

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

\*\*\* SSILA BULLETIN \*\*\*

An Information Service for SSILA Members

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Number 139: June 2, 2001

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- 139.0 SSILA BUSINESS: More website problems
- 139.1 OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE SUPPORTS INDIAN LANGUAGES
- 139.2 ENDANGERED LANGUAGES ISSUE OF CULTURAL SURVIVAL QUARTERLY
- 139.3 THE ETHICS OF PUTTING ENDANGERED LANGUAGES ON THE WEB
- 139.4 FESTSCHRIFT PRESENTED TO KEN HALE
- 139.5 PHILLIPS FUND GRANTS FOR 2002
- 139.6 POSITIONS OPEN
  - \* Project Manager: Archives of the Indigenous Lgs of Latin America
  - \* Researcher/Intern opportunity: The Rosetta Project
- 139.7 UPCOMING MEETINGS
  - \* Friends of Uto-Aztecan Conference (Santa Barbara, July 8-9)
  - \* Inuit Studies Conference (Anchorage, August 1-3, 2002)
- 139.8 WEBSITES OF INTEREST
  - \* Halkomelem ethnobiology (and language)
  - \* Linguistic Olympics
- 139.9 E-MAIL ADDRESS UPDATES

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139.0 SSILA BUSINESS

More website problems

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We are again experiencing problems with the SSILA website. Some pages are currently inaccessible, and the search function is disabled. Please bear with us as we fix things. We expect to have the site fully functional again soon.

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## 139.1 OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE SUPPORTS INDIAN LANGUAGES

>From Intertribal Wordpath Society ([ToWordpath@aol.com](mailto:ToWordpath@aol.com)) 24 May 2001:

In the hectic last 2 weeks of the session, a little-known resolution quietly made its way through both chambers of the Oklahoma Legislature. Senate Concurrent Resolution 37, authored by Senators Ted Fisher (Sapulpa) and Cal Hobson (Lexington), and by Representatives Opio Toure (Oklahoma City), Bill Nations (Norman), and Kenneth Corn (Howe) in the House, honoring and supporting Oklahoma Indian languages, was passed by the Senate on May 17 and the House on May 21, both unanimously. The resolution is based on a draft titled "Oklahoma Indian Language Heritage Protection Act," written by Drs. Alice Anderton and Richard Grounds of the nonprofit Intertribal Wordpath Society, and was supported by individuals across Oklahoma who believe the dwindling of native languages in our state, and the concomitant loss of the cultural heritage that is expressed in them, constitutes a crisis that is worth averting.

Among the 39 tribes headquartered in Oklahoma are speakers of 25 languages, belonging to 9 distinct language families; many are unique to the state. Another 13 languages that used to be spoken by Oklahoma tribes have already died out within our borders; most of these are extinct on earth. The remaining languages are all considered by IWS to be endangered. The criteria for deciding this include the actual number of speakers, the percentage of each tribe's members that still speak the traditional language, and above all the number of children who are being raised with it as a first language. Only 3 native Oklahoma languages -- Cherokee, Kickapoo, and Choctaw -- are still being learned fluently by children as they grow up. More typical is the situation where only those in their 60s or 70s and older still speak the old language; in 15 cases there are fewer than 50 fully fluent speakers in a whole tribe.

In 1990, the U.S. Congress passed the Native American Language Act, stating the federal government's support for all Native American languages, acknowledging their importance, and encouraging the teaching of native languages in schools. Senator Fisher's resolution does essentially the same thing at the state level. In a series of "Whereas" clauses, the importance of Oklahoma's native languages to culture, tribal identity, and to the state as a whole is recited. In conclusion, the legislature resolves that it

... endorses and supports the policy of the United States government enunciated in the Native American Language Act of

1990 ... encourages the teaching and learning of Native American languages at all levels ... opposes artificial barriers to the instruction or learning of Native American languages ... encourages all education authorities to take all appropriate steps to promote and encourage the instruction of Native American languages ... [and] urges the superintendent of Public Instruction to take appropriate measures to foster respect for Native American languages.

