

ADULT LEARNING THROUGH STORYTELLING: A STUDY
OF LEARNING STRATEGIES AND PHILOSOPHIES
OF AMERICAN INDIAN STORYTELLERS

by

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ADULT LEARNING THROUGH STORYTELLING: A STUDY
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When I first experienced Jake Chanate telling a story, I was awed. His ability to hold an audience, entertain and educate simultaneously, and transform a gymnasium into a natural environment filled with animals and tricksters using his voice and gestures amazed me. He opened my eyes.

When I had the opportunity to meet and talk with Mr. Chanate, he expressed his concern that there were not enough young storytellers to replace those elders who would be passing. His concern initiated this study, and I want to thank him for his welcoming spirit, his generosity of time, and his assistance with opening doors to other storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma. He made this study possible.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

People in the world have two senses of being. One is a sense of self and the other is a sense of community. The importance of the latter is seen universally as different cultures strive to maintain a sense of identity in the world. The community members share "a broadly similar conceptual map" (Weaver, 2001, p. 240). People who have shared a common history, ancestry, beliefs, and values share a common memory that helps to sustain the community sense of being. "Tribal memory and personal memory merge" (Ballenger, 1999, p. 793).

In some communities, the group is held in higher regard than the individual. This is true in many American Indian populations in the United States. "The responsibility and connectedness to the community is so strong that Native Americans often identify themselves by their tribal communities rather than through more individualistic ways such as through professional affiliations" (Weaver, 2001, p. 241). It is the whole or the tribe that makes the individual possible. The tribe has a history, language, and a set of beliefs and values that are imperative to preserving the whole. These tribal

elements have been conveyed to each generation through storytelling.

Storytellers

Among Native American people, oral tradition is a highly respected element that has conveyed the understanding of history, values, and beliefs that preserve the tribe as a whole. Oral traditions are more than entertainment. "It is vital and necessary to continued life--the life of the tribe and the life of the world itself" (Conley, 1988, p. xiii). A storyteller is the means for transmitting the history, values, and beliefs to tribal members in both formal and informal settings. In this tribal community, it is important not only to respect a storyteller but also to understand this person as part of the whole working to maintain and convey knowledge that will strengthen the entire tribe.

Storytelling has always been important among American Indian people. Stories were used "to teach tribal code of ethics, in such areas as problem solving, why things are the way they are, respect for self and others, self discipline, humility, and honesty" (Gilmore, 1999, p. 4). Before there was a written history, there were people telling stories to teach history and values and to maintain the tribal memory. Some people were gifted in this area.

These people shared stories that would educate in the areas of history, beliefs and origins, and values.

Without a written history, oral history was used by many tribes to educate each generation about its ancestors and about the good and bad experiences that distinguished each tribe. There are thousands of stories that recount tribal history from battles with European Americans to singular events such as the death of a tribal member. "The Removal of the Cherokees", which is a story of pain, betrayal, and death surrounding the removal of the Cherokees on the Trail of Tears in 1838 (Underwood, 1956, pp. 21-23), and "The Night George Wolfe Died", which is a story describing the death of a tribal member (p.42), are two examples.

The impact of these oral histories has been immense among tribes. Children and adults alike have listened to oral accounts of the Trail of Tears, a winter of starvation, a successful hunt. All of these stories were a part of the tribal memory and were told to sustain the wholeness of the tribe.

Stories such as "How the Earth Was Made", an explanation of how the creatures moved from the sky to the earth (Underwood, 1956, pp. 4-6), "The Legend of the Milky Way", a tale describing how the Milky Way originated from a

path of corn meal left by the Spirit Dog (Galloway, 1990, p. 62), and "How the Smokies Were Made", a tale explaining how the mountains were made from the beating wings of the buzzard (Galloway, 1990, p. 29), have been shared for many generations to explain the origins of the world surrounding the tribe. In addition to being entertaining, these stories also served purposes such as giving guidance and even strengthening language and development of vocabulary (Newell, 1995, p. 424).

Values have been learned and passed on through listening to these stories. Through "How the Deer Got His Horns", listeners learn to value honesty and fairness. Through "Why the Possum's Tail is Bare", the audience was encouraged to value humility. Through "The Rabbit Dines the Bear", people began to understand and accept differences in strength and abilities. These values have been gained by generations of American Indians through an immense number of stories told again and again.

Historically, Native American people lived as a group, survived as a group, and shared as a whole. According to Weaver (2001) "the sense of membership in a community was so integrally linked to a sense of identity that Native people often identified themselves by their tribal communities" (p. 245). Being raised within the community,

a child would experience life from many teachers. A male child would learn to hunt from his elders. First he would learn through listening to stories of the hunt, then by roleplaying with other children, and finally through guidance through elders from the preparation of weapons and traps to the finesse of approaching an animal without spooking the prey. This process would start and end with storytelling. At the beginning, stories would be told to educate about hunting, beliefs in nature, and respect for living beings. At the end, stories would be shared about the new hunter in order to help him become part of the whole.

A female child would also learn how to strengthen her tribe through the guidance of many teachers. She might learn tanning. This might have been clumsy at first, but, with time and practice, she would accomplish the skill. As her role models, the women would gather and talk. They would tell stories that would shape her beliefs, help her to understand her past, and shape her values as part of the group.

Then history changed. The natural learning process of storytelling and becoming part of a collective was affected by three main issues: Manifest Destiny or Removal, allotment, and loss of language.

Manifest Destiny

As European Americans desired to move and own more land, a conflict occurred. European America's "Manifest Destiny" to extend "from sea to shining sea" could only be accomplished at the expense of the American Indian indigenous population (Churchill, 1998, p. 50). The American Indians were in the way. Seen as inferior, American Indians were viewed more as animals than people. Through trickery, forgery, broken treaties, and eventually force, the removal of the Indians from their lands to reservations began. Tragically, thousands of people died and familiar places were lost. Along with these losses came the loss of much oral history. Those that were the keepers of this wisdom attempted to continue the stories, but through death and dislocation, the oral history would never be the same.

Loss of Language

Then came the boarding schools. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was established in 1824 under the War Department. Through the BIA, the federal government became involved in educating Indians. The majority of these schools were located off reservations so that thousands of young Indian children were separated from their families and communities. These schools were to "civilize or

Americanize" Indian children (Schnaiberg, 1999, p. 42). To civilize the heathens, mainstream society did its best to eliminate tribes, tribal community, history, beliefs, and language through the forced removal of American Indian children to boarding schools. The Bureau of Indian Affairs established and operated American Indian boarding schools that were designed to remove the young people from their families and forced them to speak only English in an attempt to "civilize" American Indian children (Schnaiberg, 1999, p. 42). They were forced to live in this new environment which prohibited their native language and culture and forced them to learn a new language and culture (Demmert, 1994, p. 20). Only English was allowed, and students were physically reprimanded if they spoke their native language. The Indians' belief system and language were forbidden (Holmes, 1997, p. 23). This repression went on for over 100 years. The loss of oral history as a result of the boarding school system can never be fully measured, but it was known to be an immense loss.

Allotment

As the American Indians moved to reservations, many tribes attempted to re-establish their community way of life. Once again, European Americans could not grasp this concept and history changed. In 1887, The General

Allotment (Dawes) Act was passed by Congress. "The Dawes Act granted 160 acres to each family head and 80 acres to single persons over the age of 18 and orphans under 18" (Reyhner, 1992, p. 47). For a people who did not believe in personal ownership of land, this was disastrous. "Allotment over the next forty-seven years reduced tribal holdings from about 140 million acres to 50 million acres" (47). Allotment would exact a high price on American Indian communities. Allotment meant that the group no longer shared the land in partnership. American Indians had to register with the United States government and were given individual pieces of property. "Within a generation these Indians, who had owned and governed a region greater in area and potential wealth than many an American state, were almost stripped of their holdings and were rescued from starvation only through public charity" (Debo, 1940, p. x). Much of this property was lost to unscrupulous European Americans who took "guardianship" of the lands or bought land for ridiculously low prices; in many cases, criminal methods were used (p. x).

Those American Indians that kept their land began to work that land as a family or an individual. This was a shift away from the communal way of life. Some successful attempts were made to keep the oral history alive during

this time, but new obstacles such as the distance between tribal members and the need to spend long hours farming reduced the amount of time and contact usually reserved for storytelling.

Acculturation and Assimilation

When two cultures are in constant contact, a blending of those cultures may occur. The blended state is referred to as acculturation. An extreme state where "one culture changes significantly more than the other culture and, as a result, comes to resemble it" (Garcia, 1992, p. 24) is assimilation. European Americans and American Indians have been in close contact for over 100 years. There was isolated contact before that time, but close contact was somewhat new. The result was the movement by many Native Americans to practice more mainstream ways. Many Native Americans have found this change necessary to be able to work and live in today's society. Some Indians have even left behind their Indian ways with a preference for mainstream society. Whether a forced or voluntary choice, the outcomes were that acculturation and assimilation have influenced people in many tribes and reduced the number of traditional practitioners and storytellers.

Adult Learning

Real-life Learning

Robert Sternberg has extensively researched intelligence. One striking component was his research and explanation of real-life learning. When looking at adult learning, Sternberg identified a component that he called "practical/contextual learning" (Woolfolk, 2001, p. 114). With practical learning, Sternberg emphasized real life problems as opposed to academic problems. He described 9 characteristics of real life learning:

1. Adults must recognize problems rather than having problems identified for them.
2. The way we define problems determines how we will try to solve them.
3. Problems in academic situations are decontextualized while everyday problems are highly contextualized.
4. Most school problems have one right answer; few everyday problems are that simple.
5. Problems in academic situations are usually well structured; in real life they seldom are.
6. Relevant information is given for school problems while in real life problems it is often difficult to discover where to get relevant information or even to know what information is relevant.
7. Solving real problems often calls for examination of arguments for the other side.
8. There is seldom clear feedback on real life problems.
9. Academic environments call for individual solutions to problems. In most real situations, solutions are arrived at through group decisions processes or approved by others. (Sternberg, 1988, n.p.).

Additionally, Sternberg stated, "culture is a major factor in defining successful choice, adaptation, and shaping" (Woolfolk, 2001, p. 114). He recognized many

components valued by Native American culture as intelligence in real-life learning. The Native American culture did the best job of recognizing and defining what were Native American problems. These problems needed to be understood in the context of being Native American. There was not one answer to the decline in storytellers. In the issue of loss of American Indian storytelling, there were several strategies that needed to be applied by the storytellers and the Native American community. The relevant information needed for solving the problem of loss was held by the Indian storytellers themselves. Feedback was vital because this real-life problem was affecting a community-based culture through loss of language and history. Finally, Sternberg was correct that within the Native American culture, there needed to be a group consensus. The group was highly valued and had to be heard and recognized when addressing the problem of the loss of Indian storytellers.

Real-life learning is learning that is "relevant to the living tasks of the individual in contrast to those tasks considered more appropriate to formal education" (Fellenz & Conti, 1989, p.3). Within the American Indian culture, tasks that concentrate on the whole were more important than the formal education skills. Adult

education was in the forefront of understanding a global processing element to learning. Learners needed real-life application for effective learning to take place.

Pedagogy, the science and study of how children learn, has yet to adequately address this concept.

The lessons and history learned through stories contributed more to inclusion in an Indian community than the lessons learned in public or private school. Storytelling was a real-life learning experience. Brookfield stated, "in contrast to the activities of institutions of higher education, the adult learning that occurs within informal networks does not have certification or accreditation as its end" (1986, p. 150). There was no grade for storytelling, no curriculum, or text book. Real-life learning was the key to learning and refining this skill.

American Indians live in two worlds. They learned mainstream history, beliefs, and values through formal education. They needed freedom to then self-direct away from formal education and to learn real-life history, beliefs, and values that were an integral part of tribal culture. Only through this shift could real applicable learning take place.

Adult Learning

Adults were the storytellers in the American Indian communities. Many of the adult storytellers were attempting to teach younger adults both the stories and how to present them to other people. What used to be an almost natural process when tribes were communal had become a necessary teaching experience in the last two generations. Knowledge of adult education was important. The adult education concepts established the base for understanding effective storytelling training.

Andragogy

Andragogy is the art and science of teaching adults that stresses a learner-centered approach to the learning-teaching transmission (Knowles, 1980, p. 40). Educators who practice andragogy became facilitators with their students. Through a plan developed mutually, the learner determined what information was known, what information was needed to reach the goal, and what gap in information existed. Additionally, the learner could assess what strategies to use and how to evaluate the outcome (Knowles, 1975, p. 18). Andragogy is based on six assumptions identified by Malcolm Knowles which follow:

1. Adults need to know why they need to learn something before undertaking the learning process.
2. Adults have a self concept of

being responsible for their own lives and need front-end learning experiences to make the transition from dependent to self-directed learners. 3. Adults come to a learning activity with a greater quantity and quality of experience that requires individualization of learning and teaching strategies that emphasize their rich resources and help to examine biases and habits. 4. Adults become ready to learn those things they need to know or to be able to do so in order to cope effectively with real-life situations. The critical implication of this assumption is the importance of timing learning experiences to coincide with those developmental tasks. Adults are life centered in their orientation to learning. Accordingly, learning experiences in adult education are organized around life tasks or problems. 5. The learning becomes real and practical which is a necessary element for adults learning to become storytellers. 6. Adults may be extrinsically motivated at times, but intrinsic motivation is the most powerful stimulus in adults. (Knowles, 1989, p. 83-84).

Storytellers needed to be able to explain why the transferring of stories was important. They needed to learn to offer scaffolding to adult learners whereby the learners had early success with guidance and then moved towards more independence. It had to be recognized that adults had experiences to share and may have had knowledge of stories told within their families or tribes. Concern for the loss of culture within the last two generations made the learning of storytelling a real-life situation. Stories had meanings that would strengthen identity and had been used to support mental wellness. Storytellers have

recognized the need for intrinsic motivation with their learners. Sharing stories within Native communities has usually been done with small or no monetary rewards. The motivation had to be intrinsic. Some of these elements of adult learning were already recognized. Some elements were recommended for achieving success in transferring the process of storytelling to other adults.

Self-directed Learning

Self-directed learning is "a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes" (Knowles, 1975, p. 18). This method of learning best described how American Indians learned before the European influence.

"Self-directed learning is more in tune with our natural processes of psychological development" (Knowles, 1975, p. 14). No one was going to force a person to be a storyteller. The learner first decided what was "in tune" for him or her. If the young adult had an interest in learning and telling stories, the learner then knew the goal and could look at steps to achieve that goal.

"We develop an increasingly deep psychological need to be independent" (Knowles, 1975, p.14). Native American adults benefited from a self-directed experience with learning because the recent history of Indian people had found them to be dependent on teachers to tell them what to learn, and how. However, it was natural for adult learners to want to determine goals for themselves. This move to self-directed learning connected well with Native American learners who knew that there was a "natural" part of the learning process.

Learning Strategies

Learning strategies are the "the techniques or skills that an individual elects to use in order to accomplish a learning task" (Fellenz & Conti, 1998, p. 7). Learning strategies in the area of Adult Education have been conceptualized as consisting of Metacognition, Metamotivation, Memory, Critical Thinking, and Resource Management (Conti & Kolody, 1999). Metacognition refers to thinking about how a person thinks. Metamotivation refers to the building of internal motivation skills. Memory refers to the storage, retention, and retrieval of knowledge. Critical Thinking refers to reflection of learning material. Resource Management refers to

identification and use of appropriate resources needed for the learning task (Conti & Kolody, 1998, p. 132).

All adults do not approach a learning situation the same way. Research related to learning strategies had discovered three distinct groups with different learning strategy preferences for initiating a learning activity (p. 18). These groups included Navigators, Engagers, and Problem-Solvers (p. 18).

Navigators thrived on organization. The adult learner that identified as a Navigator would approach a new learning situation by locating the best resources for that particular situation and then planning a step-by-step approach to reaching their goal. In formal education, not surprisingly, this group had the highest grades for the three groups (Conti & Kolody, 1998, p. 133).

Engagers thrived on joyful engagement with a new learning situation. They learned best when they were actively involved and the learning was fun. While formal grades may have been important to some Engagers, most were fulfilled with internal learning and the social experience of learning in a group setting (Conti & Kolody, 1998, p.133).

Problem-Solvers thrived on constructing alternatives in new learning situations. They wanted options and would

usually be the last to finish an assignment because they have seen so many pathways to pursue. While Problem-Solvers thrived on real-life learning and hands-on situations, they scored low on objective testing because they saw too many options and, therefore, had trouble deciding on an answer (Conti & Kolody, 1998, p. 134).

Adult educators benefited from understanding their own learning strategies whether they participated in the instrumented learning or gained this knowledge through discussions with the researcher. This knowledge assisted them in facilitating adult learning and helped educators understand that not all adult learners approach a new learning situation in the same way. For adults who were attempting to teach other adults about storytelling, the understanding of self and the adult learner helped the two to make a connection that was crucial to the transfer of this skill.

Educational Philosophies

Adult educators entered the learning environment with beliefs about the role of the teacher and the role of the student. These beliefs influenced the adult educator's educational philosophy. Some philosophies were more teacher-centered, such as Realism, while other philosophies were more student-centered, such as Constructionism. In

the field of adult education, the relationship between the teacher and the student was strengthened if the instructor recognized and understood their educational philosophy. Five well-established philosophies of education are: Idealism, Realism, Pragmatic (Progressivism), Constructionism (Existentialism or Humanism), and Reconstructionism (Osmon, H. A. & Craver, S. M., 1980). The five schools differ in (a) their view of what constitutes knowledge (b) the nature of the learner, (c) the purpose of the curriculum, and (d) the role of the teacher (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1980, Chapter 2).

Idealism stresses that "ideas are the only true reality" (Osman & Craver, 1980). This philosophy stresses content and is a teacher-centered philosophy. None of the participants self-identified into this philosophy.

Realism stresses "the use of the scientific method" (Osman & Craver, 1980). In this philosophy the teacher has a definite role as teaching is done in a very analytic, step-by-step fashion with objective outcomes to measure. Specialization is identified in this school of thought. One participant self-identified into this philosophy. He was a specialist in his knowledge of Cherokee language instruction and was very analytic in his approach.

Pragmatists stress "democracy by developing strong individuals to serve in a good society" (Osman & Craver, 1980). In this philosophy, the teacher becomes a resource person to help learners to achieve their goals. None of the participants self-identified into this school of thought.

Constuctionism stresses the individual and recognizes that "the individual is always in state of transition" (Osman & Craver, 1980). The constructivist teacher becomes a facilitator to the individual learner who is striving for self-understanding. Six of the participants self-identified into this philosophy. They viewed themselves as facilitators and felt that storytelling was a means to self-understanding.

Reconstructionism stresses social change and includes "social justice and true democracy" (Osman & Craver, 1980) as its goals. Learners are looking at the holistic view of how to make their world or community a better place. They want to know what will help society. The role of the teacher is to help students to develop problem-solving strategies that will assist them in becoming active proponents of change. None of the participants self-identified into this school of thought.

Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma were not aware of their educational philosophies. Some gained further knowledge through the PHIL instrument and their feedback as to its accuracy. Some declined the PHIL instrument but gained knowledge regarding educational philosophy through discussion with the researcher. Knowledge regarding their educational philosophies provided important information that clarified the relationship that they had with their students or apprentices.

Problem Statement

There were some successful American Indian storytellers. They held and conveyed knowledge through stories that had been kept through great loss. In Northeastern Oklahoma, there were several Native American storytellers who willingly shared their knowledge with family, friends, and schools in attempts to teach history, values, beliefs, and further multicultural understanding. Many of these storytellers were advancing in age and were finding that the next generation of storytellers was not adequate to keep the stories alive. Most of today's middle-aged Native American adults did not know the stories, were inexperienced at sharing stories, or had been acculturated into mainstream living where working for the individual or the family took up the majority of their time and energy.

Native American storytelling in Northeastern Oklahoma was fading as a teaching tool, and Indian storytellers were dwindling in numbers. While some attempts had been made by tribes to regain language, these efforts were not viable solutions for the Indian storyteller. Many of today's youth and adults primarily spoke English. They may have had some knowledge of their language, but it was too limited to understand stories in their native tongue much less be able to learn values from them. Tribal movements to save languages were extremely important and should be lauded. However, these attempts were not enough to substantially affect the loss of American Indian storytellers.

Attempts needed to be made to understand how the present Native American storytellers learned the stories that they tell today and to understand how they learned to present them. Only through understanding our present storytellers could efforts be made to train future storytellers. The knowledge concerning the type of learner that typified a storyteller was imperative as well as the understanding about each storyteller's philosophy of teaching. These storytellers were teachers. They taught in an informal setting and played a vital role in their Native American culture. They played a big role in the

creation, preservation, and promotion of the tribal culture. Despite this important educational role and despite the existence of a link between teaching style and philosophy (O'Brien, 2001) and teaching style and achievement (Conti, 1998), adult educators had not examined how storytellers learned or their beliefs on the principles affecting the teaching-learning transaction.

Unfortunately, the preservation of stories was being lost everyday because of historical elements, loss of language, and acculturation. Furthermore, the number of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma was drastically decreasing. This loss affected Native American knowledge of their history, beliefs, values, and the concept of community. Steps needed to be taken to gain knowledge of the learning and teaching strategies of the remaining Northeastern Oklahoman Native American storytellers to create a framework for training adults to be storytellers for the future generations.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to describe accurately the status of Native American storytelling in Northeastern Oklahoma, to identify the factors that affected its decline, to describe how the participants became storytellers, and to create a base to build upon for

enlarging the Native American storytelling population in Northeastern Oklahoma. Components of this description included identifying the learning strategies and educational philosophies used by Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma, identifying the effects of mainstream culture on the storytelling process, identifying the elements to successful attempts to transfer storytelling skills, and identifying the needs to reverse the loss of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma. This was done by determining a sample population of recognized Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma, and laying the groundwork for a respectable approach to talk with each individual. Once this was accomplished, oral interviews were held at their convenience. Included in the interviews were the research questions, the administration of the ATLAS instrument to identify learning strategy preferences and the administration of the PHIL instrument to identify educational philosophies. These instruments were offered to all participants but refused by three participants.

Research Questions

The questions to be answered by this research included:

1. How did they learn to become storytellers?

2. How did they prepare to tell stories?
3. What methods did they perceive to be successful in passing on traditional stories?
4. What methods had not been successful in passing on traditional stories?
5. What hopes did they have for the future of storytelling?
6. What fears did they have concerning the future of storytelling?
7. What was the learning strategy profile for Native American storytellers as determined by the ATLAS instrument?
8. What was the educational philosophy profile for Native American storytellers as determined by the PHIL instrument?

The information gathered was determined through analysis using a constant comparison process. Common themes were identified through open, axial, and selective coding to help create an accurate description regarding the status of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma.

The Researcher

Bodgan and Biklen (1998) stress "who you are to the various subjects and what that means to them is important" (p. 84). The necessary researcher for this study needed to be an older Native American with ties to the Native American community in Northeastern Oklahoma. Additionally, the best researcher needed to have knowledge of adult education learning strategies and methods. With these

parameters, I had the community and educational experience and background to conduct this study.

I am a 49 year-old, female Native American who has lived in Northeastern Oklahoma for 35 years. I am familiar with the majority of the participants in the study. My previous work with Jake Chanate created the doorway to other storytellers that gave me credibility with the participants. Native Americans will talk with outsiders but will share with those with whom they have a common connection. Previous contact with several of the participants and their recommendations to other storytellers opened the doorway to make the sharing possible.

I have worked with Native American youth in Northeastern Oklahoma in the area of mental wellness. Several of the participants in this study were invited into the classroom to work with the youth, and traditional stories were referenced to support positive mental health issues during the mental wellness program. This time of working with Native American youth and Native American storytellers created a link and an element of trust that benefited this research.

Through this work with mental wellness, I became involved in sweatlodge ceremonies. During this reverent

ritual, I gained knowledge that strengthened the connection to the Native American community. This connection allowed for sharing with the participants that was gained through participation in a mutual experience. It was important that this study be conducted by someone within the community who could be trusted to share with outsiders only what the storytellers gave permission to be shared. Because of previous experience in the sweatlodge, the participants knew that I could be trusted with this knowledge.

