ABSTRACT

        The Choctaw Bilingual Education Program is a plan
operating in 4 public school systems in Oklahoma to expand the
educational opportunities of Choctaw children. The 4 major program
components are inservice workshops, an inservice instructional
program in the public schools, parental and community involvement,
and a 5-year master's-level teacher-preparation program. Based on the
idea that Choctaw children will find the most satisfying lives if
they recognize and accept the fact that the Choctaw people live in a
world of 2 languages and 2 cultures, the program is intended as a
service through which teachers and aides may find or develop
insights, materials, and techniques to help in working with Choctaw
children. The handbook discusses major educational needs of Choctaw
children, what teachers and aides need to know about language, and
how the program can meet the needs of Choctaw bilingual children.
Reference is made to materials available for the classroom, materials
available for inservice training, and techniques in bilingual
education. Appended is a list of terms, with definitions, commonly
used in the study of language. (JH)

A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS AND AIDES

OF

THE CHOCTAW BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

by

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August 1971

OEG #-0-70-3473 (280)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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I. What the Choctaw Bilingual Education Program is

The Choctaw Bilingual Education Program is a plan to ex-
pand the educational opportunities of Choctaw children. It now
operates in four public school systems—Battiest, Broken Bow,
Smithville, and Wright City. It was initiated by Southeastern
State College and by the administrators of these four schools,
working with Mrs. Fayrene Benson, McCurtain County Superintendent
of Schools. It is funded under Federal legislation enacted to
improve instruction of bilingual children (Title VII of P. L.
89-10). The planning stage of the Program was directed by
Dr. Wade Baskin, Head of the Foreign Language Department of
Southeastern State College. The operational stage, which began
on July 1, 1970, is the joint responsibility of Mrs. Benson and
Dr. Leon Hibbs, President of Southeastern State College. Mr. Pierce
Martin was named Program Director beginning July 1, 1971.

The Program has four major components: (1) inservice
workshops; (2) an inservice instructional program in the public
schools; (3) parental and community involvement; and (4) a five-
year teacher preparation program.

Mr. Martin expects to spend most of his time in McCurtain
County, helping administrators and teachers to achieve the object-
ives of the Program. Associate Directors of the Program are
Mr. Gene Wilson and Mr. Jorge Morales. Mr. Wilson's primary
concern is parental and community involvement, but he also con-
ducts a weekly seminar for Choctaw college students in the teacher
preparation program. Mr. Morales' primary concern is the prepara-

tion of bilingual teachers. Students participating in the teacher preparation program also serve as School-Community Coordinators in the Program. An Advisory Committee, composed of representatives of the Choctaw community, continuously evaluates the operation of the Program and offers suggestions for its improvement. Members of the Advisory Committee, public school administrators, staff members, consultants, inservice teachers and aides, and School-Community Coordinators are listed in Appendix B (deleted).

The Program is not designed to dictate to classroom teachers and aides what they must do in the classroom. It is intended rather as a service through which teachers and aides may find or develop insights, materials, and techniques to help them in working with Choctaw children.

The Program is based on the idea that Choctaw children will find the most satisfying lives if they recognize and accept the fact that the Choctaw people live in a world of two languages and two cultures--Choctaw-American and Anglo-American.

II. Some major educational needs of Choctaw children

Since the Choctaw Bilingual Education Program is designed
to meet the educational needs of Choctaw children, a careful
assessment of their needs was made before the Program was plan-
ned. The main needs identified are:

(1) To acquire training and experience in the use of
English in various situations with emphasis on features of
English which are especially difficult for speakers of Choctaw,

(2) To have some activities conducted in Choctaw,

(3) To develop a positive self-concept,

(4) To have teachers who recognize important differences
between Choctaw- and Anglo-American children and who know how
to make these differences contribute to the Choctaw child's learn-
ing.

Many teachers and aides in the first year of operation of
the Program related stories concerning these needs. One told
of a child who wished that he weren't Choctaw. Another of
a Choctaw child who was considered stupid by his teacher because
he couldn't follow simple directions to color something a certain
color when the problem was that the Choctaw division of the color
spectrum differs from that of English. And still another told
of a teacher who believed a Choctaw student was irresponsible
in missing a week of classes because of the death of a rather
distant relative although Choctaw funerals are traditionally long.

