

**The Society for the Study of the  
Indigenous Languages of the Americas**  
*SSILA BULLETIN*

An Information Service for SSILA Members

Editor - Victor Golla  
Associate Editor - Scott DeLancey

Correspondence should be directed to the Editor

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## 41.1 CORRESPONDENCE

### More on the 1st Person

From Johannes Helmbrecht (106265.1156@compuserve.com) 30 Oct 1996:

Regarding the question from Dr. George Spivack ([SSILA Bulletin #40](#)) about the “lack of the 1st person pronoun” in some North American Indian languages:

It is difficult to prove that something is universal, but I conducted a survey of pronominal paradigms in about 50 different North American Indian languages from different stocks (including also several isolates) and found not a single language which lacks an expression of the first person. As far as I know from the typological literature on this topic there is no language in the world which lacks a first person pronoun. Sometimes first person pronouns or affixes or clitics are transparent with respect to their historical sources. I have come across 1st person pronouns which originate in a nominal expression meaning “servant”; others stem from adverbials (“here”) or from deictics (“this”). Clearly there are many diverse historical processes involved in the emergence of 1<sup>st</sup> person pronouns, but as far as I know no language lacks them entirely. There have never been serious doubts about the 1st person as a universal category. I recall that Boas himself, in his famous introduction to the Handbook of American Indian languages, assumed that grammatical forms by which speakers refer to themselves have a special status and a clear priority.

In their book on “Pronouns and People” Muehlhaeusler and Harre mention some Papuan languages which reportedly have only an opposition between 1st and non-1st person (i.e., there is only one expression for 2nd and 3rd person). Although this information should be used very cautiously (it is nearly impossible to get the relevant grammatical information about the cited languages), it indicates the direction in which we should be looking for universal features of speech-act roles.

Prof. Spivack’s question (and apparently the narrative in “The West”) raises another issue. The idea that there exist “exotic” languages--especially American Indian languages--without 1st person pronouns is not simply misinformation. It reflects a bizarre stereotype about how non-Europeans refer to themselves. In western movies from the 50s and 60s Indians speaking English to Whites often refer to themselves with a 3rd person pronoun or a proper name (“Tonto, him see danger ahead”). I never understood this strange speech attitude. Grammatical treatments of Indian languages by linguists certainly give no reason for this kind of pronoun usage by Indians. Larry Rosenwald recently posted a related query on the Linguist list about the representation of Indian pronoun usage in the books of James Fenimore Cooper (e.g., in “Last of the Mohicans” Indians use a 3rd person to refer to themselves). Why Cooper depicted Indian speech in this way is unclear, but it could have been the beginning of some of the stereotypes about Indians’ avoidance of “I”.

Johannes Helmbrecht  
Rittershausstr. 26, D-53113 Bonn  
GERMANY

## **Statistics on Speakers of Dying Languages**

From Joanna Martin (Xunaan@aol.com):

I'm writing a thesis on the metaphor (or not!) between language death and species extinction, and am currently focusing on rates of decline and the possibility of predicting these rates. I wonder if any of you might have old copies of the Ethnologue, or similar sources of statistics on endangered languages, which I might acquire through inter-library loan or by some other means. My need is not for current stats, as these are easily come by, but for older statistics which would facilitate a dia-chronic study. Can anyone direct me to these sources?

Joanna Martin  
P.O. Box 3785  
Tucson, AZ 85722

## **41.2 OKLAHOMA SEEKS LINGUISTIC ANTHROPOLOGIST/AMERICAN INDIANIST**

The University of Oklahoma, Department of Anthropology, is seeking to hire a linguist for a tenure-track appointment at the rank of Assistant Professor, beginning August 16, 1997. Salary is commensurate with experience. Ph.D in anthropological linguistics is preferred and specialization in languages of the Americas is required. Willingness to complement the existing strengths of the anthropology program is expected. Contact: Search Committee, Department of Anthropology, 455 W. Lindsey, Room 521, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK 73019.

### 41.3 POSSIBLE TENURE-TRACK POSITION AT OREGON

The Department of Linguistics at the University of Oregon announces that a regular tenure-line position may become available, pending budgetary approval, beginning Fall 1997. The position is advertised at the Assistant or early Associate Professor level. Salary will be dependent on qualifications and experience.

Applications are invited from qualified individuals in empirical descriptive linguistics or psycholinguistics. Candidates must have completed the Ph.D. degree by the time of appointment. An excellent record of research and publication is a must, as well as evidence of excellence in classroom teaching.

