Horizontal Considerations

Various language skills were not developmentally appropriate (I.e.-read aloud familiar stories...)

Standards vs. activities

Vertical Considerations

Duplication -the alphabet was introduced in pre-k but was still listed as a standard in K, 1 and 2 grade standards with a slight variation of it's description

Stage 2: Revised Initial Standards

Original 1st Grade
Standard:

**The student uses
speaking
strategies
effectively**

Modified 1st Grade
Standard:

**The student will
develop oral
communication
skills**

- **Modified Performance Indicators**

- 1) The student will use directional words correctly in a statement or question
- 2) The student will identify and match letters of the Miccosukee alphabet to their correct sound
- 3) The student will be able to use key vocabulary terms correctly in simple sentence form
- 4) The student will actively listen and respond in simple sentences to a variety of media including audiotapes, videos ,etc.
- 5) The student will be able to ask and answer questions, using one and two word responses and/or phrases and simple sentences.

Stage 3: 1st Grade Curriculum Map Example

Months	Thematic Unit	Elaponke Vocabulary	Key Ideas	Communicative Activities	S&L = Speaking and Listening;	MSS= Miccosukee Studies
August	Clans: Mine, Yours and Ours	Bird Panther Takoshaake Big town Otter Wind	Name six different local clans. Culturally appropriate greetings.	Say multiple syllable words. Understand a number of words, phrases, simple sentences and questions. Identify/match letters. Blend sounds.	1.1.a 1.1.e 1.2.b 1.3.c 1.1.g	1.1.d 1.1.j, 1.1.b (1.1.e , 1.1.j)
August	Family	Discipline Medicine Culture Talk Help/Care for Sick/Well	Identify family members' roles and responsibilities. Culturally appropriate behaviors.	Understand multi-step directions. Identify common root/base words.		

Stage 2: Revised Original Standards

Original 3rd Grade Cultural Studies standard:

- **The student recognizes the medicine and food gathering practices of the Miccosukee people**

Sample of performance indicators for 3rd grade:

- describes why it is important to work together with various clans.
- describe how the 3 native plants are used.

Horizontal Considerations

The concept of three native plants is important but the Miccosukee tribal leaders did not feel that it was appropriate to discuss medicinal plants and their uses – at least not in this context so that portion was removed from the modified standards revision

Vertical Considerations

Working together is an important concept but might be a challenging topic for 3rd graders to express in the target language and more fully discussed in a broader context such as village life versus food gathering

Miccosukee Studies Yearly Themes:

Village Life: Past and Present, Arts & Recreation, Tribal Governance, Geography, Economics

Horizontal

- Five themes were created to ensure that specific topics were discussed over the course of the year

Vertical

- Enabled the content introduced in each of the 5 themes to become increasing challenging as the students progressed from K-12

Stage 2: Revised Original Standards

Original 3rd Grade Standard

The student recognizes
the medicine and
food gathering
practices of the
Miccosukee people

Modified 3rd Grade Standard

The student understands
the various cultural
elements of village life
for the Miccosukee
Indian People both
past and present

- **Modified Performance Indicators**

1)The student will be able to describe a historically significant object for the Miccosukee people and its relevance

2)The student will be able to describe the key aspects of the lifestyle of a traditional Miccosukee village (health care, food gathering, houses, etc) and that of the present day

3)The student will be able to describe the various uses of plants/trees by the Miccosukee people

Months	Thematic Unit	Elaponke Vocabulary	Key Ideas	Communicative Activities	S&L = Speaking and Listening	MSS= Miccosukee Studies
August-September	Miccosukee Lifestyle Past and Present	Hunting Food gathering Food preparation: (butchering, cleaning fish, drying meats, cooking)	Describe a historically significant object and its relevance. Describe various uses of plants/ trees.	Able to combine two or more ideas into one sentence. Clarify and explain simple words and ideas orally. Conjunctions. Adjectives to distinguish objects.	3.1.a, 3.1.f 3.3.f, 3.3.e	3.1.a, 3.1.c
		Health care Food gathering Houses Medical people Home building Home repair	Describe key aspects of the lifestyle of a traditional Miccosukee village and that of present day.	Participate in social conversations on familiar topics asking/answering questions. Past, present, future tense.	3.2.c, 3.3.d	3.1.b

- Tests developed at representative grade levels: 1, 4, 10
- Design of Assessments
- Pilot testing and revision



Preliminary Design Considerations

- Tribal Council does not want written language taught.
 - Test Listening and speaking only.
- Teachers not confident about scoring responses alone or on the spot.
 - Record responses and score later by consensus of 2 + teachers.
- Students shy. Have never participated in a formal assessment.
 - Warm-up with simple sentences will be necessary.
- Many students can barely form sentences in Elaponke.
 - Some questions should be short answer or one word vocabulary items.
Some students may not understand complex task instructions in Elaponke.
 - Keep instructions simple.