I also have experience with adult education. Through Oklahoma State University coursework, teaching at Northeastern State University, and teaching Adult Basic Education classes, I am familiar with methods to interview adults. Knowledge concerning the creation of a welcoming adult education environment was necessary to set a climate for the interviews, and food was shared when possible. I also was familiar with the ATLAS and PHIL instruments before the study and was aware of the process for administering and interpreting both instruments.

To conduct this study successfully, certain requirements were needed for the researcher. Knowledge of Native American traditions, community, experience in the

community, and knowledge of adult education methods were needed. I met all of these requirements.

Delimitation

This study focused on Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma. The storytellers were Cherokee, Creek, Kiowa, Keetoowah or a combination of these tribes. Originally, it was approximated that there might be twenty-five individuals who would be within the limitations of this group and that ten would be interviewed. This number was too optimistic. There were fourteen individuals who met the limits of this study. Ten of these individuals were questioned and surveyed.

Assumption

The assumption was made and supported by the storytellers that the number of storytellers who were recognized by their tribes and elders and who had actively attempted to teach storytelling to at least one other adult had reduced greatly. This assumption was supported by this study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background

Historically, mainstream culture negatively affected the preservation of storytelling through Indian Removal, boarding schools, and the Dawes Allotment Act. All three of these legally backed factors resulted in the loss of language, the loss of community, and the reduction in the number of storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 mandated "eastern tribes including the Cherokees and Creeks to move west of the Mississippi" (Reyhner, 1988, p. 38). The Cherokee, Creeks, and Keetoowah all traveled from North Carolina and Georgia areas to Indian Territory which is now Oklahoma. Many lives were lost during the hardship of the Trail of Tears. Woodward (1963) cited that "an estimated 4,000 [Cherokee] Indians who started on the "Trail of Tears" died of dysentery, malnutrition, exposure, or exhaustion before they reached Oklahoma (p. 218).

The Kiowa were moved to Oklahoma through the 1867 Medicine Lodge Treaty (Schnell, 2000, p. 159). Lives were also lost through the extreme conditions of travel and the battles between United States Army troops and the

Kiowa Indians. Once in Oklahoma, the Kiowa were faced with more issues of survival because they were not an agricultural tribe and had previously migrated to hunt buffalo (p. 159).

All four tribes lost many lives through the Removal Acts. Additionally, the removal resulted in the loss of stories and storytellers. However, the tribes maintained their tribal languages until the boarding school movement and the Dawes Allotment Act.

Reyhner (1988) explained "to deal with the removed tribes . . . by 1832 the United States government was operating boarding schools" (p. 39). These schools further removed children from their families and forced them into school where their native language was forbidden to be used. These schools were "to civilize or Americanize" Indian children (Schaiberg, 1999, p. 42). The results were loss of culture, language, and a family-based orientation. All of these losses affected storytelling which relied on a common tribal language, a family-based culture that transferred stories from generation to generation, and the loss of community gatherings where stories were shared.

The General Allotment (Dawes) Act was passed in 1887 (Reyhner, 1988, p. 47). "The Dawes Act granted 160 acres

to each family head and 80 acres to single person over the age of 18 and orphans under 18. Rosen (2003) elaborates on the purpose of the Dawes Act " to break up the reservations . . . reasoning that Indians would be more likely to assimilate into white society if they acted independently" (p. B5). Allotment over the next forty-seven years reduced tribal holdings from about 140 million acres to 50 million acres" (p. 47). "Within a generation these Indians . . .were almost stripped of their holdings and were rescued from starvation only through public charity" (Debo, 1940, p. x). Debo (1940) cites criminal methods as the means for much of the loss of land (p. x).

The Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowas tribes were used to living together not owning separate pieces of land. All four tribes lived as communities before the Dawes Act. As a result of the Act, families and individuals moved away from each other. This movement limited opportunities for communal sharing of stories.

While the loss of life, inhuman treatment, and cruelty of the four tribe's history is horrible and still affects tribal members today, the reduction of oral language and storytelling threatens more loss in this generation and the generations yet to be.

Storytelling

Storytelling is more than the telling of stories for Native Americans in Northeastern Oklahoma. Storytelling is perceived as a connection with the beliefs and culture of the ancestors. Reyhner (1988) relates "For centuries Indian elders have woven history, culture, and ethics into compelling tales" (p. 134). In the weaving of tales, the listeners gain knowledge of their tribal history, the ceremonies that strengthen their culture, and the values and beliefs that support tribal ethics. All of this is transferred orally from storyteller to listener.

Stories are used "to teach tribal code of ethics, in such areas as problem solving, why things are the way they are, respect for self and others, self discipline, humility, and honesty" (Gilmore, 1999, p. 4). For generations, Native American youth have learned about these qualities through the oral tradition of storytelling. Before there were written versions of the Cherokee, Creek, and Kiowa languages, there were storytellers who shared oral history, culture, and values through stories told, repeated, and passed down from generation to generation.

Orality

Ong (2000) recognizes orality as "the oral character of language" (p. 5). The study of orality demands attention when one understands that although there have been thousands of languages in the history of man, only about 106 have been developed into writing. Additionally, there are "over 3000 languages spoken in the world today, but only 78 have a literature" (Edmonson, 1972, pp. 323, 332). Clearly, the impact of the spoken word has impacted the world, countries, and the cultures of the world.

In the original Greek, "*techne rhetorike*, speech art referred essentially to oral speaking" (Ong, 2000 p. 9). Here oral speech was viewed as an organized art form used to persuade. With the introduction of writing, the oral quality changed. Writing enhanced oral speech to allow for reflection and organization.

Second, Ong (2000) sites a category of orality that he terms as "primary orality" (p. 11). The separate distinction refers to oral cultures that have remained oral. In these cultures, there is no written word. Orality in these cultures requires study because there is so much potential for loss. "When an often-told story is

not actually being told, all that exists of it is the potential in certain human beings to tell it" (p. 11).

It is fascinating to consider the act of communicating without the influence of print. The Kiowa, Cherokee, Keetoowah, and Creek tribes all have varying levels of written language at this time, but that was not always the situation. The Cherokees developed a written language in the early 1830's when an alphabet was created by Sequoyah (Reyhner, 1988, p. 38). The Creeks started by writing hymns in the 1830's. The Kiowas created a written language after 1900 for use in the church which was adopted by very few members. However, before these times, all knowledge, beliefs, and history were passed from generation to generation through the spoken word.

Goody (1995) discusses the differences in the thinking patterns of purely oral cultures as opposed to cultures where writing developed. He provided the somewhat negative insight that "when an utterance is put into writing, it can be inspected in much greater detail . . . subject to critique and scrutiny" (p. 44). The implication is that the thought process among purely oral cultures is more simplistic because there is not an opportunity to "look at it again." Without writing,

speeches were given for occasion but were repeated or recalled by others with slight variations each time.

Conversely, Goody (1995) also proposes that a purely oral culture would be more persuasive. He states, "The oral form is intrinsically more persuasive because it is less open to criticism" (p. 50). This is logical. In an oral culture, a storyteller could be more persuasive because the story is told without the opportunity to critique at a later date. However, the inability to write the language could also explain why the storytellers were more numerous, more prolific, and more renowned in the time before the 1820's. In the modern technological world today, people are aware of their opportunities to "look at it later." For those who cannot attend a wedding to hear the vows exchanged, they can look at the video. If someone missed the President's speech on foreign policy, there are options from highlights to reading the entire speech. People rarely stop their lives for the storytellers in today's world as they did in years past.

Cultural Issues

In South Africa, many people wanted to hear Apartheid stories "from the horse's mouth" (Phaswane, 1998, p. 80). The audience viewed the telling of a story

to be more reliable and a more authentic source of information than a written account. (p. 81) In this instance, the view was that much was lost while waiting for translators who might emphasize the wrong sentence, word, or name and who might not explain the importance of pauses, phrasing, and/or play on words (p. 82).

Joseph Shepard's (1986) research echoed this idea in his work with the Ntumu people in the Cameroon. "I am reminded of just how difficult it is to interpret sayings, adages, and riddles without an adequate knowledge of the oral traditions that inform them" (n.p.). Schneider (1998) attempted to explain a quote from Nelson Mandela. "South Africa is like a big Kraal" (p. 94). In his research, Schneider found that this reference could have a number of meanings that could be opposite in nature. It could mean that two bulls in a Kraal should work together to plow the field, or it could mean that there cannot be two bulls in a Kraal inferring that there could be only one authority (Schneider, 1998, p. 95). It would have been extremely difficult for a reader of the speech to understand its message. Similarly, an outside listener might misinterpret its meaning without the local cultural references. Sarris (1991) found that "it is impossible to generalize about

'oral discourse' as it is about 'culture.' They are inseparable and specific to particular people as the people interact with one another from a shared knowledge base" (Sarris, 1991, p. 7).

Additionally, there are stories from oral tradition that can and will be shared, and there are stories that will only be shared within the culture. Therefore, it is important for today's storytellers to enhance their skills concerning the transmission of crucial stories to the young Native American adults in their communities. They are the key ones who can transmit these skills and cultural stories to the next generation.

Orality involves the telling of stories within a culture. A story may not make sense to outsiders. One illustration of this idea can be found in another work by Sarris (1991) in his work with the Pomo Indians on the Rumsey Wintun Reservation in Northern California. After he and one of his graduate students interviewed Mabel McKay, a Pomo medicine woman, they experienced confusion. The woman had told the story "The Woman Who Loved a Snake" to her visitors. After a return visit, the researchers determined that they were looking at the story with a different world view than Mabel. For the

researchers, "the snake was symbolic of something and, in that sense, supernatural. For Mabel the snake/the man was part of one coexistent reality that is located in historic time and subject to structures" (p. 2). In effect, the story was being viewed by two different worlds. Within the culture, the story had a meaning and an acceptance. Outside of the culture, the researchers were lost trying to interpret a story that they felt "wouldn't stay put" (p. 2).

This experience strengthened the resolve of this research project to assist today's storytellers in gaining skills and strategies for transmission of stories within their culture as opposed to the reporting and cataloging of Native American stories for mainstream purposes. The stories' preservation in oral form is necessary to their understanding in context. That understanding is a significant source of cultural identity which can only be maintained through oral tradition.

Transcription Issues

Addressing the issue of politics and suppression, James Edward Young (1998) in his book Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust argues that "what gets suppressed or deleted altogether from narratives is just as

important as that which gets narrated, for the meanings of the narratives lie in the articulation of both the foregrounded and the suppressed" (p. 9). What is interpreted by the transcriber as a small detail may in fact contain powerful information for its people and culture.

Even the politics of the translator and the researcher could affect the accuracy of the translation from oral to text. Sarris (1991) demonstrates this problem concerning American Indian oral literatures. He notes that the evaluators of American Indian oral literature usually read from what has been recorded, transcribed, and translated into English by non-Indians (p. 127). This gives them a very altered form from the original oral telling. Arnold Krupat (1985) examined this problem from a historical viewpoint. He examined "as-told-to" texts and was able to demonstrate how "historical circumstances and specific interests of the dominant society in its relationship with the American Indian have determined how the Indian is presented and understood in both academic and popular literatures (p. xii). He found that these "as-told-to" texts were distinctly Euro-American in their point of view (p. xii). Even the research for this study is affected by

translation of written text. On first reading, one might focus on one position, and, upon re-reading, find that this was not the focus of the author; or was it? Without the oral confirmation, can the "reader" be sure?

Storytellers hold the potential of life for every story. This is an intimidating thought. To realize the potential for the story to be told also implies the potential for its loss with the termination of each generation. Many Native American stories fall into this category. There is "the potential in certain human beings to tell it" (Ong, 2000, p.11), but there is also the potential for these human vessels to die without passing these stories on to another generation.

This can only be a version of permanence because there is life in the spoken word. It is not static. Orality involves the spoken word affected by numerous important factors. A storyteller may alter a story for a given audience or occasion or through omission. The telling of a story may have a different emphasis with different audiences. The telling at a gathering would be different than the telling at home with relatives, and it would be even different when being told for transcription. When a story is being told for transcription, it is subject to change. One example is

the use of formal frames to open and close a story. In Robert Oswalt's work, he emphasized linguistic units that he could study and translate. When working with Native storytellers, he would request an opening and a closing for the stories that family members state was not a part of the natural telling (Sarris, 1991, p.6). Though these might have seemed little changes, they did affect the essence of the story. A story that was intended to be open-ended for reflection and understanding now had an abrupt end that left the listener with a sense of completion instead a call for reflection. While many oral cultures understand and are working to retain their stories to prevent loss and preserve history and values, storytelling for transcription purposes cannot have the value of storytelling for one's own culture.

In the Native American culture, there are two parts: the self and the community. In this culture, the good of the community supercedes the self. "The result of intimate association, psychologically, is a certain fusion of individualities in a common whole, so that one's very self, for many purposes at least, is the common life and purpose of the group (Goody, 1995, p. 37). The community is a central part of the Native American culture. The stories and the values, beliefs,

and history that they convey support this common life and purpose. This fusion is necessary for a strong cultural identity and the stories are a foundation for this connection. "Culture is a series of communicative acts" (p. 37). This strengthens the position that orality is the basis for Native American culture.

So, it is very possible that after 1820, some oral stories began to be transcribed. It probably started slowly, but by the 1950's, many records were available with thousands of stories from Native American tribes which had created a written form. In addition to the loss of language, boarding schools, manifest destiny, and assimilation, transcription became another reason for the loss of storyteller as a necessary occupation.

However, there are many stories that have not been recorded, and many reasons to preserve the oral tradition. Efforts to understand the storytelling process can benefit the Native American culture by preserving history, beliefs, and values.

Native Americans

Background

"Approximately 75 million **native** Indians lived in the Americas in 1492. Those **Native Americans** were divided among more than 300 distinct cultures and spoke

more than 200 different languages" (Brinkley, Spagna, Chin, Lynn, & Hasso, 2003, p. B4). In contrast to some commonly held beliefs, North America was largely populated by distinct groups of people with their own housing, culture, political systems, and trade negotiations. In fact, "two-thirds of all the vegetables now consumed in the world were being cultivated by American Indians prior to the arrival of Columbus" (Jaimes, 1991, p. 34). Additionally, one of the largest contributions made by the Native Americans to the Europeans was the system of working democracy developed by the Iroquois Confederacy three centuries before Columbus. This country's founders acknowledged the influence of the Iroquois Confederacy on the development of the United States form of government in their personal papers (Butterfield, 1983; Jaimes, 1991). The idea that the European Americans civilized groups of savages is a falsehood.

Among the groups of tribal peoples were four groups who would later become known as the Cherokee Nation, the (Muscogee) Creek Nation, the Keetoowah Nation, and the Kiowa Nation. Nation is an integral word because these four tribes today are sovereign nations that hold treaties with the United States of America. To

comprehend fully the importance of storytelling to these Nations, one must address the systems that were in place when the Native American people met the Anglo Saxon people.

The Cherokee

The earliest contact with Europeans in the 1500's found the Cherokee people to be an advanced tribe. The people were living in civilized communities that included housing, agriculture, and a highly functional political system. Through trade with the new European people, the Cherokee culture continued to thrive and developed a bicultural system of government (Cherokee Nation Cultural Resource Center [CNRC], 1996).

In the 1830's, gold was discovered in Georgia. This discovery, along with the European idea of Manifest Destiny, combined to motivate the American government to push for Indian Removal. In 1838, the Cherokee were forced to move to the Indian Territory on The Trail of Tears. Through internment, illness, effects of the cold winter, and starvation, over one-quarter of the Cherokee people died during the move (Reyhner, 1988, p. 39).

Those Cherokee who reached Indian Territory ended their journey in Northeastern Oklahoma in and around Tahlequah which became the new Cherokee capital. This

group developed a new constitution which was ratified in 1839. During these same years, the Cherokee were establishing businesses, schools, newspapers, and churches. The Cherokee Advocate became the first newspaper in Indian Territory, and the educational system of 144 elementary schools and two higher educational institutions were of such high quality that many local white settlers paid tuition for their children to attend (CNRC, 1996). This was an advanced culture and was not a group of savages.

Today, the Cherokee Nation is the second largest tribe in the United States. At the present time, there are more than 200,000 members enrolled in the Cherokee tribe (CNRC, 1996). This large number is due, in part, to the Cherokee enrollment policy that allows all people who can trace heritage to an ancestor whose name appears on the Dawes Roll for allotment to become a tribal member. Each tribe as a sovereign nation can determine what blood quantum constitutes eligibility for enrollment. While some tribes will only accept one-quarter or more, the Cherokee tribe will accept an extremely lower amount of Cherokee blood. So, while the numbers of tribal members is growing, the number of

tribal members who know their language, culture, and heritage is shrinking.

The Cherokee tribe today is an entity which encompasses many institutions. There is a tribally-owned high school, Sequoyah High School, which is a boarding and day school for Native American students from the Tahlequah area and from many tribes throughout the United States. Cherokee Nation Industries is a profitable electronics company with defense contracts. Cherokee Nation Enterprises is the growing casino branch of the business section. A tribal council, a court system, deputy chief, and principal chief make up the executive board.

The Creek

The Muscogee Creek people were located in the southeastern part of the United States when there was first contact with the Europeans. Primarily, they were residing in what is now Alabama, Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina (Muscogee Creek National Council (MCNC), 2003). The Muscogee Creek people were originally a confederacy of tribal towns. Those towns found on the Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers were called the Upper Creeks. Those towns found on the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers were called the Lower Creeks. The importance of the

distinction was the recognition of the European influence. The Upper Creeks were less affected by the European influence than the Lower Creeks. Both the Lower and Upper Creeks were part of the Muscogee Creek political system (MCNC, 2003).

The Muscogee Creeks were also affected by the Removal Treaties. They, too were removed from their homeland to Indian Territory. Many of the Lower Creeks made the move in 1827 while the Upper Creeks dealt with a forced removal by the U.S. Army in 1836 and 1937. This tribe also lost many tribal members to the harsh conditions of the removal.

After working to re-establish the Muscogee Creek tribe in the Indian Territory, the tribe experienced another set back. After attempts to remain neutral during the Civil War failed, the tribe became involved in the conflict with the results being the loss of lives and the loss of 3.2 million acres which was approximately half of the tribe's land in the treaty of 1866 (MCNC, 2003).

The Creeks, too, were affected by the Dawes Act (Rehyner, 1988, p. 39). Allotment moved tribal land into individual ownership which made it easier to separate

tribal members and to sell or have land taken away. More land was lost along with more language and culture.

Today, the Muscogee Creek tribal headquarters is located in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. The tribal membership in 1990 was 43,500 (Funk & Wagnalls, 2003). The tribe actively runs several businesses including casinos in Muskogee and Tulsa, Oklahoma. They maintain a tribal court system, a tribal council, deputy chief, and chief (MCNC, 2003).

The Keetoowah

The Keetoowah and Cherokee history begins together. They originally were the same tribe. In fact the Keetoowahs claim that the original name for the Cherokee tribe was Keetoowah (Leeds, 2000, p. 8). Leeds, a Keetoowah historian, relates that the Keetoowahs were comprised from the full bloods and the Cherokee were the more mixed blood.

The legend among the Keetoowahs is told that a messenger came and "told them that there was a white bull coming from the east that would be the enemy of the Ani-gi-du-wa-gi. Their grandchildren's feet would be pointed west. They would have great hardships on the edge of the prairie. Their blood and their families would be divided. They would not have respect for the people, the leaders, or the medicine. If they followed God's way, they could return East. If they chose not to, they would move further West to the sea, get into boats and it would be

the last of them. God said, 'If the Keetoowah people are destroyed or become extinct, then it will be the end of the world'" (Whitekiller, qt. in Leeds, 1991, p. 10).

The Keetoowah viewed this message to represent the white invasion and that they were to move West voluntarily to avoid conflicts with the white people and to be able someday to return to the East. Therefore, the Keetoowah moved to Indian Territory before the Cherokee and became known as the first settlers. This splitting of the tribe caused resentments which led to violence in the new land. There was even a split between the tribes regarding the Civil War with the Keetoowah fighting with the South and the Cherokee joining forces with the North (Leeds, 2000).

After moving West, the Keetoowahs experienced a split within their own people. After a meeting with the Dawes Commission, Redbird Smith "withdrew from the society taking many of the traditionalists with him. His group became known as the NightHawks because they held their meetings at night and because of their watchfulness" (Leeds, 2000, p. 9). The NightHawk Keetoowah believed themselves to be "orthodox and do so today" (p. 12).

Today, the Keetoowah Nation is a federally recognized tribe in Northeastern Oklahoma. Its headquarters are located on Highway 10 north of Tahlequah. Both the Cherokee and the Keetoowahs operate gaming in the Tahlequah area which has caused some conflict, but the two tribes communicate regularly with each other. Some families may even be split in their tribal affiliations with part of the family enrolled in the Cherokee tribe and part enrolled in the Keetoowah tribe. While the Keetoowahs and Cherokee differ in later history, they share the same language: Cherokee.

The Kiowa

The Kiowa lived in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Colorado. They were a nomadic tribe that followed the buffalo. Unlike the Cherokee and the Creek tribes, the Kiowa people lived in tee-pees for easy movement to hunt buffalo. It is hypothesized that the tribe originally moved among the northern states but were pushed southward by the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Sioux Indians. At the time of that movement, there were 10 organized bands that numbered about 3,000 (Moore, 2000).

After 1790, the Kiowa and Comanche shared territories. They were in conflict over territory with the white people. They were "rounded up" by General

Custer's troops in 1868 and sent to Oklahoma. In 1874, they broke out of their reservation and attempted to return to a nomadic life. They were defeated the following year and stripped of horse and armaments. Additionally, several chiefs were moved to Florida by the troops to avoid further uprisings (Funk & Wagnalls, 2003).

In 1989, there were approximately 5000 Kiowa tribal members (Moore, 2000, p. 7). There are some small tribal businesses. There is a legislative body with a chief, deputy chief, and tribal council members.

Although the Kiowa tribe originated in a different part of the country, the Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa tribes share much in common. All four tribes were groups with political systems, language, culture, and beliefs that were affected by the arrival of the Europeans to America. They lost their homelands through force and were moved to the Indian Territory in what is now Oklahoma. In Northeastern Oklahoma, there is high representation of Cherokee, Keetoowah, and Creek tribal members. Kiowas are represented here, but their numbers are less. All four tribes are working to stop the loss of their native languages which occurred during the boarding school days. All four tribes are working

together to maintain traditional cultures, values, and beliefs to pass on to the next generation.

Assimilation

When two cultures are in constant contact, a blending of those cultures may occur. The blended state is referred to as acculturation. An extreme state where "one culture changes significantly more than the other culture and, as a result, comes to resemble it" (Garcia, 1992, p. 24) is assimilation. Assimilation was the policy of the Europeans regarding Native Americans.

From the earliest encounter, the efforts of the Europeans went to assimilating the Native Americans. Unfortunately, Indian children were the primary targets (Hamme, 1996). Indian children were taken from their homes, had their hair cut, had their clothing destroyed and replaced with European-styled clothing, and were forbidden to speak their own languages. Much if not all contact with family was forbidden or unrealistic because these schools were miles away from the reservations.

Much of this system involved the forced removal of Indian children from their parents to boarding schools far from the reservations where children were often harshly punished for any use of cultural practices or Indian languages. The philosophy underlying this type of education, continuing into the 1930s, was that these Indian children would be more

rapidly assimilated into the dominant culture if they were separated from the influence of their own cultures at an early age (Hamme, 1996, p. 22).

So, this change was not a natural assimilation, but, rather, it was a forced assimilation.

In a 2000 speech by the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs on the 175th anniversary of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Kevin Gover apologized for the BIA's involvement in "making Indian people ashamed of who they were" (p. 5). The Bureau of Indian Affairs was established in 1824 as a part of the Department of War. Many of the Indian boarding schools were run by the BIA. Unlike today when the majority of BIA employees are of Indian descent, the first employees were Europeans whose primary goal was to assimilate Native American children in order to eradicate this Indianness from future generations of American Indians. Just as the justification of Manifest Destiny appeared to be God's will to the Europeans, so did the assimilation of the Native Americans.

