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THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF THE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES OF THE AMERICAS

*** SSILA BULLETIN ***

An Information Service for SSILA Members

Number 15: March 13, 1995

CONTENTS:

- 15.1 CAIL SESSIONS FOR 1995 AAA MEETING: LAST CALL
- 15.2 INFORMATION WANTED ON LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS
- 15.3 POSITION IN LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY AT CSU-LONG BEACH
- 15.4 LINGUISTS NEEDED FOR SHORT TERM CONTRACT WORK IN BOLIVIA

15.1 CAIL SESSIONS FOR 1995 AAA MEETING: LAST CALL

The following two independently organized sessions will constitute the 34th Conference on American Indian Languages at the 1995 Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, Nov. 15-19. SSILA members who wish to participate in either of these sessions should contact the organizers IMMEDIATELY at the addresses below. Papers are still being accepted, but all proposals for sessions must be submitted to the AAA by April 1, and organizers must have all materials in hand no later than the last week of March.

* STRUCTURE AND STYLISTICS OF NATIVE AMERICAN DISCOURSE.

Organizer: Pam Bunte, Dept. of Anthropology, CSU-Long Beach,
Long Beach CA 90840 (e-mail: pbunte@beach1.csulb.edu; tel:
310/985-5172; fax: 310/985-1535).

* THE CATEGORY IRREALIS IN AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGES. Organizers:
Harriet E. Manelis Klein & Laurel Watkins. Contact Harriet
Klein at: Dept. of Anthropology, Montclair State University,
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043 (tel: 201/655-7556 [machine attached];
fax: 201/655-7687; e-mail: klein@apollo.montclair.edu).

[[* These two sessions are the only ones I am aware of that are being organized for the 1995 CAIL. If anyone else is organizing a session, they should contact me immediately so that I can send out a supplementary announcement. --V.G. **]]

SSILA members who wish to volunteer a paper to the 1995 AAA meeting outside of these sessions should submit their abstracts directly to the AAA, using appropriate AAA forms. Sessions will be arranged by the AAA Program Committee. Since SSILA will meet with the LSA next winter, we are not organizing sessions of volunteered papers for the AAA meeting. The call for papers for the SSILA winter meeting (Jan. 7-9, 1996) will be mailed with the April SSILA NEWSLETTER and abstracts will be due on September 1.

15.2 INFORMATION WANTED ON LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS

From Fran Karttunen (liar457@utxvms.cc.utexas.edu) 4 Mar 1995:

In January there was a report on a northwest Pacific community that was down to a couple of speakers before they realized that their language was not a general "Indian" language spoken by Indian people elsewhere but a specific language soon to be lost forever. A tribal official said they were going to ask for linguists to come help. Does anyone know what the name of this community and its language is? Also, I would very much like to receive information about community attitudes toward language maintenance/reclamation programs and linguist involvement. (Not everyone likes linguists or thinks they are helpful.)

--Fran Karttunen, Linguistics Research Center, Univ. of Texas, Austin,
Texas 78713 (liar457@utxvms.cc.utexas.edu).

15.3 POSITION IN LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY AT CSU-LONG BEACH

[This previously announced 1-year opening in Linguistics and Anthropology at CSU-Long Beach is being re-announced as a 2-year position.]

California State University, Long Beach, announces a 2 year lecturer position in linguistic anthropology. This full-time position is a joint position in the Anthropology and Linguistics departments. An applicant must have a Ph.D. in linguistic anthropology (or be ABD with completion of the Ph.D. preferred by 8/22/95); must have a publication record commensurate with professional, active fieldwork; and must have evidence of effective teaching at the college level. Desired specializations include: language and education, the ethnography of communication, and language and gender. In addition to courses in linguistic anthropology, the successful candidate must be able to teach an educational anthropology course required of prospective teachers and linguistic students, as well as general classes in sociocultural anthropology. Position open until

filled.

Send letters and resumes to: Pamela Bunte, Chair, Anthropology Department,
CSU-LB, Long Beach, CA 90840 (pbunte@beach1.csuib.edu).