Preliminary Test Design Considerations

- Tribal Ed Committee and Principal want to give the test at the beginning and end of year.
 - Two forms of each test are necessary.
- Some students may not understand complex task instructions in Eloponke.
 - Keep task instructions simple. Decided against complex cuisenaire rod tasks.
- Miccosukee children respond well to visuals
 - Use culturally authentic or friendly visuals as prompts for speaking and responding
- Some children travel off the reservation. Others do not.
 - Limit visuals and other content to life on the reservation.

Preliminary Test Design Considerations

- Many topics are sensitive or inappropriate for a test.
 - Family. Many children are being raised by one parent, grandparents, aunts, or some other relative.
 - Different and complex terms for kinships, i.e. mothers relatives and fathers relatives.
 - Sacred topics. Teachers could not discuss the corn dance and didn't want students discussing it.
 - Medicinal plants and treatments.
 - Certain animals. Snakes and monkeys are taboo.
- Test questions/stimuli/directions can not be written down in Elaponke.
 - Write down stimuli in English. Work with group on how to say them in Elaponke. Record them in Elaponke for test administrator to listen to before administering the test.
- Visuals are needed for the test.
 - Sources. Visuals provided by teachers. National Park Service has pictures of animals and plants on Everglades. Historical photos available from the NMAI through Tribal request.

Test Task	Type	Example
Warm-Up:		What is your name? How old are you?
Task 1	Receptive	Hand me the turtle.
Task 2	Expressive	What's in this picture? (using a graphic image of a single item, such as a shoe) What's this? (using a toy animal)
Task 3	Describe a photo	Photo of children playing a game
Task 4	Monologue	Tell me about what's happening in these pictures. (sequence of actions is shown in pictures)
Task 5	Dialogue or discussion	1 st grade: "Tell me about your favorite animal." (Follow-up questions asked) Topic depends on grade level.

Grade at beginning of 2012-13	Gender	Test administered
1	F	First Grade
2	M	First Grade
3	M	First Grade
4	F	Fourth Grade
4	F	Fourth Grade
4	M	Fourth Grade
5	M	Fourth Grade
10	M	Tenth Grade
10	F	Tenth Grade
10	F	Tenth Grade
10	F	Tenth Grade
Total: 11 (1 ea) 1st, 2nd, 3rd grade examinee (3) 4th grade examinees (1) 5th grade examinee (4) 10th grade examinees	Total: (6) Female examinees (5) Male examinees	Total: (3) First Grade tests; (4) Fourth Grade tests; (4) Tenth grade tests

Rubric for Scoring Pilot Tests

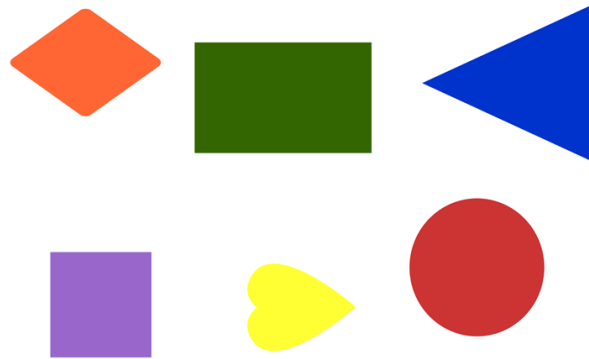
Rating	No Proficiency	Emerging	Growing	Proficient
Points	1	2	3	4
Vocabulary (applies to Tasks 2-5)	Inadequate and inaccurate use of vocabulary	Somewhat inadequate and inaccurate use of vocabulary and too basic for this level	Adequate and accurate use of vocabulary for this level	Rich use of vocabulary with frequent attempts at elaboration
Pronunciation (applies to Tasks 2-5)	Unintelligible, or barely intelligible pronunciation that prevents comprehension.	Frequent pronunciation errors, may impede comprehension	Occasional pronunciation errors, but do not impede comprehension	None or almost no pronunciation problems
Grammar (applies to Tasks 3,4,5)	Almost no correct grammatical structures, impeding comprehension	Frequent grammatical errors	Some minor grammatical errors	None or almost no grammatical errors
Fluency (applies to Tasks 3,4,5)	No response, or speech halting and uneven with long pauses or incomplete thoughts	Speech is hesitant or slow with frequent pauses; little attempt to keep conversation flowing	Some hesitation but continues and completes thoughts	Speaks without hesitation and with natural pauses
Task Completion (applies to all tasks)	No attempt, or minimal attempt to complete the task, responses frequently inappropriate	Partial completion of the task, responses mostly appropriate yet undeveloped	Completion of the task, responses appropriate and adequately developed	Superior completion of the task, responses appropriate and with elaboration
Task 1 Task Completion (Special descriptions apply to Task 1, 4 th Grade)	Demonstrates understanding of 1 sentence.	Demonstrates understanding of 2 sentences.	Demonstrates understanding of 3 sentences.	Demonstrates understanding of 4 sentences.