Consequently, the Choctaw child usually needs to have an edu-

cational program which is adapted to his special cultural differences. He needs a teacher who knows, for example, that, since Choctaw does not have the sound speakers of English use at the beginning and end of the word spelled j-u-d-g-e, he may say something like Cheesus for Jesus and may need special help in learning the sound.

In order to meet such needs of Choctaw children, the Program provides two main services. First, it provides materials both for classroom instruction and for information of teachers and aides; second, it provides workshops to help teachers and aides learn more about the Choctaw people and to learn how to use the special classroom materials and techniques.

III. What teachers and aides need to know about language

In order to work with bilingual children as effectively as possible, teachers and aides need to know much about how a language signals meaning.

The original form of every natural language known is speech. For most languages which have a writing system, speech came long before writing; and there are still many languages which have no writing system. All modern writing systems for natural languages are, in one way or another, based upon speech.

The spoken form of a language may be thought of as a system of signals of meaning in which the significant sounds are combined in certain ways to make larger units.

The basic elements of a spoken language are its system of sounds. Choctaw has a system of about twenty distinctive sounds; English has a system of about forty. Many of the Choctaw sounds and the English sounds are identical; but Choctaw has some sounds that English does not have, and English has some that Choctaw does not have.

Although these sounds have no meaning of their own, they are the elements from which the meaningful units of speech are built. Every language has certain restrictions on the order in which sounds can be combined. For example, Choctaw does not begin words with sequences of consonant sounds like tr and gr; and English does not have sequences like gt and mgr at the beginning of words.

The distinctive sounds of a language are combined within such restrictions as those mentioned above to form the meaningful units of language. Although many words such as boy, house and hit have just one unit of meaning apiece, many other words have several units of meaning. For example, the word childlike consists of two units of meaning--child and like; similarly, cheerful consists of cheer and -ful, manly of man and -ly. Even words like boys, houses, and hits consist of two units of meaning--the base word and the suffix, which, for nouns, means "two or more." Some words have more than two units of meaning; for example, unmanly has three obvious units of meaning: un-, man, and -ly; and unmanliness has four: un-, man, -li-, and -ness.

It is reasonable to analyze words like pinched, pinching, sweeter, sweetest, and elephants as each consisting of two units of meaning--the base and the suffix; -ed means "past time," -er means "more," and -s means "two or more." Again, Choctaw and English have similarities and differences in the use of such suffixes. Although both, for example, have tense systems, which signal very similar meanings, Choctaw does not use tense suffixes. And Choctaw does not have forms like "sweeter" and "sweetest."

The words of a language are only a part of the language. If someone tells you only that a woman named Suzy and a man named Bill are involved in an action called stabbing, you do not have enough information to know what exactly happened.

You know only as much as isolated words can tell you. You
need to know how <u>Suzy</u> and <u>Bill</u> are related to the action of
stabbing. Every language has a means of indicating such relation-
ships. Commonly used means are word-order and suffixes. English
relies heavily on word-order to indicate such relationships:

> Myrtle pinched Ralph.
> Ralph pinched Myrtle.

Choctaw also uses word-order to indicate relationships, but not
the same order as English. Compare, for example, the following
sentences:

> Tobookoli impa.
> He eats lunch.

<u>Tobookoli</u> is "lunch," and <u>impa</u> is "he eats"--the English word-
order is the opposite of the Choctaw.

Word-order to indicate relationships is used more extensi-
vely in English than in Choctaw; where English uses word-order
to turn some statements into yes-no questions, Choctaw uses
a question-particle (<u>hon</u> in the following example):

> He is coming
> Is he coming

> Minti   (He is coming.)
> Minti hon   (Is he coming?)