Another part of the assimilation process was the push for conversion of the Native Americans to Christianity. "Whenever there was contact between white settlers and Indians, Indians were pressured to conform

to white ways of behaving, including the adoption of Christianity" (Reyhner & Eder, 1988, p. 33). There is evidence of the European push for Native Americans to become Christians from Spanish attempts to "convert them to Catholicism" (p. 35) to "Congress established a civilization fund [1819] which lasted until 1873, to provide financial support to religious groups willing to teach Indians" (p. 38).

The first Europeans in American came to the "New World" to escape religious prosecution. America was founded on the ideas of religious freedom. Ironically, this did not apply to cultural religions and beliefs already held by the Native inhabitants.

Oral Tradition and Language

"For many American Indian tribes or nations, the oral tradition of storytelling serves as an important educational method for conveying traditional values, beliefs, and expectations" (Duryea & Potts, 1993; Garrett, 1991, Oswalt, 1988, as cited in Garrett, 1996). "It is through stories that we come to an understanding of ourselves, the world around us, and our relationship to everything in that world" (Garrett, 1996, p. 6).

For tribes such as the Cherokee, the Creek, Keetoowah and the Kiowa, oral teachings came before there

was written communication. Tribal members were raised to understand their history, beliefs, values, and relationship to the earth through oral tradition. Until the 1800's, this was the primary teaching method. Even after the beginnings of written language, more valuable information that was not for mainstream consumption was related through the telling of stories in homes, villages, and social events. Those who held the stories held the past, present, and future of the tribes. This statement is still true in the 21st century. Fox (1988) stresses the importance today of including storytelling in the teaching of Native American students when she stresses "students need an environment rich in oral literature: songs, storytelling, and oral play. It is essential that listening not be neglected. For Indian students, especially, more time must be devoted to it" (qt in Reyhner, p. 169). Possibly, it has more urgency and value because of the loss of elders, stories, and language that take place everyday.

Zehr (2003) illustrates this point with a tragic reality that the last two fluent speakers of the Makah tribal language died last year. "Only 10 people, all over the age of 65, still speak Spokane fluently. The only skilled speakers of Lushootseed are elderly and

frail, and can no longer take part in their tribe's formal activities to pass on their language skills" (p. 15). The loss of any human being is tragic and affects other people, but the loss of this generation of Native American elders may result in the loss of the oral traditions and history of whole tribes.

However, this does not have to be the outcome. Many tribes including the Cherokee, the Creek, the Keetoowah, and the Kiowa are striving to reverse the loss. Even the federal government is proclaiming the need to work collaboratively to save Native languages in the passing of Public Law 101-477 The Native American Languages Act in 1990. This act recognizes that "the traditional languages of Native Americans are an integral part of their cultures and identities and form the basic medium for the transmission, and thus survival, of Native American cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values" (Cantoni, 1996, p. 2) It is these cultures, literatures, histories, religions, political institutions, and values that must be preserved. Although this act is a positive step that reverses earlier policies that aided in the eradication of these languages, it, like many educational mandates, comes with little financial resources.

It is up to Native Americans to save the oral traditions and languages. There are some excellent examples that are being studied for possible replication. Among those are the Blackfeet language immersion program, the Hawaiian language immersion program which has educated over 3,000 students without one child dropping out before high school graduation, and the Ojibwe immersion schools in Wisconsin where language is seen as the key to both culture and academic success (Hinton, 2003). With a further understanding of the learning process, those Native people who hold the language, stories, and history of their tribes can better assist today's adult Native learners to develop other successful programs that will save tribal futures. Thus, the process of storytelling is a form of informal adult education.

Adult Learning

Andragogy

Andragogy is based on "the Greek word *aner* (with stem *andr-*), meaning 'man, not boy' or adult" (Knowles 1980, p. 42). It is "the art and science of helping adults learn" (p. 43). Originally seen as contrary to pedagogy, the teaching of children, Knowles now views andragogy as "another model of assumptions about learners

to be used alongside the pedagogical model" (p. 43).

This model includes four assumptions that are important to understand for study of the storytelling process with adult students.

In the first assumption, Knowles (1980) describes the adult learner's self-concept and the teacher's concept of the learner. Adult educators need to adjust their idea of the passive student to an idea of the adult learner as self-directed learner. Likewise, the adult students must adjust their idea of having the educational decisions made for them and the information handed to them to an idea of becoming active members of the learning process and having ownership of their own learning (p. 30). Native American adults who are entering the storytelling process may not wish to learn all stories from all tribes for all purposes and all audiences. If they only want to learn, for example, Kiowa stories that hold a moral for young adults, then this pathway, as self-directed adult learners, should be the one that they select and the pathway that the instructor facilitates.

To help adult educators fully perceive the shift necessary for working with adult students, Knowles (1980, pp. 46-49) recommends creating a positive climate that

avoids the pitfalls of the possible negative images of a traditional K-12 classroom by creating a comfortable environment filled with mutual respect for teacher and learner. He encourages the self-diagnosis of needs to assist the learner's motivation to learn. A further recommendation is to involve the learner in the planning process that requires equal responsibility from the educator and learner. A final suggestion in this area is to allow for self-evaluation rather than teacher evaluation. All of these components would be advantageous to the storytelling/learning process.

In andragogy, the teacher recognizes that the learner comes to the educational setting with many life experiences that children would not have. "Adults are what they have done" (Knowles, 1980, p. 50). This is a benefit in the learning of the storytelling process because storytelling comes from experiences. Many of the experiential techniques postulated by andragogy such as simulation exercises, role-playing, and field projects would be great foundations for building and maintaining storytelling skills.

Another assumption that is addressed through andragogy is the student's readiness to learn. Havighurst pointed out that adults have many roles

including "worker, mate, parent, homemaker, son or daughter of aging parents, citizen, friend, organization member, religious affiliate, and user of leisure time" (Havighurst 1961, p. 51). Havighurst continues to explain that adulthood is full of transition points and the crises that accompany these transitions (p. 51). These ideas correlate well with Erikson's stages of crisis. Middle adulthood, according to Erikson, is encompassed with the generativity vs. stagnation crisis (Eggen & Kauchak 2001, p. 92). During this stage, adults either find a way "to give back" or stagnate. There are many avenues that could be used for giving back such as volunteering and grandparenting. Learning stories that will benefit the next generation of Native Americans and finding opportunities to share those stories would be an excellent example of generativity.

The last assumption discussed in andragogy is the learner's orientation to learning. Adults need "immediacy of application" (Knowles 1980, p. 53). Therefore, storytelling would not be viewed as a subject to be studied, theorized, and researched. Rather, it would be performance-based to address the need for immediate application.

Self-directed Learning

Self-directed learning is an invaluable goal in the field of adult education. It connects the adult to life-long learning. If adults were to only experience education in the conventional K-12 parameters, many would quickly lose interest, motivation, and fail to see the relevance to their lives.

Knowles (1975) defines self-directed learning as "a process in which individuals take the initiative in designing learning experiences, diagnosing needs, locating resources, and evaluating learning" Tough (1966, 1967,) emphasizes the responsibility of the learner in the planning and directing of the learning experience. Having the individual's input is imperative in the passing of the storytelling process.

Many adults can relate experiences where stories were shared with them as youths without context and relevance. Even if these stories had a special significance for them, they may have lacked the confidence and initiative needed to have passed these stories on to others. Now, as adults, these learners find themselves motivated to learn more about the stories found in their culture and about the meaning and history related to the stories, and they desire the opportunity

to gain confidence through guided demonstration to tell the stories in an effective manner. They are motivated. What is necessary now is the collaboration between the holder of the knowledge and the adult learner. This is best achieved through an educational process that allows for the learner to have adequate input, the freedom to ask questions, the ability to be self-paced, and the opportunity for self-evaluation. These practices are all examples of self-directed learning.

Brookfield (1986) discusses the ideas of effective practice in creating a teaching-learning environment that is based on self-directed principles. He points out that the learning is voluntary. Unlike mandatory work training, a voluntary environment would work well for adults wanting to learn how to tell stories. Additionally, the content of the class could be determined by the learner selecting stories from a particular tribe.

Second, Brookfield (1986) emphasizes the need for mutual respect in self-directed learning. As the learner gains and demonstrates new skills, constructive criticism and encouragement would be encouraged to strengthen the adult learner's image of self-worth.

"Facilitation is collaborative" (Brookfield, 1986, p. 10). In this learning environment, the roles of leader and learner may fluxuate as the adult learning the storytelling process may at times be the learner and at times be the presenter. Empowering the adult learner to be self-directed is absolutely critical to the storytelling process where there will be autonomy when the student moves to tell stories to formal or informal audiences in the Native American community.

Brookfield (1986) emphasizes the importance of praxis in self-directed learning. This cycle of process involves reflection, collaborative analysis which leads to new activity, and more reflection; this process is ongoing. As the adult learners strengthen skills in self-directed learning, they are able to understand and facilitate the cycle of praxis.

Critical reflection is a necessary component of self-directed learning (Brookfield, 1986). This component encompasses the idea of the storytelling process. "Through educational encounters, learners come to appreciate that values, beliefs, behaviors, and ideologies are culturally transmitted and that they are provisional and relative" (p.10). The self-directed learner learns the storytelling process through

assessment of self, cultures, beliefs, and values that will then be the core of what is shared with the Native American community. Much must be reflected upon as the majority of Native American people live within at least two cultures. Reflection that assists the learner to expand the knowledge of being bi-cultural is imperative and can help to strengthen the necessity of not losing one culture for another.

Brookfield (1986) sees self-directed learners as becoming proactive adults who act within the community to make positive changes instead of constantly reacting to changes over which they have no control. This is a crucial goal in the Native American community. There are leaders, but, in a sovereign nation, not enough. So, while the individual adult learner will benefit from self-directed learning, so will the Native American community which for Native Americans is the ultimate goal.

Instrumented Learning

Using learning instruments designed to contain descriptions which relate back to theory, concepts, and ideas which help the participants to understand themselves is classified as instrumented learning (Blake & Mouton, 1972, p. 14). "Learning instruments give

people a way of examining their behavior within a systematic framework of theory which can be directly translated into practice" (p. 14). Instrumented learning is used in many venues from business to education to mental health. Participants respond to statements or questions from a well-researched instrument and then follow the instrument through to its determination of a category. Participants are then given information (written or oral) that further clarifies the results of their responses and are given the opportunity to gain insight. This method of learning works to "convert from a teacher-tell approach to a self-oriented learning orientation" (Blake & Mouton, p. 17). The importance here is that participants be given details which are descriptive of their personal reactions and feelings instead to someone else's outside evaluation. Then the participant can gain insight or even see the necessity for change.

Instruments can be developed in a variety of ways. There are many ways of gathering learning data (Blake & Mouton, 1972, p. 14). Examples include (a) Forced Choice, (b) Sentence Completion, (c) Multiple Choice, and Likert Scales. Forced Choice is a method that forces the participants to select from two choices. A sample would

include a sentence starter such as "I prefer working in: ___A bright light ___ B low light." The respondents are required to select one of the choices as most like them. The Sentence Completion method allows the respondent more freedom in answering the prompt. An example could include a situation such as taking a test. The sentence starter could be "When I am taking a test, I feel" This method is quite effective in prediction situations (Blake & Mouton, 1972, p. 16). The Multiple Choice method allows the participant to select from three to five possible choices. For example, the word that best describes me when faced with confrontation is: (a) forceful, (b) calm, (c) compromising, (d) nervous. The Likert Scale method asks the participants to determine a degree to which they agree or disagree with a statement. An example would be the statement "I prefer to work alone" with several choices placed along a five point scale: (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Uncertain, (4) Disagree, (5) Strongly Disagree (Dunn & Dunn, 2001, p. 5). All of these methods guide the participant to further self-understanding and a heightened understanding of other people.

Instrument learning is also an extremely valuable tool in adult learning in the area of diversity. While

determining a category for self, the participant also rules out strategies used by others. In viewing and reflecting upon these other strategies, the participant can view approaches through the eyes of other people. With this understanding, an acceptance of diversity can arise. For example, participants might realize that they may prefer working alone but that others need other people to be comfortable and productive. In the future, the participant may not view a co-worker's interruption as "just wanting to stop me from working" but as a need to enhance the co-worker's productivity. Additionally, the participant might discover a need for organization when completing a project or learning task through instrumented learning. While selecting the organized choice in the instrument, this participant can see that there are other ways to approach tasks or learning situations. In the future, when a co-worker or fellow students wants to "jump right into it" to get a project done, the participant can accept a different approach and explain about being of greater benefit to the project if given more time. Instrumented learning can help respondents increase their appreciation of other behavioral styles, so they can identify and minimize potential conflict with other people (Carlson Learning

Co., 1996, n.p.). While instrumented learning is a valuable tool for self-understanding and teamwork, it is also an invaluable tool for building understanding of diversity.

Instrumented learning assists the learner by increasing self-awareness, interpersonal awareness, and an understanding of the learning process. Through instrumented learning the concept of learning-how-to-learn is strengthened. This concept has been researched in adult education by Robert Smith. Smith (1982) states that this process "involves possessing, or acquiring, the knowledge and skills to learn effectively in whatever learning situation one encounters" (p. 19). The development of self-understanding of an individual as a learner will help learners to understand how they learn (p. 57). This approach is an instrumented learning approach. Through self-awareness enhanced by self-assessment, the learner builds a solid base of understanding from which to grow. Smith has three interrelated subconcepts of learning-how-to-learn that illuminate his meaning.

Learners' needs is the first subconcept. Smith(1982) asks, "What does the learner need to know about learning itself for success in learning" (p. 20).

In this study, two instruments, ATLAS and the PHIL were used to guide the learner to see how they learn and allow them to compare their approaches with the approaches of others. The storytellers understood how they learn and the beliefs that they hold about the teaching/learning process and what they needed to know about learning for successfully transferring storytelling skills to adult learners.

Learning styles is the second subconcept in Smith's learning-how-to-learn. There are many definitions of learning styles. Smith (1982) defines learning style as "the individual's characteristic ways of processing information, feeling, and behaving in learning situations" (p. 24). Instrumented learning was used in this study to assist the storytellers in understanding how they process information, what feelings they hold concerning learning, and what behaviors they feel were necessary components in a good learning process. By understanding that all adults do not learn and process information the same way, the storytellers can recognize these differences and can utilize them in the planning and teaching process.

The third subconcept of learning-how-to-learn is training. Smith (1982) defines training as "deliberate

efforts to help people become better at learning and more successful in the educational arena" (p. 25). This study sought to determine successful strategies for transferring storytelling skills from identified storytellers to Native American adults in Northeastern Oklahoma. The result will be used to identify and recommend successful strategies for training. In this real-life educational situation, these recommendations are the import of the study. Native American storytellers must be able to successfully help adults learn-how-to-learn or the history, beliefs, culture, and values of this group of people will be lost.

Summary

Storytelling is a defining power in the Native American in Northeastern Oklahoma. It has been utilized for hundreds of years to orally relay information regarding culture, history, and ethics from generation to generation. Contact with European Americans resulted in a loss of storytelling in the Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa tribes. Mainstream attempts to force the tribes to assimilate through the Removal Act, boarding schools, and the Dawes Act resulted in losses of Native languages, history, culture, and a reduction in the number of storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma.

Orality is an integral need in the Native American culture in Northeastern Oklahoma. Culture, language, values, and history suffer daily with the loss of tribal elders and with their assimilation into the mainstream culture. Records of today's storytellers are important, but this process is plagued with barriers that will not permit the accurate records with accurate interpretations. Cultural and transcription issues bar this as the most viable method of preservation. Only through study of the transmission process within the Native American communities for the Native American communities can progress be made.

An understanding of andragogy and self-directed learning is important in this field of study. Young adults must become knowledgeable in their own stories. Recognition concerning the best practices, procedures, and means of motivation can benefit both the adult teacher and adult learner. Instrumented learning tools can help the storytellers to better understand themselves so that they can recognize important teaching and learning concepts for passing on their stories.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive

A descriptive study "presents an accurate description of what is being studied Data may be organized according to themes" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 22). Descriptive qualitative studies enable the researcher to observe, interview, and record what is there. Words are relied upon more than numbers in qualitative research. This study looked at the teaching and learning strategies used by Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma. Information was gathered to describe how Native American storytellers learned the stories that they told, the venues where they told stories, the storytellers' perception of relevance of the stories to Native American community, and the effect of mainstream influences on the storytelling process.

This study described who the storytellers were, the learning strategies with which they self-identified, and effects of mainstream culture on Native American storytelling in Northeastern Oklahoma. Because of the limited number of participants possible in Northeastern Oklahoma, the need for face-to-face collection of

information, and the cultural and language issues involved with a written instrument, description was the strongest approach for this study. This study describes the state of Native American storytelling in Northeastern Oklahoma.

Qualitative

Qualitative research is "any research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 17). Qualitative research can include observations and interviews, but it can also include other forms of data including data that have been quantified for other purposes (18). For this research, an emphasis was placed on the interview process, but it was supplemented with additional information needed for accurate recommendations to be made concerning Native American storytelling skills.

A qualitative approach can "explore new or little known, previously unconceptualized or inadequately understood phenomena" (Morse, 2002, p. 2). Some stories were known, but many were held by a few. The process of transmitting these stories and storytelling skills was an area where little was known and needed to be explored. For the purposes of this study, common themes were

determined through the descriptive process related by Corbin and Strauss.

Qualitative research needs to be "naturalistic" (Bogdan & Bilien, 1998, p. 4). Through the use of this term, the study needed to be conducted, as much as was possible, in the natural or actual setting where it took place. The researcher needed to go to the participant. This study was centered on the teaching strategies involved in Native American storytelling. Therefore, the researcher attempted to document each of the 10 storytellers in the storytelling process in as naturalistic setting as possible for the personal interviews. Community events, storytelling sessions, and pow wows were attended by the researcher, but the distractions surrounding the events led to the researcher interviewing most of the participants in a home or work setting. These environments allowed the participants to feel at ease in family or familiar surroundings. The move to a home setting for some interviews also aided participants with health issues that would have made travel difficult. In this study, the environment of the participant became the most naturalistic setting as possible.

The use of a naturalistic setting strengthened the dialogue between the researcher and the participants. Young (1988) states that "social location in the world influences how they come to experience and describe it. People have particular histories and occupy social positions, which means that they do not see the world from another's standpoint - -although they may understand each other across differences through dialogue" (p. 127). The natural home setting allowed for the dialogue to be more open and meaningful and balanced the social positions within the Native American community and the mainstream culture.

Qualitative research requires descriptive data (Bogdan & Bilken, 1998, p. 5). Descriptive data includes notes, audio or videotapes, and pictures. Data is not reduced to numbers as in quantitative research. The researcher observes, asks questions, and documents what is. This study involved some notes taken at storytelling events, the interviews with the 10 storytellers, and follow-up phone calls to verify information concerning storytelling.

Qualitative research is "concerned with the process" (Bogdan & Bilken, 1998, p. 6). The process is as important as the outcomes in qualitative research. The

researcher re-evaluated constantly during the research process. The responsiveness to change in the process was the responsibility of the researcher in this study. Although questions were prepared, responses necessitated alterations and the revisiting of participants to ensure accurate descriptive data. One example of the change in the process involved the issue of gender. Originally, there were no questions related to the gender of storytellers in the research questions. During the first two interviews, the participants relayed information identifying public storytelling as a male dominated norm within this area. This caused a process of change in questioning that was supported both by the participants' responses but also by the recognition that all of the participants in this study were male.

Another example of process involved the issue of duty. In the research questions, duty was not addressed but was recognized as a common theme as the interviews progressed. The participants viewed their possession of this knowledge as a duty to share the stories with others. This process then became its own process because duty had to be understood without any negative connotations. To these men, this duty was an honor.

Without the constant comparison, the important themes of the participants would not have been recognized.

Qualitative research is inductive in nature (Bogdan & Bilken, 1998, p. 6). The information comes from the bottom up rather than the top down (p. 6). The researcher for this study did not have prior knowledge of how storytelling and its transmission occurred. The answers and even the right questions came from time spent with storytellers. The storytellers led this study.

Qualitative research has meaning as a central concern (Bogdan & Bilken, 1998, p. 7). The researchers are interested "in how different people make sense of their lives" (p. 7). What were the participants' perspectives? For this study, the participants' perspectives were crucial. The storytellers knew the stories, the meanings, the purpose, and the process by which they learned to be storytellers. Because of the loss of so much language and culture through outside influences, this process was changing. Knowing the participants' perspective was vital to understanding the adult learning strategies that assisted them in "passing on" this knowledge and this skill. Their perspective on the change in this process due to mainstream influences was imperative to the creation of an accurate description

of the Native American storytelling process in Northeastern Oklahoma.

Qualitative research was the most appropriate method for this project because of the nature of this research problem. The number of recognized Native American storytellers in northeastern Oklahoma is a relatively small number of people. Originally, the researcher thought that there might be 25 people who had experienced the process of being successful at storytelling and attempting to train other adults. This research project looked to interview 10 of these people which was to be approximately over one-third of the recognized population. However, during the process of identifying participants, the researcher recognized that the original estimate of 25 Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma was too high. Only 14 participants were identified by their tribes, elders, and other storytellers as meeting the qualifications for this study. Of these 14 storytellers, 10 actually became participants in this study.

The basic components of qualitative research are data, interpretive procedures, and written or verbal reports (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 20). The data came from the interviews, observations, and the instruments.

The interpretive procedures included sorting of the data by common themes. The written and/or verbal reports included an overview of the findings as well as a break down of findings by categories.

This research project utilized interview data and categorical data from two instruments. The emphasis was on the qualitative data that was generated from interviews with Native American storytellers. The categorical data related to the storytellers' personal learning strategy preferences and educational philosophies were used to support the qualitative data and to assist in the recommendations section of the research. The correct description of the storytelling transmission required the recognition of successful adult education techniques involved in teaching young adults Creek, Cherokee, or Kiowa stories and teaching the skills necessary to be able to share these stories within the Native American community. For this to be accomplished, the qualitative data was supplemented with the ATLAS and PHIL instruments. Then, during the interview process, those who completed the instruments were asked to verify the accuracy of these instruments within this project.

Participants

A population is the "group of interest to the researcher" (Gay, 2000, p. 122). Information from this group can be utilized by the researcher to gain insight about the target population. The target population for this study was American Indian storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma who were recognized within their communities as storytellers and who had actively taught or attempted to teach other adults storytelling skills.

A good sample is "one that is representative of the population from which it is selected" (Gay, 2000, p. 123). The selection of a good sample produces meaningfulness and generalizability of the results (p. 123). For this study, all members of the sample were of American Indian descent. Each participant in this study was recognized by their community as American Indian storytellers. This recognition was given by community members and elders in the Native communities who had extensive knowledge concerning the presentation and accuracy of storytellers. All participants resided in Northeastern Oklahoma. All participants were teaching storytelling skills to another adult or had attempted to teach these skills in the past.

The participants were 10 individuals from 4 different tribes including the Cherokee, Keetoowah, Kiowa, and Creek tribes of Oklahoma. Each participant was interviewed individually and was also given the opportunity to take the ATLAS instrument to determine learning strategy preference (Conti & Kolody, 2004) and the PHIL instrument to assess educational philosophy(Conti & Kolody, 2004).

Profiles of Storytellers

Jake Chanate was an elder in the Kiowa tribe. Mr. Chanate was active in the pow wow circuit. He emceed and participated with a drum group. He spoke both the English and the Kiowa language fluently. He had retired after working with the Veteran's Assistance Program at Northeastern State University for over 30 years. Mr. Chanate was probably the most well known storyteller in Northeastern Oklahoma. He had presented to adults and children for almost 40 years.

George Coser was an elder in the Creek tribe. Mr. Coser's father was a medicine man. He spoke both the English and Creek languages fluently. He had worked with Indian mental health for many years and also contributed in the area of Native American drug and alcohol treatment

and prevention. He told stories within his community and in public schools.

Harry Oosahwee was an elder in the Cherokee tribe. Mr. Oosahwee (55) taught the Cherokee language. He worked with both pre-school youth and adults. He spoke both the English and Cherokee languages fluently. He was an employee of the Cherokee Nation and an adjunct instructor for Northeastern State University. He presented stories to students from Pre-kindergarten through adult.

