Ethics in collaborative research – online workshop

Friday 27.03.2020, 16 – 19 Warsaw Time

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Report from the COLING online workshop

Ethics in collaborative research

27.03.2020, University of Warsaw

compiled by Agnieszka Hamann

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External researchers and local communities. Ethical challenges

Speaker: Justyna Olko

This paper discusses some basic legal, organizational and technical aspects of collaborative research, and then moves to key concepts, ideas and challenges (including methodology). What needs to be emphasized is that this is a never-ending process: ethical awareness and self-reflective approach to research is something that each scholar should constantly work on, based on their experience and collaboration with local researchers and Indigenous / minority communities.

In humanities and social sciences, there already exists a set of standard guidelines that researchers are expected to follow by addressing the following issues when submitting a research project in order to be able to obtain ethical clearing:

Standard procedures	Ethical challenges to consider
Explain how you plan to identify and recruit research participants, and how you want to ensure fair access and voluntary participation in the community.	Has the research been consulted with the local community (prior consent of the community to even apply for funding for the project)? How to select a representative sample not only in terms of age, professions or education, but also internal divisions in the community (competing organizations, conflicted parties). Not everyone will want to participate but the research design cannot exclude anyone.
Design informed consent procedures – a legal way of consenting to participate in research, typically a written form informing what you are going to do and signed by participants.	How to translate the Euro-centric legal jargon into another language and culture? Can you ask someone to sign something they do not fully understand? How to work with people who are illiterate or have no experience with literacy in this particular language? How to deal with historical trauma and social issues (e.g. in Wilamowice the trauma of being forced to sign the *Volksliste* during WW2)?
Plan how to protect vulnerable individuals/groups (e.g. minors, minorities and disadvantaged groups within the community itself).	Are you going to exclude them? If not, how to recruit them fairly and address the issue of informed consent? How to protect best their personal data and materials created with their participation?
Plan how to protect sensitive data.	What data can and what data cannot be exported from a country – not only physical or biological material, but also personal data. How will you treat recordings and other kinds of fieldwork material that contain personal data or sensitive data in terms of content? What are the legal requirements in the countries where your institution operates and where you are

	going to work?
Plan how to share benefits from your research with the community.	Who decides what the community needs and what the benefits will be: the researcher (top-down approach) or the community? Research on / for / with / by the community? * Who in the community can "decide for everyone"? (communities are never homogenous!)
How to comply with data protection laws?	How to create safe spaces for data storage? Who needs access to what data (multi-layered access privileges)? (e.g. in our LCure project only local collaborators - community members - have access to personal data of participants)
Create necessary information about research and consent forms	In what language(s) – local or national/dominant? If local, will it be necessary to create neologisms? In what kind of methodology? Will these neologisms be understandable? Which variant of orthography to use, if there are several? Are participants familiar with reading and writing in this or any language? How to reveal information about the research without impacting results of this research (e.g. in the case of experiments)?

* From the traditional data-extracting research ON the community, there was a change in research paradigms to work FOR the communities, but this is just another patronizing way of conducting research because researchers apply their own methods and impose their own ideas what the benefits for the community can be. Thus, the models more recommended nowadays embrace **research WITH the community** (in partnership) and **research BY the community (community-driven research)**, which is probably the most challenging one because communities typically have very limited possibilities to fund their research. Funding usually goes through academic institutions and then – at best – it becomes research WITH the community.

However, following all of the above guidelines and complying with formal requirements does not guarantee the research will be fully collaborative and ethical with regard to a local community.

First of all, it is possible to skip any of the stages (e.g. the consultation phase), and it may very easily go unnoticed that the research was not consulted with the community before applying for funding or that it is not fully collaborative in terms of goals, methods and decision-making at every stage of the project – planning, implementation, results, interpretation, and publishing. Thus, the challenge here is to have local participants as partners and stakeholders, also in the research design and the interpretation of results.

