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Case Study in Activist Applied Linguistics: Working with the Oregon Judicial Department for the Accessibility of Domestic Relations Information

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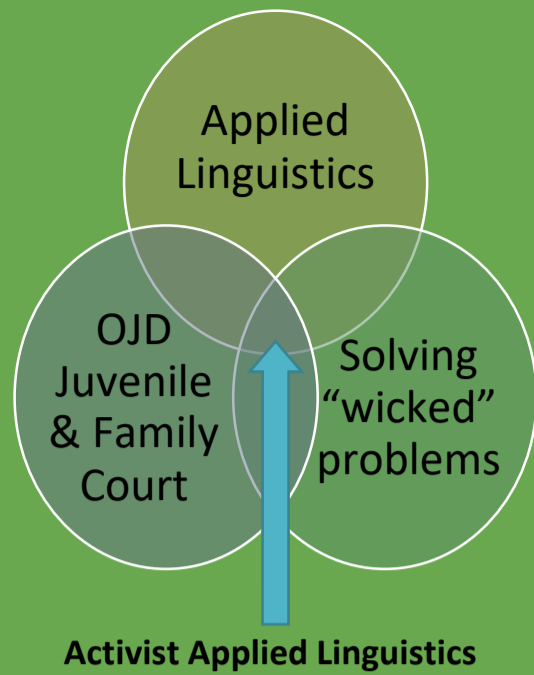
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Activist Applied Linguistics (AAL):

Doing Applied Linguistics together with communities in order to make positive social change.

Problem:

Lack of public knowledge about alternative to traditional trials.

Goal:

Make legal language more accessible to everyday people navigating the justice system.

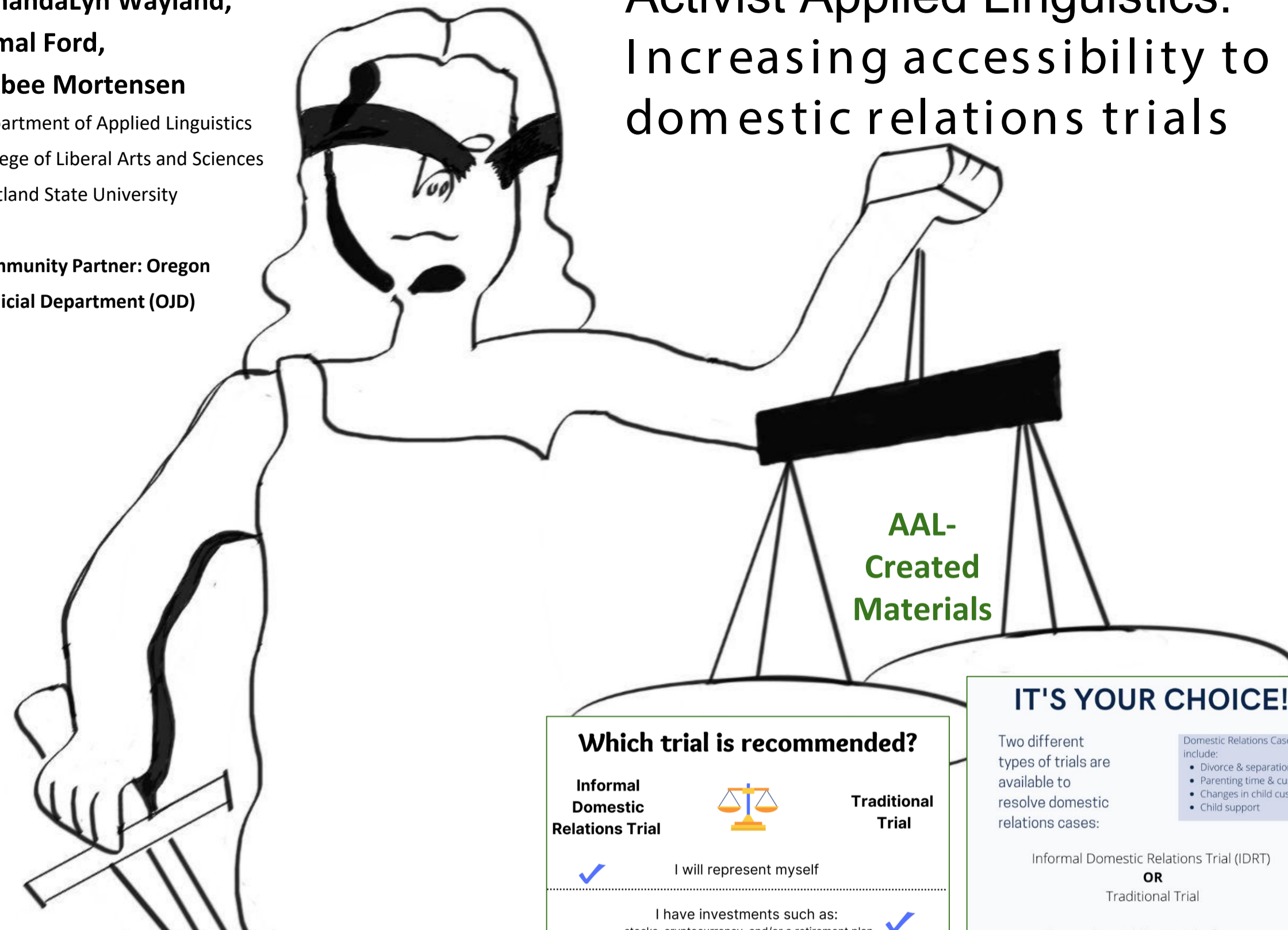
Highest Impact toward:

