

Facilitator Comments on Class Instruction

January 23, 2008, class 1. Today was the first day the Introduction to Arapaho class met. The class is being taught using ASLA. None of the students in the class knows how to say anything in Arapaho. After about 30 minutes of introductions and explanations of how the class would be run, we began. Once the class started English was not used in the lessons. After 45 minutes the class demonstrated they had full cognition of 16 words and 24 phrases in Arapaho.

January 28, 2008, class 2. Today the class met for the second time. After about 35 minutes of each student demonstrating they had full retention of the language learned from the first class, we went on to new material. In 35 minutes each student in the class demonstrated they had acquired 32 new phrases. After 75 minutes of classroom instruction between the first and second class, all students have acquired 16 words and 56 phrases in the language. They are astounded by what they have learned and are eager for their next class.

January 30, 2008, class 3. Exam day. This marked the third time the class met. Held a 30-minute review before testing students on material learned. While the class outline stated students were only going to be tested on ability to understand 16 words and 24 phrases, I actually tested them on 16 words and 40 phrases. Some of the phrases they were tested on were; An airplane is flying, A man and woman are walking, A young boy and young girl are dancing, A dog in running, A rabbit is sleeping, Beavers are swimming, A man in sitting on a chair. The test was an oral exam, students were tested individually and it took about an hour to test the entire class this way. Each student got 100% on all 56 items that they were tested on.

February 6, 2008, class 5. This was the fifth class meeting. Students were able to say 20 words and 20 phrases in Arapaho, and demonstrated that they understood the meaning of 80 additional phrases when hearing them spoken in Arapaho. It has been calculated that they have reached this level after 240 minutes (4 hours) of instruction.

February 11, 2008, class 6. This was the sixth class meeting. Due to the amount of language students are acquiring it is taking longer to set the classroom up. In order to maximize on classroom instruction time will need to begin setting room up sooner. Class started with students demonstrating what they are able to say on their own in Arapaho. There was a slight increase over the last class in the number of phrases they were able to produce. Approximately 25 minutes were used for about half the class to do this individually. The remaining 35 minutes were spent learning new material. This moved very quickly and increased in complexity as students demonstrated their ability to understand and say things like; "I see two birds flying, they are seagulls." "I see two cups on a table above two books." "One woman is standing in front of a fence and a woman and man are standing behind the fence." "Two people are riding horses through a river." "Five dogs are standing inside a car." "I see five men riding five horse, they are riding very fast." During this time students were able to increase what they were able to say in Arapaho by about 25 new phrases. In all students are now at a level where they are gaining an ability to recognize and express themselves in about 150 different ways in Arapaho. This has been accomplished in about 300 minutes, or 5 hours, of classroom instruction. They will be tested again on Wednesday February 13.

February 13, 2008, class 7. Students were tested today. This was an oral test in which they were to translate 16 words into Arapaho and 64 phrases from Arapaho to English. Students were tested one at a time and given the option to translate as many phrases into Arapaho as they could before translating from Arapaho to English. Almost all members of the class were able to translate 16 words and up to 14 phrases into Arapaho. In many instances students learned new words within phrases while being tested. One example of this was “A boy is *alone* standing on a rock *in the ocean*.” Another was “A dog is asleep *lying* under a car.” For the second time, each student received 100% on all items they were tested on. There will be a week break before the class meets again. During that time students have been assigned to watch the movie Bambi in Arapaho and to write down in English every word and phrase that they can understand being said in the movie in Arapaho.

February 25, 2008, class 8. Class last met on Wednesday Feb 13, eleven days ago. Today during the first 30 minutes of instruction time I reviewed the class on everything learned over the past six classes, approximately 5.5 hours of instruction time. Even though they had this long break, each individual student demonstrated an increase in what they could say in Arapaho. Over the last 30 minutes of class time they learned 25 new items, which consisted of foods and drink items and terms involved with eating and drinking. Their total cognitive language base is now up to 180 different ways of expressions, items, things and events in Arapaho.

