Understanding Different Aspects of “Waŋč”

Context:

This IPA is designed for the College level Dākota language class at the start of the third year advanced level of Dākota. The students have finished a two year sequence and are now ready to move into a language class where they will start to not only get the Dākota language, but also gain deeper insight into the Dākota perspective on certain topics. These students are in a LCTL (Less Commonly Taught Languages) classroom so the classroom size is very small usually ranging from 4-6 highly motivated students many of whom wish to teach Dākota in their home communities.

The Dākota Language Department within the American Indian Studies Department at the University of Minnesota is one of the oldest indigenous language programs at the college level in the United States. There has always been a two year Dākota Language sequence but with a recent allocation of money from the state of Minnesota, the program is currently being expanded to meet the need for not only those who want to learn Dākota but those who want to teach it as well. The first step in this was to establish a much needed third year in the Fall of 2007.

Big Idea (based on Understanding by Design)

Big Idea: Waŋč (holy, sacred, mysterious, powerful something that has the ability to give or take life)
Enduring Understanding: The Dākota have many perceptions of waŋč depending on the context of the object or entity.
Guiding Question: In what ways do the Dākota, and other cultures, view supernatural creatures as more than ordinary or waŋč?

Overview of the Unit:

This IPA will focus on the Dākota concept of “waŋč” which has many different meanings and is used in a wide variety of Dākota words but its core meanings have always been “holy, sacred, mysterious, something that has the ability to give or take life.” It is part of a larger unit based on “Wóyakapi Wan Dęced Oyakapi” (Traditional Dākota storytelling). Some of these concepts can be difficult to grasp in the language classroom but the relationship that we Dākota have to the language is an integral part of how we understand “waŋč.” We will look at the oral part of Dākota history through stories and how “waŋč” comes through in those stories as told from a Dākota perspective.
Estimated Proficiency Level:

**Speaking:** Intermediate high (*ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines*)

**Writing:** Intermediate mid (*ACTFL Proficiency Writing Guidelines*)

**Content/culture goals:**

*Students will:*

- identify differences in meaning when using “waŋaŋ” in Daŋota.
- recognize similarities and differences between the Daŋota perspective and their world today with Euro-American influence or perspective(s).

**Language Goals:**

*Students will:*

- use the Daŋota story telling format.
- practice sharing stories and opinions on those stories.
- ask questions to get information about others.

**Overview of the Task:**

The Daŋota word “waŋaŋ” cannot be translated into English with any single definition or concept. I will use an authentic traditional story from Naomi Alberts, an elder from the Mni Waŋaŋ Oyate (The Spirit Lake Reservation in North Dakota). She tells the story of a creature (Unk*e®i*) that to this day, still lives in the water at Mni Waŋaŋ. The reservation was formally called “Devil’s Lake” and she explains why they say “Devil’s Lake” to describe the ‘Unk*e®i’ which is a being that is “waŋaŋ.” The influence of English and Christianity also will be looked at because before the coming of the Euro-Americans, there was no Daŋota word or even concept for ‘devil’ though “waŋaŋ” is used to describe him as well (Waŋaŋ*šica-Devil*).
Order of tasks: It makes sense to me to do this task first with the interpretive, then the presentational and finally the interpersonal. The interpretive task will give the students an idea of what level of language they will be expected to produce. The presentational will have them researching and telling a story to the class which will set them up for the interpersonal task at the end where they share and discuss two stories that they’ve heard in class.

Goal/Role: Students need to understand the many uses of “waŋaŋ” and how it applies to the modern usage and the supernatural both of which are a part of the daily life of the Daŋota. The students will gain an insight into the art of storytelling by hearing a traditional Daŋota story and then take on the role of storyteller by telling a story using Daŋota storytelling techniques.

Audience: The audience should be peers and the instructor but it should also be for native speakers at this level of proficiency.

Situation: Because of the importance of storytelling in the Daŋota language, students need to be aware of the storytelling framework both in and outside of the classroom.

Product, Performance, Purpose: Students will create a story in the presentational task (task 2) that emulates Daŋota storytelling while showing an aspect of waŋaŋ.

Standards & Criteria for Success: Task 1 will have a comprehension guide, task 2 will have a rubric and task 3 will have a rubric.