- Senior Citizens
- English Language Learners
- People with low literacy

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 College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
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**Community Partner: Oregon
 Judicial Department (OJD)**

Activist Applied Linguistics: Increasing accessibility to domestic relations trials



Which trial is recommended?

Informal Domestic Relations Trial	Traditional Trial
✓ I will represent myself	
I have investments such as: stocks, cryptocurrency, and/or a retirement plan	✓
I share a business with my spouse	✓
I share real estate with my spouse	✓
✓ I want the trial to finish in under 2 hours	
✓ I want my witnesses to be able to write their testimony	
My witnesses are available to come to court	✓
✓ I want to talk to the judge directly	

IT'S YOUR CHOICE!

Two different types of trials are available to resolve domestic relations cases:

Domestic Relations Cases include:
 • Divorce & separation
 • Parenting time & custody
 • Changes in child custody
 • Child support

Informal Domestic Relations Trial (IDRT)
 OR
 Traditional Trial

Choose the trial that is right for you!

Informal Domestic Relations Trial	Traditional Trial
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self representation encouraged; this will cost less • Usually, the judge's decision is back in 2 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self representation discouraged; this will include lawyer fees • Typically, wait 54 days for the judge to make the final decision

To learn more about Domestic Relations please see:
 Oregon Judicial Department : Family Law Program : Family Law : State of Oregon

Original OJD Materials

INFORMAL DOMESTIC RELATIONS TRIAL
 It's the Right Choice for You!