Copies of the measure are available from the Intertribal Wordpath Society, 1506 Barkley St., Norman, OK 73071, telephone (405) 447-6103, or e-mail [ToWordpath@aol.com](mailto:ToWordpath@aol.com).

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## 139.2 ENDANGERED LANGUAGES ISSUE OF CULTURAL SURVIVAL QUARTERLY

>From Jon Reyhner ([Jon.Reyhner@nau.edu](mailto:Jon.Reyhner@nau.edu)) 24 May 2001:

The June 2001 issue of \*Cultural Survival Quarterly\* is devoted to the topic of Endangered Languages. (CSQ is published by Cultural Survival, an international human rights organization for indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities.) Guest edited by Dr. Eileen Moore Quinn, a linguistic anthropologist at MIT who specializes in Irish, the issue includes articles on Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Americas. Included are the writings of indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, research activists and scholars, some of whom compare global linguistic "crash" to worldwide loss in ecological bio-diversity.

The articles demonstrate that no hard and fast formula for language preservation is likely to emerge. Just as each case has been the result of a unique set of historic and cultural circumstances, so too must revitalization or revival efforts be dovetailed to meet the needs and goals of specific linguistic communities.

Contents:

Marion BlueArm, "Maintaining Lakota on the Cheyenne River Reservation"

Jonathan David Bobaljik, "Language Shift on the Kamchatka Peninsula"

Lucia Clark, "On the Brink -- Griko: A language of resistance and celebration"

Deidre d'Entremont, "By Any Means Necessary? Tourism, economics and the preservation of language"

Jessie Little Doe Fermino, "You are a Dead People"

Andre M. Kapanga, "Recreating a Language: a socio-historical approach to the study of Shaba Swahili"

Joan Smith/Kocamahhul, "For Reasons Out of Our Hands: a community

identifies the causes of language shift"

Ole Henrik Magga & Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, "The Saami Languages: the present and the future"

Patrick McConvell, "Looking for the Two-Way Street"

Daniel Nettle & Suzanne Romaine, "The Last Survivors"

Gilvan Mueller de Oliveira, "Endangered Languages in Town: the urbanization of indigenous languages in the Brazilian Amazon"

Eileen Moore Quinn, "Can this Language be Saved?"

Jon Reyhner, "Cultural Survival vs. Forced Assimilation"

Anna Saroli, "Can Quechua Survive?"

Lindsay Whaley, "The Growing Shadow of Oroqen Language and Culture"

The publication date is June 15. Copies are available for \$5 + \$2.50 shipping. To order, contact: Sofia Flynn, Publications, 215 Prospect Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 (tel: 617/441-5406; fax: 617/441-5417; e-mail: [sflynn@cs.org](mailto:sflynn@cs.org)).

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### 139.3 THE ETHICS OF PUTTING ENDANGERED LANGUAGES ON THE WEB

>From Doug Whalen ([whalen@alvin.haskins.yale.edu](mailto:whalen@alvin.haskins.yale.edu)) 29 May 2001:

The internet is a great tool for spreading information around the globe at minimal cost. As sound gets better integrated into this world-wide web, it becomes easier to include material from endangered languages. Since the majority of the world's language do not have an agreed upon writing system, putting them on the web in spoken form makes a lot of sense. But can we do it ethically? This was the question raised at a recent workshop at the University of Texas in Austin.

This workshop was part of last month's SALSA meeting at the University of Texas (the "Symposium About Language and Society, Austin", now in its ninth year). The need for explicit agreement about ethical issues has been brought into focus by the launch of UT's AILLA project (the Archive for the Indigenous Languages of Latin America -- see their site at <http://www.ailla.org>). As with North America, virtually all of the indigenous languages of Latin America are endangered. For many of these language communities, the prestige of having their language put on the web generates pride within the community and political leverage with the majority language of the country.