This is a very brief explanation of the system of a spoken
language: distinctive sounds are combined to make the meaning-
ful parts of words; the meaningful parts of words are combined
to make words; words are combined to make sentences. The system

may be diagrammed as follows:

```
┌─────────────────────┐
│ Distinctive sounds  │
└─────────────────────┘
          ↓
┌─────────────────────┐
│   Smallest units    │
│     of meaning      │
└─────────────────────┘
          ↓
      ┌─────────┐
      │  Words  │
      └─────────┘
          ↓
    ┌───────────┐
    │ Sentences │
    └───────────┘
```
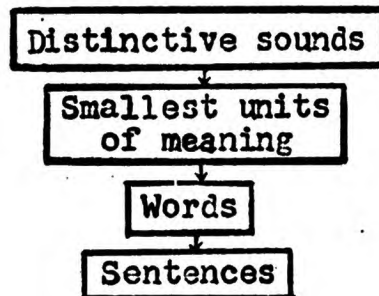
So far, little has been said about writing. For natural languages, writing is developed long after speech and in order to give language a visual form. The written forms of Choctaw and English are _alphabetic writing_, which means that the distinctive sounds of speech are represented by letters of the alphabet. The English alphabetic writing at its simplest is illustrated by a word like _bet_, in which each sound is represented by one letter.

However, English alphabetic writing is not always so simple. Take the word _bought_, for example. Like _bet_, it has only _three_ sounds in speech; but, whereas the vowel sound in _bet_ is spelled with the letter _e_, the vowel sound in _bought_ is spelled o-u-g-h. Another significant point about English alphabetic writing is illustrated by words like _do_, _no_, and _to_. In actual speech, the vowel sounds in these words are usually three different sounds; but they are all spelled with the letter _o_.

Thus, it is not accurate to speak of "the sound of the letter _o_," for example, as if the letter o were used to spell only one sound. The letters of the alphabet have _names_ which we call when we recite the alphabet; but what sounds they spell depend

on the words in which they occur.

English speech has about <u>forty</u> distinctive sounds. English alphabetic writing uses <u>twenty-six</u> letters of the alphabet to write these sounds. So there is not one letter to represent each sound. In fact, English has more than <u>three hundred</u> ways to spell the <u>forty</u> or so sounds of English. Consider, for example, the following spellings of the so-called long-<u>e</u> sound:

> bel<u>ie</u>ve
> rec<u>ei</u>ve
> P<u>e</u>te
> el<u>i</u>te
> gr<u>ee</u>n
> l<u>ea</u>f
> d<u>e</u>ny
> part<u>y</u>
> mon<u>ey</u>

The diversity of English spelling is due to a number of factors. English has been written for about a thousand years. During its history, many spellings have been borrowed from other languages. And, all the while, English pronunciation has been changing--and is still changing; but English spelling has changed very little in the lrst 350 years.

Choctaw alphabetic writing is much younger--only about one hundred years old. In fact, Choctaw linguists ("two" is plural) are still working on some aspects of a Choctaw writing system. Consequently, Choctaw writing is much closer to having one letter to represent one sound than English is.

The information that has been presented so far in this section deals with the <u>structure</u> of language. Only one important generalization about <u>word-meanings</u> will be included here. The words of a language represent an analysis of the world.

An example of such an analysis are the commonly used terms
baby, boy, and man, which may be used arbitrarily to divide
the life-cycle of a male human being into stages. The stages
are not exact: when does a baby become a boy? when does a boy
become a man? And there is no reason that there must be three
stages, since a person might view the life-cycle in either two
or two-hundred stages.

Consequently, the relationship between language and reality
in one language often differs from that relationship in another
language. A good example of such a difference is that Choctaw
and English do not divide the world of colors into the same
categories.

In learning a second language, a person must, consequently,
learn both the system of structures and the system of meanings.
The learner may have difficulty at any point where the first
language and the second language differ in either system.

A list of some terms commonly used in the study of language,
with definitions, is contained in Appendix A.

IV. How the Program can meet the needs of Choctaw bilingual
children

As was indicated previously, the Program is designed
to meet the educational needs of Choctaw bilingual children
(see Section II). Special materials and methods have been
designed to meet each of the four basic needs listed.

A. Learning English. The Program staff has made
a careful study of both Choctaw and English to identify featu-
res of English which may be difficult for native speakers of
Choctaw to learn. On the basis of this study, the staff has
prepared special materials for teaching the features thus
identified.

B. Learning through Choctaw. Specific parts of the
special language materials mentioned in Section IV. are writ-
ten in Choctaw. Parts of the social studies material which
will be available in January 1972 are in Choctaw. It is sug-
gested that teaching aides conduct additional classroom work
in Choctaw for speakers of Choctaw.