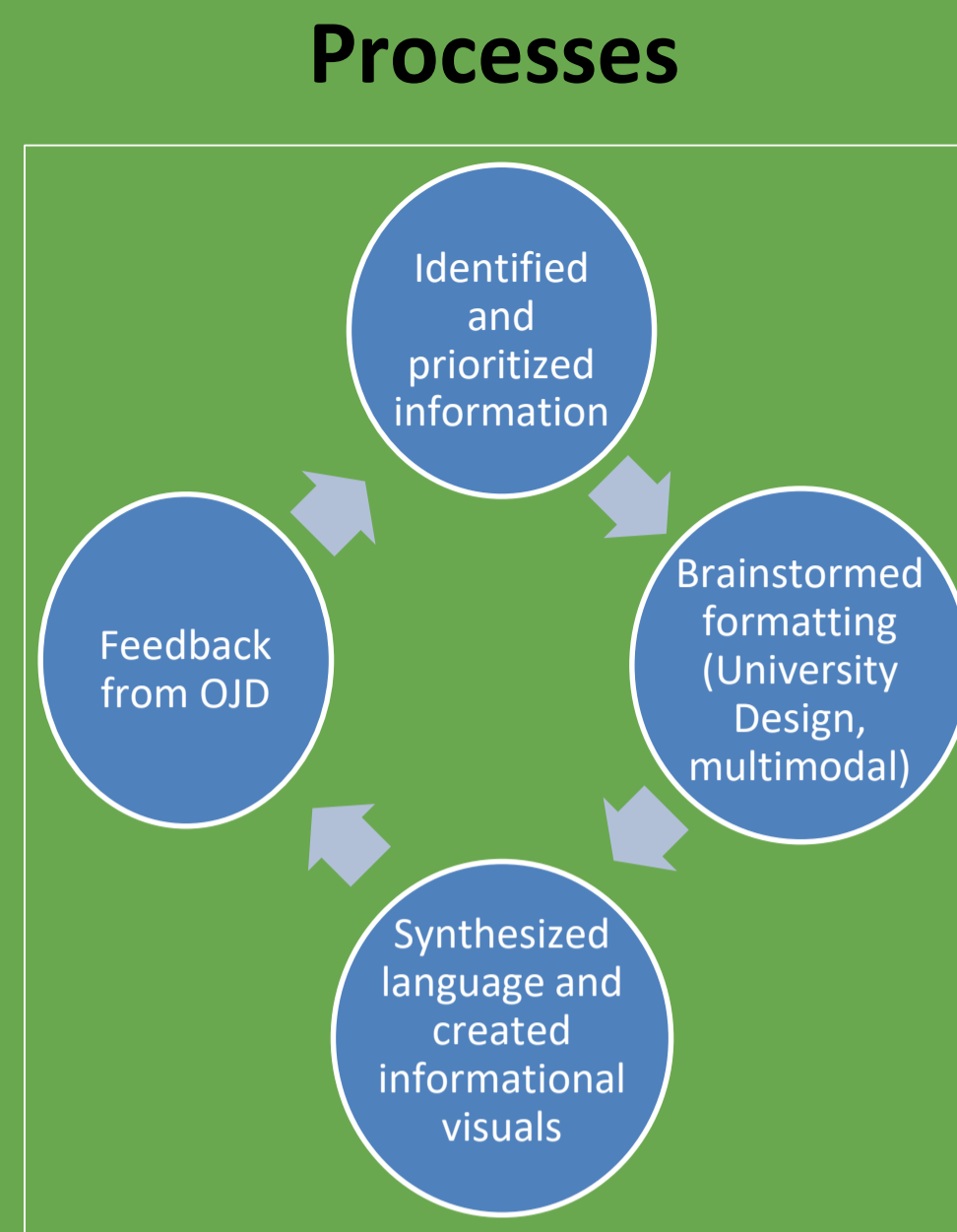
INFORMAL DOMESTIC RELATIONS TRIAL
 It's the Right Choice for You!

INFORMAL DOMESTIC RELATIONS TRIAL
 It's the Right Choice for You!

If you represent yourself, you will be expected to follow the Rules of Evidence and you will be the one to make opening statements and closing arguments and to question witnesses

Sample of original text from OJD describing self representation at a grade 9 reading level.

AAL covers this concept in the "It's Your Choice" infographic at an overall grade 6 reading level.



Findings & Impact

Even when lawyers try to communicate with laypeople, they still tend to use dense text and complex sentences.

The OJD reached out to ask us to help, indicating how AAL is needed because it takes into account evolutions of communication and its effect on society. Our created materials will be published on the OJD website and included in their handouts.

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Give us your feedback!
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