Timeline for the IPA:

This IPA will take approximately two weeks (ten fifty minute class periods).

Day 1 Students complete interpretive task.

Day 2-8 After the interpretive assignments are returned, six class sessions will be devoted to preparing for the presentational task (before that assignment is given):
Day 2-3: What is the use of “waŋaŋ” in the story? Discussion of the Daŋota and Wašicu (Euro-American) perspectives on “waŋaŋ” will give out guidelines for the presentational task at the end of the third day.

Day 4: The art of Daŋota storytelling and what words are present in most/all stories.

Day 5: What supernatural creatures exist in the Daŋota world and to the outside world? Are these creatures viewed as sacred? Why or why not?

Day 6: Peer review of complete rough drafts

Day 7: Peer reviews returned to students and discussed

Day 8: (4-5 minutes per student) Students use power point (or some visual) to tell a story about a supernatural creature (either Daŋota or Wašicu) that they have researched and their thoughts on how it is viewed by others and their thoughts on how it fits into something that is “waŋaŋ.”

Day 9: Students will share with me their thoughts and ideas about one story told by another student in preparation for the interpersonal task.

Day 10: (10 minutes) In pairs, students will take turns and summarize and discuss their story with a peer and ask each other about their stories.

Task 1: Interpretive Task

Materials needed:

- Comprehension Guide: Waŋaŋšica Bde Wóuŋspe (modified from ACTFL Integrated Performance Assessment manual)
- Audio clip: “Waŋaŋšica Bde” as told by Naomi Alberts
- A transcription of the story in Daŋota

This audio will be appropriate for the cognitive level of third year students because they have had some prior exposure to Daŋota storytelling and some basics in how the Daŋota use “waŋaŋ” for a number of beings and objects.
The students will listen to the story twice with a transcript of the story in front of them before they see the questions and once with the questions after I give them out. They should be able to start filling out their sheets on the third listening and complete it. I would also give them a fourth listening to allow them to look over their answers.

Because of their level, I would have the questions in Daŋota as well as their answers. I may check for comprehension in English after I have viewed their answers if it appears that there was a common question or idea that may have been missed.

**Essential Questions:**

What does “waŋj” mean in the context of “Waŋjica Bde”?

What is the Daŋota perspective and the Waʃicu perspective on Uŋktehi?

**Interpretive Task**

- Two listenings of “Waŋjica Bde”
- Third listening with questions for them to answer to check comprehension
- A fourth listening to let students check over their answers and give to me at the end of class

**Description of the Scoring for the Task: Scoring for the Comprehension Guide**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3 points, with the potential for partial credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 point / answer, for a total of 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 points per section for a total of 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18 points total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extracting the big idea(s) from the narrative is the primary focus as is the ability to elaborate on the concept of “waŋj” while looking to the past for meaning and to the present so sections one and three are scored higher. Section 2 is really a basic check for comprehension but it will help guide them to answer the final section.
Waŋŋašica Bde Wóyakpi
(Naomi Alberts oyake)
Ehaŋna wóyakap waŋ déćed oyákapi ūŋkaŋ o ehaŋna Daŋota oyate ikdag omániipí kýyapi. Ūŋkaŋ de maŋoce kiŋ ded ahíti ūŋkaŋ koškag hena ṭokaheya šni ayaba tukted tok aya kab aiš táku héčeni kab hena abdezapi ūŋkaŋ táku waŋ waŋyaŋkap kiŋ he hiŋhaŋñašiči paha akán okšaŋya étuŋwan waŋka ūŋkaŋ iknuhna hiŋhaŋñašiči táku waŋ waŋyaŋkap ūŋkaŋ mni kiŋ etanhan táku waŋ skaye na malipiya étkiya šotas’e iyaye a k’a ake mnig ed ıcipaś hiŋlipaye hohe hoši kípi ūŋkaŋ wiçašta itaŋcan kiŋ hena heyab kéya he táku héča (haŋ) abdeza po eya héče ho ake hiŋhaŋna han ake nakun ekta paŋag héčiya iba ekta étuŋwan kap ūŋkaŋ ake nakun hecalhi taki waŋ šotas’e iyaye unkaŋ hena ked (kiŋ?) mni ake hektakiya mnig ekta hiŋlipaya ūŋkaŋ he táku wamaŋásaŋ kaiš táku waŋaŋ héča e keyápi ūŋkaŋ he waŋna ekta ţiyata hoši kíp ūŋkaŋ ake nakun iyečhi wauŋyaŋkap ce eya ho ece šiši kiŋ ed wicašta tona itaŋcanáyá kapi hena iyukacaŋp ūŋkaŋ he wabduskaŋ, iš taki waŋaŋ heca kaiš waŋaŋšica heca eyápi hohe heced waŋna iyukcaŋpi ūŋkaŋ ho hetanhan héčed waŋna de maŋoce kiŋ ded waŋaŋšicabde eciyapta ce eyápi keyápi ho heuŋ dehaŋ aŋpetu kiŋ dehaŋyaŋ waŋaŋšicabde eyápi
Daŋotia 5126 Ptanyetu