February 27, 2008, class 9. Today’s class was amazing. I presented them with a new area that dealt with things that one eats and drinks along with how they are prepared and consumed. The class was presented with over 20 food items, given within phrases that discussed how these items were prepared and consumed. In all they learned 50 new phrases, plus a rhyme in about an hours time. Some of the new things learned were; A kitten and girl are drinking milk, a bird is swallowing a fish. That boy is drinking milk, (and) a girl is eating a piece of bread. I eat bread; bread is food. I eat strawberries; strawberries are food. Because a deer is an animal and food, I eat deer meat. Cars are not food. A child is eating corn. A woman is boiling potatoes and a man is eating cake. They have also begun to learn how to say things in the past and future. The rhyme they learned in Arapaho was Berries and table, plate and bread. I’ll eat cake, before I go to bed. In all cases they know the Arapaho as well as the English for what they are saying. The class has now had approximately 6.5 hours of language instruction (390 minutes), and are demonstrating an ability to either recognize and/or say about two hundred phrases.

March 3 & 5, 2008, class 10 & 11. On March 3 the class were reviewed on earlier material that needed refining, such as not simply saying girls are jumping but more descriptively, two girls are jumping into water, and two girls are riding horses through a creek, rather than just girls are riding horses. Another phrase refined was a bee is flying toward a flower. On March 5, the class had two demonstrate their ability to say 50 phrases or more in Arapaho and understand another 50 when said to them in Arapaho. After this assessment food items were worked on again. Added to the previous list were things, “Meat is cooking,” “A man and woman are cooking,” “A bird is swallowing a fish,” plus the difference in saying actions involving inanimate and animate singular and plural i.e. I see two books versus I see two dogs. At this point in time they are able to say about 80 phrases in Arapaho and understand around 120. Next week will focus on increasing both these abilities.

March 10, 2008, class 12. The class began with me saying things in English to individuals and being told that back in Arapaho. We went through about a third of the class this way. Students demonstrated that they could translate well over 60 phrases from English to Arapaho. After this we moved on to new phrases that dealt with clothing. They heard me say 8 items of clothing and twelve related phrases like A man is wearing a white shirt, black pants, black hat and black shoes. Over there I see a young girl wearing a red raincoat and boots and another girl is wearing a blue raincoat. In addition to this students also demonstrated that they understood the lessons from last week that dealt with food. They will be tested again on Wednesday.

March 12, 2008. Students were tested on Wednesday and Friday. The reality with how students are tested is that they are tested one at a time. This means that it actually takes longer to get through testing students than it takes them to learn the material. All students had to translate 20 words and 30 phrases from English to Arapaho. On this first section all students got everything correctly translated. The second part of the exam required that each student demonstrate their ability to understand 50 phrases when said in Arapaho. These phrases were fairly complex and some quite long, such as “ A woman is standing in front of a fence and a man and woman is standing behind the fence.” Another phrase was “A man is standing in a tepee and girls and boys are sitting in the tepee.” Another was “Two girls are riding horses through a river.” On this section of the test two students got 48 out of 50, and the other students got 50 out of 50.

March 19, 2008 class 13. During the first half of the class students were assessed on how much Arapaho they are able to now say. Their ability to say things in Arapaho is starting to catch up with what they are able to understand in Arapaho, even though this has not actually been enforced or drilled. This was demonstrated in today’s class with students being able to say phrases up to what happens with food. This means they have demonstrated their ability to say about one hundred and seventy different phrases in Arapaho and understand an additional one hundred phrases in Arapaho. This is a baseline, however, because they also are able to combine and recombine these different phrases in about three combinations. This means that they can actually produce over 400 different phrases in Arapaho, by taking parts from phrases that they know to create new phrases, and can probably understand over 1,000 different combinations of phrases that they have now learned. The class has had approximately 11 hours of language instruction in the classroom.