Roger Cain was a member in the Keetoowah tribe. Mr. Cain (41) was a storytelling elder who was recognized in the Keetoowah tribe for his active participation in the stomp dance ceremonies at the Chewey stompgrounds and as a Keetoowah artisan. Mr. Cain's involvement in storytelling and stomp dances was a result of the teachings of his grandfather who recently passed away. Mr. Cain was a fluent English speaker and spoke the Cherokee language with some limitations. He worked to develop grant programs that benefited Native American students in public schools and created Booger masks.

Choochie Kingfisher was a member in the Keetoowah tribe. Mr. Kingfisher was not an elder in age, but was recognized in the Keetoowah and Cherokee tribes for his

storytelling abilities and his aged spirit. He was a Cherokee Nation employee and worked at the Cultural Resource Center as a community and school liaison and instructor. He worked with schools to develop language, culture, and arts programs. He presented stories to public schools and within his community. He spoke both the English and Cherokee languages fluently.

Hastings Shade was an elder (64) in the Cherokee tribe. Mr. Shade was a former deputy chief of the Cherokee Nation. He had worked to aid Cherokee people through tribal government and personal involvement within his community. He told traditional stories to public groups and was a Cherokee historian. He spoke both English and Cherokee fluently. He and his wife have taught Cherokee language courses through the tribe, through Northeastern State University, and independently.

Jim Carey was an elder in the Cherokee tribe. Mr. Carey was a Cherokee language and history teacher at Sequoyah High School, a Native American boarding school outside of Tahlequah. He was also an ordained minister. He used storytelling to teach Cherokee history and the Cherokee language to Native American teenagers. He also told stories in his ministry. He was a Cherokee Nation employee and was active within his community.

Sammie Still was an elder (52) in the Cherokee tribe. Mr. Still was a photographer and media arts specialist for the Cherokee Nation where he had worked for over 23 years. He spoke both the English and Cherokee languages fluently and co-taught a Cherokee language class on-line. He was recognized in the Cherokee tribe for his storytelling abilities and was called a living treasure by other storytellers.

Ed Fields was an elder in the Cherokee tribe. He claimed to be 18 years old again and again. Other storytellers commended Mr. Fields for living the Cherokee Way. Mr. Fields was a Cherokee language instructor for the Cherokee Nation. He spoke both the English and Cherokee languages fluently and co-taught a Cherokee language class on-line. He was recognized in the Cherokee tribe for his storytelling abilities.

Sequoyah Guess was a storytelling elder in the Cherokee tribe. Mr. Guess was well known and recognized by the Cherokee tribe for his storytelling abilities. He referred to himself as "a traditional storyteller" meaning that he tells stories from his ancestors. He works with the Cultural Center educating college students and has developed two Cherokee tales into short films.

Instruments

ATLAS

Assessing the Learning Strategies of Adults (ATLAS) instrument and the Philosophies Held by Instructors of Lifelong-learners (PHIL) instruments were used as instrumented learning tools. These instruments have been used in business, higher education, field work, and the workplace to assist adult learners in a better understanding of self and awareness of the needs of others.

In this study, the ATLAS and PHIL instruments were used to provide a framework for understanding the philosophical bases and techniques used by storytellers. ATLAS was developed to identify preferences in learning strategies (Conti & Kolody, 2004, pp. 181-192). It is a forced choice model that works in a flow chart design. Respondents look at the first page and are asked to determine which of the two selections most identifies them. Once that choice is made, the instrument guides the respondent to another page which again offers the reader two choices that again narrow the categories for self-identification. At the completion of the instrument, the reader is categorized as a Navigator, Problem Solver, or an Engager. The participant then

reads about each of the three categories to determine the accuracy of the self-assessment instrument.

ATLAS is a valid instrument for assessing the learning strategies of adults (Conti & Kolody, 2004). Validity is "the degree to which a test measures what it is intended to measure" (Gay, 1987, p. 553). ATLAS has been shown to be valid in measuring the learning strategies of adults in real-life situations (Conti & Kolody, 2004).

ATLAS is a reliable instrument. Reliability is "the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures (Gay, 1987, p. 135). If an instrument is reliable, the same results will be determined each time that the instrument is administered (p. 135). When administered in a test-retest situation covering one-week to three-week periods of time, ATLAS showed a reliability of .87 (Ghostbear, 2001, p. 82).

Through the ATLAS instrument, the reader self-determines into one of three categories. The Navigator thrives on organization. The adult learner that identifies as a Navigator would approach a new learning situation by first locating the best resources available for that particular situation and then planning a step-

by-step approach to reaching the goal (Conti & Kolody, 2004).

Engagers thrive on joyful engagement with a new learning situation. They learn best when they are actively involved and when the learning is fun. Most Engagers are fulfilled with internal learning and the social experience of learning in a group setting (Conti & Kolody, 2004).

Problem Solvers thrive on constructing alternatives in new learning situations. They want options and will usually be the last to finish an assignment because they have seen so many pathways to pursue. Problem Solvers thrive on real-life learning and hands-on activities (Conti & Kolody, 2004).

In working with adult education, understanding the approach that the instructor and learner take to complete a task is extremely important. For adults attempting to teach other adults the skill of storytelling, the understanding of their own approach and the understanding of the approach taken by the adult learner can create a connection that can benefit both in this learning process.

PHIL

The Philosophies Held by Instructors of Lifelong-Learners (PHIL) instrument was developed to identify the educational philosophies of adult educators (Conti, 2005). The PHIL instrument also follows a forced-choice format. The reader has two choices on the first page. Respondents must decide which statement is the most accurate for them. After deciding, the flow chart design guides the reader to another page, where once again, the reader must choose between two choices. At the completion of the instrument, the respondent will self-identify as a Idealist, a Realist, a Pragmatist or Progressive, a Humanist, or a Reconstructionist.

Both validity and reliability were necessary for the inclusion of an instrument in this study. In separating participants into teacher-centered and student-centered, the PHIL instrument was 87.6% accurate. In separating the Pragmatists from the Reconstructivists, the PHIL instrument was 87.1% accurate. In separating the Pragmatists from the Reconstructivists, the PHIL was 95% accurate. In separating the Idealists from the Realists, the PHIL instrument was 97.4% accurate (Conti, 2005).

The reliability of the PHIL instrument was established through the test-retest method. The

correlation for these two testings for 39 adult education practitioners after a 2-week interval was .742 (Conti, 2005).

After completing the PHIL instrument, the respondent is self-identified into a school of educational philosophy. The first category is the Idealist. In this school of thought "the ideas are the only true reality" (Osman & Craver, 1980, p. 1). This philosophy stresses content and is a teacher-centered philosophy.

Realism stresses "the use of the scientific method" (Osman & Craver, 1980, p. 39). In this philosophy, the teacher has a definite role as teaching is done in a very analytic, step-by-step process with measurable objective outcomes.

Pragmatists stress "democracy by developing strong individuals to serve in a good society" (Osman & Craver, 1980, p. 121). In this school of thought, the teacher becomes a resource person to help the learner to achieve personal goals.

Humanists stress the individual and recognize that "the individual is always in a state of transition" (Osman & Craver, 1980, p. 244). The Humanist teacher becomes a facilitator to the individual learner who is striving for self-understanding.

Reconstructivists stress social change and include "social justice and true democracy" (Osman & Craver, 1980, p. 175) as its goals. Learners are looking at the holistic view of how to make their world or community a better place. They want to know what will help society. The role of the teacher is to help students to develop problem-solving strategies that will assist them in becoming active proponents of change.

Each school of educational philosophy views the learning process differently. The role of the teacher and the role of the student vary in these schools of thought. The purpose of education varies. The process and the content vary.

In looking at the educational process between the storyteller and the adult learner, understanding the philosophical foundations of the storyteller was important. From these beliefs came the approach used to transfer the content, the identification of the role of the teacher and student, and the understanding of purpose for transferring the storytelling skills. This study used the PHIL instrument to assist the storytellers in self-identification of their school of educational philosophy. This helped them to better understand their

teaching approaches and strengthen the bond between the storyteller and the adult learner.

Procedure

The data gathered from the interviews was enhanced by the data gathered from the two categorical instruments. The first instrument administered was ATLAS. ATLAS was useful for this study because it can be administered in 3 minutes or less.

The researcher attempted to administer the ATLAS to all participants in this study, describe to the participant what the results meant, and ask for feedback as to the instrument's accuracy. Three participants refused to take both the ATLAS and the PHIL instruments. For those participants that completed the instrument, the researcher then asked the storytellers to reflect on the attributes of being a Navigator, a Problem-Solver, or an Engager regarding the teaching of storytelling. These results were recorded. Some insight was gained from an initial reaction and some from reflection recorded from a return meeting.

The PHIL instrument was also an ideal instrument in this study because it is also designed in a flow chart format that can be completed in less than 5 minutes. The instrument was to be administered, the results discussed,

and reflection noted from each participant. Three participants refused to complete the instrument. From those participants that completed the instrument, the results were recorded and the storytellers reflected on the accuracy of the description. Some commented on the PHIL instrument during the first meeting, and some participants commented during follow-up meetings when reflection had occurred.

The two instruments were also ideal for this study because they could be administered orally when there was limited proficiency in reading English. Therefore, it was still utilized with English Language Learners participants who had the Creek, Cherokee, or Kiowa language as their primary language.

While this study could have been accomplished without the two instruments, the use of the two instruments strengthened this study by identifying personal beliefs and strategies that affect adult education. This study was based on the foundation of adult learning. Therefore, the two instruments worked to complete the circle of information needed for accurate understanding of the storytelling process and for relevant recommendations to be made for training of today's adults.

Data Collection

In this study, descriptive information was gathered through personal interviews to gain an understanding of the learning process involved with storytelling. Participants were selected using the limits described. The researcher then contacted and began the process of interviewing.

Jake Chanate was the first participant to be contacted because he was the person who was the most vocal about the loss of storytellers in the Native American community. He was worried that there would not be others to take his place when he was no longer able to tell stories publicly. He was receptive to being interviewed and to assisting in contacting other storytellers who might be willing to give their time and expertise.

There were four meetings with Jake Chanate with an average meeting lasting approximately 2 to 3 hours. He was eager to share information and, once prompted, would talk about storytelling for long periods of time. He agreed to take the ATLAS instrument. It was given verbally. Once completed, he somewhat agreed with the results, but he stated that the instrument was not of his world and could not accurately categorize him. He then

refused to take the PHIL instrument. His refusal to take the PHIL instrument affected two other storytellers who would not consider the instruments because Jake had not given the instruments his approval. With the exception of the instrumented learning, Jake was completely involved and an enthusiastic participant. He answered all research questions and opened other areas such as gender to discussion.

Through Jake Chanate's recommendations, Hastings Shade, Jim Carey, Sammie Still, Ed Fields, and Sequoyah Guess became involved as research participants. All were interviewed twice with the exception of Sequoyah Guess. Follow up phone calls were also made to Sammie Still and Ed Fields. Some meetings were located at the Cherokee Nation Tribal Complex, and some were in social settings when stories were being told. Jim Carey was approached after a storytelling session. Sequoyah Guess was interviewed after a storytelling session. Sammie Still and Ed Fields declined to complete the ATLAS and PHIL instruments. As the interviews continued, the issues of gender and the duty of storytelling continued to arise and became their own categories.

Two participants recommended including Choochie Kingfisher in the study. He was contacted at the

Cherokee Nation Cultural Center and agreed to be interviewed. There were two meetings with Choochie and at least 4 follow-up phone calls. His perspective was similar to the other participants with the exception of his research on storytelling through the Internet. He added the concern that accuracy was not only a transcription issue, it was but also an issue with Internet sites that claimed to have authentic stories which he knew to be incorrect. He agreed to take both instruments.

Harry Oosahwee was a Cherokee language instructor in Northeastern Oklahoma. Hastings Shade recommended talking to Harry Oosahwee because Hastings Shade had heard him incorporate storytelling into his Cherokee language classes. At first Harry Oosahwee was reluctant to be called a storyteller because he viewed himself as a language instructor. After talking with him and sharing what the deputy chief, Hastings Shade, had said, Harry agreed to be interviewed. Once the interviews began, it was apparent that Harry was a storyteller. He used stories in his language classes, had told stories to his family, and had shared stories within his community. Other participants recognized him as a storyteller but felt that it was not his way to recognize himself. Harry

Oosahwee was interviewed twice and called once. He agreed to take both instruments. He contributed much in the area of transcription issues because of his knowledge of the Cherokee and English languages.

George Coser was known by me because he had told stories to my students at Sequoyah High School. When approached, he was open to being interviewed. His main interview took place at his home with his family present. He supported the main themes that had developed especially the concept of family. He was the keeper of traditional stories for his family and hoped that families would continue to have someone with this role. However, he recognized that many families did not have someone in this role and so he saw the importance of researching this area. He was willing to take both instruments but questioned their relevance.

Roger Cain was a younger person that fit within the limits of this study. His participation emphasized the importance of the study. His knowledge of storytelling came from his grandfather. Unfortunately, his grandfather's health was failing and during the time of the research, his grandfather passed away. Roger had been working to transfer stories and tradition to his teenaged children so that Grandpa Pumpkin's knowledge

will not be lost. He had also shared stories with area schools and Johnson-O'Malley programs. The three interviews with Roger Cain were all located at his residence with his family present. There were four follow-up phone calls and one informal meeting at Northeastern State University's Native American Symposium. He agreed to take both instruments.

All participants were audiotaped. Several of the men were self-conscious about the taping in the beginning, but all appeared relaxed with time and were open to sharing, laughter, and the sharing of common experiences. Ed Fields was the only person to ask to hear his tape before giving permission for the use of its contents. After going to meet with him to share the tape, he then agreed to its inclusion without listening to the tape. I felt that he was more concerned about my intent and persistence than the contents of the tape.

It was an honor to meet with these gentlemen. Their knowledge was immense and their desire to give to the next generation is to be commended. I gained knowledge, ties to heritage, and a look into a world that is being lost. My respect for these men will last forever.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is "a process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts and fieldnotes, to increase understanding and to present what is discovered to others" (Bogdan & Biklen (1998, p. 157)). This process involves working with the data, organizing it, breaking it into to manageable units, and finding patterns in the data. Strauss and Corbin (1990) regard coding as "the heart" of qualitative research (p. 57). While they emphasize the importance of open, axial, and selective coding, they also state that this must not become mechanical or automatic. They must have flexibility according to the circumstances (p. 59). Therefore open, axial, and selective coding were utilized in this project with a degree of flexibility.

Open coding is "the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 61). During this step, the data were evaluated looking for patterns and categories. Although some categories were determined by the research questions, other categories were found through examination of the field notes. For example, the question concerning how they learned to be storytellers produced the category of family which remained strong

throughout the process. However, the category of duty evolved from the evaluation of the data rather than the original research questions.

Axial coding is "a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways after open coding, by making connections between categories involving conditions, context, action/interactional strategies, and consequences" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 96). After open coding, axial coding puts the data back together developing main categories. This process was followed after the open coding stage. Connections between categories were made. For example, in the initial coding, identity and teaching were not linked, but once the interaction between these two categories was recognized, the loss of identity category resulted. The loss of community teaching opportunities resulting from boarding schools and the changes in language affected the identity of generations of Native Americans in Northeastern Oklahoma.

Selective coding is "the process of selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refining" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 116). This section was completed as the

third step in the coding process. Through observation, field notes, transcripts, and audio/video tapes, the data were synthesized by completing the three-step process of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Each step built on the results of the previous step and by follow-up information gained through additional interviews. Once this process was completed, a well-defined description of the condition of Native American storytelling in Northeastern Oklahoma was determined.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

The 10 interviews were conducted with Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma. Because Northeastern Oklahoma was Indian Territory before it became a state, there were multiple tribes represented in the participants. The selection of tribes was determined according to the recognition of storytellers in the area by their communities and tribes. There were 4 tribes represented by 10 Indian men known in this area. The tribes included the Cherokee, the Creek, the Keetoowah, and the Kiowa. There exist similarities and differences in the history, ceremonies, language, and the types of stories told within these four tribes. Although differences can be found within the four tribes, the similarities express the strength of being Native American in Northeastern Oklahoma.

The interviews were compiled and analyzed for consistent themes. These themes describe family, language, duty, identity, loss of identity, tribal similarities and differences, teaching through storytelling, and gender as important factors in Native American storytelling.

The data were analyzed using a flexible approach to open, axial, and selective coding recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 57). During open coding the categories of family, duty, language, Problem Solvers, and Humanism were identified. All 10 participants spoke of duty and language during their first interviews. Seven of the men spoke of family clearly, and comments made supported further investigation in this category. Seven of the ten storytellers participated in the instrumented learning. Five men were Problem Solvers. Six storytellers self-identified as Constructivists according to the PHIL instrument. This, at first, appeared contradictory considering the emphasis on the individual in Humanistic thinking. This required further investigation.

Nine of the ten men were interviewed more than once. These further interviews and further evaluation of the data were invaluable during the axial coding. When the information was put back together the following categories and subcategories were determined:

Family	Duty	Language	Problem Solvers	Constructivists
- gender	- community	-identity	-	- facili

				tator
	-family (past, present, future)	-loss of identity		-lost genera tion's connec tion
	-language	- 3 different languages/experiences		
	-stories			

Continued coding allowed for "systemically relating categories and filling in categories that needed further refining" (Straus & Corbin (1990, p. 116). The following relationships and categories evolved:

FAMILY	Private World	Female		
GENDER	Public World	Male		
LANGUAGE	Identity	Two Worlds		
LOSS OF IDENTITY	English	Assimilation	Lost Generation	Multitribalism
DUTY	Teaching	Community through the individual (past, present, future)	Language	Stories
PROBLEM SOLVERS	Therapists	Describer of Identity		
HUMANISM	Guides			

Family

Family is important in any culture. Before federal intervention and forced assimilation, the Native American family structure involved "children raised within a

cultural context that emphasized the participation of the entire community or tribe in day-to-day childrearing responsibilities" (Halverson, Puig, & Byers, 2002, p. 319). While the dominant culture has redefined family, within the Native American community examples of pre-intervention can still be viewed at pow wows, stomp dances, religious ceremonies, and other social, and cultural events. Children are monitored, fed, disciplined, and cared for by the whole Indian population attending. This communal environment allows teaching and learning from many generations.

Every storyteller interviewed discussed the importance of family. All of them had heard stories from parents, grandparents, uncles, cousins, and even people adopted into their families. Most of them had lived in households with members outside of the nuclear family where all elders were responsible for teaching and caring for the younger family members. A 40-year old Keetoowah man recalls his cousin living in the same house. "He moved in with us in first grade. Grandpa and Grandma became OUR grandpa and grandma so that they were his too. There was no MY, only OUR." One Kiowa man recalled, "Grandfather would tell us stories at night. We would ask him to tell us another story."

Storytelling helped to keep children alive. The Kiowa storyteller told about the role of grandfather storyteller in the Kiowa harsh winters.

Let's take our winter stories. They were told because they were to improvise a person's hunger. We had blizzards that come through in our wintertimes, and, a lot of times our hunters were not able to go out and acquire the appropriate amount of meat that we needed to survive on. So it may be a long period of time - a week or two before we could replenish our food supply. So whatever we had left, it went as far as it could until was depleted and then after that there was none. There was no walk outside and have a grocery store right around the corner. It was a point that we had to keep whatever we had and to feed your children and after that, that was it. Well, children become very hungry after awhile. They become irritable and after awhile, they are just crying because of hunger. At night, they would cry out there, usually around suppertime. There's nothing to give. And a gentleman would come in there, usually a grandfather or a great uncle would come and see this. To see this person come in there and feel this pain would be unbearable. But he would start talking the stories. They used the stories to hypnotize the children - talk about the summer months when everything is green and everything is plentiful. There's no starvation in the summertime. You always find fruits, wild things out there. After telling these stories on that, he told them about that summertime when you find green vegetables to eat, our fruits were plentiful, game would be everywhere, not just the buffalo. You could have a selection of things. Everything was so happy in the summertime. As he tells it to these children, these kids on that. They imagining that same kind of happiness - - just last summer when they were having such

a good time. And as they're doing this and their mind is imagining this, he would eventually get to a part of the story that he's telling about that they are tired anyway that they fall asleep. Grandfather's mission was complete. They went to sleep hungry. Maybe tomorrow, their hunters would be successful and keep them going.

This role was essential to the Indian people during extremely harsh conditions, and this role fell to the storyteller. He made life bearable and allowed the children to survive to another day. He gave them hope.

Within the Indian communities, family members shared identity through stories. They taught "how to carry on our traditions and carry on our culture, and that was important because without it, we are just a name of a tribe." These teachings came from family.

One Keetoowah man shared stories with his own children and with children in public schools. He was hopeful that telling stories to the children would result in kids retelling those stories at home. "Kids telling stories to parents will bring families back together. Being able to sit around and crack jokes and tell stories renews those family ties. That's what these stories are meant for. They are meant to teach, but also to tie those families together." Recently, a former Chief of

the Cherokees stopped him and told him how much he appreciated him. The man's son had come home and shared a story that he had heard at school. As the former chief heard the story, he realized that he knew it but had never shared that story with his family. He and his son were able to talk about it together. The Keetowah storyteller hopes that this is happening in other tribal families.

Language

While language can be written and oral, most tribal members who know their native language are referring to oral discourse. "In its Greek original, *techne rhetorike*, speech art referred to essentially oral speaking" (Ong, 2000, p. 9). "The spoken word forms human beings into close-knit groups. When a speaker is addressing an audience, the members of the audience normally become a unity" (p.73). Native American history demonstrates this oral speaking unity connection.

Language is powerful. The "Peace Commission" of 1868 recognized the power of language in its report when it stated,

Through sameness of language is produced sameness of sentiment, and thought; customs and habits are molded and assimilated in the same way. Schools should be established, which

children should be required to attend; their barbarous dialect should be blotted out and the English language substituted. (Atkins, 1887, p. xx)

This language extinction movement was highly successful and almost resulted in the loss of the Cherokee, Creek, and Kiowa languages. Although the number of tribal speakers lowered dramatically during this time, some Native speakers kept the languages alive.

The life of languages is at a critical time. Linguist Michael Krauss estimates "that about 80 percent of American Indian languages are moribund" (Coyne, 1995, p. 30). Today, the majority of the fluent speakers are elders. The English language is the first and usually only language spoken by younger Native Americans in Northeastern Oklahoma. So, why work to save tribal languages? Richard Littlebear (2000) argues that "it is the spiritual relevance deeply embedded in our own language that makes them [languages] relevant to us as American Indians today" (p. 9). This idea is supported when Native language speakers explain that they pray in their tribal tongue. One Cherokee storyteller explained, "I pray in Cherokee, and when I teach, I teach the Lord's Prayer in Cherokee." Several of the storytellers learned to speak to their Creator in their Native language and

feel that their spirituality is stronger when expressed in their Native tongue.

Within the Cherokee, Creek, and Kiowa people, the Native language is the door to the ceremonies, spirituality, community, identity, and the telling of cultural stories. The "Peace Commission" almost succeeded in closing that door. Songs, names, and blessings are pure when they are not filtered through the English language. Even humor in storytelling is clearer when told in the Native tongue. A Creek storyteller explained that "jokes were funnier than when they're told in English." One Cherokee interviewee related a story which is quite funny when told in Cherokee because it is a play on the Cherokee pronunciation of certain names.

One time at a gathering, someone looked up and laughed when seeing four people walking up a hill. The humor came from the people's names in Cherokee. One man's name translated from Cherokee was Pinetree. A second man's name translated to Pulling. Another man's name was Heavy, and the woman's name was Waggie. In Cherokee, one observer noted, as he saw them walking up a hill, Here comes Waggie Pulling a Heavy Pinetree up the hill.

The story resulted in laughter from the Cherokee speakers who understood the wordplay involving the names. This Cherokee storyteller saw this example as a small sample of the power of speaking in the Native language.

He saw and heard another example at a Cherokee funeral. There, a speaker was giving a eulogy in Cherokee. He was relating beautiful qualities and experiences with the deceased. Then he stopped and looked around. Then, he apologized to the non-Cherokee speakers in the audience and said, "I can't translate that part to you. There are no English words to relay what I just said." The story in the eulogy had to be in Cherokee. There was no other way to communicate it.