Another aspect to consider is a short-term versus a long-term involvement of a researcher and their responsibility to the community. The common practice is for researchers to get a grant, carry out a

3-year project and leave with the data – there is no continuation or long-lasting benefits for a community. This kind of short-term involvement may be more damaging than no involvement at all because certain hopes and expectations may arise, local collaborators may gain and lose credibility in the process, etc. Thus, in language revitalization or education, short-time involvement usually only brings some benefits for a researcher, but rarely for a community.

The next crucial issue is the interpretation of results. The traditional notion that a local community members have data and local knowledge that needs expert understanding and interpretation by external researchers, people who have certain distance to the reality that they study, to develop an understanding of this reality and produce scientifically valid results, is actually the main ethical challenge in research. It completely ignores Indigenous research and local knowledge as an **equally valid system of knowledge**.

This is closely associated with the threat of **epistemological violence**, which may take many forms. Its most obvious and basic manifestation is data extraction: a researcher elicits data and does the research, while a community does not participate in the interpretation of the data and publication of results, nor does it benefit in any way from the study.

The other challenge researchers have to face on a regular basis is the already mentioned divide between local knowledge and the so-called expert understanding. This is a very serious challenge that calls for entirely new approaches – better ways of creating spaces for local research and local knowledge as equally valid systems of knowledge(s) that essentially complement and enrich academic perspectives. A good example is the phenomenon of "writing history for a community"; for example, quite recently in Wilamowice a monograph about the history of the town was published without taking into account the results of consultations with local experts, researchers and community members. As a result, the book is not only wrong about many basic facts and perspectives of the inhabitants of the town, but it is also a clear example of epistemological violence that has affected members of the community.

Finally, coming back to the issue of how to define "benefits for the community: of course, writing a book, dictionary or grammar of a language may be extremely important. If you develop a relationship with the community, they will tell you what they need in this respect. But, in fact, the benefits can be much broader and less tangible: then can embrace preparing local researchers, empowering community members, supporting local organizations and grass-root initiatives, giving them not just funding but also helping to develop the capacity to act. Thus, the benefits may be material, emotional and psychological. All this is part of a **self-reflexive approach to research** that we – as researchers – should be developing. Instead of staying enclosed in our academic world and its often narrow perspectives, we should open ourselves to multi-level interactions and exchanges with local communities and to constant self-reflection on our methods, motives and ethical sensitivity.

Practical aspects of decent behaviour in collaboration with local communities

The history of research in Wilamowice

Speaker: Tymoteusz Król

Wilamowice is a town founded in the 13th century by settlers who arrived from Western Europe, though their exact place of origin is unclear. Majority of authors who wrote about the town in 19th century underlined the unique identity of its inhabitants and hypothesized about their possible English, Anglo-Saxon, Flemish or Dutch origin. They presented the culture as an exotic one and having nothing in common with the surrounding Polish or German-speaking villages and towns.

However, one of local priests, Józef Szymeczko wrote in his diary (written at the beginning of 20th century and published in 2003) that the inhabitants of Wilamowice considered themselves to be neither Polish, nor German, but simply Vilamovian and did not get involved in the local Polish-German conflicts.

The beginning of the 20th century was the period when the so called *Sprachinselforschung* ("research for linguistic islands") developed: German linguists, ethnographers and other researchers wanted to find traces of German culture in Eastern Europe – a trend which was strongly supported by Nazi nationalistic movements in 1930s. For example, Hans Bathelt claimed there always was "a spiritual bridge" between Wilamowice and the "great Germany", while for instance painter Strzygowski portrayed Vilamovian women in their traditional clothes but entitled the painting "Deutsche Bauerinnen" (German female farmers). They collected a lot of important data that is important to study now, however, we need to be aware of certain ideologies involved there and carefully analyse the collected material, since documenting the culture and language may have been less important than serving nationalistic ideologies. Those attitudes persisted until 1980s: as late as 1981, Walter Kuhn still wrote about Wilamowice as the last German-speaking village in Eastern Europe.

