Bound Pronoun App Assessment, 2/10/15--2/14

Device: iPad Air

Tester: Sarah Orndorff, Cherokee language student.

Amount of time for assessment: 4 days

**Verb and pronominal studies referenced:**

A Structured Approach to Learning the Basic Inflections of the Cherokee Verb, Durbin Feeling

Cherokee Educational Degree Program: Verb Reference Book, Wyman Kirk (NSU, version

Outline of Basic Pronominal Forms in Cherokee, Wyman Kirk

**Overall Impressions:**

This has the potential to be a high quality app for teaching an important facet of the Cherokee language, particularly for students who rely on self-study. To date, iPad has no real quality apps for teaching Cherokee and definitely none that teach grammatical topics. In the future, this app could be the basis for focus on or expanded into a quality verb study app.

It is a simple and generally easy to use app. It does precisely what the app has been designed to do: attempt to teach the Cherokee bound pronoun. Whether this is a successful modality of teaching will require a longer period of usage and feedback.

The main considerations focused on in this assessment largely revolve around how organized the presented information is, the tenses of verb examples presented with the pronominals, and the question of what level of student this app is geared towards and whether this is to accompany coursework or not.

I have endeavored to assess this app as clearly and as well as I can based on my current knowledge of Cherokee and how I and others I have observed learn. If any clarifications are needed on any points below please message me or contact me at: [S.J.Orndorff@gmail.com](mailto:S.J.Orndorff@gmail.com).

**General Pros and Considerations:**

* Consider who this App is targeting; New/beginning, intermediate or advanced students?
* Pro: Intuitive color and visual cues. Red/ ‘X’ for wrong answer, Green/ check mark for right answer.
* Pro: Options for Latin, Syllabary or Both.
* Pro: Tone marks but consider adding accompanying syllabary without tone marks for easy reading as seen in the Online CED if applicable.
* Consider explaining what a bound pronoun is and why it is important. Consider simplifying and/or explaining linguistic and grammatical terms. Note: simplification does not have to mean ‘dumbing down’. It is very likely that students will have varying backgrounds in education and may or may not be familiar with all linguistic and/or grammatical terms. Consider how ‘accessible’ the final app should be. This could be accomplished by a glossary of terms or similar ideas.
* Consider if this app will stand alone or will accompany Jalagi Gawonihisdi online coursework. If it is to stand alone, without coursework, more explanations, (however long or brief.), of topics may be required. It may be safest to assume that not everyone is at the same level of learning. However, if this app is meant to accompany coursework, then it should reflect said course material and be made clear up front to the user that the app was designed to accompany certain coursework and where that coursework is available.

**Technical:**

* No crashes on start up. Runs consistently without crashing for long periods of time.
* No known crashes while using app during challenges, sorting through bound pronouns, etc.
* Buttons work for navigation when tapped.
* Buttons for answering questions work consistently when tapped.
* \*\* POSSIBLE TECHNICAL ISSUE\*\* View Challenges -> Please Select a Pronoun Group :

**--**View challenges button works when tapped

**-**- Buttons for selecting pronoun groups work when tapped

**-**- NO buttons function when tapped for anything after. It appears as though there are buttons that can be tapped in the pronoun group but don’t work when they are.

**-**- It is unclear what the purpose of ‘View Challenges’ is. This might be because of the perceived malfunctioning buttons if they are supposed to lead to or explain something else. Is it is to view the potential card sets under ‘Do a Practice’? If the Practices are actually the challenges under ‘View Challenges’, then changing one or the other for consistency might be considered to avoid confusion about the purpose of ‘View Challenge’ function.

**General Layout/ Navigation:**

* No considerations; layout is straightforward and simple**.**

**Pros and Considerations--Organization of information/Learning modalities:**

* Consider ability to disable the timer if desired. It may be off-putting or frustrating to some students, especially students who need to learn at their own pace or new students who are learning bound pronoun information for the first time. When the student is ready, they can enable the timer to challenge themselves if they wish. Personally, I would disable the timer if I could.
* Pro: Ability to mute buzzer if desired. Some may find this off-putting. I found myself muting it most of the time.
* Consider more clear organization and presentation of bound pronouns by type. Consider applying this model as “Sort by group” in view pronoun section and using this model to sort challenges by type.

For example:

--**Sets A & B; before vowel, before consonant and before vowel** (for beginning students).

-- **Person Pronouns with him/her as the object and Passive pronouns, before vowel and before consonant** (for intermediate students).

-- **Combined person pronouns before vowel and before consonant** (for advanced students).

Students could start with bound pronouns according to their level and comfort. Information divided up into categories looks less overwhelming to students and lets them learn chunks of information at their leisure. This could probably be expanded out into 4 or 5 categories as well.

Verb studies done by Wyman Kirk (NSU) and Durban Feeling both break down and present bound pronoun information in this way with excellent, relatively simple explanations of paradigms for each. I find Kirk more straight forward and accessible, but Feeling’s is also excellent. I can provide both for reference if desired.

Both of these studies are more recent than the CED, (not to say that the CED’s grammar section is not good on bound pronouns…), ergo the thought of how these are organized and presented has changed since the CED was put out.

* Consider using more practical, basic tenses with bound pronouns presented with conjugated verbs for beginner/intermediate students:

--Present tense

--Remote past, Reportative past

--Habitual

--Progressive future

--Commands

Consider tenses for more advanced students in a different grouping:

--Absolute future

--Infinitive

--Future imperatives

--Recent past imperatives

In day to day, colloquial speech, people normally use the above basic tenses. With the addition of imperative and infinitive, (slightly more advanced topics that may need explanations), I feel these are especially important for the beginning and intermediate student to master, because more complex tenses usually stem from them.

In Wyman Kirk’s verb study, he lays out the following basics for his VRB entries: Present, Habitual, Remote past, Command, Infinitive. This is very helpful because it gives a clear, basic, base line to work with when it comes to changing tenses (and pronominals). A student more easily draws the connection between forms, how they change and why. Including sound changes, (consider that these might need explaining also depending on tense and verb used; this could be considered an intermediate/advanced topic.).

From personal experience, I’ve been a student of Ed Fields’ for a while now, (A certified Cherokee Language instructor and first language speaker.). He almost always presents verbs to us in present tense or at least in one of the basic above tenses. Occasionally, he’ll toss us something more complex, but he keeps it simple for the most part.

From what I have observed of students, teachers and experienced myself, it is fairly linear and common to progress from present tense and then branch out to other simple tenses such as past, future, etc. before going on to study more complex tenses. I, personally, have never experienced disorientation/cognitive dissonance from learning tenses in this way. People live in and tend to perceive most things in a ‘present and ‘I’ centered time sense. I feel it would be counter-intuitive to deviate from this natural progression.