

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

SSILA BULLETIN

An Information Service for SSILA Members

Editor - Victor Golla (golla@ssila.org)

Associate Editor - Scott DeLancey (delancey@darkwing.uoregon.edu)

Correspondence should be directed to the Editor

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113.0 SSILA BUSINESS

Please note the new website address! We continue to get inquiries from SSILA members and others who have lost track of the SSILA website. It can now be reached only through the SSILA domain address: <http://www.ssila.org>

Please bookmark this address. It will not change again soon.

113.1 CORRESPONDENCE

Loss of linguistic diversity

- From Susan Herring (susan@LING.UTA.EDU) 26 Apr 2000:

For my Language Universals and Linguistic Typology course this semester, I would like to have my students read something about the consequences of global language endangerment and loss for the study of linguistic universals and typology. Ken Hale touches on this theme briefly in his 1992 article in *Language*, but does not develop it fully. Has anything been written recently that tackles this important issue head on?

I am teaching the course from a Functional-Typological perspective, but would be receptive to using articles from any theoretical perspective, \as long as they engage responsibly with issues that loss of linguistic diversity raises for the scholarly investigation of language universals.

~Susan Herring
University of Texas, Arlington
(susan@ling.uta.edu)

Discount available

- From Margaret Anderson (anderson@unbc.ca) 26 Apr 2000:

I have flyers available for an author's discount on the following publication:

Potlatch at Gitsegukla: William Beynon's 1945 Field Notebooks. Edited by Margaret Anderson and Marjorie Halpin. UBC Press, 2000. The discount brings the price down from \$75 list to \$45. The book is shipped direct, so there is also a \$5 shipping charge. (All prices are in Canadian dollars.)

The volume includes the entire content of four field notebooks by Beynon at a series of totem pole raisings and feasts. It also includes an introduction by the editors, and a number of photographs taken by Beynon in 1945. Appendices list all variants of all Gitxsan words in the notebooks and supplement these with additional notes from interviews in 1978 and 1998.

~Margaret Anderson
University of Northern British Columbia
(anderson@unbc.ca)

Habitats Project

- From Brad Ray (bradray@ix.netcom.com) 28 Apr 2000:

I have been engaged in an 11-year project involving the production of a GIS database containing the world's languages, as well as its cities, towns and villages.

The database has polygons representing the areas of concentration for each of the world's 6,703 living languages. It also contains over three million cities, towns and villages, in digital file, for each of which our Habitats Project team has been compiling language data. We intend to place this database in the public domain upon completion of a first draft.

The first compilation will have a variety of errors involving population figures, incorrect Lat/Lons, migration of peoples since compilation, etc.

However, it is our hope that this global assessment will serve as a stepping-stone to a more accurate picture of the world's peoples, language communities, and migratory populations. I would be delighted to hear from members of your Society who might be interested in knowing more about our project, and perhaps serving as consultants.

~Brad Ray
The Habitats Project
(bradray@ix.netcom.com)

Translations of two terms needed

- From Wilfried Pieters (wilfried.pieters@euronet.be) 7 May 2000:

On behalf of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Ghent, Belgium, I would like to ask your help. We are looking for the translations of the two words below into 87 different languages, for an art project. What the artist will do with these translated words we don't know at this moment. But first we need to have the words, and we'd especially like to have them in lots of endangered languages.

The two words are:
COUSINAGE (= "the state of being cousins")
MIRRORING (= "the reflection of a mirror")

It is important that the translations be words, not descriptive phrases. We need these translations by May 13th. If possible, we would like them in the original orthography. (Ideally, this would be in a Word document, as an attachment in html format, or as a gif, if special alphabets must be used). All the people who send us their suggestions will be informed about the project as it develops, so that they know what happened with their words. Thank you very much for your help!