Polish historians and ethnographers frequently criticised German researchers for their lack of objectivity, however, if you analyse Polish publications of 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century, some of them use a very similar discourse, but trying to find proof of the Polish identity of Vilamovians. Even if the roots of this culture are non-Slavic, there is still a lot of Slavic influence. Bazielich (2001:28) searched for typically Slavic elements of the Vilamovian folk dress. Dziedzic (2012: 13) wrote about the (Catholic) Church and the home being the "bastion of Polishness", while in fact until the 19th century the Polish language was only the language of administration and later of the Church, and people did not speak it at home. Finally, Szymeczko (2003: 68) claimed to have helped Vilamovians to clarify their identity – they finally started feeling Polish. Thus, when it comes to books and papers about the town, language and culture, they often show heavy bias towards German or Polish nationalistic movements without taking into account the actual identity and sensitivity of the Vilamovian people.

The situation began to change thanks to the linguistic and cultural revitalization efforts in the recent years. First, the projects of Tomasz Wicherkiewicz[1] and Justyna Olko brought some new researchers who tried to understand the local perspective. Secondly, members of the local community, such as me or Justyna Majerska-Sznajder, became researchers and now our – Vilamovian – voice is stronger than ever. Now, if you search for resources about Wilamowice, you can find our publications and see the Vilamovian perspective as well.

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[1] See http://www.inne-jezyki.amu.edu.pl/Frontend/Language/Details/10

A look at fieldwork problems of local / indigenous researchers

However, the **local / indigenous researchers** also face a set of their own problems while doing fieldwork. The basic research method in ethnography is participant observation, and if you are an ethnographer from Kraków or Australia, that is an obvious outsider, your research interests and goals are obvious and clearly visible for the community members, so you do not need to repeat again and again that you will use the information obtained from them in your work. However, when I talk to my neighbour, though she knows I write books about Wilamowice, for her – first of all – I'm the next-door neighbour, a friend, so I often hesitate if it is ethical for me to use certain material. Then I feel I need to go back and confirm it with her if I can use it in my book.

Another problem in a town of this size is anonymisation. If you refer a rare story or a specific event, other members of the community may know or at least guess who was involved, even if no names are mentioned. So quite often I choose not to include certain material into my results because I'm afraid how it may be used in the future. Maybe sometimes I do overreact because it may be only me who knows all the context, maybe others wouldn't know the whole story, but still I prefer to be too cautious rather than to do harm.

Moreover, when you write about such a small community, you need to think about who will read it. In the 19th century researchers wrote books and papers for other academics, and nobody in the community ever saw the results of their work printed in a remote place, possibly in another language. However, now everybody can read what I write, even if I publish my text in a very specialized journal. And what is more, I don't want to hide my work. I want to write texts which are academic in nature, but making sure it will not harm anyone in Wilamowice. And I believe that it is crucial for researchers to remember that we can never know how and for what purpose our texts may be used in the future, on which we have no influence.

And finally, the last aspect I would like to mention is all kinds of local influences that local researchers have to deal with. Local authorities and politicians may try to advertise the municipality or hide/ highlight certain aspects of local politics. Interviewees and collaborators may also have certain expectations and opinions on what should and shouldn't be published, so they may be somewhat dissatisfied with the results of my research if I cannot include this kind of information. I believe that at the end of the day it is crucial for researchers to know the community well, think about its well-being and do their job in a way which is acceptable both for the academia and the community.

Practical aspects of decent behaviour in collaboration with local communities[2]
Speaker: Joanna Maryniak

What I would like to talk about today is how in my work I'm trying to avoid making the same mistakes others made before me. The basic tenet of my work philosophy may be summarized by the following quotation:

> *You will rarely be praised for the disaster you prevent. Prevent it anyway.[3]*

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[2] Recommended reading: Peter Sahlins's book on the multi-stranded boundaries in Pyrenees: "Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees," UC Press, 1989.