But there are ethical decisions that have to be made at every step of the process. The intent of the workshop was to bring some of these considerations to light, both to make others aware of them and to bring in other perspectives so that a consensus can begin to be formed.

The eight speakers had a variety of issues to raise, and certainly none of them were settled. In fact, most of the talks explicitly raised more questions than they answered. As a first step to bringing awareness to issues that are easy to ignore when only the technical challenges seem difficult, however, the workshop was quite a success.

The clearest consensus was reached on these points:

- \* "Publishing" on the web is different from publishing on paper. It has different consequences for the authors of the texts and should be treated differently.
- \* Agreements to be recorded are often made with an individual based on trust with that one person. Putting that same recording on the web brings the whole world into the picture and should not be assumed as part of the original agreement.
- \* This last point is especially difficult to accommodate when the recordings were made decades ago, before there was an internet to think about.
- \* The rights to linguistic material fall under the general issue of intellectual property rights. These are currently being debated in relation to indigenous culture for music, dance, and visual arts as well as for language material. In all these domains, there are many unanswered questions.
- \* While problems will always arise, it is imperative that web archivists have an explicit ethics policy in place. It needs to cover the known issues, but also be flexible enough to accommodate the developments that we know are going to take place in the realm of indigenous intellectual property rights.
- \* Indigenous peoples often assume that others are making money off of their products. With language material on the web this is typically not true, but if it does become true it is apparent that some method of sharing that income with the indigenous group is necessary.

--Doug Whalen  
Endangered Language Fund  
([whalen@haskins.yale.edu](mailto:whalen@haskins.yale.edu))

[An expanded version of this report can be found on the ELF web page (<http://www.ling.yale.edu/~elf/ethics.html>).]

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## 139.4 FESTSCHRIFT PRESENTED TO KEN HALE

>From Malcolm Ross ([Malcolm.Ross@anu.edu.au](mailto:Malcolm.Ross@anu.edu.au)) 30 May 2001:

On Friday 25 May 2001 at MIT in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Ken Hale was presented with a festschrift, *Forty Years On: Ken Hale and Australian Languages*. There were over 50 people at the presentation, including the Hale family, and Australian(ist) linguists Jane Simpson, David Nash, Mary Laughren, and Barry Alpher (who, with Peter Austin, are the volume's editors), contributors Norvin Richards and Claire Bower, and Michael Walsh. A Warlpiri greeting was read from a Warlpiri language and education workshop which had just been held at Lajamanu.

In 1959-60 Ken Hale documented around seventy Australian languages using the methods of modern linguistics and anthropology. In the years since, he has written and published numerous papers on theoretical and descriptive topics, made his field records available to several generations of linguists, and encouraged native speakers in studying and maintaining their languages. The 36 contributions to the volume reflect this broad diversity of Hale's pioneering work. Contributors include linguists from Australia and North America, and three Australian language speakers.

The volume starts with several chapters dealing directly with Hale's fieldwork, beginning -- as he did -- in Alice Springs with Arrernte and Warlpiri. These include first-hand accounts, by Sara Hale and others, of what it was like grappling with fresh ideas and being in the field in Australia in the 1960s, and serve to place his work in the broader context of Australian language studies. The breathtaking scope of Hale's contribution, both in terms of languages documented and topics examined, is reflected in the diversity of languages and topics covered by the remaining chapters: theory, typology, methodology, syntax, semantics, phonology, morphology, historical linguistics, language change and creativity, and language policy implementation.

The volume also includes an interview with Hale, two vocabularies collected by Hale and O'Grady in 1960, and a bibliography of Hale's Australian work.