C. Developing positive self-concepts. A set of read-
aloud stories and a large portion of the social studies mater-
ials mentioned in Section IV. B. are devoted to helping Choctaw
children to develop positive self-concepts. It is suggested
that teachers and aides use additional materials and techniques
to help in this development. It will help for Choctaw parents
to visit classrooms and, when they can, assist with instruction;
they can present talks and demonstrations about Choctaw culture.

D. <u>Having</u> <u>teachers</u> <u>who</u> <u>understand</u>. The staff has pro-
duced, specifically for teachers and aides of the Program, mater-
ials on Choctaw language and culture. Eight or nine days of
workshops in 1971-1972 will be devoted to helping teachers
and aides to increase their understanding of the Choctaw people.

Materials mentioned in this Section are described in
Sections V and VI.

V. Materials available for the classroom

A. Oral language materials. A set of eighty lessons
in English, by Mr. Roy Willis, edited by Mr. Dale Nicklas,
revised by Mr. Todd Downing. The lessons are designed to teach
to speakers of Choctaw those features of English which may be
most troublesome. Preparation for the English lessons is given
in Choctaw. Included are diagnostic tests and teacher instruct-
ions. Additional lessons are in preparation.

B. Miami Linguistic Readers. A set of basic reading
materials. The series, published by D. C. Heath and Company,
is especially useful for children whose first language is
Choctaw. It may be used as the basic reading program for all
first-grade children.

C. Raed-aloud stories. A set of five stories about
Choctaw children by Mrs. Mary Frye. (Additional stories will
be available periodically during the year.) The stories are
written to be read to primary children; they are useful not
only as supplementary reading materials but also as techniques
for helping Choctaw children to develop positive self-concepts.

D. Social studies kit. (Available January 1972) A multi-
media kit of sequential materials on Choctaw language and cul-
ture by Mrs. Janice Arrendale and Mr. Randy Jacobs.

VI. Materials for inservice training

A. English for Speakers of Choctaw by Mr. Thurston Dale Nicklas. A basic introduction to problems speakers of Choctaw may encounter in learning English.

B. A Selected Bibliography of American-Indian Literature for Children by Dr. Joseph E. Littlejohn.

C. A Choctaw Orthography by Mr. Thurston Dale Nicklas. A basic introduction to the system of sounds and the system of writing Choctaw.

D. A Choctaw Morphology by Mr. Thurston Dale Nicklas. A description of the system of units of meaning in Choctaw.

E. A Choctaw Syntax by Mr. Thurston Dale Nicklas. (Available in Fall 1971). A description of Choctaw sentence structure.

F. A Brief History of Choctaw Culture by Dr. James Morrison. A short account of the development of Choctaw culture. Available both in print and on audiotape.

G. Demonstrations of Choctaw oral language materials by Mrs. Marie Dillard and Mrs. Norma Willie. A short videotape produced by Mr. Clyde Jackson. A teacher and a teaching aide demonstrate the use of the oral language lessons developed for the Program.

H. A Handbook for Teachers and Aides of the Choctaw Bilingual Education Program by Dr. Joseph E. Littlejohn.

VII. Some useful classroom techniques in bilingual education

It is generally agreed by experts in bilingual education that children learn English as a second language most rapidly and effectively in a classroom in which there is _a lively, ongoing use of language_ throughout the school-day. Not all uses of language have to be structured like the oral language materials mentioned in Section V; in fact, many students of the language-development of children believe that children learn more about language (and about themselves) through informal, unstructured, _natural_ use of language as they work and discover.

This section contains notes on several classroom techniques which foster the use of language by children.

A. _Creative Drama._ After the teacher or aide has read the children a story, for example, the children act out the story--in their own language and with their own actions. The general technique in creative dramatics is to help children to discover meaning in a story or a situation by acting out specific incidents. Acting out offers rich opportunities for both verbal and non-verbal expression. An excellent introduction to creative drama is Brian Way's _Development Through Drama_; it is clear and brief and full of specific suggestions for things to do in the classroom.