[3] The first quotation is by ExNihiloAdInfinitum on reddit: https://www.reddit.com/r/LifeProTips/comments/fp3p7m/lpt_you_will_rarely_be_praised_for_the_disaster/. All others come from the chapter: "Ethical aspects and cultural sensitivity in language revitalization: by

This means that the well-being of the community is an absolute priority and a researcher should avoid doing anything that would potentially hurt the community. What is more, if you do your job well, no one will really notice it was done, but do it anyway – for the good of the people.

According to the United Nations' Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues[4], every action that a researcher takes should be preceded by obtaining:

Free	● It needs to be given absolutely freely and preferably **enthusiastically** – so if you ask if you can take a photo and you hear "maybe" or "I don't know", take it as a "no". It is just them being polite and trying to save face.
Prior	● Ask for permission **before** you do anything, for example only take a photo if you got a definitely positive answer.
Informed	● People must **fully understand** what they are agreeing to, so do not speak legalese, use plain language, ask which language – minority or dominant – people feel more comfortable with.
Consent	● Permission to do something or agreement about something.

It is also worth remembering that

> *what is legal may not be entirely ethical.*

For example, in many countries the letter of the law says that when you have recorded somebody, the recording belongs to you. However, the more sensitive approach would be– if possible – to go back to the interviewee(s) after transcribing the recording and before publishing it to ask if they are still ok with what they said.

> *One shouldn't treat the written word as having absolute precedence over what*
> *you are told by the members of the community.*

If you are an outsider and you want work in a community, first you need to do the usual literature research, that is to read what has been written on this topic. However, you also need to remember that what you read in books and academic papers might reflect an external perspective or outdated point of view, so it may not reflect what the community really thinks and believes. Of course, use your own best judgement, but – on the whole – trust in what members of the community say. What they tell you is more likely to reflect what the community believes in than what is written in books, which may simply go out of date.

Furthermore, if you say something and members of the community correct you, do not apologize but thank them that you learnt something new. When they talk about their emotions and feelings, remember to be sensitive and supportive, tell them it's a valid concern, avoid commenting or criticizing.

> *When asked whether what they are speaking is a language, the best answer is*
> *the one respecting the perspective of the community.*

Tymoteusz Król, Justyna Majerska-Sznajder and Joanna Maryniak (in *Revitalizing endangered languages: a practical guide*. Edited by Justyna Olko and Julia Sallabank. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

[4] https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

The very fact of working with minorities puts a researcher in a politically sensitive position. Examples abound: Basque in Spain, Silesia or Wilamowice in Poland etc.: these are political issues of a national level. Being a member of the academic community, you may be asked to express your opinion on certain issues – more or less – relevant to your research. For example, the Polish Parliament while working on the law on minorities in Poland decided to ask scholars if the language spoken in Wilamowice alongside Polish is a language or not. To answer this kind of question the best policy is to listen to the voice of the community: if its speakers say it is a separate language, different from other languages spoken by other communities, write this down in your report or publication. Always respect the perspective of the community because from the ethical point of view this is the optimal solution. From the linguistic point of view, there is no definite and satisfactory definition of a language, a dialect, a sociolect, an ethnolect etc., and the decision of what is and what is not a language is often taken at the political level (e.g. look at umbrella terms such as English with huge geographical and social variation or Chinese including numerous languages, many of which are not even related with one another).

The position of an outsider can also be exploited by the community collaborators.

Finally, be aware of the fact that as an outsider you may be useful for the community not only in the good sense of this word, but you may also be used or even abused by the community members, e.g. for political or economical reasons. Remember that ethics also includes the ethics of working with oneself. When you enter a community, you probably start knowing one person or even not knowing anybody, you need to get to know people to learn who will help you, who will laugh at you and who will use you for their own gain.

Researchers might be seen as representatives of the dominant culture.

Not only can you find yourself in the position of being criticized or ridiculed, but you may also potentially face lack of understanding or hostility. Even when speaking the same language, linguistic or cultural misunderstandings are not uncommon because of different understanding of words or concepts, or unfamiliarity with e.g. idiomatic expressions. So even if you come to the community with the best possible intentions, be aware of the potential for problems and search for ways of avoiding them.