 Çaže ___________________

 Waŋaŋšica Bde Wónspe
 Wóeçuŋ Ţokaheyu

 Ţokaheyu

 Waŋna wóyakapi kiŋ “Waŋaŋšica Bde” anayąọptanŋ. He tóŋed idukčan he? Wóiyukčan tánka tónakca he? Daŋotia owa wo

 ______________________________________

 ______________________________________

 ______________________________________

 ______________________________________

 ______________________________________

 Núnja

 Daŋotia ayupta po

 1 Ehaŋna Daŋota oyate kiŋ omanipi. Tokca uŋ?

 ______________________________________

 2 Tuweweŋa yewiçayapi he? Tokeca?

 ______________________________________

 3 Pahag hetaŋhanŋ tákú wanyakapi he?

 ______________________________________

 4 He tákú abdezapi kiŋ taktokunŋ he?

 ______________________________________
5  Tóhni abdezapi he?

6  Wiçaštag hena ḵipi héehan takaḵuŋpi he?

7  Wiçašta šatšan ḵiŋ taka wiçašipe he?

8  Wiçaštag hena aš ḵipi héehan wiçašta šatšan ḵiŋ hena tak eyapi he?

9  Tókca uŋ Waṅšica Bde eyap cée he?

Yámmi  Wiçašta šatšan ḵiŋ “Waṅšica” eyapi tka Wašicüpi ḵiŋ héči ahiṯip sni ečed wóyakpi ḵiŋ de oyakpi ye/do Wiçoie ḵiŋ de “Waṅ” ūŋpi tka táku ţapi he?

Wašicüpi hena wiçoieg he “waṅ” ūŋpi tka ehaŋna k’a dehaŋ “Waṅšica” táku ţapi he? Tuktedked aḵidečeca? Tuktedked ićiţoka he? Tóḵed iduḵčan he?
Dakota 5126 Ptanyetu

Name__________________

Wakansica Bde Lesson
First activity

1. Now you have heard the story of Wakansica Bde. What do you think about it? What are the big ideas/thoughts from it? Write them in Dakota.

2. Write your answers in Dakota

1. Why were the Dakota traveling around?

2. Who all did they send out?

3. What did they see from the hill?

4. What did the thing that they saw from hill do?

5. When did they observe?
When the men returned back to camp, what did they do?

What were they instructed to do by the leaders?

When they returned back to camp again what did the leaders say?

Why is it called Wakansica Bde?

The leaders used the term Wakansica (can mean devil or something that is holy and bad, mysterious and bad, powerful and bad) in the story but it was before colonization. What does Wakan mean in this context then?

The Euro-Americans also use this word “holy but what did Wakansica mean in the past and what does it mean today? Is it sometimes the same, sometimes different? What are your thought on it?
Task 2: Presentational

Materials needed: Rubric for Presentational Task

**Essential questions:** How do the Daŋota view supernatural creatures? How does “waŋaŋ” apply to these creatures? What elements are necessary to make a story “Daŋota”?