Another storyteller elaborated on this point by saying, "In Cherokee, when you tell a story, it more or less explains itself. When you tell a story in English, you're just telling a story." One example that he shared first was telling an audience that someone in the story fell off of a horse. "In English, we would say, 'He fell.'" In Cherokee, the words would tell how he fell, whether he fell and laid on the ground, or whether he fell and rolled over and over. "We would not laugh because he fell off or he got hurt. We're laughing because of the way it was explained to us." The story in Cherokee explained itself.

This language power also is demonstrating a bond that is being lost. To tell a Kiowa story in the Kiowa language to a group of Kiowa speakers is powerful. The

listeners would be able to relate to each word. One example is the word Kompt-Toe. When telling a story to a group of Kiowa speakers, this one word has a meaning that a Kiowa speaker "understands actually, exactly what's that one little word is." However, to explain this word to an English speaker would require elaborate description.

When one storyteller was young, "If you told Kiowa kids to come inside, it's getting dark. There's a Kompt-Toe out there. You are gonna get caught. We would all scream and come inside." Now, to describe that in English would take half of the day. In English, one might say a Boogie Man, Big Foot, a big person. Maybe this entity would be a dead person who was still walking the Earth who might eat children. Maybe it was children from other tribes. All of these concepts would have to come together in English for this one word to come alive and have the right meaning. How would that be possible for storytellers speaking in English today?

All storytellers agreed that the telling of stories was affected by the translation to English. A story told in Cherokee, for example, would be different than the same story translated into English. Some words would not even have English translations. So, while not one person

begrudged the telling of stories in English, all concurred that traditional stories would never have the exact same meaning without the teller and the listener both being Native American language speakers.

All of the storytellers were troubled by the negative effects that the loss of Native language had brought to their people in the last two generations. Oklahoma had and continues to have several Native American boarding schools. In their origins, the schools were utilized to "civilize" the Native Americans; this included punishment for any students caught speaking a language other than English. Several of the storytellers interviewed had family stories concerning boarding school experiences. A 40-year old Keetoowah man related a story concerning a parent's boarding school experience.

My grandmother was threatened by BIA people that she had to send my mother and her sisters to boarding school because she did not have adequate housing. So, my mother went to boarding school when she was four. She did not speak English and was punished if she spoke Cherokee. Although she eventually adapted and learned English, her sisters did not. One sister was three and had never slept alone in a bed, so at night, she cried. Her five year old sister would sneak into her bed at night to try to keep her from crying, but she would get in trouble for that and was moved to another room. Both of them hated boarding school

and wanted to go home and talk Cherokee again.

Even for those Indians whose Native language survived this time in Oklahoma history, there are still other obstacles to saving their Native language. In Northeastern Oklahoma, there are no tribal elementary schools, so all education for these grades is in English. While the Cherokee tribe has seen some success through their language immersion Head Start program, their students leave them to go to public school where they are speaking English and the Cherokee language is not reinforced.

Elementary school is in English. So, except for a few small programs that see the Cherokee language as an occasional add-on to which some public school teachers object for fear of confusing students with opposing vowel sounds, elementary students are taught in English. This concerns all of the storytellers but especially one of the language immersion pre-school teachers and the Cherokee language teacher at Sequoyah High School, a Native American boarding school. Both men know that the new Cherokee Nation language immersion program is offering an excellent start in teaching the Cherokee language. One teacher in the program feels that he is

making a difference in the lives of Cherokee. "I hear children speaking the Cherokee language daily, and it makes my heart proud." However, the high school Cherokee teacher, who teaches 9th -12th grade students, knows from experience the loss of language that results in grade K-8. He says, "For many students, they are starting again on the high school level. If they have not had the opportunity to hear and speak their language for years, they may retain some words, but they need practice to keep the language."

The loss of language also represents the loss of stories. All participants remember "parts of stories" that they know were fully flushed stories in previous generations. However, with the loss of language came the loss of detail, meaning, lessons, and totality. Many Native American stories in Northeastern Oklahoma were originally told to teach important lessons concerning origins, behavior, spirituality, history, and/or skills. One Kiowa participant related an experience where he met an author who had translated Indian stories into English for a book. He was asked to introduce her to an audience. Members of the audience asked about a particular story and why only part of the story was included. She responded that that was how it was told to

her. So, the audience asked the facilitator, who knew the whole story, if he would share it. He apologized, but shared it because "any part of that story, it doesn't mean anything. It's only told halfway through. It concludes and leaves the rest in your mind, but it doesn't tell you the moral of the story." Through transcription, language differences, and editing, stories are changed and abbreviated which can produce an entertaining story that has lost its moral teaching.

The issue of transcription and books was discussed by several storytellers. One man is working to develop a book. His motivation is not money but is preservation. However, even he conceded that stories in books lacked the power of an actual storyteller. He referenced another storyteller for an example. "Read the Sandai stories. Your imagination has to come up with those characters. When you see Jake perform those stories, you see what it takes you to see those characters. That's what you lose when you read the stories. You lose the content of humanness." The term "humanness" is a powerful term. To lose the humanness by reading instead of experiencing the stories is comparable to the differences in reading about the sweatlodge ceremony and experiencing the sweatlodge ceremony.

This man is a contradiction, though, because he is working on a compilation of stories. He feels that this is necessary because there are fewer storytellers and because the written accounts that he has seen have been flawed in two ways: (a) The stories have not been complete, and (b) the stories have been written in standard English for the time of publication. "In the 1700's and 1800's, the English had to be correct when it was written. We broke those rules." Repeatedly, he found translations of stories told with standard English syntax when he knew that was not how people spoke. His goal is to record stories as they are actually told complete with incorrect grammar, sentence fragments, and Northeastern Oklahoma dialect. While he would rather that someone hear the stories, he is passionate about the preservation of tribal stories written in the way that the stories were performed.

The same person also introduced a new problem with written English; this is the Internet. In his research, he utilized the Internet to see what other people were sharing. What he found disturbed him. "There are a lot of partial stories going on out there." Additionally, he found many falsehoods including supposed Cherokee stories with names and places that would not be Cherokee. He has

tried to contact the authors when possible but has found resistance. So, along with English book transcriptions, there may be further problems as new generations attempt to find heritage on the Internet.

The Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa storytellers included in this study all speak and understand their tribal languages and express a willingness to teach language to the younger generations. Some are working with youth and adults at this time. All agree that the efforts and the number of willing students must increase.

Duty

While all of the participants agreed that language was the most important factor affecting storytelling, the majority strongly expressed their belief that telling stories was their duty. "Storytellers have a responsibility to carry their cultural norms with them and to impart their values, customs, and traditions to successive generations" (Halverson, Puig, & Byers, 2002, p. 326). They hold the knowledge and to reserve that knowledge and not share with the community would be an aberrant idea to them. One Kiowa teller explained:

It is a life duty that was bestowed upon me by another person. Grandfather . . . was able to hypnotize. That was brought to the point of

my duty now. Now there are new storytellers, may not be from the same tribe, may be from other tribes. But that's the whole idea. That story that they retained is still being survived. It's part of history again. From their duty now they will teach the younger ones.

To this storyteller, to possess a story comes the responsibility of sharing that story. Duty is not a negative word. It is an honor and privilege because the Native American community views the community as more important than the individual. To share within the community is a privilege.

A Cherokee speaker "sees it not only as a duty, but it was what I was put here to do." In his belief system, it is not enough to know his language and stories or even enough to relate these to his family. He has to work with his people. So, he is working with a Cherokee language immersion program to bring language, culture, and stories back to the Cherokee people. He also works outside of this program to teach Cherokee classes on the college level. Furthermore, he volunteers his efforts to anyone who would want to learn. Repeatedly, the participants voiced the seriousness of the responsibility that had been given to them and that they accepted.

One Keetoowah speaker expressed this sense of duty further by stating that "everybody tells stories in some

form." He meant that on some level, every tribal member felt a duty to share knowledge. Another Keetoowah speaker echoed the idea that "everyone is a storyteller to some degree." A Creek storyteller combined the idea of duty and family together by saying, "I see it [storytelling] as a duty. Yes, I do. I really do. I think that every family should have a storyteller." His hope was that every family would have someone who knew the story of the family. While he hoped that there would be more public storytellers, he was emphatic that someone in each Indian family should take on this duty. In the Indian community, knowing who one's ancestors were is highly valued. Any formal, traditional introduction includes ancestral information. This is not done to show how powerful one's ancestors were, but it is done to honor them and to show that the speaker is a part of that family. It does not matter whether an ancestor was a medicine man or a thief; it is part of the connection that relates Indian people to one another. So, what the Creek man was emphasizing is the importance of stories continuing to be told within families. He felt that it was his duty to do that for his family. He also spoke publicly because he felt that it was his responsibility to talk to those Indian youth who were not raised in

traditional ways. Through both public and private venues, he felt honored to fulfill his duty.

A Creek storyteller expressed his willingness to share with others but felt that his first obligation was within his family. "I have a niece who is 17-years old who I tell stories to, so that when we're gone, she can tell." Although he speaks publicly, he felt that it was a family issue to continue the stories. Whether learned at home or within the tribe, he indicated that the stories must continue. "The stories are very important to the tribe because that's the history."

Several speakers described attempts to teach stories to someone else. All were hopeful that someone else in the tribe would take on this duty so that the stories would survive in oral form. All have shared stories with family and attempted to teach the stories to younger relatives. They expressed frustration and a sense of hope. The frustration was described as these men attempted to compete with video games, television, and computers to keep the interest of young adults. While the adolescents were respectful, they were trying to balance two worlds. Respecting culture was important, but so were friends, sports, and music. This can be a challenging conflict when a grandfather competes with a

grandson who asks, "Do you want to play a video game?" or "Grandpa, I can get this National Geographic movie of what you are talking about. We can see it on this tape."

The hope came from the possibility of seeds being planted. The grandson will remember some of what his grandfather taught him. He does have an interest in sharing with his grandfather even if his venue is second source, video, instead of first source, his grandfather.

The stories were being remembered. The hope is that it will take place within the family but also through sharing in public storytelling. One Kiowa storyteller recounted a story twice where he had taught a Sandai (a trickster) story to a future storyteller. He had told the story to a sixth grade class and had received a positive response. Six years later, he met a woman who told him that her son, now a high school senior, was in that sixth grade class. Her son had been required to make a speech his senior year. He had told the Sandai story that that Kiowa man had told him 6 years before. While the woman was apologetic that her son had copied the storyteller without his permission, the Kiowa man was thrilled.

I told her, it's more of an honor. It makes my heart happy that I relate to somebody. This person, now, can present my story and

now if he knows his own stories, can present those types of stories. He already has that part of knowledge he retained that knowledge to be able to carry that on - - the characters and everything.

The young man had remembered the story, had told the story, and would keep the story for others. The Kiowa storyteller felt honored that the young man had taken this responsibility from him. He knew that the story would survive and be told again.

Identity

Legally, each tribe has the "right to determine their own legal definitions of identity" (Garrouette, 2001, p. 224). To be given citizenship within a tribe is usually based on "blood quantum" (p. 224). An individual tribe can require one-half blood quantum, and until recently most tribes required one-quarter blood quantum. As each generation intermarries, the degree of Indian blood required by some tribe is becoming lower. During Principal Chief's Ross Swimmer's administration in the 1970's, the Cherokee Nation opened their rolls; that is, the tribe would recognize any member with any degree of Cherokee blood as long as the member could prove a blood relationship with a person found on the Dawes' Rolls. Given the wide range of legal requirements to be identified as a tribal member, American Indian identity

must have a broader meaning. So, Indian identity combines an individual's beliefs, values, connection to other tribal members, and participation within the tribal community. It requires, "a conscious act of reclaiming knowledge of a tribal self" (Teuton, 2001, p. 626). Storytelling contributes to Indian identity.

One Cherokee elder emphasized this point explaining, "Storytelling teaches us what life is all about. It tells us how we should live our life. It tells us what's right and wrong. It tells us how to look at the world and the environment." This is the importance that one Cherokee elder gave to storytelling. He felt strongly that the Indian identity was created, shaped, and affected by the stories that survived within the culture. He was not alone in holding these beliefs. A Kiowa elder expressed the same idea by saying, "When the songs and stories are gone, so are we." The Cherokees, Creeks, Keetoowah, and Kiowa people need to know their past to fully understand who they are and their connection to other people. Without that information one Creek storyteller said, "They just exist." "Thus, everybody has a story. Without it, you lose a piece of yourself. You really don't have that connection."

Storytelling can help Native people to learn about themselves and their connection to the past and to other Native people. Listening to the family stories can strengthen identity and a connection to ancestors. Listening to tribal stories can enhance knowledge of a people and one's connection to that people. The values, beliefs, humor, and history that tie each member of a tribe together can be transmitted while the stories and the storytellers are still here to relay the knowledge. These Native American storytellers are an integral part of making that connection to true full identity.

Repeatedly, the issue of identity was raised by the storytellers. In the 21st Century, how does one know what it means to be Native American? All agreed that it was determined by how one lived, and that how a person chose to live was determined by the lessons conveyed through stories that had been orally transferred from generation to generation for thousands of years. A Cherokee elder elaborated, "Indian identity is a sense of belonging - - something that no one can take away from them."

One Creek storyteller emphasized the need for stories to complete who Indian people are. "Storytelling needs to be passed on. When we don't know who we are, then we're always looking for something." The stories contain

the values, history, and spirituality that create a whole identity. Too many Indian people are still looking for their whole identity. Storytelling, traditions, history, and an Indian belief system can help them to become whole. Unfortunately, many tribal members have looked in self-destructive places for ways to make them whole.

Factors that seem to be related to alcohol abuse in this population include cultural dislocation (the feeling of not fitting into either traditional Native American culture or the general U.S. culture) Native Americans experience four times as much alcohol-related mortality, three times as much alcohol-related illness, and increased rates of alcohol-related accidental deaths, suicides, and homicides. (Thompson, 2000, p. 243)

Alcohol is just one example of a negative option for filling the void. Hopefully, through the sharing and the belonging to a community, a more positive way can be found to complete a whole, positive Indian individual.

"Our history lives so much in storytelling," explained one Kiowa elder. To remember tribal history was important to all the speakers. The Cherokee, Creeks, Keetoowah, and Kiowa all had tribal communities before the arrival of the white culture. There are stories that exist today that tell of that time. All four tribes experienced removal from their homelands to Indian Territory. All of the participants had ancestors who had

experienced removal. With that time, there was much sorrow that is still related today through stories. A Keetoowah storyteller related, "My grandfather told us about the hardships." Native American people are cognizant that a paragraph to a page in the history books is not enough to make that connection for today's young people. To know who they are today, young people need to know what their ancestors experienced. By knowing their tribal past, they can be better prepared to create tribal goals for the future.

Loss of Identity

Indian people live in a "cultural double consciousness" (Poupart, 2003, p. 88). This phrase is utilized to illustrate the two conflicting parts of Indian identity. After assimilation, removal, boarding schools, and living within mainstream culture, "American Indians have internalized . . . the dominant subject position" (p. 88). However, the second part of identity is pulled from "the telling of our experiences and stories in a continued oral tradition [to] resist the dominant culture's subject position" (p. 88). This conflict results in a loss of Indian identity.

All Indians in Northeastern Oklahoma live in two worlds. The fraction of time may vary from individual to

individual, but each American Indian here is in contact with mainstream American culture at some time. For some, this is on a weekly basis while for some it is a daily issue. One storyteller described it by saying, "When I wake up in the morning, I wake up a Cherokee person. I see the world as I was supposed to see it. But I have to cross over the line - - that invisible line to get to today's society. I have to work on that side." To live and function in two worlds results in a loss of identity. The amount of the loss is also different for each individual tribal member. While the storytellers accept that today's tribal members must exist in two worlds, they worry about the loss of identity because they have seen the losses of language and culture that have taken place in their lifetimes. The history of Northeastern Oklahoma is evidence of the loss of Indian identity and of assimilation.

First, Oklahoma was Indian Territory. After the forced Indian removal by the United States government to Indian Territory, each tribe lived together here, communally, as they had always done. The land was held in common. One Kiowa storyteller explained, "I didn't own the land; you didn't own the land; we owned the land in common." Then "the General Allotment (Dawes) Act was

passed in 1887 . . . in an attempt to force European values of individualism and private initiative on Indian people who lived and operated under a communal system" (Reyhner & Eder, 1988, p. 53). Government imposed allotment of land separated tribal members and forced individuals to own personal tracts of land. Native Americans in Oklahoma found themselves pulled apart by a program that also opened the door to opportunists who swindled Native Americans out of much of their land. "The general effect of allotment was an orgy of plunder and exploitation probably unparalleled in American history (Debo, 1940, p. 91).

Oklahoma does not have reservations. So, unlike Arizona and New Mexico for example, there are not large acreages that are tribally owned and community occupied. On most reservations, Indians living on reservations are a majority population within the boundaries of the reservation. Culture, language, values, ceremonies, and spiritual beliefs are easier to maintain in a reservation setting. In Northeastern Oklahoma, allotment, the transfer of tribal property to individuals, separated individuals and families resulting in more interaction with the mainstream culture. Language also changed as

the need to communicate and conduct business with the dominant culture progressed.

Because Oklahoma was Indian Territory before it became a state, there are many tribes represented within the state. The issue of multitribalism evolves from that fact. In repeated statements by the storytellers, the issue of knowing who one is also became knowing to what tribe an individual belonged. One Kiowa storyteller was particularly troubled by this loss of tribal identity. "I see a lot of that. They don't even know who they are. They've copied from somebody else." The reference becomes clearer with an example from Cherokee culture. Originally, the Cherokee did not participate in pow wows. They were known for the stomp dance. Today, there are Cherokee stomp dances, but there are also Cherokee pow wows and many Cherokees who participate in pow wows with other tribes. One Cherokee storyteller shared, "We put on one of the biggest pow wows every year, but we're not pow wow people. We're stomp dance people." Most of the interviewees expressed the concern that most of the younger Cherokee dancers probably did not even know that this ceremony was something borrowed from other tribes.

There are losses of tradition and ceremony. One Kiowa storyteller recounted a meeting that he had with his 94-year old mother. She said:

I'm coming close to my time. When I leave this world, don't mourn for me because today's generation doesn't know how to mourn. You have lost that. You cannot mourn the way that I've been taught. You cannot do that kind of mourning. You don't have that because it's gone. You can't act that part. It has to be the full part of that mourning. You don't know how, so don't mourn for me. Go on with your life because we've lost that way.

She was not being harsh; she was being generous and giving him permission to mourn in a mainstream way because the Indian way would be too hard on him and could not be done correctly. Although troubled, he had to accept that the loss of his mother would also be compounded by the loss of tradition and culture. She had taught him his language, beliefs, and stories to help him know who he was, but she was unable to teach him how to mourn in the traditional way.

Loss of tribal identity can also be found in storytelling. Certain stories originated from certain tribes. Although some concepts may overlap, the storytellers could separate a Cherokee story from a Creek story or a Kiowa story. There is uncertainty among them whether young adult tribal members know when they are

telling or listening to a story if a tribal affiliation could be made. Tribal members should know their own stories. One storyteller shared, "I know what stories are Cherokee stories. I research that." There was a consensus concerning the issue of telling stories from other tribes. All storytellers interviewed were adamant that a Native American storyteller not tell stories from other tribes unless they had received permission to do so. "With their permission, I can tell other tribal stories," one Keetoowah teller explained. They found it unfortunate that not all storytellers in the United States felt as they did, and they could site examples of stories being told from a different tribal member. The Kiowa elder storyteller felt very strongly that the telling of stories in a multitribal way was confusing to tribal identity and disrespectful. He stated that he knew tribal stories outside of his own tribe but, when asked, referred to someone within that tribe who would be able to tell that story. He hoped that other tellers would do the same. So, the loss of identity is compounded by tribal confusion as well as confusion with the mainstream culture.

One Creek interviewee's grandmother cautioned him that he must "remember who you are because if you don't,

there will be someone who will tell you who you are.” She shared stories with him that strengthened his understanding of who he was and how he was connected to other Creeks in his clan. However, she also recanted the loss of their Tribal Town’s ceremonial grounds. There were four men who were in charge of the grounds in the 1930’s. The grounds died out because they were not able to keep the traditions and ceremonies progressing. Some of the knowledge may have been lost on the Trail of Tears through the loss of their parents. Some loss may have continued with the separation of Tribal Towns through allotment. Her story of the loss of the ceremonial grounds is one example of a loss of opportunities for that generation and the generations following to keep the connection that strengthened their Creek identity.

The boarding school experiences were intended to assimilate Native Americans into mainstream culture. Even as late as 1964, one boarding school superintendent by the name of Pratt was quoted saying, “I believe in immersing Indians in our civilization and when we get them under holding them there until they are thoroughly soaked” (Marriott & Rachlin, 1969, p. 283). This assimilation was to occur even if by force. One teacher “on being transferred to a school in Oklahoma with

'notoriously bad' discipline, found the windows barred and the doors padlocked to keep students from running away" (Rehner & Eder, 1988, p. 93). The result was a lost generation.

There is a lost generation. All of the interviewees agree on this point. As a result of boarding schools, prejudice, and the intertwining with a dominant culture, elders passed less information in a sometimes subversive manner. Another factor was the youth, influenced by mainstream culture, were more involved with television and current music than with their elders.

Additionally, many in the lost generation failed to pass information on to their children conflicted with concern that their children "fit in" in mainstream schools and work environments. "My generation is really guilty of not speaking and teaching it [Native language] at home," one Cherokee participant shared. Many members of this generation are now attempting to find out who they are. After years of separation, they want to connect to their tribal communities. However, as one Keetoowah storyteller expressed, they have created a barrier for themselves which will take time to overcome. "They are inside a box. You have to overcome that box.

You can't open it. It took a long time to build it. You have got to keep asking."

Some members of this generation have lost identity but are asking for knowledge because "I want to teach my children. What I do today is going to affect my grandchildren." The storytellers expressed a belief that this knowledge would break down a barrier for youth and allow them to know who they are and also assist them in teaching their children so that the cycle of barriers does not continue.

"We're losing people who are telling stories," lamented one Kiowa storyteller. These people are sharing our "culture, history, and traditions. Once that is lost, we won't be here," he continued. This fatalistic projection demonstrates a fear of the ultimate loss of identity. It echoes the words of other storytellers whose larger fear would be that Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa would just become names without meaning.

Gender

All of the participants in this study were male. This was not planned but rather was the outcome. While several women were approached, they were reluctant to participate or referred a male instead. There are female

Indian storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma, but the number is small. They have made a powerful but more private impact within the storytelling community.

When talking with the interviewees, all of them related hearing stories from males and females. One Creek man related, "When I was growing up, I heard stories all the time from my mother and my father." This was common in the home. However, in Northeastern Oklahoma, the majority of public storytellers are male, and their numbers are small. Among the Cherokee, Creeks, Keetoowah, and Kiowa tribes, there are fewer than 15 people who could be classified as public storytellers. Of those, less than 3 are female. Two females, both Cherokee, were approached to be interviewed. One agreed to be interviewed but repeatedly postponed the meeting. This could have been because of the interviewer's lack of experience, concerns about contributing to mainstream knowledge outside of her tribe, or uneasiness about overstepping traditional roles within the Indian community. Some of the male participants felt that the issue of gender roles was the most contributing factor. They noted that while she was known to tell stories within the communities, she was not known to speak to large groups or to non-Indian audiences. She had filled

a male role by telling stories outside of her own family, but she was hesitant or did not feel the need to share.

One Keetowah man commented, "It's an ego thing. Women haven't needed to speak publicly because they don't need to prove themselves." He felt that the woman's power was within the home. He did not mean this in a chauvinistic way. When he elaborated, he explained that the Indian male ego would be expressed more in a public venue. He was almost embarrassed for males in his explanation. He knew the influence of Indian women was immense, but he thought that that influence was gained in a more humble way. He knew that the influence of Indian men was also immense but felt that influence was gained in a humble but acknowledged way. The males would give credit to the Creator, elders, or the community for the stories and the opportunity to share the stories, but they would also gain from presenting in a public venue.

Susan Lobo (2003) in a story describing American Indian communities, found that "women are strong but low-profile" (p. 1). She cited several women including a woman named Delphina whose "kitchen was the place to go to find out what was happening in the community. Delphina never spoke in public nor sat of boards. Yet, she held great influence and respect in the community.