Relative to empirical descriptive linguistics, we seek a candidate with strong grounding in the functional approach to morphosyntax and discourse, field work with non-European languages, and cross-linguistic grammatical typology.

Relative to psycholinguistics, we seek a candidate with strong grounding in functional approaches to grammar and discourse, experimental cognitive psychology, cognitive science, empirical quantitative methods (experimental, text-based, etc.), and language processing.

The successful candidate in either area will, in his or her work, be able to contribute to several foci within the Department. We enjoy a long tradition of work within the functionalist and typological tradition, with major concentrations in descriptive field work, experimental linguistics, second language acquisition and teaching, and cognitive science.

Please submit a letter of application which includes a statement of research interests, vitae, sample publications, and have three letters of reference sent to:

Search Committee  
Department of Linguistics  
University of Oregon  
Eugene, Oregon 97403

Review of applications will begin on January 6, 1997, and will continue until position is filled.

For more information consult our web site at [logos.uoregon.edu](http://logos.uoregon.edu), or contact Doris Payne, Chair ([dlpayne@oregon.uoregon.edu](mailto:dlpayne@oregon.uoregon.edu)).

The University of Oregon is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## 41.4 1997 ATHABASKAN CONFERENCE AT U OF OREGON IN MAY

The 1997 Athabaskan Language Conference will be held on the campus of the University of Oregon in Eugene, May 17-18, 1997. Linguists, anthropologists, native speakers, educators, and other interested parties are welcome to attend. Abstracts for presentations about any aspect of the Athabaskan languages are welcome--descriptive, theoretical, or pedagogical. Abstracts are due March 1, 1997. Send abstracts and questions to:

Chad Thompson, Department of English and Linguistics,  
Indiana U/Purdue U,  
Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499  
(fax: 219/481-6985; e-mail: thomsoc@cvax.ipfw.indiana.edu).  
A conference web page has been set up at:  
<http://cvax.ipfw.indiana.edu/~thomsoc/athabaskan.html>

## 41.5 18TH AILDI IN TUCSON, SUMMER 1997

The 18th Annual American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI) will be held at the University of Arizona, Tucson, June 2-27, 1997, hosted by the Department of Language, Reading and Culture and the American Indian Studies Program. Offering 6 graduate or undergraduate credit hours, the AILDI involves linguists, tribal elders, bilingual/ESL specialists, teachers, aides and school administrators in an integrated, holistic learning experience focusing on American Indian languages and cultures. All courses lead toward regular degree programs and toward bilingual and ESL endorsements.

1997 courses/topics will include:

- Bilingual Materials and Curriculum Development for Native American Classrooms
- Parent, Community, and Tribal Roles in Maintaining Heritage Languages
- Language and Culture in American Indian Education
- Indigenous Literatures of the Americas
- Southwest Native Languages
- Creative Writing in Indigenous Languages
- Linguistics for Native American Communities
- Readings by American Indian Writers and Poets
- Tribal, National and International Guest Speakers
- Teaching and Appreciating Linguistic Diversity among Native American Communities

Tuition will be \$662 for six credit hours. Housing costs will range from \$300 to \$700. For registration forms and additional information contact:

AILDI  
Dept. of Language, Reading and Culture  
College of Education  
Room 517, Box 210069  
Univ. of Arizona,  
Tucson, AZ 85721- 0069  
(tel: 520/621-1068; fax: 520/621-8174; e-mail: kfranbe@ccit.arizona.edu;  
web: <http://AISP.harvill.arizona.edu>).

## 41.6 LINCOM EUROPA NOW HAS WEBSITE

LINCOM EUROPA, the German company that has been publishing a wide range of materials on endangered languages around the world, now has a World Wide Web site. Visitors to the site will find several new American Indian publications noted. Their "Languages of the World/Materials" series includes a Passamaquoddy-Maliseet sketch by R. Leavitt, and a sketch of Pima Bajo by Z. Estrada F. has been announced for the next set (ca. Dec. 96). The "Languages of the World/Text Collection" series includes a work in preparation on Chinook Jargon, and one on Bare. LINCOM EUROPA has also started a new multimedia series on CD-ROM, and a disc on Sauk (by Gordon Whittaker) is in preparation. The URL for LINCOM EUROPA's site is: <http://home.t-online.de/home/LINCOM.EUROPA>. Inquiries and comments should be directed to <LINCOM.EUROPA@t-online.de>.