~Wilfried Pieters
(wilfried.pieters@euronet.be)

113.2 POSITION OPEN

Aboriginal Language Coordinator, Simon Fraser U (British Columbia)

- From Paul McFetridge (mcfet@cs.sfu.ca) 1 May 2000:

Applications are being accepted for a one-year lectureship in Linguistics at Simon Fraser University, beginning Sept. 1, 2000. The successful applicant will teach and coordinate Aboriginal language and linguistics courses in British Columbia as part of the cooperative program between the University and the SCES/SFU Program at Secwepemc Education Institute. The program is based in Kamloops, BC, but courses take place in a variety of Interior and Coastal First Nations communities. This appointment will be made subject to budgetary approval.

At least an M.A. in linguistics with a specialization in Aboriginal language(s), or a related field is preferred for the position. Demonstrated knowledge in a Salish language, and/or other BC Aboriginal languages is essential. University-level teaching experience in Aboriginal languages is expected, and candidates should be sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal students and organizations in small, individualized programs. Experience in Aboriginal language teaching methods, as well as specialized knowledge of curriculum development, teacher training and pedagogical support in Aboriginal language programs is an important criterion for appointment.

Teaching duties will include teaching linguistics courses (e.g. Ling. 130, 220, 360, 260) to Aboriginal language/language teacher trainees, and teaching or supervising, with the help of fluent speakers, courses in one or more B.C. Aboriginal language (e.g. Shuswap, Lillooet, Heiltsuk, Haida, Halq'emeylem, Carrier). The teaching load will vary so as to permit the appointee to also undertake the duties of Aboriginal Language Coordinator for the SCES/SFU Program, which will involve liaison with Bands and Aboriginal language authorities to promote education in Aboriginal languages; collaborating with the SCES/SFU Academic Coordinator and local education coordinators to plan, schedule and monitor Aboriginal language and linguistics courses; to ensure that course objectives and standards are met, and to provide academic advice for students in courses in local communities and facilitate their registration in appropriate courses.

Send a letter of application and curriculum vitae before June 2, 2000 to: Paul McFetridge, Chair, Linguistics Department, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6, Canada (tel: 604/291-3554; fax: 604/291-3776). In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents. SFU offers equal employment opportunities to qualified applicants.

113.3 WEBSITES OF INTEREST

The Red Thunder Cloud story

As those of you know who have already received the April number of the SSILA Newsletter (it was sent out earlier this week), the “Notes & Comment” column this quarter consists of a report by Ives Goddard on the identity of Red Thunder Cloud, reputedly the last speaker of Catawba, who died in 1996. Ives has discovered that RTC, who also called himself Carlos Ashibie Hawk Westez, grew up in a middle class African-American family as Cromwell Ashbie Hawkins West and assumed a Catawba identity during his teens. Although other masquerades of this sort are not unknown, what is unique about West/Westez’s case is his acquisition of an authentic speaking knowledge of Catawba (already nearing extinction in the 1930s).

Ives’ report has been the subject of two newspaper articles during the past week, one in the Charlotte (North Carolina) Observer on May 5, the other an AP wire service story that appeared on May 6. The texts of both articles are available on the web. The Charlotte Observer story can be retrieved from: <http://www.charlotte.com/observer/0505thundercloud.htm#email>

The AP story (“‘Last native speaker of Catawba’ fooled world”) can be read on the Anthropology News Web site at: <http://www.tamu.edu/anthropology/news.html>

Linguistic Olympics

- From Tom Payne (tpayne@OREGON.UOREGON.EDU) 9 May 2000:

I would like to announce that the US Linguistic Olympics Website has been updated. (The Linguistic Olympics is an entertaining and educational activity for secondary school students (ages 11 to 18), who compete by solving linguistic problems in real languages they have never learned. This activity has been a regular part of educational life in Russia for over 30 years, and has now been implemented three times as an outreach of the U of Oregon’s Linguistics department.)

The site has a new look, and there are now over 25 problems geared to students who are native speakers of English. These problems may be downloaded for personal or classroom use. I would encourage all linguists to look at the site and try some of the problems. Although they are geared to secondary school students, many are challenging even to professional linguists. You may find some of these useful in your classes.