People always felt warm, safe, and cared for in Delphina's kitchen" (p. 7). What Lobo related is found throughout American Indian communities. Women have power, and those Indian women who opted to use that power publicly were accepted. However, many Indian women gain their respect and affect other's lives in a more private manner.

Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma are primarily male. Male interviewees shared stories learned from both genders but mostly from grandfathers, father, uncles, or male family friends. If the stories had come from a female in the family, it usually was told within the home and rarely in a larger setting. These stories were usually bedtime stories or stories with lessons. All participants were certain that there were stories told privately between mothers and daughters, but when they told of storytellers at ceremonies, dances, or community meetings, they discussed males. "When I was a child, it was the males who told the stories. My mom told within the family, but not in a community setting," explained one Cherokee storyteller. While the gender roles have shifted in some areas of Native American culture, public storytelling in

Northeastern Oklahoma is one area that has remained predominately male.

In recent years, there have been a few public female storytellers. Most of the participants in this study felt that all interested Indian youth should be given the opportunity to share their tribe's stories, so possibly the next generation will see more female storytellers. The fear of identity loss may supersede the usual practice of storytelling being in the male domain.

Preparation

When asked how he prepared to tell stories, a Kiowa man replied, "I go into the woods for 4 days and fast." Then he laughed. Then, he seriously answered that he did "consider beforehand who my audience is - - whether they are young or old, Indians or not." He voiced what all the storytellers expressed. The main issue of preparation was being cognizant of who the audience was. The telling of stories improved with repetition. No one shared that they practiced before presenting to the public because most believe that the stories come to them. The Kiowa storyteller did share, "I can feel my grandfather talking through me. I can see him, his gestures, and hear his tones."

In fact, the Kiowa storyteller remembers clearly how unprepared he was the first time that he told a Native American story to an audience.

I was required to take a speech class as a college freshman. I didn't go sometimes. One day, the teacher said, "We will begin presentations today." I looked around and all the students had index cards with notes on them. I prayed that I wouldn't be called, but I was. I borrowed some cards from a friend and went to the front of the class not knowing what I was going to do. Then, I started talking like Grandfather did, telling a Sandai story. I got an A. I felt so guilty that I confessedShe said that I could keep the A if I would tell the story again for a meeting that she had the following week. I said, "Okay." I was thinking maybe 20 or 30 people. When I got there, there were all these people, probably over 300. I couldn't believe it and didn't think that I could do it. I walked out on the stage and silently asked Grandfather to help me. Then I started talking and out it came. It surprised me because I had never thought about being a storyteller until that day. And it all happened because I wasn't prepared.

The question of preparation can be answered by looking at these men's lives. They have heard many of the stories that they tell their whole lives. This was a natural way to prepare. Additionally, all of these men attribute their stories to previous generations which may be an example of expressing humility. They credit the elders that have been in their lives, not themselves.

Teaching

The Cherokees, Creeks, Keetoowah, and Kiowas all have taught through storytelling. All participants were taught values, skills, and history through stories, and all participants have transferred this knowledge through stories to a new generation. Storytelling was the natural teaching tool. "Storytelling plays a special role in Indian culture because it avoids the appearance of personal criticism while teaching culturally congruent values and behaviors" (Red Horse, 1980, p. 490).

One Kiowa respondent felt that education was storytelling. "Storytelling is no different than preparing and teaching a class. You don't read to them. You talk to them. Tell them a story. They will remember that story a lot more than when you read it to them." What he knows intuitively is supported through educational research, but he has experienced it in community, home, and public school settings.

One Keetoowah man remembered his parents using storytelling as teaching in his home. "When I started using it as a teaching tool, I realized that those times that I thought that I was getting in trouble, they were teaching me. They were teaching me the stories. They were teaching me the lessons behind those stories. Even

today, when I have a problem, I remember those stories."

Today, he uses those stories to work with Indian youth.

Today, the way I teach is that when I go to a school, I always introduce myself and I say, "If there's just one person among you that picks up these stories and continues to teach them, then my job has been done." I measure my teaching success in the following way: I am blessed. When I go back out into the community, they will ask me, "Chooch, tell me this story." I say, "You tell it to me first." They tell it to me in their own words, and I smile because I know that story has stayed with them. I encourage them to go home and ask their grandfathers and grandmothers for stories.

In his work, storytelling is a powerful teaching tool and an opportunity for grandparents to relate and teach their grandchildren.

One storyteller also teaches the Cherokee language to adults. He uses stories to reach his students. He also asks them what they would like to learn. "I ask them what they would like to learn at the end of each session. They tell me, and I search it out." He naturally understands that adult education must be student-directed to be effective. He innately understands what Knowles (1980) states as principles of adult learners including "involving participants in diagnosing their own learning needs" and "encouraging learners to formulate their own learning objectives" (p.

120). The Cherokee storyteller continued, "As an instructor, I need to feed the hunger that they have instead of feeding them what I want to give. They [the students] have a tendency to learn a little bit faster if they're learning something that they want." His approach supports the research in adult education that adults are motivated more when they contribute to what is being learned. Adult learners need to have "autonomy, empowerment, and self-direction" (Galbraith, 1998, p. 8).

Even around the drum, teaching occurs in song and through storytelling. Three of the men in this study sang publicly as well as told stories. It is a good match. The stories and the songs support the culture and teaching within the tribe. When young Indian adolescents are learning to drum and sing, they are taught the important skills and values through stories. As an elder and teacher, the Kiowa adult storyteller tells the youth the significance and history of what they are singing. When he talks to the young people, he "is really storytelling to let them know these things and how important they are." When the youth know, understand, respect, and feel the power of the songs, then "it all comes alive" in the singing. They must learn this from elders through stories. Being told how to sing a song is

not enough. It will be forgotten. Through storytelling, the knowledge will last.

Storytelling and teaching also are vital to the sweat lodge or purification ceremony. The sweat lodge ceremony is a ritual that is separated into four parts or rounds. It takes place outdoors in a small homemade dwelling covered with hides or canvas. Inside, there is a small space for people to sit around a hole in the center. Outside, there is a fire that heats rocks that will be brought in to the lodge in four stages. It is a religious ceremony, but some slight deviations can be seen from leader to leader. The singing of songs, telling of stories, praying, and giving thanks take place within these four rounds.

To participate in this ceremony, one must kneel and enter on hands and knees. "You're on the ground, low down to Mother Earth because you're gonna go back there. When you leave this world, that's where you're gonna go, so you humble yourself there," the Kiowa storyteller explained.

During each level, rocks are brought in and put into the center. Water is poured onto the rocks to create a hot, steam-filled, dark environment. "If your spirituality is right when you start these levels, by the

second level, you're comfortable. That doesn't mean you're not hot, but it's all right. That fourth level is supposed to go by too fast. Everything is all right - - gone on four or five hours. Those four levels go with the four corners, the four directions, the four seasons." The center is "the circle of life. When you understand that, it kinda makes sense of who you are," the Kiowa participant shared.

To understand the concept of Native American identity requires teaching through storytelling. One sweat lodge leader prepares adolescents for the sweat lodge experience through storytelling. He may tell a story about a healing ceremony or of an experience in the hills gathering sweat lodge stones. He will prepare them for the ritual and reassure them that he will not allow them to experience shame or embarrassment. This teaching process is important today because of the lost generation. Many adolescents did not have this knowledge passed down to them, and while they would desire it, they might never participate if not taught and encouraged. So, teaching fulfills two roles. One role is the passing of history, values, language, and beliefs. The other is the teaching process to prepare participants to enter into cultural ceremonies. What was once common knowledge

that was naturally handed down to each new generation is now held by a few who can effectively teach to revitalize.

Tribal Differences

This study investigated Native American storytelling in one area, Northeastern Oklahoma. Initially, many similarities were found in the areas of ceremonies, values, and communal spirit. However, the historical backgrounds, languages, and current levels of restoration are different and require further explanation to fully comprehend the storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma.

The Cherokee

The Cherokee Nation Tribal Complex is located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. This tribe is the second largest federally recognized tribe in Northern America with the Navajo Nation being first. Its tribal membership is 201,000. The Cherokee people originated in Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee before the expansion of the European settlers and the discovery of gold in land owned communally by the tribe that had been negotiated in a treaty with the United States Government. Gold and Manifest Destiny combined with President Andrew Jackson to dislocate the Cherokee people. Although the Cherokee people fought the removal in court and were awarded their

lands by the Supreme Court, the President's refusal to recognize this ruling resulted in the Trail of Tears, the forced relocation of the Cherokee people from Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee to Indian Territory in Northeastern Oklahoma. At the time of removal, there were approximately 16,000 Cherokee members. By the arrival into Indian Territory, "4,000 of the Indians who started on 'The Trail of Tears' died of dysentery, malnutrition, exposure, or exhaustion before they reached Oklahoma" (Woodward, 1963, p. 23). This tragic event is part of Cherokee history and part of what makes Cherokee people Cherokee. Several of the interviewees can relate family history back to names of family members who survived the Trail of Tears.

The Cherokee people brought unique ceremonies with them. One ceremony that is known outside of the tribe is the stomp dance. The stomp dance originated as an expression of Cherokee religion. The participants include drummers and dancers. All Cherokee members attending are eligible to dance excluding only those women who are menstruating. The dance starts around the drummers, such as in a pow wow setting, but differs from the social pow wow in that there is a leader who is followed single file with alternating genders forming a

long spiral. For some Cherokee members, this is their main religious ceremony while some members also attend organized religious services in addition to attending the stomp dance.

The Cherokee language was first an example of orality, but by "1821, Sequoya developed a syllabary representing sounds in his language and was used in the tribal newspaper the Cherokee Phoenix" (Reyhner & Eder, 1988, p. 31). Sequoya's hope was that his syllabary would help to preserve his culture.

The Keetowah

Keetoowah sources relate that this tribe originated as part of the Cherokees and originated along the Tuckasegee River in North Carolina. The name Keetoowah refers to "the covered or protected people" (Leeds, 2000, p. 2). The Keetoowah bands require a higher blood quantum for membership (one-quarter) than the Cherokee Nation does. This requirement is a result of the Keetoowahs maintaining a higher blood quantum since encountering other cultures. The Keetoowahs section into four entities: "the United Keetoowah Band of the Cherokee, two groups of NightHawk Keetoowahs, and the Cherokee" (p. 1).

Between 1760 and 1799, some members of the Keetoowah, or Kituwa, began a migration to Arkansas to avoid the European invasion. By the time of the Cherokee arrival, many Keetoowahs were already living in Northeastern Oklahoma and Western Arkansas and became known as the "Old Settlers". There was conflict between these two groups which even extended to fighting on different sides of the Civil War (Leeds, 2000, p. 120).

Until 1968, the Keetoowah members had offices within the Cherokee Tribal Complex. However, during this time, their relationship dissolved and a new tribal headquarters had to be established. At the present time, the Keetoowah Nation is headquartered outside of the Tahlequah city limits on the Illinois River. It is also a federally recognized tribe.

The Keetoowah ceremonies closely resemble the Cherokee ceremonies with the stomp dance as the central expression of religion. The Keetowah speak the Cherokee language because they were originally one group. Because of the Keetoowah people were mostly full-blood at the time of removal and because of the effects of the open enrollment of the Cherokees, a higher percentage of the Keetoowah people than Cherokee people speak the Cherokee language.

The two interviewees from the Keetowah Band are NightHawk Keetoowah. They were the youngest members of this study. In their forties, they both tell stories within the communities and schools. This represents a shift in the lost generation. This shift is mainly evident in the Keetoowah population. The original band to break with the Cherokees consisted of mainly full-bloods. Efforts have been made within this group to maintain a higher blood quantum than the Cherokee tribe which opened their rolls. This emphasis makes a difference in the rate of loss and assimilation within the NightHawk Keetoowah Band.

The Creek

The Muscogee Creek's history reflects a matrilineal society that existed in Tribal Towns (Braund, 1990, p. 239). The Creeks originated in Georgia, Alabama, and northern Florida with "most of the population concentrated in interior settlements along major rivers" (p. 239). The matrilineal system meant "that children traced their family descent through their mother's line" (p. 240).

The Muscogee Creek Indians were known as mound builders. They created earthen pyramids that were used in religious practices. The Creeks were actually

separated into the Upper Creeks and Lower Creeks before removal. The Lower Creeks experienced more influence from the Europeans (Braund, 1990, p. 239).

As did the Cherokees, the Creeks were forced to move from their homeland through the Treaty of 1832. They resisted and were removed by force in 1836 and 1837.

The Civil War was a hardship for the Creeks. They first experienced battles and loss of lives while still neutral. Then some Creeks fought for the South, and some fought for the North. Even when the war was over, Reconstruction negatively affected the Creeks. They lost 3.2 million acres of land within Indian Territory during the Reconstruction of the South.

Like the Cherokees, the Creeks were torn apart by allotment. Individual property was not the Creek Way. They were accustomed to tribal towns. Land was lost through many dishonest transactions with those outside of the tribe.

The Muskogean language family includes the Creek language as well as Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Seminole languages. The Creek language was an oral language only until the 1840's when missionaries worked to create a written language to transcribe the Bible. Since that

time, the written language has been used for tribal newspapers and, today, for Creek language classes.

The Kiowa

The Kiowa originated in the northern Rocky Mountains, near the headwaters of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers (Schnell, 2000, p. 159). At one time, the Kiowa people migrated to the Black Hills but were forced out by the Cheyenne and Lakota. By 1833, "they had centered their lives near the Wichita Mountains in Southwestern Oklahoma. In 1867, the Medicine Lodge Treaty required the Kiowa to settle on a reservation" (p. 159). The reservation life was extremely difficult for a tribe that had never been agricultural and had migrated to hunt buffalo. Unlike the Five Civilized Tribes who had farms and schools, the Kiowa relied on the government for food once they were forced to locate and stay within a small area. In contrast to their ability to self-sustain before mainstream intervention, the reliance on the US government caused disillusionment and even some confusion. The Kiowa storyteller shared an example.

They would be given all kinds of rations. It was the Rainy Mountain agency at that time. Then they would depart for another month. As they were leaving, you're talking about plains Indians who lived from the wild game and our buffalo and now they're caught there, they couldn't do that hunting, no more

buffalo. So, they got their meat from beef itself, but the soldiers gave them other items that they were never exposed to in their life. It never grew around here, so how do they know how to prepare and eat it? They would give us them big bags of rice. Okay, they don't know what rice was. So, what they described it as is dried maggots. Rice was dried maggots. They were trying to get them to eat dried maggots. As they would come across that creek, they would get that rice and they would throw it in the creek. The creek would turn kind of like white, but everybody would do that. When they got together, they would talk about what they got. They would tell people, "Don't eat that. Those soldiers are trying to kill us with those dried maggots. Oh, no, they might come alive, and they might eat your insides out."

The Kiowa who were used to hunting were governed by a system that offered foods that they had not experienced. Without a knowledge of a farming system, the Kiowa lost "any chance of the tribe maintaining a self-sufficient economy" (Schnell, 2000, p. 159).

The Kiowa also were affected by the Dawes Act which required allotment of land to individual tribal members. Like the Cherokee, Keetoowah, and Creeks, lands were lost through allotment and "land deals and outright swindling soon deprived tribal members of many more acres" (Schnell, 2000, p. 159). Although from a different geographic location, the Kiowa people experienced many of the same losses when they encountered mainstream culture.

This study centers around Northeastern Oklahoma. The Kiowa elder who participated was born in Southwestern Oklahoma, but he lives within the boundaries of the Cherokee Nation. He has resided in this area for more than 30 years. He still returns to his homeland but has his family and friendship ties in this area now. He has been one of the premiere Northeastern Oklahoma Indian storytellers for over 30 years.

The Kiowa people speak the Kiowa-Tanoan language. It is related to the Pueblos of the Rio Grand Valley in New Mexico. According to the 1990 census, there are approximately 1,092 Kiowa speakers. Of the three languages, the Kiowa spent the longest period in a state of orality. There were signs of pictographic representations on buffalo hides, but there was no written language until recently. It was the last of the languages in the groups in this study to be developed into a written language, and even today there are several different syllabaries for the language. Even with the attempts at producing a written language, the results are minimal compared to the Cherokee and the Creek language programs. Elders in Southwestern Oklahoma may still speak the language, but most do not write it. It is an oral language. The Kiowa elder in this story speaks

Kiowa fluently, but he, himself, expressed concern that he is not speaking his language enough because of his distance from Southwestern Oklahoma. "When I go home, I find that I understand more than I speak anymore. I can still communicate, but speak a little bit differently than my relatives back home."

Early Kiowa tribal ceremonies included the Sun Dance, a 10-day ritual that culminated in self-mutilation and visions. This ceremony was outlawed by the United States Government after the Kiowa were forced onto the reservation. The last officially documented Sun Dance ceremony was over 100 years ago. Today, the Kiowa participate in Gourd Dances and a sweat lodge ceremony that includes the use of religious peyote.

Similarities and Differences

The similarities between the four tribes are the most recognizable. However, the differences still affect the tribes, the stories, the language, and the tribal identities. These differences also affected this study in two ways. First, the state of proficiency in tribal languages differs between the tribes. Second, the four tribes experienced differences during Indian removal.

While all four tribes have experienced language loss, the levels and approaches for revitalization are

different. The Cherokee and Creek Nations have the most concentrated efforts for language restoration at this time. Both tribes are working with language immersion through their Head Start programs, and both tribes offer language classes within the communities and at the area colleges. Of the two tribes, the Cherokee Nation has more full-time language immersion teachers. However, due to open enrollment, it has lowered the percent of tribal members who speak the Cherokee language. The enlarged efforts to teach the Cherokee language has also brought some of the tribal stories to a new generation.

The Keetoowah Band was once a part of the Cherokee Nation (or the other way around), so the language spoken is Cherokee. Because the group that separated and became Keetoowah was largely composed of full-blood members, the Keetoowah have had more success in maintaining the Cherokee language than the majority of Cherokee tribal members did. While assimilation also affected the Keetoowahs, the percentage of Keetoowahs who speak their tribal language is higher than the three other tribes. Because language and storytelling are related, the Keetoowah has the youngest representation in this study.

The Kiowa language maintained orality for a longer period of time than the other three tribes. Today, most

Kiowa speakers are not literate in the Kiowa language. In 2001, Gonzales published a Kiowa primer which has yet to be adopted.

The Cherokee and the Creeks both experienced forced removal from the east through the Trail of Tears. Both tribes lost their homelands to the discovery of gold and Manifest Destiny. They share a similar history which they do not share with the Keetoowah and the Kiowa.

The Keetoowah were originally part of the Eastern Cherokee but decided to avoid the European invasion by agreeing to move west voluntarily. Although they experienced hardships, they did not experience the suffering and the vast loss of life that was part of the Trail of Tears for the Cherokee and the Creek tribes. When the Cherokees arrived in Indian Territory, the Keetoowahs were already here and became known as the Old Settlers. Resentments between the two groups even resulted in deaths in both tribes. So, without the same history, the stories passed down to the next generation were not the same. Old stories from the homeland still were shared in common, but historical stories split between the tribes.

The Kiowa also experienced forced removal like the Cherokee and the Creeks, but the Kiowa were Plains

Indians, hunters, and warriors. These warriors met removal with violence but were moved onto the reservation at Fort Sill in June of 1875. Unlike the Creeks, Cherokees, and Keetoowah tribes, the Kiowa were not an agricultural group. Even after placement at Fort Sill, there was rebellion before the tribe agreed to remain on the reservation. So, historically and geographically, the Kiowa stories contain different elements than the other three tribes.

The stories told by the different tribes are not all the same. For example, Cherokee stories that relate to woodland animals, agriculture, and removal differ from Kiowa stories of horse raids, migration with teepees, and plains' plants and animals. It is important to recognize these differences, but the tribes also share commonalities in their stories. All four tribes have themes including origins, animals, tricksters, and mainstream invasion. The differences complicated this study when determining themes, but the commonalities that evolved strengthened the shared values, beliefs, and teachings that reflect American Indians.

Learning Strategies

Assessing The Learning Strategies of Adults (ATLAS) and Philosophies Held by Instructors of Lifelong-learners

(PHIL) instruments were used during this study to determine teaching and learning strategies of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma. Seven of the ten participants agreed to take the instrument. In fact, the same three storytellers did not complete either of the instruments in this study because they felt that it was "too much of a white influence." These three storytellers participated fully in the interview sessions but after viewing the flow chart form of the instruments refused to complete the two adult education instruments because "they do not measure in our world. It is like measuring apples and oranges." Respecting the wishes of the people was an integral part of gaining the interviews, so their refusals were accepted with an understanding and with politeness. The three dissenters were quite cordial and forthcoming in all other matters.

ATLAS then moves the learner to another choice until the learning strategy preference of the learner is determined. The instrument can be read or given orally. Six participants read the instruments, and one received the information orally by his choice. Those who participated found the instrument to be accurate in describing their approaches to teaching and learning storytelling. For the seven who completed ATLAS, five

were Problem Solvers, and two were Engagers. Of the three that did not complete the instrument, their reference to abstract ideas in stories and their attention to detail in their storytelling would strengthen the finding that teaching Problem Solver skills would benefit future storytellers.

Problem Solvers

Problem Solvers use critical thinking skills, generate alternatives based on resources, are comfortable with abstract ideas, and are descriptive and detailed in their answers (Conti & Kolody, 2004, p. 186). This was the group with the highest representation. Five of the seven participants self-identified as Problem Solvers.

Storytelling is an example of critical thinking skills. The story selected must connect with the audience present, and the answers to questions regarding the stories must be carefully thought through. An effective storyteller is constantly generating alternatives that will relate to the group whether the group is young, old, Native, or a mixed ethnic group. This component makes these men effective at what they do.

The abstractive nature of storytelling is evident. They are the guides for their audience to events, people, and animals that are not present. They take these

abstract concepts and guide their audiences to an understanding that is more concrete. These men are wonderful guides in this process.

Being descriptive and detailed are indicators of why these men are known within Northeastern Oklahoma for their oral craft. Ghost Bear (2001) describes the Problem Solvers' motto as "Ask them what time it is, and they will build you a clock" (p. 381). Ask storytellers about a current or historical event, and they will recreate it in words, actions, and detail. Be prepared to spend some time. One Keetoowah man described a Kiowa storyteller's attention to description and detail by sharing, "[Without Jake], your imagination has to come up with those characters, but when you see Jake perform those stories, you see what it takes you to see those characters." All of these men create mental images for their audiences by describing, demonstrating, and repeating details that allow the audience to connect. Through self-identification and through their discussions, actions, and storytelling, these men match the Problem Solver category for adult learners and truly "enjoy the process of telling the story" (Conti & Kolody, 2004, p. 186).

Engagers

According to the ATLAS research, Engagers are "passionate learners who learn with feelings, learn best when they are actively engaged, enjoy the work that they do, and relate to building a relationship with others" (Conti & Kolody, 2004, p. 187). Two of the storytellers identified as Engagers. Feelings were important to these men. For both of the men, these stories evoked feelings of grandparents, parents, plus positive and negative events in their tribe's history. So, feeling would be unavoidable. One Cherokee Engager related, "I love telling stories and interacting with my audience. Every time is different because I am reaching a new group of people. That makes me feel good." Clearly, the social relationships that he had with his audience members were important to him. He was able to make a connection with his audience which is valuable to Engagers, and he was able to reach his audience in a helpful way which was enhanced through his Engaging approach.

Navigators

"Navigators are focused learners who chart a course for learning and follow it" (Conti & Kolody, 2004, p. 185). As this group approaches a learning situation, they "demand order, are logic oriented, and want

schedules and deadlines" (p. 185). This strategy did not match any of the seven.

Storytelling defies order and at times is spontaneous. Many of the stories told contradict mainstream logic such as origin stories. Additionally, although "Indian time" is a stereotypical term, each man started at his own pace, and each finished when he was done. No one finished because of time constraints. They finished when they were done even if the timing interfered with another obligation. They were very much in the present giving their full attention as they would replicate with the next obligation until it was finished.

