

Walking the Land:  
Documenting  
intergenerational,  
conversational  
Ojibwemowin in the Forest

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Multimedia

# Who we are and why land and language

- Mary Hermes: University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, Curriculum and Instruction
- Mel M Engman: Grassroots Indigenous Multimedia
- Kevin Roach: Grassroots Indigenous Multimedia
- Jordyn Flaada: Grassroots Indigenous
- Long time Ojibwe language as revitalization, documentation and materials creation



# Revitalization makes this next move possible

- Documentation of conversations, materials and further models for everyday interaction  
- informal education, transmission in homes over generations
- Conversation archives: UMN Digital Conservatory, 2013 “Documenting Chippewa Conversations and Training Indigenous Scholars” NSF/DEL: 1346905
- Building on success of Waadookoaading, young speakers invited to participate in walks with first speakers.
- Building on land as pedagogy, especially (Bang, Marin, et. al) Chicago American Indian Center,
- Current Technology: Point of View Cameras

The sweet spot:

NSF Funding: 1664510 : Understanding learning mechanisms and language acquisitions through intergenerational conversation in southwestern Ojibwe, a Native American language.



Revitalization

Interactional/  
ecological  
approach



# Documentation and methods

- April 2016 (2 sets of walks) -April, May 2018
- Corpus is 15 walks, 20 minutes- 1.5 hours.
  - 5 Elders, 12 different youths
- “Walks”
  - On Ojibwe land, 22-4 youth, one Elder
  - Point of view camera, zoom recorders
  - Instructed to “walk” and talk about whatever they wanted, no “expertise” in identification



# Gii-ashkibagwaanozowag





# Documentation transcription sample

File Edit Annotation Tier Type Search View Options Window Help

Grid Text Subtitles

Volume: 15

5.14.18.walk3.joe.mov  
☐ Mute ☐ Solo 0

5.14.18.walk3.joe.wav  
☐ Mute ☐ Solo 0

Rate: 100

00:04:47.829 Selection: 00:09:37.859 - 00:09:39.738 1879

5.14.18.w... 00:04:46.000 00:04:48.000 00:04:50.000 00:04:52.000 00:04:54.000 00:04:56.000

00:04:46.000 00:04:48.000 00:04:50.000 00:04:52.000 00:04:54.000 00:04:56.000

default [1]  
Ojibwe Adult [108] | Gaawin nimin...gaawin niminwenimaasiig gineb |  
English Adult [70] | I don't like snakes. |

Ojibwe Youth 1 [165] | in. Ginebig. | | Gaye niin | | Ginebigooog. Miinan. |  
English Youth 1 [148] | ats it. A snake. | | Me too | | Snakes. Berries. |

Ojibwe Youth 2 [24] | | | | | |  
English Youth 2 [22] | | | | | |

# Theory: Indigenous pedagogy and Micro-interactional analysis

- Following Bang, Marin (foundation of indigenous + interaction) And Goodwin  
What is it? Why it matters:
- Desettling language (science)- Human-nonhuman, and interaction rather than individual as unit of analysis. To understand human/ more than human collaboration; the work participants are doing in conversation;
- This is an empirical way to describe culture in the making, cultural production
- Import to revitalization, more than learning words> Gap: theoretical land as pedagogy; language is separate.
- This is description of land as pedagogy and through indigenous language.