**Description of the task:**

**Instructions to be in Daŋota:**

You are going to tell a story using the computer and images (power point). The Daŋota nation has many stories and they use the word “waŋaŋ” many times. Every day, around the earth there are many sacred and holy things that are discussed but sometimes we still do not understand many of these things that are viewed as “waŋaŋ.” These are some of them: The Devil, Bigfoot, the spirit in the water, thunderbirds, dragons, the little tree dwellers, Uŋktomi the trickster. Where are they from? When Wasicus see these things, what stories do they have? You will also tell a story. Your fellow classmates and I want to know what you think about this particular story / creature so when you are done telling it, we will understand your perspective

**Days 2-8 Timeline for Presentational Task:**

**Day 2:** What is the use of “waŋaŋ” in the story? Is there Christian influence on how “waŋaŋ” is viewed today? Discussion of the Daŋota and Wašicu (Euro-American) perspectives on “waŋaŋ.”

**Day 3:** Continued discussion of the Daŋota and Wašicu (Euro-American) perspectives on “waŋaŋ.” I will give out guidelines for the presentational task at the end of the third day.

**Day 4:** The art of Daŋota storytelling and what words are present in most/all stories. How do the Daŋota start out their stories and why is “kéye” and “uŋkaŋ” used to often?
Day 5: What supernatural creatures exist in the Daŋota world and to the outside world? Are these creatures viewed as sacred? Why or why not? How are these stories often told and when do people believe them (or not)?

Day 6: Students will come to class with drafts of their finished presentation ready for peer reviews and a copy will be given to the teacher as well.

Day 7: Peer reviews completed as well as teacher input and corrections all to given back to the student in preparation for presentation.

Day 8: (10 minutes per student) Students use power point (or some visual) to tell a story about a supernatural creature (either Daŋota or Wašicu) that they have researched and their own thoughts/reflection on how it is viewed by others and their thoughts on how it fits into something that is “waŋ”. I would like students to use a visual such as power point to help facilitate meaning for the other students. After having discussed “waŋ”, students will be able to discuss their thoughts and even the thoughts of others on which supernatural being they have presented a story about. Students will also turn in a reflection on the assignment.

To ensure that the students have full understanding of the task, the timeline will be included on the assignment that I give out on the third day. The instructions will be in Daŋota but will be accompanied in print with the English to avoid any misunderstandings.

Peer review(to be done in pairs): They will be told to focus on:

- Clarity: How does the information flow? Does it follow a logical progression?
- Appropriateness: Will their presentation and use of language represent a Dakata perspective?
- Big ideas: Do the big ideas come through in the presentation?
- Audience: Their presentation should be present able to native speakers
- Storytelling: Their story should contain elements of traditional Daŋota storytelling

Students will exchange papers and then take turns giving each other feedback for one full class session, so there should be time for adequate discussion. Description of Scoring Rubric:
Scoring Rubric for Presentational Task

**Non-negotiables**

______ Skit lasts between 2-4 minutes
______ Final copy of script is turned into teacher before performance
______ Both partners have substantial and approximately equal speaking roles
______ Skit is performed without reading from the script
______ Skit includes at least 1 dependent clause

The non-negotiable items were chosen because they will help with the interpersonal presentation in the end. They time limit will tell how much language needs to be produced. Because Daŋota is an oral language, telling a story really does need to be told from memory or internalization of that story. I, as well as other students, am looking for student insight into how they define concepts of “waŋaŋ.” I need the final copy turned in before so I can have prior knowledge of where everyone is with their development and learning.

Students will be given the rubric in advance. Language function, impact, content, comprehensibility, and accuracy make up the rubric. These are some of the essentials of storytelling and I want the students to see all of this in advance so they can work towards their goals rather than being surprised.

Instructions to students (same as provided in English earlier for this task):