March 31, 2008 class 14. This was the first class after an 11 day Spring Break. Several students volunteered to go through as much as they could say in Arapaho. Generally, they were able to say between 150-180 phrases in Arapaho, in spite of being away for 11 days, and their comprehension level is more than double this number. One of the surprises today was their being exposed to the following: A woman is wearing an orange shirt and orange pants and she looks like a pumpkin. On the surface this does not look all that difficult, except that “looks like and pumpkin” were words that they had not heard before. It took about 3-4 minutes for them to figure this out. On Wednesday the class will get new material. The class has now had approximately 12 hours of instruction.

April 2, 2008 class 15. The class received 28 new phrases that dealt with various adjectives including color; number, young and old and new and old in association with people, animals and objects. They mastered these in about 45 minutes.

April 9, 2008 class 17. Class went through review of earlier material during first half of class. Was a bit puzzled that they are not getting through the review as fast I thought they would. This is especially surprising because during second half of class students learned three different counting systems up to ten. These were basic counting from 1 – 10, plus the system of applying numbers from one to ten for inanimate objects and animate objects creatures and beings. At this point, after 17-hours of classroom instruction, students have a combined baseline working knowledge and speaking ability of over three hundred phrases that they can combine and recombine in about four different ways.

April 14, 2008 class 18. Class continued with counting and how to apply numbers and colors to animate and inanimate objects, people and animals. When I continued on with the number 11, I was surprised by several of the students who continued on their own from 12-15. After I told them the number 16 they continued on to 19 on their own.

April 16, 2008 class 19. Went over counting systems a bit and then moved to inquiries about the state of things. This allowed me to present false questions to students who had to then correct those questions. This was done the following way. A question would be asked; Is this ball yellow, when the ball was actually blue. The student would have to state that the ball is not yellow the ball is blue. Another would be “Is the red car old, when in fact the red car was new. They also learned to hear the difference in what was being asked between “is the young dog brown?” or is the brown dog old?”

April 21, 2008 class 20. Continued with earlier weeks lessons of colors, numbers and counting systems for first part of class, then reviewed with class by calling one student up to go through entire material on her own. Neither she nor class realized she was actually being tested. Student received a perfect score. Class was dismissed.

April 23-May 8, 2008 final exam. It took about 8 hours to test each student individually over four class periods. The final consisted of students demonstrating competence by orally producing 60 phrases in Arapaho, then listening to 60 different phrases in Arapaho and translating them into English. Some of the phrases they had to produce in Arapaho were: A man and woman are standing in front of a fence. A cat and girl are drinking milk. A man is riding a horse. A man is smoking. Five men are riding five horses. A dog is lying on top of snow. Three puppies are standing on a brown wagon. Some of the phrases they heard in Arapaho that they had to translate to English were: Nii3noo hiteehibno, hiteehibno nenei’i’bii3ib – I eat strawberries. Strawberries are food. Hinen hooceit hoseino’ – A man is frying meat. Neniiseiht hisei 3ii’ookuut hee3e’eitee’ nii3exoeyoo noh hinen noh hisei 3ii’ookuu3i’ nee’eteetebe nii3exoeyoo – A woman is standing in front of a green fence and a man and woman is standing behind the fence. Hinee hisei heneixo niihooyooni wote, biixuut, noh wotoo niihooyoo noh hii3oono’ ce’beihko’ – That woman is wearing an orange hat, shirt and pants and she resembles a pumpkin. Nehe wo’oo heneixo niihooyooni biixuut noh 3ii’okut teesihi nouhuut – This cat is wearing a yellow shirt and he is sitting on a ladder. Heneixoowoo ceneeteeyooni nebii3uut noh Hinee hinen hooweixo hookoubiixuut – I am wearing my blue shirt and that man is not wearing a coat. Nonohowou’u neniisi3i nii’ehiiho’ heniinih’ohuu3i hihcebe heeteec, neneeni3i’ heeteec’ii’ehiiho’ – I see two birds flying above the ocean, they are seagulls. Out of the students tested, three got everything correct, and the rest got about 94% on the final.