# Role of land: land as participant in transcripts

Land missing in transcript, human only

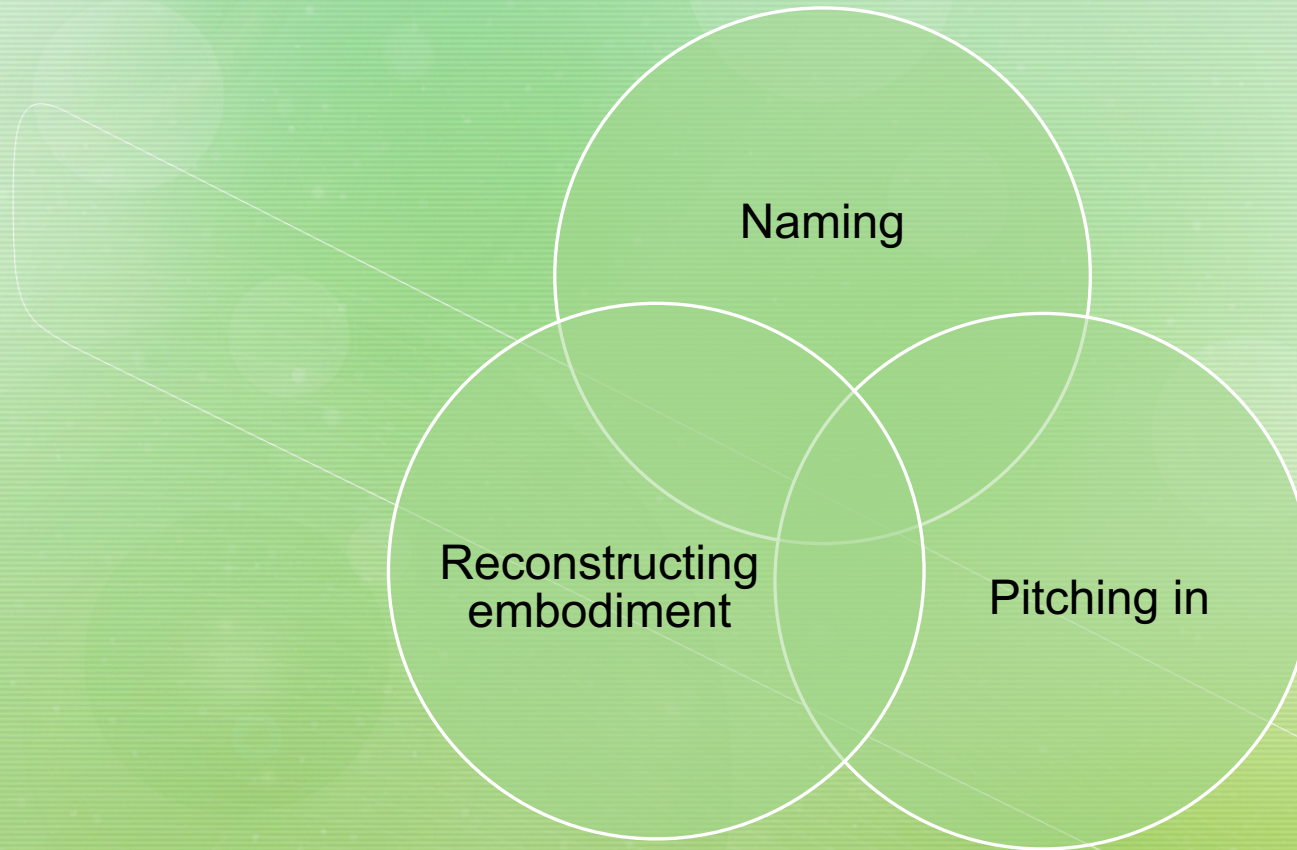
14:12.200	Y1	= <del>Mii ganabaj</del> = <i>I think</i>	Holds it close to A and shakes it a little as Y2 bends down and picks up a brown one.
14:15.000	Y2	Chi-ginwenzh imaa gii-ate. <i>It's been here a really long time...</i>	Y1 then holds the green branch parallel with Y2's brown branch as Y2 gently strokes the brown needles.
14:18.000	Y1	<del>Bakaan inaagwak apiich...</del> <i>It looks different than...</i>	Y1 and Y2 have branches side by side, are slowly pulling their fingers through the needles on the brown one as some come off in their hands.
14:21.200	Y1	[Ingiw, nawaj chi-wenipanad da-= (.) <i>Those, it's easier to=</i>	

# Land as, included in transcript participant with a turn

	Time stamp		Verbal	Non-verbal
14	14:12	Y2	= <del>Mil ganaba</del> = =I think	
15		L	=	
16	14:15	A	= <del>chi-ginwenzh</del> eh? for a long time?	((nods as he speaks, keeps gaze on branch))
17	14:16.0	Y2	<del>Shke.</del> Look.	((bends down and picks up brown branch again))
18		L		
19	14:16.6	Y2	Chi-ginwenzh imaa gii-ate. It's been here a really long time.	((maintains gaze on brown branch as he moves it to the physical center of the interaction, runs fingers through the needles, some come away in his hand))



# Interactional analysis of one episode:



# “What is it called” is an invitation to construct knowledge together

## Excerpt 3.2 Gii-ashkibagwaanowag (Reading the land, reconstructing time)

9 14:08.0 L



10 14:09.0 Y1 Gii-ashkibagwaanowag=  
They were green

11 14:11.0 Y1

((bends down and picks up green branch from the ground))

12 14:11.8 L



13 A =Hmm=

14 14:12 Y2 =Mii ganabaj=  
=I think

15 L





16 14:15 A =chi-ginwenzh eh?  
for a long time? ((nods as he speaks, keeps gaze on branch))

17 14:16.0 Y2 Shke. ((bends down and picks up brown branch again))



# to think about time/ life cycle and knowing through collaborative experience

Look.				
18		L		
19	14:16.6	Y2	Chi-ginwenzh imaa gii-ate. <i>It's been here a really long time.</i>	((maintains gaze on brown branch as he moves it to the physical center of the interaction, runs fingers through the needles, some come away in his hand))
20	14:17.0	L		
21		A		((gaze is down toward branches as he points with index finger of right hand at Y2's fingers and branch interaction))
22	14:18.0	Y1	Bakaan inaagwak apiich (.) <i>It looks different than</i>	((moves green branch closer to Y2's brown branch
23	14:21.2	Y1	[Ingiw [Those	
24	14:21.2	Y2	[Nashke /look.	

# Implications For Land as Pedagogy

- Across numerous episodes and walks, a shared conception of ecological knowledge emerged in which hierarchies of expert-novice were flattened and expertise was redistributed through interaction. Moreover, the *nature* of the expertise that participants collaboratively constructed was more experiential and relational than the decontextualized and specialized knowledge that is often encouraged in traditional schooling contexts (e.g., definitions, classifications, citations).



## Implications for land based revitalization