Navigators are perfectionists (Conti & Kolody, 2004, p. 185). The issue of perfectionism is important because this term can be confusing to oral presenters who often credit their storytelling skills to a higher power or to family and ancestors. One Cherokee storyteller said, "I ask the creator to use me as a teaching tool." This man could not see his actions as perfect. If the storytelling session went well, the creator had worked through him. Another Kiowa storyteller remembers his grandfather when he tells stories. "I remember him and talk to him. I ask him to help me tell this story." In his mind, he is passing on his grandfather's words and

not his own. Because of this characteristic, the Navigator grouping was empty.

Philosophy

Philosophies Held by Instructors of Lifelong-learners (PHIL) can also be read or given orally. All were read. After taking the instrument, the participants are able to read about the five schools of thought and give feedback as to the accuracy of placement. All seven agreed with the outcomes of the instrument. There were six Humanists and one Realist. There were no Idealists, Pragmatists, or Reconstructionists.

Humanists

According to the Description of Philosophies in PHIL, Humanism "focuses on the individual and believes that individuals are always in transition.... Learning is viewed as a process of personal development which seeks to provide learners with options" (Conti, 2005, p. 4) and "the role of the instructor...is to be a facilitator" (p. 4). Six of the storytellers identified with this school of thought. After reading the description for this school of thought, one commented, "This is the one. I am a facilitator."

This school of thought is an ideal match for the Native American storytellers in Northeast Oklahoma. Even though they held the knowledge, they would wait until a person was ready to take in that knowledge. The idea of people being in transition meant that not everyone would be ready at the same time. So, stories might be entertainment for some of the audience, be lessons for some, but may be internalized with only a few. This was okay. "If one person leaves with this story and the desire to learn more, then I have done my job."

Humanism also promotes self-understanding. This is a goal for the storytellers. They would like to be the guides to a better understanding of the self, the community, the tribe, the history, and the individual's place within the tribe. Many Native Americans are struggling with self-identity because of living in two worlds. Storytellers can help guide the lost.

Realists

According to the Description of Philosophies in PHIL, Realism "holds that reality exists independent of the human mind.... This philosophy... strongly supports the use of the scientific method.... The role of the teacher is to present material systematically" (Conti, 2005, p. 4) and to develop the learner's rational powers.

One participant identified as a Realist. He is a storyteller and a Cherokee language teacher. When teaching Cherokee language, he "teaches the syllabary as the base of language acquisition." This step-by-step approach is supported by Realism. In answering the stems in the instrument, he felt that he could identify more with the statements as a language teacher than a storyteller.

ATLAS was beneficial to this study because the majority of storytellers reported a learning strategy that was supported by detail. The inclusion of detail in storytelling assisted these men in creating a visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic connection with their audiences through words. Additionally, the introspection revealed strategies that the storytellers felt that they could strengthen and could help strengthen in others. ATLAS gave them a common vocabulary that they could share with adult learners. The inclusion of teaching Problem Solver skills to all future storytellers would benefit new storytellers regardless of personal learning strategy. What makes the current storytellers effective is their ability to create abstract, detailed accounts that pull their audiences into the stories. This is a

Problem Solver skill that could be taught to the next generation of storytellers.

Summary

The number of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma has diminished. As the elder storytellers lose the stamina to relate the stories publicly, the number of young Indian storytellers needed to replace them is not enough. Language issues, assimilation, and attempting to balance two worlds work against the continuation of oral traditions.

Traditional families that include storytelling as a part of the family structure still exist. Both female and male adults are sharing traditional stories within many private family structures. However, the public venue for storytelling is dominated by a reducing number of male presenters. Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa children who are growing up in families who follow more mainstream practices are losing avenues for hearing and learning from stories in the public venue.

Historically, the losses of stories and storytellers came from the interference of the mainstream culture. The United States government forced Native Americans to move from their homelands into a government system that included boarding schools that resulted in a loss of

language and culture. The same government required Native Americans in Northeastern Oklahoma to separate from usual communal living to allotment of lands to individuals by means of the Dawes' Rolls. The loss of language and separation of Native peoples resulted in a loss of stories and storytellers.

Through this loss, the storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma have accepted the duty of keeping the stories and the languages. All of the interviewed storytellers maintained fluency in their tribal languages and positively accepted the responsibility of keeping the remaining stories safe and sharing the stories with those who would listen.

While positive people, these men also are fearful. The storytellers are fearful that there will be a further loss of the tribal stories or that the oral tradition will be replaced by cold, incomplete transcriptions in textbooks. They are fearful that the loss of tribal languages that has already resulted in loss of identity will continue and that stories will no longer be told in tribal tongue.

The telling of stories in English is already happening. The majority of time that these men present is in English because their audiences are primarily

English speakers. They understand that Native Americans in Northeastern Oklahoma live in two worlds and that the mainstream world speaks English. They recognize that there is a lost generation that has missed traditional teachings due to mainstream interference. To reach today's young generation with traditional teachings, they are willing to speak in English, but they recognize that the stories will not be the same as in their native language.

The Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa tribes are establishing language revitalization programs. At this time, the Cherokee immersion Head Start program is seeing the most success, but the loss of language skills when these students leave this program is high. The attempts to teach adults has been mixed with the programs that incorporate approaches of andragogy meeting with the most success.

There have not been organized efforts to teach storytelling publicly. Each of the participants has attempted to teach stories to children and adults. The most successful attempts have occurred within their own families, but several have had young adults return to them and be able to tell stories that the students learned from the storytellers. This is pleasing to these

men, but they would like to see more opportunities for young adults to learn storytelling.

Of the ten storytellers who participated in this study, seven participated in the instrumented learning section. The ATLAS results found that five men self-identified as Problem Solvers and two men self-identified as Engagers. The experience from other uses of ATLAS in which Problem Solvers question the validity of ATLAS suggests that the three who refused to complete ATLAS may have been Problem Solvers.

These men are willing to assist those who would preserve oral traditions because they are cognizant of the importance and impact that these stories possess. "The importance of life itself was taught to me a long time ago. To be able to leave it with someone is mandatory. Our lifespan is so short that if it is not left for someone ... then all of our existence is gone," shared one Keetoowah storyteller. These men are working to prevent such a loss. They are working to maintain tribal languages, traditions, values, and stories, and they are anxious to involve others.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Study

The number of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma had declined. Elder storytellers in the Cherokee, Keetoowah, Creek, and Kiowa tribes were concerned that there were not Native American storytellers to replace them when they were no longer able to tell stories. They expressed apprehension that the loss of storytelling would result in loss of culture, history, and identity for the next generation. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify the teaching and learning strategies of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma to clarify the storytelling process for future generations.

This was a descriptive study that followed a constant comparative format. Participants in the study were identified by recognition from their tribes in the area of storytelling and were interviewed using research questions and were asked to complete the PHIL and ATLAS instruments. All 10 of the participants were audiotaped at least once. Most were interviewed twice. Some follow up phone calls were made to verify information.

The interviews were transcribed and reviewed for common themes. The results from the PHIL and ATLAS instruments were compiled from those participants that completed the instruments. The themes were constantly compared, refined, and relationships between categories were created. These themes were validated through the transcripts and further discussion with the participants. The final validated themes created an accurate description of the storytelling process and the conditions that affect that process.

The themes were family, language, duty, identity, loss of identity, gender, preparation, teaching, tribal similarities and differences, the low number of storytellers, and learning strategies.

Family

All of the participants discussed the value of family within the Native American communities. Many of the storytellers were raised in extended families where grandfathers and grandmothers still told stories that influenced their understanding of right and wrong, their history, and their beliefs. They expressed fear that the extended family living together was less evident today and were concerned that this was resulting in less family storytelling.

Language

All participants spoke their Native language and used that language in prayer and ritual. They recognized that this was a critical time for the Cherokee, Creek, and Kiowa languages and expressed support for Native language classes. However, they related that the loss of language had already affected storytelling. Stories could not be accurately translated into English. Humor was lost. Lessons were abbreviated or were incomplete. Terms that were easily understood in the Native language required so many descriptors in English that the meaning was lost.

There was acceptance that publicly stories would have to be told in English because that would be the language understood by the majority of public audiences. In the last two generations, the storytellers had adapted Native stories into English using the closest translation to the original possible.

Duty

The theme of duty was not included in the original research questions, but resulted from the interviews with the storytellers. Repeatedly, the term duty was expressed. To possess a story came with the duty to share that story with others. The sharing might have

been within the family or publicly, but it was shared. The men viewed this duty as a privilege.

Identity

The participants were in agreement that storytelling contributed to Native American identity. While each tribe had legal definitions for determining membership, the storytellers voiced a need to broaden the definition to those who understood their tribal history, beliefs, and lived a life based on those factors. Their stories related history, beliefs, values, and rituals that would assist Native Americans in understanding who they were. The participants saw the survival of culture tied to the stories told within that culture. Understanding tribal stories filled a void within a person and made them whole.

Loss of Identity

The negative effects of mainstream culture on storytelling were shared by all of the participants. They shared the effects that Removal, boarding schools, and the Dawes Allotment Act had on Native Americans. Lives, storytellers, and stories were lost during the forced move to Indian Territory. Tribal languages were lost at boarding schools which resulted in the loss of stories. Additionally, the youth were separated from

their extended families where they would have learned their tribe's stories. The Dawes Allotment Act pushed families to further separation which resulted in a loss of storytelling time and contact between generations.

The participants felt that there was a lost generation who had not been adequately taught their language, culture, and their tribal stories. One result was assimilation of many of these Native Americans into mainstream culture. Another result was multitribalism as one tribe's stories were being told by other tribes. Both losses created a Native American person who had lost who he was. Knowing and telling the Native American stories from the correct tribe was important to all participants.

Gender

Originally, both females and males were asked to take part in this study. Only 10 males participated. In Northeastern Oklahoma, there were 14 storytellers who met the criteria for this study. Three were female. Two were approached, but neither woman participated.

When the male storytellers were questioned, they responded that they had heard stories from females, but that these stories had been shared in small or home setting. The public storytelling domain was primarily

male. The influence of both sexes was evident in storytelling, but the males influenced the public venue more.

Preparation

When answering the question about preparation, the participants responded that they did little preparation that was overt. Their preparation had occurred naturally from hearing the stories repeatedly throughout their lives. Several storytellers viewed themselves more as conduits for ancestors who had told the stories before them. When questioned again, the remaining storytellers concurred.

Teaching

Initially, not all of the participants regarded themselves as teachers, but, as the process and interviews continued, all concurred that they were teachers of history, values, and beliefs. They innately understood that more will be remembered if told in story form.

All of the participants had attempted to teach stories to others with varying degrees of success. There was a separation of purpose that was identified. Sometimes storytelling was used to teach history, values, and origins. Sometimes storytelling was used to teach a

process such as drumming, singing, or the sweat lodge ceremony. Regardless of purpose, all of the storytellers viewed storytelling as a valuable teaching tool.

Tribal Similarities and Differences

Participants in this study were from four different tribes: Cherokee, Keetoowah, Creek, and Kiowa. Therefore, their stories are not the same. The Kiowa stories are plain's stories with tepees, plain's plants and animals, and migration for hunting buffalo. The Kiowa maintained orality the longest. The Creek stories involved a matriarchal structure with mound building as a focus. The Cherokee stories involved Stomp Dance ceremonies and forced removal. The Keetoowah stories involved separation from the Cherokee tribe and Nighthawk affiliations. Each tribe's history, location before arriving in Indian Territory, and language affect the stories that their storytellers tell. Additionally, the storytellers were certain that each tribe's storytellers should only tell stories from his tribe.

However, the participants also recognized the similarities in the backgrounds and stories of the four tribes. All of the tribes have origin stories. All of the tribes have stories related to forced Removal. All four tribes are dealing with loss of language, effects of

mainstream culture, and multitribalism. While all participants agreed that each tribe should tell their own stories, they concurred that all storytellers could work together to develop strategies to strengthen storytelling.

Low Number of Storytellers

While the original estimate made by the researcher was that 25 Native American storytellers existed in Northeastern Oklahoma, that number was too optimistic. After researching with tribal elders, the number of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma who spoke publicly, were recognized by their tribe, and had attempted to teach others was actually 14. Of this number, 10 were interviewed.

Learning Strategies

Seven of the 10 participants completed the ATLAS and PHIL instruments. Three selected not to participate in this section of the study because "it was not of [their] world." From the ATLAS instrument, it was determined that 5 self-identified as Problem Solvers and 2 were Engagers. Problem Solvers are descriptive and detail oriented which correlates well with storytellers. Engagers enjoy the social aspect and relationship building which is also beneficial to the storytelling

process. From the PHIL instrument, 6 self-identified as Humanists and 1 as a Realist. Humanists view themselves more as facilitators which correlates well with a Native American approach to education.

Summary

The findings of this study were in the areas of family, gender, identity, loss of identity, language, similarities and differences, learning strategies, teaching, duty, preparation, and the low number of storytellers. These led to conclusions and recommendations in the areas of public and private venues, identity and its loss, the loss of story integrity, the influence of ritual on storytelling, teachers as facilitators, and priorities.

Public and Private Venues

Storytelling takes place in both public and private venues.

The role for males and females differ for storytelling according to the venue in which the story is being told.

The present private and public venues are not structured to sustain Native American storytelling in Northeastern Oklahoma.

Storytelling can occur in private and public venues. Stories can be told in the home and at social and spiritual gatherings. Traditionally, these two venues

were natural portals for the telling of stories. In the 21st century, these two venues are not structured to include storytelling at the level necessary to sustain it in Northeastern Oklahoma.

Storytelling is comprised of private and public venues. The private venue is located in the home. One Keetoowah storyteller heard stories from his grandfather "in the evenings and at bedtime." Having extended family in the household was a practice that is changing. The mainstream norm of the nuclear family has influenced Native Americans in Northeastern Oklahoma and has resulted in elders living separately from their children and grandchildren. While family is highly valued, it is no longer a conduit for storytelling.

All of the storytellers had shared stories within their families, but many were frustrated with attempts to compete with video games, television, and computers. When sharing stories with his grandson, one Kiowa storyteller recalled interruptions by his grandson who asked, "Do you want to play a video game?" While the grandson wanted to include his grandfather in his life, the grandson's priorities were different than the grandfather's. These shifts in the family structure affect sustaining storytelling.

The participants voiced a need for family storytelling. One Creek storyteller thought "that every family should have a storyteller." Some Native American families have a storyteller, but most have family members who know a few stories but are not fulfilling the potential of telling them. The recommendation would be to encourage more families to incorporate multi-generational storytelling time. If this time were prioritized over time with Playstations and sitcoms, storytelling could be sustained and move towards revival.

The role of the parental figures in the households needs to include storytelling. Young Native Americans today need the connection to their own family's past. Additionally, they need the teachings that come from traditional stories. Family nights, bedtime stories, holidays, and family gatherings can include the telling of stories. Young people and adults who missed the storytelling experience can be involved in this time.

Because there is a lost generation in storytelling, some middle-aged Native American individuals may not know their own tribal stories to share with their children. These family members could talk with elders, tribal headquarters, continuing education, or colleges with storytelling classes to learn and understand tribal

stories that come from their tribes. Then, the focus could return to the family setting.

The environment today is very fast paced. Days are filled with work, school, activities, and obligations. Leisure time is sometimes spent without verbal communication between family members. Television, CD's, video games, and telephones serve to separate family members from verbal interaction. The stories and messages found in mainstream media cannot effectively teach the culture, history, and values that tribal stories can. The fast-paced cycle that encompasses today's families needs to change. It is not reasonable to eliminate modern forms of entertainment entirely, but they can be limited. Time can be allotted to the sharing of stories. Parents need to take back the values education of their children. Mainstream values found in media need to be balanced with traditional Native American values. This is happening in some families but not in enough families. Children need to be taught the stories that relate the history, values, and beliefs of their culture and family. This can start in the home with mothers and fathers and be supported in the community.

The public storytelling venues can be found at large social gatherings such as pow wows, church, schools, and regional events. Events that primarily revolved around storytelling are few and have not been well attended. One Keetoowah participant explained, "We tried to have a Turtle Island Storytelling Festival here, but it was not well attended. I have seen them be successful elsewhere, but around here things are prioritized differently." So, he continues to tell stories at public schools, pow wows, and at the Cherokee National Holiday and talks with other storytellers about their desires for more involvement with the Native American community in this area.

Gender

One approach to strengthening public storytelling involves gender. The public storytelling venue, which reaches the most people, is almost exclusively male. Lobo (2003) found that Native American women were "strong but low-profile" (p.1). As a result, with over half of the population not publicly participating, this has contributed to the reduction of storytellers and the loss of stories.

Male storytellers in 2005 have many time constraints. All of the participants in this study work outside of the home. Only one man has storytelling as a

small section of his job. So, storytelling is accomplished outside of the regular work week framework.

Women have time constraints also. However, if both sexes were equally encouraged to publicly present stories, then the outcome would be a higher number of public storytellers. Many women do know stories from their tribes but have limited themselves to telling them within the home. The knowledge is there, but it has been limited to private venues.

While women have not been excluded from public storytelling, they have not been encouraged. Public speaking has not traditionally been a female role in the Native American community. The role is changing, but the change is being seen more in caretaking and political venues. More Native American women do speak to groups regarding health issues such as giving information about mammograms, diabetic screening, and services for children. This is a continuation of the home and the role of care giver, and it is not a role of entertainer. Women share facts that will benefit the community. Yasaitis (2003) recommended "both the mother and the grandmother must transcend what used to be the bounds of the female sphere" (p. 78). This role is powerful for women and should be extended to include the sharing of

stories. Each year, more elders within the Native American community die; each year wisdom and stories are lost with the deaths of these men and women. Women need to be encouraged to share their knowledge publicly before it is lost. The traditional roles for public speaking have cost too much already.

Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa women need to be encouraged to participate in public storytelling. At the present time, there are only a few public female storytellers within the four tribes. The private venue has been occupied more by females. There is an unseen wall of tradition that limits these women.

Women can be good role models and excellent speakers. They should be encouraged to tell stories publicly. Because of the small numbers of storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma, it is no longer tolerable for the role of women storytellers to be restricted to the private venues. Encouragement needs to be given for women storytellers to tell stories publicly. There are a few women who already tell stories to larger groups and are recognized by their tribes, but this is a resource that needs to be strengthened. Strengthening and expanding the role of female storytellers will strengthen the values, beliefs, and traditions of the tribal

community and offer positive female role models to this generation of Native youth.

The door is open. Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa women need to be encouraged to walk through it and in addition to roles as homemakers, professionals, politicians, and care takers, add the role of storytellers to their accomplishments.

Mentoring

In the public venue of storytelling, tribal organizations, public and private education, and vocational training programs have opportunities for strengthening the storytelling process and increasing the number of storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma. Existing entities such as Sequoyah High School and Talking Leaves Job Corp hold possibilities to reach adults and transitional adults.

A mentoring program needs to be implemented to develop storytellers. This mentoring program would most reflect the apprenticeships that were integral to teaching in the four tribes before the Anglo-Saxon influence. Respected elders would guide young adults by demonstrating storytelling skills, relating stories, working with the student, and introducing the student to the community as a storyteller.

In this area, two sites are the most logical places to implement mentoring programs as pilot programs: Sequoyah High School and Talking Leaves Job Corp. Sequoyah High School is a Native American boarding school outside of Tahlequah, Oklahoma. It is a tribally run high school. Although it is under the apices of the Cherokee Nation, all four tribes would be represented at this site. Transitional adults come to Sequoyah not only for academics but also for cultural foundation. Some students enter with a knowledge of their culture while others have been affected by the lost generation and are eager to learn about their tribes in a search to understand who they are. A mentoring storytelling program would be a perfect fit for these students.

Talking Leaves Job Corp is a vocational center outside of Tahlequah, Oklahoma. This site would have young Native American adults from the Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa tribes. At this time, there is a mentoring program in place for drummers. Elders meet with students one evening a week to teach them songs used by drum groups, drumming skills, and respectful elements surrounding the setting up, drumming, and taking down of a drumming area. A mentoring program for storytelling would be a natural extension of this process.

Elders have expressed a willingness to give back to the next generation. Indian youth have expressed a desire to learn traditional ways. Mentoring would be the perfect connection.

At this time, funding for the two mentoring programs would have to be presented to the Cherokee Tribal Council for a vote. The budget should not be extensive because no rent or utilities would be necessary. These meetings could take place in the dorms or recreation centers already used by the students. Evenings and/or weekends would probably work best for students and working mentors. Some materials might be needed, but there would be a minimal cost. Providing food to the students would not be an issue because both sites have snacks available for students. Soft drinks for the mentors should be provided. Dorm staff are already be on duty, so supervision of students would not be a funding issue. The main cost would be the monies for the elder storytellers. The participants whose health is good would probably be willing to participate on a rotating basis for a minimal fee. Some would volunteer time. Those elders whose health might preclude them from regular participation could participate sporadically when their health allows. Taking these factors into

consideration, the proposal would show a minimal cost with much in-kind contributions. If the Cherokee Nation education budget could not cover all expenses, the Nation would be a valuable resource for writing grants that could include mentoring. These two sites could be pilot programs that could be adapted and brought to communities at a later date with the Sequoyah and Talking Leaves Job Corp transitional and young adults mentoring others.

While this program concept is formulated within the educational programs already housed within the Cherokee Nation, other tribes would benefit. The Cherokee, Keetoowah, Creek, and Kiowa Nations all have students who attend school at both sites. This program could also be a pilot for the Keetoowah, Creek, and Kiowa tribes to use as a model for building mentoring programs with storytellers to work with their youth.

Public Schools

Storytelling must continue to be an oral tradition. As Goody (1995) states, "The oral form is intrinsically more persuasive" (p. 50). Oral transmission holds more power than reading or even viewing tribal stories through multimedia. A storyteller can hold a live audience's attention and relay a message that could never be fully related in print or even on DVD. A true storyteller

connects with the audience to fill a need. This need can be met with more venues for oral storytelling.

While there are some public schools that occasionally invite storytellers to share their talents and messages in annual programs, the opportunities for storytelling in more public schools are immense. In Northeastern Oklahoma, Native American students make up 51% of the public school population (SchoolReportCard, 2001). These students need to be served. The Johnson O'Malley programs (JOM) offer services to Indian students in public schools. Some services include school supplies, assistance with money for senior year expenses, and after school tutoring. These components are extremely valuable, but JOM could be also an excellent vehicle for promoting Native American storytelling. JOM could support storytelling in two ways.

First, speakers could be incorporated into the school day. At this time, one storyteller enters public schools on a somewhat regular basis. The opportunity is there to utilize these powerful teachers. JOM, the tribes, and Parent and Teachers Organizations could assist with funding and with matching in-kind (volunteer) time as an incentive. Grant writers could also include Native American storytellers in school grants that

emphasize character building, mental wellness, and educating the whole child. Through sources such as these, the funding could be found to support storytelling in the schools.

Storytelling is a natural match for the public school setting. Speech classes constitute an obvious match. Students could critique the orator's skills and prepare stories for presentation. English/Language Arts classes could enhance vocabulary, strengthen plot identification, and further writing skills. Social Studies classes would benefit from historical stories from a viewpoint that might not always be shared in the traditional classroom. The whole school could benefit from lessons taught and character built through the sharing of stories.

Second, storytelling classes or workshops could be instigated for students. Students could elect to take a class in storytelling for credit. Stories could be taught orally to these students along with the stories' meanings and public speaking skills. Stories from different tribes could be shared with an emphasis on students telling stories from their tribal affiliation or gaining permission to tell stories from other tribes. Enrollment would be open, so students without tribal

affiliation could learn their culture's stories or gain permission to tell tribal stories.

Trained students could present to their schools, to other schools, and at community events. These students would reach more community members. These students would also hold the stories for the next generation.

During each tribe's holiday events, storytelling exhibitions could be added. These exhibitions would give children, teen-agers, and adult storytellers the opportunity to prepare and entertain audiences. These events would expose today's Indian youth to storytelling as a part of Indian life.

At this time, the number of Native American storytellers is declining in this area. By offering more opportunities for public storytelling, it is possible to change this. However, these opportunities must be developed soon before there is further loss of human resources.

The Loss of Storytelling and Identity

The loss of storytelling correlates with the loss of identity.