What counts most is that personal engagement outlasts the funding process.

The ethical approach to research assumes that the researcher always leaves something behind when they finish the project. This may be something tangible, even as small as a memory stick with collected data, which is really easy to include in the funding budget. However, there is an even more important aspect to consider: through **collaboration** people get attached to one another and it is even more important to do your best to form actual, **lasting relationships** whenever possible.

Check your privilege.[5]

Language revitalization and documentation is not only academic research and social events: it also includes mundane tasks and sometimes the dirty work. If it's only possible, why don't you come a day earlier to help set up the room or leave a day later to help clean it up? Your help will be greatly appreciated and it may offer you an opportunity of a **meaningful interaction** with community

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[5] A thought-provoking article about checking privilege https://everydayfeminism.com/2015/07/what-checking-privilege-means/

members. If a problem arises and you can help, offer your assistance – what is a challenge for one person may be super-easy for another with another set of skills.

A healthy, well-rested and positively-minded person can do more for the
revitalization than one who is struggling to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Making circles out of lines. A view of the evolving relationship between academia and language communities

Speakers: Olimpia Squillaci & Ebany Dohle

Our relationship with the field situation is rather complex, as we are both insider and outsider researchers. We would like to talk about how our field experience regarding Greko and Nahuat-Pipil can be applied to other field contexts.

The political situation in El Salvador, where speakers of Nahuat-Pipil are trying to reconnect with their linguistic and cultural heritage, is extremely relevant to language revitalization efforts. The current decline in language use is a direct result of historical events, such as indigenous genocide, civil war, displacement and migration, as well as criminal activity and gang violence. It is significant because it affects how indigenous people perceive outsiders, so this is something that researchers wanting to work in El Salvador should take into account. First revitalization efforts led by native speakers started in 1960s, then in 2012 there was a resurgence started by young activists in the capital city, and now there are revitalization efforts both at the local and international levels, with certain academic support but hampered by a lot of internal conflict.

In the case of Greko the first revitalization movements also started at the end of 1960s when two teachers and their students started organizing evenings to discuss language-related issues. The young people understood the importance of their linguistic and cultural heritage, so when they went back to their villages, they started a community-driven project. People at first were hesitant but soon many older speakers welcomed this initiative. An association with branches in local villages was created, headed by community committees consisting of local people of all ages. By the late 1980s and 1990s many associations were founded which became always more politicised; other stakeholders with regional and national recognition and influence joined the stage. In spite of that fewer and fewer people spoke the language: as one of the activists put it: "we probably should have spoken less about the language and more IN the language". In 2015 new activities were set up with the aim to revitalise the language but a revitalization movement only got certain impetus in 2017. It is a group of people who decided to communicate in Greko in their everyday life to prevent it from disappearing.

What we did was to look at what we – as young researchers – found out going out into the field because many things changed over the years. First of all, based on Mosel's comparison of aims, perspectives, motivations and products of linguists and Local Language Workers, we proposed an updated and more detailed comparison to include the results of our research. Today the differences do not seem to be so clear-cut, but very much blurred, especially in the case of people like us who are both community members and researchers.

1: Linguist's and LLW's perspectives on fieldwork projects (Mosel 2006: 68)

	Linguist	Local Language Worker
Aims	academic	educational, cultural
Perspective	focus on otherness	focus on identity
Motivation	intellectual curiosity	intellectual curiosity, status, money
Products	PhD thesis, specialised investigation	dictionary, reading materials, translation

In our view, nowadays linguists and Local Language Workers have much more in common in terms of aims, perspectives, motivations and products delivered as the result of their fieldwork, an excellent example of which is the COLING project. It brings together academics and people from local communities, it offers them opportunities to travel to other communities, share and exchange experiences, participate in workshops and field schools. It is not only about producing deliverables but also about training people and leaving know-how in the community, so that people – if they want – can start their own documentation projects, produce their own teaching materials, etc.