### Peer Assessment / Teacher Assessment Scoring Rubric for Presentational Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations Strong</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language function</strong></td>
<td>Language is used to express a variety of meanings</td>
<td>Language is used to express meaning</td>
<td>Language is used to express limited meaning</td>
<td>Language use is restricted to memorized phrases from class; little effort to create language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact</strong></td>
<td>Students use power point to fully maintain the interest of the audience; language selected with audience in mind</td>
<td>Student use some visuals to maintain the interest of the audience; most language/visuals selected with audience in mind</td>
<td>Students use of power point is limited with visuals to maintain the interest of the audience; some language/visuals selected with audience in mind</td>
<td>Students use of power point is minimal with visuals to maintain the interest of the audience; language use is inappropriate and/or story is unappealing to audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Students have a clear theme that is well articulated and supported with many examples and details</td>
<td>Students have a clear theme that is fairly well articulated and supported with some examples and or details</td>
<td>Students have a theme, but skit digresses or is unfocused; few examples or details to support main idea</td>
<td>Theme is unclear or nonexistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehensibility</strong></td>
<td>Message clearly understood by audience; Accent/pronunciation is easy to understand</td>
<td>Message mostly understood by audience; Accent/pronunciation is mostly easy to understand</td>
<td>Parts of message understood, some errors that inhibit meaning; Accent/pronunciation sometimes difficult to understand</td>
<td>Message confusing to audience, many errors that inhibit meaning Accent/pronunciation difficult to understand and inhibits meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language control:</strong> Accuracy</td>
<td>Language is accurate for familiar forms, with some errors in newer and more complex forms</td>
<td>Language is mostly accurate for familiar forms, with more errors in newer forms</td>
<td>Language includes several errors in both familiar and unfamiliar forms.</td>
<td>Language includes many errors in familiar and unfamiliar forms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: ACTFL Integrated Performance Assessment Manual*
Task 3. Interpersonal Task

Materials needed:
- Instructions to the students
- Rubric

**Essential questions:** How does “waŋ” apply to supernatural creatures?

What is the belief about supernatural creatures? Are they real, do people think they exist, why or why not?

Description of the task:

The instruction sheets will be given out on the day preceding the actual interpersonal task.

Students will work in groups of two. Each student will have chosen a story from the ones presented and discuss it with their partner. S/he will summarize the story then share their own thoughts and reflections on it, ask their partner for their thoughts and reflections on it, and they both discuss further thoughts on the story.

The students will complete the interpersonal task in my office while the other students wait outside. Each pair will have 10 minutes.

**Step One** – Students will discuss their story presented in class during the presentational task with the instructor in Daŋota. The instructor will ask them questions to get them prepared for the interpersonal task. Focus:

- Key elements in the story
- What does “waŋ” mean in this context?
- Do they believe this creature exists?
- What is the big / main idea of this story / creature?

**Step Two** - After each student has summarized their story, they will share their thoughts and reflections on the story as well as ask their partner for their thoughts and reflections. If this is not an original Daŋota story, They will ask questions of each other like:
What does “waȟan” mean in this context?
Do they believe this creature exists?
Have they ever seen / experienced something like the story / creature they are talking about?
How do other cultures perceive this creature?
Are there any similarities / differences between this creature / story between the Dakota and other cultures? (example Nessie vs. Ujiktehi)

Students will be paired with another student who is at their level of speaking ability based on prior work and ability that has been assessed by the instructor.

Feedback – At the end of all interpersonal activities, I will use the rubric to provide feedback by calling each pair back into the small room in order to review their performance. I will do this in English.

Non-negotiables
______ Presentation lasts between 8-10 minutes
______ Summary and discussion is performed without reading from the notes
______ Student is able to elaborate on at least one big idea from their story regarding “waȟan”
______ Student is able to ask questions that go deeper into peers knowledge of the story
## Teacher Assessment Scoring Rubric for Interpersonal Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations Strong</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Language is used to express meaning</td>
<td>Language is used to express limited meaning</td>
<td>Language use is restricted to memorized phrases from class; little effort to create language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interaction</strong></td>
<td>Student interacts with peer to go deeper into the story or thoughts of their fellow peer</td>
<td>Student interacts somewhat with peer to go deeper into the story or thoughts of their fellow peer</td>
<td>Student interacts rarely with peer to go deeper into the story or thoughts of their fellow peer</td>
<td>Student does not interact with peer to go deeper into the story or thoughts of their fellow peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>Students story has a clear theme that is well articulated and supported with many examples and details</td>
<td>Students story has a clear theme that is fairly well articulated and supported with some examples and or details</td>
<td>Students have a story, but content digresses or is unfocused; few examples or details to support main idea</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Bibliography

_Waŋsica Bde Wóyakapi_ Recording of Naomi Alberts, Spirit Lake Dakota, 1970


ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.


ACTLF Proficiency Writing Guidelines:


Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development