15.4 LINGUISTS NEEDED FOR SHORT TERM CONTRACT WORK IN BOLIVIA

From Bret Gustafson (bret@isr.harvard.edu) 21 Feb 1995:

The Subsecretaria de Asuntos Etnicos of Bolivia (hereafter SAE) is in the process of expanding that country's Proyecto de Educacion Inter-cultural Bilingue (PEIB) into various ethnolinguistic communities of the Amazon region. Currently the country has existing projects in the Aymara, Quechua, and Guarani regions of the Altiplano and Chaco. The current project takes place in the context of a history of various experiments in bilingual education (state, private, church, etc.) which will now ideally be synthesized, "officialized", and standardized in state schools in indigenous areas. The project also occurs as part of new policies of multicultural educational reform of the presidency of Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada (MNR). The vice-president, Victor Hugo Cardenas, is an Aymara 'pedagogo', who made acceptance of the vice-presidency contingent on official support of multicultural and multilingual educational reform. The educational reform currently underway in Bolivia is being funded by the World Bank.

Currently, the native peoples of the Amazonian region face the problems and obstacles similar to indigenous peoples of other parts of the hemisphere. These are principally economic and political, but also include the histories of neo-colonialism, missionization, and past efforts at assimilation through education, colonization, and so forth. In this difficult context, native organizations have arisen, with varying sources of external assistance, and have unified in the Confederacion Indigena del Oriente Boliviano (CIDOB). CIDOB is currently working directly with the SAE in issues of bilingual education, teacher training, and resource production (written materials, texts, etc.).

The state has appropriated (expropriated?) the former 'compound' of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (ILV), located in the Riberalta area of northeastern Bolivia. This compound, of houses, classrooms, lodgings, etc., had already been serving as a teacher training school (for Indians and non-Indians in the 'traditional' educational system). It will now function solely as an 'Instituto Indigena' for training native teachers in linguistics, bilingual education, etc. Funding for these projects comes from various external sources, including the EC and some European NGOs, as well as UNICEF, which has been a traditionally adamant supporter (and funder) of bilingual education in Bolivia.

Currently, the SAE has received funding to support the work of professional linguists in the country. This funding has the specific goal of providing technical assistance for the reassessment, and readjustment of alphabets which are currently in use among various language groups. These alphabets are the legacy of mainly ILV work in the past, and are characterized by the traditional trends of that organization. Nonetheless, these are among the only scarce resources available as a base for future work in these languages. The SAE is looking for a number of linguists, professional, or of graduate level, who could spend several months (depends), working directly with native teachers and speakers in reaching technical decisions about certain alphabets for the next step of elaborating primers. Obviously, skills in phonetics, phonology, and

the technical, educational and political aspects of orthographic standardization are necessary.

Some indigenous teachers who will be participating have had linguistic training, while others have previously worked only as translators for missionaries. In any case, the institutional and financial support available, as well as the apparently positive political environment have created an auspicious moment for possibilities in native autonomy in decision making, obviously historically rare in the country.

As a former employee of UNICEF in Bolivia, and a collaborator of the Educational Reform and the Secretaria de Asuntos Etnicos, I have been asked to serve solely as a communication link in this search for linguists. I have already communicated with several people, but I would like to stress that the opportunity is open to all who may be interested, and qualified.

As mentioned, skills in the appropriate areas are necessary. One should also have experience in political questions of language maintenance, education and survival. Knowledge of (fluency in) Spanish is of utmost importance, as would be experience with language families native to Bolivia. I have been informed that funding is quite generous, on a per diem basis, with gradations according to experience (i.e. grad student, ABD, PhD, etc.) Funding is quite competitive and should not dissuade professional linguists from applying. As of now, I have been informed that work in the summer months has been planned, with funding for up to six month stays.

I am not entirely sure of all of the details. Although I am not related to the decision making or the administration of the funding, this particular project is being carried out under a joint agreement between Harvard University and the Bolivian Government. Nonetheless, decision making and planning are completely under control of the Secretario de Asuntos Etnicos.

I am available for specific questions, which I may or may not be able to answer (by e-mail, phone, or by mail to address below). However, interested persons should prepare (**IN SPANISH**):

- 1) A letter stating related experience and reasons for interest in the project.
- 2) A C.V. detailing educational and professional experience.
- 3) A list of two or three possible references (actual reference letters not necessary at the moment)

This information should be sent, as soon as possible, to:

Lic. Monica Sahonero
Sub-Secretaria de Asuntos Etnicos
Casilla 1663
La Paz
BOLIVIA

If anyone has other questions, or doubts, or concerns, please contact me in some form at: Bret Gustafson, Dept. of Anthropology, William James Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138 (tel: 617/493-7910; e-mail: bret@isr.harvard.edu).

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