2: Linguist's and LLW's perspectives on fieldwork projects (Squillaci and Dohle)

	Linguist	Local Language Worker
Aims	academic, interdisciplinary	educational, cultural, social, well-being
Perspective	focus on otherness, focus on knowledge sharing	focus on identity, knowledge transmission, problem-solving
Motivation	intellectual curiosity, problem solving, emotional, personal, ancestral history	intellectual curiosity, emotional, personal, ancestral history, status, money
Products	PhD thesis, specialised investigation, outreach materials (exhibitions, documentaries, language books and literature, etc.)	academic papers, dictionaries, reading materials, translations, socially motivated projects

The other significant change is that today ethics of research is a very important issue, and it is not only about the "bureaucratic" ethics (signing consent forms, etc.) but also about equal exchange between researchers and community, asking the community what they need instead of imposing solutions. This kind of approach helps to empower people, give the communities visibility and even help to solve some local problems.

We need to do is to decolonize our minds: avoid any kind of patronizing attitudes, folklorisation, or romanticisation   (e.g. by searching for "authentic" language or "authentic   " speakers of a language). Language is not a pretty piece in a museum or a package handed down from generation to generation. It is a live being which develops all the time, new words appear to cover new areas of life. Any efforts by new speakers to revitalize and use their own language must be appreciated because this ensures its future and survival.

Language revitalization may be greatly supported by creating **support networks** with variety of participants: community members, institutions, academia, human rights activists, language activists. The inclusion of numerous and varied perspectives ensures more solid   results in language revitalization programmes as well as quality results research-wise because the very same events or phenomena can be given very different interpretations by researchers and local people. On the other hand the recognition of contributions of various participants of the project guarantees the exchange of knowledge and competences: community members acquire academic expertise, while scholars have a chance to gain new insights into local issues.

An extremely important form of empowering people to speak in and about their heritage language and culture is organizing non-academic events, where people have an opportunity to meet other users of the language or other varieties of the language (e.g. Nahuat-Pipil in El Salvador and Nahuatl in various communities in Mexico). This is a forum to understand you are not alone in your efforts, which often encourages people to take it back to their communities, use the language and be proud of their heritage.

We do believe that the only way to work with minority languages is to work in a circular schema where the community is the basis but cooperates with all other interested parties, recognizing each other's contributions as equal.

Co-labouring in research: knowledge production and ethics in community engagement

Speaker: Genner Llanes-Ortiz

As an indigenous researcher, I would like to emphasize several points based on my personal and professional experience.

- First of all, being part of the community does not automatically make you an expert. You still have to do the legwork that any other researcher has to do: you have to talk to other members of the community, learn from them, reflect on the diversity of voices, as well as collect, organise and analyse your data. The very fact that you may be of a different generation and one of the few community members who has had access to higher education, who has learned other language(s) and possibly lived in other countries, already makes you a certain type of outsider.
- While doing your fieldwork, it is important to communicate your research interests in simple terms and translate academic ideas into everyday language, so that people without academic background can actually understand you.
- Be ready to present your research to many people, but also be conscious of the fact that they have the right to be uninterested or too busy to engage.
- Try not to step on anybody's toes but also do not be afraid to speak your mind - talk to "common" people as well as to people of authority within the community, and be prepared to negotiate between your research personal and institutional agendas and the community's perspectives, goals and interests.
- Be ready to change your research objectives, language and methodology if need arises, especially if this is what the community expects or requests.
- The issue of epistemic violence requires answering several questions: Are there **local definitions** that work better to explain things? Would it not be more ethical to use them instead of imported terms and concepts? What is the best word to capture this idea? Can we use **indigenous concepts** to replace external terms?
- Always acknowledge the source of your ideas, if appropriate (and safe) by naming the person who provided them. It is the only ethical solution to recognize individual authorship within the community.
- At the end of your research, find creative and engaging ways to share your work and be prepared to be criticized. Allow your devolved research to be torn apart, re-used and recycled by active members of the community. If they take your research apart and use it for their own ends, this means that they have been able to connect with your work.
- If appropriate, share authorship with the community. Otherwise, acknowledge their diverse voices in your work.