## 41.7 THE BOOK EXCHANGE

From Shirley Silver (silver@sonoma.edu) 26 Oct 1996:

I want to give the following away -- I don't want anything in exchange:

- Davies, William D. 1986. Choctaw verb agreement and universal grammar. D. Reidel Publishing Co.
- Dorsey, James Owen and John R. Swanton. 1912. A dictionary of the Biloxi and Ofo languages. BAE Bulletin 47.
- Furbee-Losee, Louanna, ed. 1976. Mayan texts I. IJAL Native American Text Series vol.1(1). The University of Chicago Press.
- Masthay, Carl, ed. 1991. Schmick's Mahican dictionary. American Philosophical Society.

## 41.8 POLYGLOT LORD'S PRAYER (1870)

From Marie-Lucie Tarpent (marie-lucie.tarpent@msvu.ca) 30 Oct 1996:

I have recently been given an extraordinary book: a 1975 facsimile edition of an 1870 compilation of the Lord's Prayer in 250 versions, as printed at various times by the Vatican. This compilation (edited in Latin) includes languages ancient and modern, some of which I had never heard of, from many corners of the globe. Each language or dialect is given a single page.

From what I can glean from the introduction, the editor was familiar with the research in language reconstruction and classification that was on the cutting edge at the time, as well as with many earlier similar compilations.

The section of potential interest to SSILA members is the one on **IDIOMATA AMERICANA**, including South and North America. Some of the names are easily recognizable, but many are unfamiliar.

### **IDIOMATA MERIDIONALIA:**

- ◆ Araucanice seu Chiliace
- ◆ Araucanice alia dialecto
- ◆ Peruanice (= apparently Quechua)
- ◆ Kichuanice (minimally different from the preceding)
- ◆ Aimarice
- ◆ Moxhice (= Mochica ?)
- ◆ Mosetenice (has 2nd person in mi-)
- ◆ Mobimahice
- ◆ Itonamice
- ◆ Zamucanice
- ◆ Mainice
- ◆ Tupiace
- ◆ Guaranice
- ◆ Guaranice alia dialecto
- ◆ Kiririce
- ◆ Kiririce alia dialecto
- ◆ Homaguaice
- ◆ Caribice
- ◆ Maipurice
- ◆ Toba dialecto
- ◆ Mocobice
- ◆ Abiponice
- ◆ Mbaice
- ◆ Salivice
- ◆ Tamanacaice
- ◆ Betoice



- ◆ Yamena dialecto
- ◆ Yarurice

**IDIOMATA SEPTENTRIONALIA:**

- ◆ Kachice
- ◆ Poconchice seu Pocomanice
- ◆ Mayice seu Yucatanice
- ◆ Messicanice (= apparently Nahuatl)
- ◆ Mixtecice
- ◆ Totonacca dialecto
- ◆ Otomitice
- ◆ Tarasca dialecto
- ◆ Perindice
- ◆ Coraice
- ◆ Tubarice
- ◆ Tarauhmarice [sic]
- ◆ Opataice
- ◆ Cochimice
- ◆ Virginiace
- ◆ Canadensi idiomate (= probably Algonkian)
- ◆ Shavannice
- ◆ Mohogice (= Mohawk)
- ◆ Illinice
- ◆ Mareschetice Abenacquiorum dialecto
- ◆ Penobscotice alia Abenacquiorum dialecto
- ◆ Pasamaquoddice alia Abenacquiorum dialecto
- ◆ Micmacensi dialecto
- ◆ Tadussaca dialecto
- ◆ Oregonice (= Coast Oregon Penutian; I am not sure which language)
- ◆ Crianæ seu Cree tribus dialecto
- ◆ Koetenaicæ tribus dialecto
- ◆ Pedum-Nigrorum tribus ita dictæ dialecto (= Blackfoot)
- ◆ Assiniboinice
- ◆ Potawotomice
- ◆ Groenlandice (= Inuktitut)

## 41.9 BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Award

SSILA member Laura Graham's 1995 book, Performing Dreams: Discourses of Immortality among the Xavante of central Brazil (U of Texas Press) has won First Place in the Chicago Folklore Prize and Honorable Mention in the Victor Turner Prize for Ethnographic Writing.

### ALT II

The second meeting of the Association for Linguistic Typology (ALT II) will be held at the University of Oregon, Eugene, from September 11 to September 14, 1997. The local organizer for ALT II will be:

Scott DeLancey  
Dept. of Linguistics  
University of Oregon  
Eugene, OR 97403  
(delancey@darkwing.uoregon.edu).

Linguists wishing to present a paper at ALT II are asked to send an abstract to Masayoshi Shibatani (Faculty of Letters, Kobe University 1-1, Rokkodai-cho, Nada-ku, Kobe 657, Japan) no later than March 1, 1997.

## **The Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas**

Victor Golla, Secretary-Treasurer & Editor

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