A culture is as strong as its shared connectedness to its history, beliefs, values, and ceremonies. This connectedness evolves from stories. Sarris (1991) found

that "oral discourse...and culture are inseparable and specific to particular people as the people interact with one another from a shared knowledge base" (p. 7). Garret (1996) supported this need for connection to stories when he found "it is through our stories that we come to an understanding of ourselves, the world around us, and our relationship to everything in that world" (p. 6).

Oral traditions connected Native American people who now reside in Northeastern Oklahoma. Historically, the history, beliefs, skills, and values within the tribal communities were passed from generation to generation through the telling of stories. Orality was a strength among these people. While stories were being shared, the Native American people knew who they were. From interactions with mainstream culture, the history, beliefs, skills, and values of Native people were negatively affected. Forced removal to Indian territory, loss of language, boarding school forced assimilation, and allotment resulted in a weakened group of individuals striving for the strength of community.

Storytelling can bridge or balance the two worlds that Native people face, and help them to clarify their identity. When two cultures are in constant contact, a blending of those cultures may occur. The blended state

is referred to as acculturation (Garcia, 1992, p. 24). The Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa people live daily balancing the state of acculturation. While the federal government's attempts to assimilate the Native Americans have diminished, the results of the past mandates have resulted in these four tribes interacting daily with both mainstream culture and with other tribes. The result is a struggle to maintain tribal identity both concerning separation from mainstream culture and concerning separation from other area tribes.

Knowledge of tribal stories aids in ownership of tribal identity. For Native American people who participate daily in mainstream culture through such aspects as school, work, church, and shopping, retaining tribal identity means overcoming mainstream hurdles that are necessary to adequately provide a family income. Values, beliefs, and culture that have been transmitted through storytelling can sustain and guide the Native American through a day in the mainstream culture. Without these teachings, Native people are lost and possess an emptiness that mainstream culture is quick to fill. Without these teachings, Native people find spirituality and values from the pervasive messages found in a media and system that misrepresents them. It is not

that Native Americans need to isolate themselves from outside forces, but, rather, they need a solid base to interact with another world and feel whole without having a void that can easily be filled with self-destructive practices. Identity cannot be overvalued. Erikson identified eight stages of crises that correspond to eight stages in life (Slavin, 2003). In each of these stages, humans are struggling to understand who they are (p. 49). This understanding is strengthened by culture, and culture is strengthened through the oral transmission of history, values, and beliefs from one generation to the next generation.

Knowledge of tribal stories aids in ownership of specific tribal identity. Oklahoma was first Indian Territory. Tribes were placed in close proximity to each other by the United States government. This has resulted in a second type of acculturation: the blending of tribal cultures. While individual tribal histories can usually be clarified, individual tribal cultures can be difficult to separate. Tribal cultures are meshing together. The Cherokee tribe historically practiced a stomp dance ceremony for religious purposes. The early Cherokee did not have pow wows. However, time, and the intermingling of tribes have contributed to the Cherokee

Holidays which includes one of the largest pow wows in Oklahoma.

Stories have also been affected by the close proximity of tribes to each other. Some stories are now claimed by more than one tribe. This confusion is futhered by some commonalities in themes between the tribes' stories. However, correct identification of tribal stories is still possible and must be respected.

Cherokees need to know what it means to be Cherokee; Creeks need to know what it means to be Creek; Keetoowah need to know what it means to be Keetoowah; Kiowa need to know what it means to be Kiowa. While this may sound obvious, acculturation between the tribes has led to a multitribal identity. This has occurred through confusion and Native American emphasis on hospitality.

Many young Native American adults have areas of confusion categorizing songs, stories, ceremonies, and practices to specific tribes. This can lead to a level of uncertainty that affects personal identity.

Hospitality is a positive attribute but has contributed to the multitribal identity. The sweatlodge is one example. To have a multitribal group within the sweatlodge is common. Natives would not exclude someone who asks to enter with respect and pure intentions.

Additionally, many sweatlodge leaders invite outsiders who they feel would benefit from the experience. The result is a mixture of tribes within a ritual.

To aid in welcoming other tribal members, visitors are encouraged to share in their own language, sing their own songs, and practice their rituals surrounding their spirituality. The unity developed in the sweatlodge is powerful and does not end with the opening of the flap after the final round. The connectness continues for all involved and may contribute to the confusion. This is only one example that is played out in many different circumstances between tribes in Oklahoma. A positive attribute has led to a continuation of mixed identities.

Schools have contributed to a loss of tribal identity. Native Americans are grouped together as a mass enemy or a suffering people in much of K-12 American history. If tribal names are referenced, often the names are given in mass which results in misunderstanding the distinction among the unique tribes. Multicultural classes are offered that, usually with good intentions, share Native American culture as one entity. Art classes have students develop Native American art that may belong to tribes found outside of Oklahoma or may not even belong to any Native American tribes.

While Native Americans do share some qualities, each tribe is an individual entity. This fact has been ignored too long.

Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa storytellers recount tales that weave each unique community together. They connect Native people by reminding them of mutual history, beliefs, traditions, and language. Unfortunately, each generation has experienced a decline in recognized storytellers who hold the knowledge that is vital to the Cherokee, Creeks, Keetoowahs, and Kiowa people residing in Northeastern Oklahoma. The loss of these stories has resulted in a loss of distinctive tribal identity.

Efforts need to be made now to strengthen Native American identity through the correct classification of stories to each of the four tribes. Research is needed to correctly link Native American stories to the tribe of origin and then care taken to correctly identify each story every time that it is told publicly.

More stories need to be told in the public and private venues so that the Native Americans in Northeastern Oklahoma regain knowledge and ownership of their stories. As they regain the knowledge of their beliefs, values, history, and ceremonies, that knowledge

can empower them to understand who they are. Many Native American people in Northeastern Oklahoma have a piece of their identity missing. Storytelling can supply that piece that will create the whole.

Story Integrity

The integrity of Native American stories in Northeastern Oklahoma is being lost.

Historically, Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa stories were passed verbally from generation to generation in the Cherokee, Creek, or Kiowa languages. Storytelling was a common occurrence and stories were repeated often. The storyteller and the audience spoke the same language, shared the same history, and held the same points of reference. Today, those factors have changed. The stories that are being told are primarily told in English. Written transcriptions are often flawed or only partial stories. The audience and the storyteller may not have shared experiences. Storytelling is not a common experience that occurs on a regular basis, and many Native American adults and children in this area may hear a particular story told only once. All of these factors have lowered the content integrity of the stories told today.

Language and Orality

The sharing of a common language is invaluable in any culture. Communication of values, beliefs, history, and securing a connection to the community requires a mutual understanding of a common language. Much is lost in translation. The power of language within an Indian community results from speaking and understanding the tribal language.

Through boarding schools that punished students for speaking Cherokee, Creek, or Kiowa languages and allotment which isolated Native speakers from each other, the numbers of fluent Cherokee, Creek, and Kiowa language speakers has been greatly reduced. The loss of language correlates with the reduction of storytellers. Telling stories in English instead of in the Native language has negatively affected the power of the lessons, history, and humor expressed in previous generations. At this time, a Native speaker can translate and explain the differences between a story told in a tribal language and its English translation. Each year the number of people who hold this knowledge decreases. "Our world is defined by our language; our existence is defined by our language. Some day, we will call to the mountains where our ancestors dwell and wait forever for an echo that

will not return - because the . . . mountains have forgotten their Indian names" (Smelcer, 2004).

The numbers of Cherokee, Creek, and Kiowa language speakers need to increase to preserve the languages and the stories that connect Native people.

The three languages (Cherokee is spoken by both Cherokee and Keetoowah tribal members) need to be taught orally and with application to daily lives. At the present time, most adult Cherokee, Kiowa, and Creek language classes present the learners with words. This approach has not been successful. Knowing unrelated words is not conducive to retaining language. "Our languages must be taught in the context of every day conversation, not as isolated words. We acquire fluency by speaking" (Littlebear, 2000, p. 9).

Current adult language classes emphasize writing as a means to learning a tribal language. While this may be helpful to some visual learners, most adult learners would benefit more from practice with real-life conversation. "Writing will never dispense with orality" (Ong, 2000). The Native American culture learns more effectively through oral language. It is more of an apprenticeship culture where values, beliefs, spirituality, history, and skills are shared orally and

experientially. To be shared correctly, Native language is imperative. This use of Native language is necessary to acquire the "communal identification" (2000) that holds the tribes together. The four tribes are presently working to maintain their Native languages. These efforts could be furthered developed to increase fluency through real-life usage.

The issue of writing the tribal languages and translating the Native stories into book format is an issue that evokes feelings. While the writing of stories may preserve these stories for future generations, the oral telling of the stories creates the power.

"Gestures, vocal inflections, facial expression, and the entire human, essential setting in which the real, spoken word occurs ... (aids) words to acquire their meanings" (Ong, 2000, p. 47). All of the interviewees were in agreement. Their stories could, and some have, been written in Native languages and in English, but the result is a poor transmission of the original. The need for the inflection is demonstrated by two Kiowa words that are written exactly alike but have totally different meanings depending on the inflection of the voice. In this case, a simple inflection changes "thank you" to "I am going to kill you." Once again the emphasis and need

for the oral transmission of stories is strengthened. Otherwise, the next generation will have lost the power of inflection, gestures, and movements that make the Native stories the powerful teaching tool that it was intended to be.

There is power in the spoken word. Ong (2000) defines "techne rhetorike" from the Greek language to mean speech art referring essentially to oral speaking (p. 9). Before there were written words, this speech art was the primary source for persuasion. This speech art was power. Goody (1995) also references the power of oral language when he states, "The oral form is intrinsically more persuasive" (p. 50). In early years, the Native American storyteller held the power to persuade, teach, preserve, and entertain. With the reduction in the number of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma, there is a reduction in the oral power to persuade, teach, preserve, and entertain. This loss negatively affects the culture of American Indians in Northeastern Oklahoma.

The opportunities to hear Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa storytellers are few. What was once a common occurrence before books, television, and computers has now become a rarity. Today, there are more

opportunities to read translations of these stories, but reading is not the same as hearing the stories and does not have the same impact. Translations may emphasize the wrong sentence, word, or name or might not explain the importance of pauses, phrasing, and/or a play on words (Phaswane, 1998, p. 80). The reader is often lost because the stories were meant to be heard.

The oral telling of stories supports the Native American culture. Sarris (1991) found that "it is impossible to separate ... 'oral discourse' and 'culture' as they are inseparable and specific to particular people as the people interact with one another from a shared knowledge base" (p. 7). Orality involves the telling of stories within a culture. These stories have power and references that may elude an outside listener but that can be understood by members of that culture. This common bond further connects the community. Losing the oral connections damages the community and reduces the commonalities that unite individuals.

Potential is a key term in discussing storytelling. Storytellers hold the potential of life for every story. However, there is also the potential for elders to leave this world without telling the story. For some stories, there are many holders who may pass on the story. For

other stories, the story may die with the elder. The potential for such loss is overwhelming. The potential for creating venues for oral storytelling is immense. The history, beliefs, values, and persuasive power of tribal communities will be determined by the decision of potential.

The Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa people support community. Their existence as tribal entities relies on this support. Storytellers convey the common beliefs, values, history, and traditions that connect community members to one another, but they must be heard. Readings, tapes, and videos will not ever impact and support a community as much as sharing the common experience or oral presentation. The tribes in Northeastern Oklahoma can work to find, develop, and support public venues for storytelling. The results for the tribes will be immense because "culture is a series of communicative acts" (Goody, 1995, p. 37).

The Cherokee, Creek, Keetoowah, and Kiowa Nations need to expand their cultural outreach programs. At this time, there are language classes offered for the Cherokee, Creek, and Kiowa languages. These language programs need to be taught through a storytelling approach to help connect the language to real life. This

is being done through the Cherokee Nation Headstart program. The same approach needs to be taken in the adult language programs. Learning in context with real-life application will enhance any language program.

College and continuing education Creek, Cherokee, and Kiowa classes can be used to reach the missing generation of speakers. The early education systems resulted in the loss of Native American languages; this system should be responsible today to help preserve the languages and increase the number of Creek, Cherokee, and Kiowa speakers.

These classes need to build upon each other. Two semesters is not enough to master a language and the cultural traditions associated with it. The universities and tribal councils can work together to develop a six semester program. Such a program would benefit the colleges, the tribes, the communities, and especially those students who can take the languages back to the K-12 classroom. The state of Oklahoma is making a concerted effort to support alternative certification for Native American language speakers in the K-12 classroom. The colleges and the tribes need to take this opportunity to educate those who will influence the next generation.

K-12 education can reintroduce Native languages into their curriculum. An intermediary program can be placed in elementary schools to fill the gap between the Headstart immersion programs and the college experience. While some Indian students may take Cherokee or Creek classes if they attend Sequoyah High School, this is a small number of area students, and, even those students have missed years of reinforcing what was learned in Pre-K. Northeastern Oklahoma schools receive funding for each Native American student enrolled at each school. Now is the time to service those students with language and storytelling classes. The current efforts are weak and supplemental. A program modeled after the Shady Grove Elementary School where the Cherokee language is infused throughout the Pre-K through eighth grade could benefit Indian children through this area. This one public school program needs to become a demonstration site for other area schools. Through language immersion, Pre-K through eight grade classes, community tribal language classes, continuing education, and college credit language classes, the efforts to teach the Cherokee, Creek, and Kiowa languages can and should be extended.

The Role of Tribal Storytellers

In this study, all of Native American storytellers knew their Native language. The majority were fluent speakers. These men are practiced in using real-life application to convey lessons. Therefore, they would be valuable assets in the teaching of Native languages.

Two of the men already contribute by teaching the Cherokee language in Northeastern Oklahoma. Both men hold Oklahoma teaching certificates. They have developed classes that intertwine the storytelling and the language and have found this to be a natural match. They should continue in this work.

The remaining participants do not teach their languages publicly, but they have taught them within their families. Because of other obligations and health concerns, teaching to groups within the community may not be the best and healthiest use of their time. However, they should be involved in the development of language programs. They could work with certified instructors to create better language programs by enriching the programs with stories and real-life application. These men are natural adult education teachers and understand learning styles differences. They understand teaching what is appropriate for filling the gap in knowledge based on the

adults' needs. While they are telling stories in an auditory perceptual style, they naturally include movement and description of characters for the visual learners and emotion and actions that involve the tactile/kinesthetic learners.

These natural skills should be tapped for the tribal language programs. These men may be too humble to understand that they are experts. Their expertise should be used in the planning of Cherokee, Creek, and Kiowa language classes which could possibly culminate with a storytelling session with Native stories told in original tribal languages. The language programs now are much better than classes in the past. They could be further enhanced by adding these people as resources and consultants.

Tribal Story Integrity

The participants were certain that storytellers should tell stories from their own tribe. This action will strengthen the knowledge of stories within a tribe as well as maintain respect necessary in a multi-tribal environment. This element of training must be taught in Native American storytelling classes, in apprenticeships, and in the family teaching structure.

One participant shared an experience when someone asked him to teach a story from another tribe. The storyteller told him that while he knew the story, he did not think it right to do so. Instead, he suggested members of that tribe to talk to and learn from.

Storytelling teachers may be working with groups who are multitribal. The instructor then needs to facilitate not only the telling of stories but also the understanding of respect.

Teaching

Storytellers are teachers who facilitate learning through stories.

Six of the seven participants who completed the PHIL instrument self-identified into the Humanism school of philosophy. Conti and Kolody (2004) identify Humanism as a philosophy in which "the role of the instructor is to be a facilitator" (pp. 181-192). This was verified in responses from the participants. They viewed themselves as facilitators or guides in the teaching/learning process. They facilitated learning through stories. "Storytelling plays a special role in the Indian culture because it avoids the appearance of personal criticism while teaching culturally congruent values and behaviors" (Red Horse, 1980, p. 490). Through

stories, these men guide adults and children. Instead of saying, "This is not the Native American way" the men can share a story about beliefs and behaviors that will guide the listener to understanding.

The Humanistic attribute of facilitation should be recognized as a valuable teaching tool when teaching Native American students in Northeastern Oklahoma. The Humanist participants in this study can act as guides to connect the private and public worlds. They can guide students in understanding individual identity and its connection to the community. They can guide through the storytelling process to further understanding of identity, history, and culture. They can guide the research to correctly identifying Native American stories and classifying them with the correct tribe. They can guide and strengthen the lost generation. The storytellers hold information that can benefit Native American people in Northeastern Oklahoma, but they will not force this information onto anyone. They offer the information to guide those who want guidance.

Another identifier in the Humanist philosophy is "the focus on the individual" (Conti & Kolody, 2004, pp. 181-192). This emphasis on the individual may seem at odds with the Native American value on community. The

participants fully valued community. However, they believed and accepted individuals where they were in the learning process. One Keetoowah storyteller shared, "I teach to the individual.... no sense in following the public school example of teaching everybody the same stuff at the same time." He believed and other storytellers concurred that they had to start where the individual was in order to be effective. They valued community and saw teaching to the individual as the most productive method for reaching the individual and connecting the individual to the Native American community.

Priorities

Storytelling is not recognized as a high priority among Native Americans in Northeastern Oklahoma.

Storytelling revitalization is not a high priority in Northeastern Oklahoma. There are no storytelling classes offered by the tribes or within the communities. When asked, the storytellers recount plans that did not develop or attempts such as the Turtle Island Storytelling event which no longer exists because of low attendance.

One Kiowa storyteller recalled being asked to be part of a storytelling class. "They had big plans, but nothing ever happened. Now, I don't think that it ever will."

One Keetoowah storyteller has storytelling as a small part of his job with the Cherokee Nation. He was pleased when he had opportunities to go into the communities and present stories in public schools. However, when asked about his desire to expand storytelling during the Cherokee Holidays, he listed five other areas that tribal leaders had prioritized for his time before he could address storytelling. He shared "Several of us talked about doing more with storytelling. We would like to have a competition at the Holidays, but we have been saying that for years." He continues to offer storytelling suggestions, but is aware that they will probably not be used.

All of the participants share stories and teach to adults and children. They respond to invitations to tell stories. They have seen the impact that storytelling can make. All see the potential and would like for storytelling to be valued as a teaching tool in the Native American community.

To gain support in Northeastern Oklahoma, storytelling would have to be recognized as a high priority by the Cherokee, Keetoowah, Creek, and Kiowa tribal governments. The recommendations from this study will be presented to council members from all four tribes. It is the hope of the researcher and the participants that the recommendations for mentoring, classes, and expanded programs for sharing stories will be supported by the tribal administrations. Otherwise, the number of storytelling will continue to decline and with it a decline in Native American identity.

Storytelling and the Problem Solver Process

Problem Solver characteristics strengthen the storytelling process.

Problem Solver skills can be taught.

Problem Solvers use critical thinking skills, generate alternatives based on resources, are comfortable with abstract ideas, and are descriptive and detailed in their answers (Conti, 2005). All 10 storytellers who participated in this study were successful in transferring stories because they were descriptive and detailed. One Keetoowah storyteller explained, "Watch and listen to Jake. He makes it so that you can see the plants, the animals, even hear their voices." Without

the Problem Solver skill for detailed description, the audience would not fully experience the stories that were told. This does not mean that only those people who self-identify as Problem Solvers should be storytellers. This means that Problem Solver skills would strengthen any mentoring program that was teaching young adults to tell stories. These skills can be taught, and the result would be better storytellers who could create another world for their audiences by including detailed elements that would evoke mental pictures of abstract places and ideas that would strengthen the relationship between the story and the audience.

The storytellers in this study were able to generate alternatives based on the audience to which they were presenting. This is a Problem Solver skill. They were able to present effectively to children, teenagers, adults, Native American audience, and non-Native audiences. To accomplish this, they expanded ideas for some audiences, simplified ideas for other audiences, and selected stories that would make the most connection with the audience present. Therefore, it is not surprising that the majority of storytellers in this study self-identified as Problem Solvers. Again, this does not mean that only Problem Solvers should be encouraged to learn

to tell stories. It is evidence that Problem Solver skills could be included in the teaching of storytelling to the next generation. They would benefit from learning to generate alternatives that would assist them in relating to a variety of audiences.

When teaching new storytellers, it is important to develop the Problem Solver traits that can be found in all adult learners. Navigators and Engagers will bring other skills to the art of storytelling, but they can also be taught the process of storytelling through the process of Problem Solving. The end result will be detailed, descriptive storytellers who will be able to generate alternatives that will connect effectively with a variety of audiences. This outcome would be a high measure of success.

The goals of this research were to describe the value of Native American storytelling in Northeastern Oklahoma to today's tribal communities, to document factors that led to its reduction, and to identify strategies to help ensure the continuation of storytelling for future generations. Examining the ideas expressed by the storytellers was invaluable as a conduit to understanding the extreme power that storytelling had within the Indian community. From these ideas, recommendations were made

to increase the number of Native American storytellers in Northeastern Oklahoma. The implementation of the recommendations can assist Native Americans in maintaining values, beliefs, traditions, connections to community, and securing a sense of identity.

The strength of the Native American people in Northeastern Oklahoma lies in a tightly woven, precise community that connects and supports the values and beliefs that pre-date mainstream encounters. Double-walled baskets also pre-date mainstream encounters and represent the elements of the Native American community.

The reed was collected as the stories were. Individual reeds were connected with "runners" to tie them together and formed a sturdy structure. These runners worked as storytelling did to bring individuals into an entity. The runners weaved in and out to bring the individual reeds closer to one another and supported the form that the basket would take. Stories also brought communities closer.

The storyteller and the basket weaver could encounter obstacles to creating a strong community basket. The stories in the reed might have been left out too long and become brittle. The colors of the language might have become dull with exposure to mainstream

elements. The reed could have broken from being forced in two directions. The pathways of design might have been forgotten. These losses affected an entire people who thrived on the strength of community.

With nurtured reed, the storyteller runners could weave together a strong community. The stories could be gathered and maintained properly. The reed could be treated to create strong, detailed support. Patterns could be generated with the whole entity in mind. Colors could be naturally dyed to form visual images that teach and strengthen identity. The reed, the runners, and the dyes could work together to tell a tightly woven story with endless beauty and endurance.

The double-walled basket is unique with the creation of an outside wall. This wall adds support and shapes the basket. Each individual reed is taken from its state and worked into a patterned community. The individual becomes a part of the whole. This has been the search of the lost generation. With the revitalization of storytelling, these individuals could find their connection to the whole. The outcome would be stronger individuals that work together for a stronger, connected, woven tribal community.

Epilogue

This study completed its circle through Jake Chanate. The conception of its purpose was identified by his desire to encourage Native American youth to prepare to take his place. His guidance and participation furthered its purpose. His passing reflects his understanding the necessity for storytelling to come full circle and be passed on to the next generation.

Jake Chanate was synonymous with Native American storytelling in Northeastern Oklahoma. His gentle nature transformed into a commanding presence that transmitted history, stories, lessons, and humor to all age groups. Through his voice, movements, facial expressions and interaction with his audience, Jake was able to take listeners with him to a world of animals, tricksters, and moral lessons. He made it seem effortless.

Unfortunately, it was not effortless. His passion for storytelling was in conflict with his body. What he had been able to do for hours had already been limited to short segments of time that left him physically drained by the conception of this study. However, his passion was not limited and his efforts to offer guidance to the next generation were immense. Generativity emitted from him.

His passion was the catalyst for the origin of this study. His generous spirit opened doors that made this study possible. His passing demonstrates the importance of this study. He was truly a pleasure and an inspiration to have encountered. While his death means that his knowledge of Native American culture, language, stories, and ceremonies results in the closing of a door to which no one else holds the key, the information that he shared before his death will benefit those who are looking to create a small opening into another world which may grow into a new pathway. It was an honor to have known him.

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Appendix

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 11/9/2004

Date: Monday, November 10, 2003

IRB Application No ED0450

Proposal Title: Adult Learning Through Storytelling: Learning Strategies and Philosophies of American Indian Storytellers

Principal Investigator(s):

Jodi Rachel Green
1204 Goingsnake
Tahlequah, OK 74464

Gary J Conti
206 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact me in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, colson@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Jodi Rachel Green

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Dissertation: ADULT LEARNING THROUGH STORYTELLING: A STUDY
OF LEARNING STRATEGIES AND PHILOSOPHIES OF AMERICAN
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