The volume is published by Pacific Linguistics, and is now available for sale. The full table of contents, together with ordering information, can be found at:

<http://www.anu.edu.au/linguistics/nash/aust/hale>

-- Malcolm D. Ross  
Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies  
Australian National University, Canberra

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#### 139.5 PHILLIPS FUND GRANTS FOR 2002

>From Eleanor Roach ([eroach@amphilsoc.org](mailto:eroach@amphilsoc.org)) 25 May 2001:

The American Philosophical Society announces that Phillips Fund grants for Native North American Research in 2002 can now be applied for. Applicants may be graduate students engaged in research on master's or doctorate dissertations, as well as holders of the doctorate. Grants are for research in Native North American linguistics, ethnohistory, and the history of studies of Native Americans, in the continental US and Canada. They are not intended for work in archaeology, ethnography, psycholinguistics, or pedagogy. They are ordinarily given for one year, and are for research only. They can cover travel, tapes, and informants' fees, but are NOT intended for general maintenance, the purchase of permanent equipment, study, travel to conferences and workshops, or for assistance with publication or translation.

The maximum award is \$3000. The next deadline for applications is March 1, 2002, with notification in May. Applicants may be residents of the United States, or American citizens resident abroad. Non-US nationals whose research can only be carried out in the United States are eligible. Grants are made to individuals; institutions are not eligible to apply.

Application forms can be downloaded from the APS website at:

<http://www.amphilsoc.org>

(Click on "Grants" on the homepage.) Forms may also be requested by mail from:

Committee on Research  
American Philosophical Society  
104 South 5th Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

When writing be sure to include indication of eligibility for the program; nature of the research (e.g. archival, laboratory, fieldwork, etc.); and proposed use of the funds (travel, purchase of microfilm, etc.) Foreign nationals must state the objects of their research that









The Long Now Foundation is looking for linguistics students and professionals interested in helping with archive research for The Rosetta Project 1,000 Language Archive. The Rosetta Project is an attempt to create a broad corpus of language descriptions, vernacular texts, analytic materials and audio files for 1,000+ languages in a publicly accessible, online archive ([www.RosettaProject.org](http://www.RosettaProject.org)). Our goal is to create a meaningful survey and near permanent archive of 1,000 languages as well as a unique platform for contemporary comparative linguistic research and education.

We are assembling a group of 5 researchers for the summer of 2001 to help collect and assess a variety of materials to build the archive. Most of this research will take place in the library stacks at Stanford and Berkeley, and will also involve scanning and image processing in the offices of the Long Now Foundation in San Francisco. Payment will be on a "pay-per-text" basis. We pay \$10 per text collected, which should work out to a minimum of \$15 an hour. If you get efficient at the process, you can make significantly more.

Most of the materials in the Rosetta archive are excerpts of already published texts so the collection effort focuses on locating, excerpting and formatting published materials in various archives and personal libraries. We are excerpting and disseminating these materials under Fair Use provisions where appropriate or with specific permission when we are reproducing entire publications.

The texts we are collecting for each language include:

- Genesis translations
- Glossed vernacular texts
- Orthographies (ideally in IPA)
- Swadesh word lists
- Inventories of phonemes
- Morphology and Syntax (short sketches of 7 pages or under)
- Audio files (sample of spoken language with transcription and ideally a translation)
- Details (origin and current distribution of language, number of speakers, family, typology, history, etc. -- an expanded Ethnologue entry)

Though we are primarily looking for people to work in and around our office in San Francisco, proposals to work in other archives in the US or around the world will also be considered. Off-site collection efforts will likewise be paid via a "pay-per-text" basis and collections must focus on materials needed for the Rosetta Archive.



On this site you will find over 30 problems geared to secondary school students who are native speakers of English. These problems may be downloaded for personal or classroom use. I encourage all linguists to look at the site and try some of the problems. Although they are geared to secondary school students, many of them are challenging even to professional linguists. You may find some of them 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, and so we reciprocate by offering them original problems.

In addition to the Linguistic Olympics homepage 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.

Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to submit a problem.

--Tom Payne  
University of Oregon  
([tpayne@oregon.uoregon.edu](mailto:tpayne@oregon.uoregon.edu))

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139.9 E-MAIL ADDRESS UPDATES

Michelet, Stephanie .....[smichelet@worldnet.att.net](mailto:smichelet@worldnet.att.net)

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