Another reason I would like to ask SSILA members to look at the site is that I would like you to consider submitting a problem in a language you know well. Our Russian colleagues have been most gracious in allowing us to adapt problems from their archives. However, they are also constantly in need of more problems for their on-going Linguistic Olympics program. We would like to reciprocate by offering them some original problems.

The Linguistic Olympics homepage is at: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~tpayne/lingolym>

There is also an unlinked page that contains my report to the LSA on the 1998 US Linguistic Olympics. It is at: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~tpayne/lingolym/LOreport.htm>
This document also gives guidelines for problem preparation.

Thank you very much for your help in making our discipline known among secondary school students.

~Tom Payne
Department of Linguistics, University of Oregon

113.4 UPCOMING MEETINGS

Program of the Athabaskan Workshop & Conference (June 9-10)

- From S. Hargus (sharon@u.washington.edu) 9 May 2000:

The Workshop on Athabaskan Prosody will take place on Friday, June 9, as planned, but the 2000 Athabaskan Language Conference will now take place only on Saturday, June 10. Both meetings will be held in Moricetown, British Columbia. The preliminary programs of the two meetings are:

Workshop on Athabaskan Prosody (June 9)

- Jeff Leer (U of Alaska Fairbanks), "How stress shapes the stem in Athabaskan"
- Sharon Hargus (U of Washington), "Quality and quantity issues in Witsuwit'en word stress"
- Bill Poser (Carrier Sekani Tribal Council and UBC), "An acoustic study of Dakelh (Carrier) pitch accent"
- Gary Holton (U of Alaska Fairbanks), "Tone and intonation in Tanacross"
- Suzanne Gessner (UBC), "Properties of tone in Chipewyan"
- Siri Tuttle (UCLA), "Locations and realizations of prominence in Athabaskan languages"
- John Alderete (UBC), "Word level prosody in Tahltan, a historical and phonetic exploration"
- Michael Krauss (U of Alaska Fairbanks), Invited discussant.

Athabaskan Language Conference (June 10)

- Sally Rice (U of Alberta), "Posture and existence predicates in Dene Sounline (Chipewyan): Lexical and semantic density as a function of the STAND/SIT/LIE continuum."
- Ted Fernald (Swarthmore), "Athabaskan Satellites and ASL Ion-Morphs"
- Gunnar Olafur Hansson (UC Berkeley), "Chilcotin Vowel Flattening and Sibilant Harmony: Diachronic Cues to a Synchronic Puzzle"
- Lynda Holland (Holland Educational Consulting), "Lost and Found: The Dene Elder's Project, Voices from the Past"
- Edward Vajda (Western Washington U), "Ket verb morphology and its parallels with Athabaskan-Eyak-Tlingit: Possible evidence of a distant genetic link"
- Sally Rice et al., "Cold Lake Chipewyan revitalization project"
- Alfred Joseph, (Tse-Kya (Hagwilget) Band), "The role of the Witsuwit'en and Gitksan languages in Delgamuukw v. The Queen"

Multi-media fair

- John Alderete and Tanya Bob (UBC), "Transcriber 1.4.2 as a tool for annotating large sound files in Tahltan"
- Eric Lockard (Salina Bookshelf), "The Navajo Language: A Grammar and Colloquial Dictionary on CD ROM"

- J. Randolph Radney (Trinity Western U and the Canada Institute of Linguistics), “Overview of LinguaLinks”

The meeting will conclude with a Farewell feast at the Moricetown campground.

Abstracts for the Workshop and Conference have now been posted on the conference web site: <http://faculty.washington.edu/sharon/ALC2000/>

113.5 E-MAIL ADDRESS UPDATES

Beck, David dbeck@ualberta.ca

Frank, Paul paul_frank@sil.org

Lang, Julian irahiv@hotmail.com

Smythe, Susan ssmythe@mail.utexas.edu