- Location:
 - Miccosukee Language Arts classroom.
- Administration
 - The administrator asked questions in Elaponke during the first day of testing, showing the examinee visual prompts when appropriate.
- Recording
 - A small video camera was stationed about four feet from the table, capturing the examinees' facial expression and non-verbal responses, which included, but were not limited to, facial expressions and physical gestures such as pointing to an image.
- Review
 - After several examinees were given the test, the SLTI staff and the MLA team collectively reviewed the video and individually scored the examinees' responses on the rubric for the test.

Lessons Learned in Pilot Testing

- Invert Task 1 with Task 2 for 1st grade
- Modify Task I for 4th grade
- Eliminate question on “fact or fiction?”
- Simplify/modify instructions in English
- Reduce rate of speed for Miccosukee story recordings
- Give task directions in English and Elaponke

Lessons Learned in Pilot Testing



After piloting:

Task 1: Point to the skirt on one girl. Ask, "What is this?"
Point to the shoe on one girl. Ask, "What is this?"

Task 2: Pick up the red stick and put it on the circle.
Put two blue sticks inside the square.

- Modify Task I for 4th grade

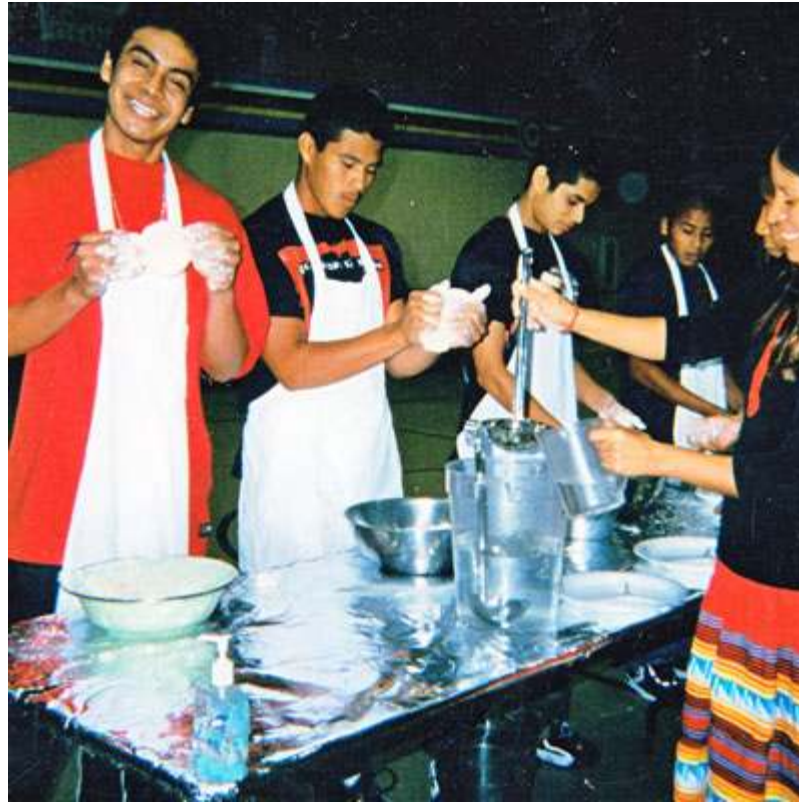
Original task changed to:

Instructions to examinee:

I'm going to show you four pictures. (Point to the picture that goes with the sentence.)