Indigenous researchers? Challenges and commitments with the community

Speaker: Omar Aguilar Sánchez

The question I would like to reflect upon today is who indigenous researchers are.

In indigenous communities such as the Mixtec one, a common view is that a researcher is an outsider, usually a foreigner, they come to collect data and never return. I have to fight with this kind of notions. To have good communication with the community, it is essential to explain your work and also why your work is important and how it will be beneficial to the community.

As an indigenous researcher, I have authorization to do my research both from the community and the authorities, and I also have the know-how from the academia. My assumption is that I have to go back to the community with the results of my work and with benefits resulting from my work. My community is the most important critic and receiver of my research, so I always have to tell the truth. If I say something that is not true, people – my family, friends or neighbours – will recognize that. So I have to do my research in such a way that the community accepts and agrees with my work.

Thus, a large part of my work is academic research, publications and presentations at universities and conferences. But when I am in Mexico, I also always try to do something with the community, for example workshops for the public, lessons for school children etc. to show them cultural values, promote the idea of the reintegration of cultural memory.

The Perspective of an Indigenous Community of Sierra Norte de Puebla Towards Outside Researchers

Speaker: Herlinda Marquez Mora

My community is called Tenango (originally Atenamitic). Because of its location, the place attracts many visitors, including researchers, thanks to its unique craftsmanship, culture and traditions, as well as the fact that Nahuatl is still spoken in the community.

How are foreigners called in Tenango? There is actually no single word for this concept. A man is called a *coyotl*, a term which comes from the name of the predatory animal that often kills domestic animals and was extended to white conquistadors because of what they were doing. Today few people in the community know this story and they see foreigners as well-dressed and well-mannered people, so a more respectful term was coined *cocoyotzin*. Foreign women are generally called *xinola* from the Spanish word *señora* with the polite form *xinolahtzin*.

How are foreigners perceived in the community? Community members usually expect foreigners to arrive with some altruistic goal in their mind because first foreigners who visited the community came with clothes, medicines and other goods, so every time they saw a foreigner, they thought they would receive something. Foreigners can also be tourists and it is obvious they don't eat very spicy food and speak English.

So how can researchers win the trust of the community? First of all, by speaking Nahuatl. It is a very surprising thing to hear a foreigner speak Nahuatl, mostly because of the discrimination that lasted

for a very long time, so many young people decided to give Nahuatl up. Now to hear a white man speak Nahuatl for many people is an experience that challenges their worldview.

In a community which is located close to a city, it is pretty obvious that young people will want to live the way that people in the city live. This is why many of them try to forget their heritage and language. But very often hearing a foreigner speak Nahuatl encourages them to cultivate their language and culture. People start asking how it is possible that a foreigner is interested in things that the whole community is trying to forget. This is the moment when the community starts to perceive the value of their own culture, language, dress. Outsiders' appreciation gives the community a sense of confidence.

However, sometimes things get misinterpreted too. Some people tend to think that the culture and customs that they have only serve to attract and entertain foreigners, and they don't really see the importance of their own heritage.

Thus, looking back at the history of research in the area, the preliminary list of recommendations for future research may include the following:

- It is important for the researcher to make their work known in the communities.
- It is important to stay in touch with community authorities and activists.
- It is important to take into account the perspective of the local community because this can also contribute to the success of their research.
- It is recommended for the researcher to engage into daily activities of the community or the organization of community events. This shows that the researcher has a community-oriented attitude and community-driven interests.
- It is important to leave a significant contribution in the community, which does not have to be financial. It may also include initiating or generating new initiatives in the community, so that the community can start to value what they have. This is how research can contribute to the life of the community.
- Beside knowledge, a researcher should have a vocation and a real interest in their work.