B. _Role-playing._ Role-playing is different from acting. In creative dramatics, children are giving a _performance_; in role-playing, they are not supposed to give a performance. In role-playing, a problem is established, and the children take

the roles of people who are involved in the problem and try
to work out a solution. It is an excellent technique for using
language to help children understand and begin to overcome pre-
judices and self-centeredness. Role playing can also contribute
to the development of positive self-concepts. The best book
on role-playing is Fannie Shaftel's Role-playing for Social Values.

C. Valuing techniques. Valuing techniques are techniques
for getting people to examine their values in life and their
behavior which is determined by their values. It is especially
important that students in the Choctaw Bilingual Education Program--
both Choctaw- and Anglo-American--devote some time to thinking
through and talking about their behavior toward others. One basic
technique is for the teacher to tell the children a relevant story
without an ending and to ask the children to put themselves in
the places of various characters in the story. Then the teacher
can use various devices to get the children to think the situation
through and to talk about their own feelings and the feelings
of others. A good introduction to valuing techniques for pri-
mary children is Rath, Harmin, and Simon's Helping Children to
Clarify Values.

D. Language games. A number of language games are available
commercially today, such as Lotto, Junior Scrabble, and Syntactics.
But perhaps the most useful ones are those that the teachers and
aides, using a little imagination, can design to meet the real
needs of students in their classrooms. With 3x5 cards and magic
markers, for example, they can make word-cards for children to use

in sentence-building games; children can learn to read through putting together their own sentences with such word-cards. Primary children also enjoy oral rime-games played in teams to see which team can think the most words to rime with a beginning word. James Moffett gives useful suggestions for language-games in his book A Student-Centered Language Arts Curriculum, K-6.

E. Making books. Letting students write, illustrate, and assemble their own books offers a variety of language-learning activities. The first book may be simply an illustrated dictionary. In making it, children can talk about words that mean something to them--calf, pig, hungry, happy; then they can learn to print these words and, with colored paper, scissors, and crayons, to make a first dictionary of their words. It should be very useful for them to make a short Choctaw-English dictionary in this manner. When they have learned to read, children can tell their own stories to teachers and aides, who can write them down; then the children can make books with their own stories. In the book mentioned in VII. D., Moffett gives many interesting ideas for the use of children-produced books.

F. Discussions. Children learn much about language from classroom discussions. Although some of the discussions may be structured, children learn much from just "talking things over." After a walk around the schoolyard to collect leaves of various sizes and shapes, for example, it is pleasant and useful for children to talk informally about how things are different. An interesting technique is for teachers and aides to bring unusual objects such as block puzzles or abstract sculptures

into the classroom and just leave them on a table for children
to examine and to talk about. Sometimes, children may carry on
discussions in small groups; at other times, they may participate
in more structured discussions with teachers and aides.

VIII. The teacher preparation component

To meet the long-range educational needs of Choctaw child-
ren, the Program also has a preservice component to train Choc-
taws as teachers of Choctaws. In 1970-1971, ten Choctaw gradu-
ates of McCurtain County schools entered the Program at South-
eastern State College; in 1971-1972, fifteen Choctaws will
participate.

In addition to the regular teacher-training curriculum,
these students take many courses which emphasize Choctaw
language and culture and Choctaw educational problems.

As School-Community Coordinators these preservice teachers
will also spend approximately 150 hours each in the schools
and Choctaw communities of Mc Curtain County during 1971-1972.
They will talk to Choctaw parents, counsel and tutor Choctaw
children, and observe and teach in the schools.

These students are working toward master's degrees in
elementary education.

Appendix A: Some Terms Used in Language-Study

1. **Basic** <u>sentence-patterns</u>. The small number of key arrangements of words in the sentences of a language. The most commonly used English patterns are illustrated by the following sentences:

> Eleanor is nice
>
> Eleanor is here.
>
> Eleanor is chairman.
>
> Eleanor procrastinates.
>
> Eleanor hit Martin.
>
> Eleanor gave Martin gifts.

The positions of the words within these patterns are signals of how the words are related to one another; for example, the position of <u>Eleanor</u> before the verb <u>hit</u> signals that Eleanor performs the action "hit," and the position of <u>Martin</u> after the verb signals that Martin is affected by the action.