Picture 1: Boys making Fry bread.

Sentence: The students are learning to make bread.



Lessons Learned in Pilot Testing

Original questions in English:

What do you see in Picture 1?

What do you see in Picture 2?

How are these things important for the Miccosukee culture and why?

Describe the connections between the two images (4.1 D)

Revised questions:

What do you see in Picture 1?

What do you see in Picture 2?

How are these things important to the Miccosukee culture today?

Why are they important today?

How is picture 1 like picture 2? What else do pictures 1 and 2 have in common?





Instructions for test administrator:
In English, and then Elaponke, say:

Look at the three pictures.

Tell me what is happening in this picture (pointing to the "getting dressed" picture).

Now tell me what is happening in this picture (pointing to the "washing face" picture).

Now tell me what is happening in this picture (pointing to the "eating breakfast" picture).

- Questions on Assessments or Standards development?

- Examples of Standards, corresponding Curriculum Map and an Assessment item for Speaking & Listening

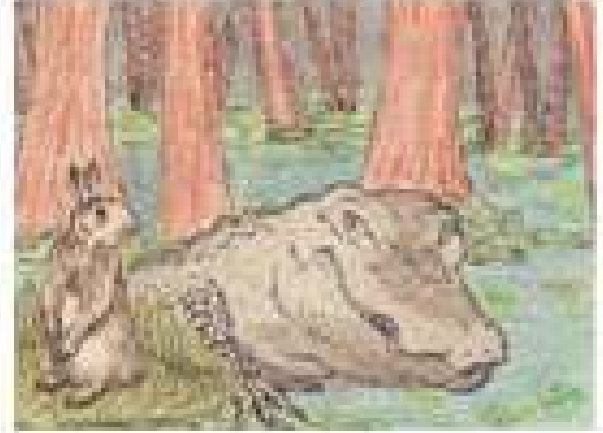
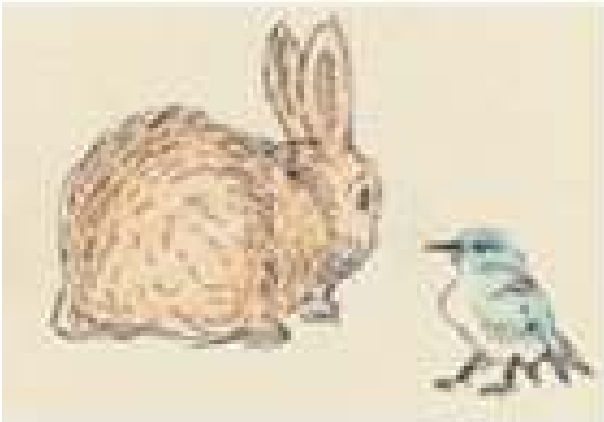
- 1.1 The student will continue to demonstrate growth in the understanding and use of oral language**
- a) The student can identify, say, segment, and blend various units of speech sounds (multiple syllable words)
 - b) The student can identify common root or base words of various Miccosukee words
 - c) The student will be able to focus on the meaning and key details of a simple oral Miccosukee story**
 - d) The student will be able to determine the sequence of events in a simple Miccosukee story
 - e) The student will demonstrate understanding of an increased number of words, phrases and simple sentences and questions
 - f) The student will engage in short conversations on simple topics
 - g) The student will demonstrate understanding of multi-step oral directions

Thematic Unit	Elaponke Vocabulary	Key Ideas	Communicative Activities	S&L = Speaking and Listening	MSS= Miccosukee Studies
s: Mine, Yours and Ours	Names of Clans	Name six different local clans. Culturally appropriate greetings.	Say multiple syllable words. Understand a number of words, phrases, simple sentences and questions. Identify/ match letters. Blend sounds.	1.1.e, 1.2.b, 1.3.c, 1.1.g 1.1.a,	1.1.a, 1.1.b, 1.1.d, 1.1.e, 1.1.j

Alligator Story:

Recording was made of a story about a rabbit
and an alligator

Task: Choose the picture that goes with the
story.



- Group Formation
- Task: Develop a curriculum activity based on a standard at one grade level.

Example Speaking and Listening

Standard: Tribal Oral Traditions & Stories

First Grade:

- The student will be able to focus on the meaning and key details of simple Tribal oral traditions.

Grade Level	Vocabulary	Key Ideas	Communicative Activities

- Discussion