2. <u>Distribution</u>. The arrangement of the sounds of a language to form words. For example, Choctaw does not have the <u>m</u>-sound at the ends of words, and English does not begin words with the ng- sound found in <u>sing</u> and <u>bang</u>.

3. <u>Fricative</u>. A sound, such as the sound that begins the word <u>fig</u> and the sound that ends <u>pass</u>, in which the air passing through the mounth is not stopped, but is pushed out in a manner which produces friction.

4. <u>Grapheme</u>. A letter of the alphabet or a combination of letters of the alphabet to represent one of the distinctive

sounds of a language. The distinctive sound commonly called the long o is, for example, represented by a number of graphemes in English. Some of the graphemes are:

     ao as in boat

     o...e as in tote

     ow as in low

See also phoneme.

5. Intonational patterns. An arrangement of accents and voice-pitch used in making an utterance. The string of words "Jane is here" may, for example, be spoken as either a statement or a question, depending on the intonational pattern. If the pitch of the voice rises slightly at the end of the utterance and then falls rapidly into silence—

    Jane is here

the utterance is a statement. If, on the other hand, the pitch rises, stays up, and the voice stops—

    Jane is here

the utterance is a question. Accent (or stress), which is also part of an intonational pattern, is not marked in the examples given above.

6. Linguistics. The study of language. The term is used with various meanings. Some people define it as "the scientific study of language." Although it is commonly used to refer to the study of the sounds, words, and the sentence-structure of language, it can be used more broadly so as to include psychological and sociological aspects of language.

7. <u>Morpheme</u>. The smallest unit of meaning in language. The word <u>remake</u> contains two morphemes: <u>re-</u>, which means "again," and <u>make</u>, which means "to bring into being." The total meaning of <u>remake</u> is a composite of the two meanings. Some words--<u>boy</u> and <u>dog</u>, for example--are only one morpheme long; many, like <u>remake</u>, consist of more than one morpheme.

8. <u>Orthography</u>. A writing system for a language.

9. <u>Phoneme</u>. The smallest unit of sound which can make a difference in meaning. For example, the spoken version of the word spelled <u>p-e-t</u> contains three phonemes, each represented in writing by one letter of the alphabet. The spoken word <u>bet</u> also contains three phonemes. <u>Pet</u> and <u>bet</u>, as spoken, differ only in the initial phonemes.

10. <u>Quality</u>. In reference to the distinctive sounds of a language, the total of the things a speaker does to his vocal tract to produce a sound. For example, the tongue position for the vowel in the word <u>hot</u> is lower in the mouth than for the vowel in <u>hit</u>; this is a difference in quality.

11. <u>Quantity</u>. In reference to the distinctive sounds of a language, the amount of time it takes to produce a sound. Quantity is not generally significant in English, since, for example, the word spelled <u>k-i-d</u> is the same word regardless of how long a person holds the vowel. However, quantity is distinctive in Choctaw, since some words differ in only the length of vowels.

12. <u>Stop</u>. A sound, such as the sound that begins the word spelled <u>p-i-g</u>, in which the flow of air through the mouth is stopped completely at some point. Other words beginning with stops

are cat, dog, bear.

13. Syntax. The system by which the relationships among words
in sentences are signalled. (Or a description of such a system.)
An important feature of English syntax is word-order.

14. Transformation. A change in a basic sentence-pattern or in
any of its parts. Some transformations delete parts (You will
be here tomorrow→Be here tomorrow); some substitute one item
for another (The girl is here→who is here); others add new
parts (The girl is here→The beautiful girl is here); and still
others rearrange parts (Jane is here→Here is Jane).

15. Voice. The vibration of the vocal cords during the production
of a sound. A sound is said to be voiced if the vocal cords
vibrate during its production, and voiceless if there is no
significant vibration. Many English sounds are distinguished
from one another by only the presence or absence of voice;
for example, the only significant difference between the
pronunciation of bit and pit is that the initial sound in bit
is voiced and the initial sound in pit is voiceless. Other
pairs of sounds which contrast in the same manner are those
commonly spelled as follows:

Voiced	Voiceless
d	t
g	k
j	ch
z	s
v	f

Of the six pairs of sounds listed, Choctaw uses only the b/p
distinction; it does not have any of the other voiced sounds.