

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

*** SSILA BULLETIN ***

An Information Service for SSILA Members

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-->> --Correspondence should be directed to the Editor-- <---

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171.0 SSILA BUSINESS

Change of date for Hale Prize nominations

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The deadline for nominations for the Ken Hale Prize has been extended to October 15. For further information on the Prize see SSILA Bulletin #170, or contact the chair of the selection committee, Sara Trechter, at strecther@csuchico.edu.

SSILA website about to move

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The SSILA website will be moving to a new server within a week, unless unexpected problems arise. This turned out to be a larger undertaking than we had anticipated, since it involved a change in platform (from Windows to Unix). You will notice some changes--the databases will (at last) be up to date--and the site will continue to evolve.

There will be no change in the domain address (www.ssila.org), but some users may have to update their bookmarks.

The site manager, Ardis Eshenberg, welcomes comments and suggestions

for improvement. You can reach her at ardise@hotmail.com.

171.1 CORRESPONDENCE

The language of grief

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From (LinSwnsn@aol.com) 5 Jul 2002:

I'm a graduate student in Portland, Oregon, working on an MA in Applied Theology (Pastoral therapy). My thesis will deal with the language of grief, or the insufficient language of grief, and I am doing research on words for death, dying and bereavement in different cultures.

Recently there were two articles in The Wall Street Journal noting the inadequacy of English in regard to grieving parents. We don't have a word for a bereaved parent, and it is awkward for people, when they are asked if they have children, to say "no." They feel as if they are denying their deceased child's existence. If they mention the child, they feel an explanation is necessary.

Are there any words in indigenous American languages for a mother or father who has lost a child to death, whether by accident or illness?

I will appreciate any help for references you can give me.

Swanson

Dr.

6137

--Linda Ross

755 SW Viewmont

Portland, OR 97225-

Re: "Yankee"

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From Carl Masthay (cmasthay@juno.com) 3 Jul 2002:

In Bulletin #167, Steve Russell asked about the word "Yankee." Back in 1996 I compiled an etymology, and in answer to him I sent the etymology, as below. It may be useful to some others. It is a word that has been bandied about from time to time with little chance of being seen comprehensively in the context of its several conjectural sources.

Masthay

Ave.

63141

--Carl

838 Larkin

St. Louis, Missouri

Yankee: a name with a problematic origin
(Compiled from the OED and many sources)

The Oxford English Dictionary says this etymology is "most used," and Algonquianists believe it is correct:

1822 Heckewelder (1876, p. 77): North American Indians' form of English, producing Yengees (Massachusetts Yengeese) and then Yankees. Compare New England Indian form Engismon (1675, Saltonstall). Farther west (1878, Baraga) Cree Akaybssiw [E(n)g(e)lis(h)], producing Ojibwa Jbganash, or Zhaaganaash.

The OED says the following is "most plausible," and Dutchmen readily promote it:

Dutch Janke (/yahnk-kuh/), meaning "little (dumb) Jan" (/yahn/; for John), a derisive term by the Dutch (1838) and English for New Englanders. Attested by: 1683 Yankey Dutch, 1684 Captain Yankey as surnames, 1687 a pirate Yanky, 1697 a Negro Yankee.

Although the Massachusetts Yengeese appears to have come from English, it may have been reinforced by or mixed with Cherokee (1789) eankke 'slave, coward' [a form not attested in modern Cherokee], a name applied to the inhabitants of New England by the people of Virginia when they refused to aid them in the war against the Cherokees. After the battle of Bunker Hill, the people of New England, having established a reputation for bravery, accepted the name Yankees.

Cherokee ulmenki 'prisoner, captive, slave' (from Louis De Vorse's edition of William Girard de Brahm's _Report of the general survey in the southern district of North America_, 1750s) . Compare modern Cherokee atsiyvgiyv, ayvgi [v is a nasalized shwa].

1713 farmer Jonathan Hastings of Cambridge, Massachusetts: 'excellent'. Compare French surnames Yancey, Yancy 'an Englishman'.

Prof. Harold Bender, Merriam-Webster New International, second edition, wrote: "Originally _Yankee_ was Jan Kaas [John Cheese], a disparaging nickname for a Hollander.... _Yankee_ was used generally in the Colonies to apply to any northerner who was disliked...." [Source: letter by Howard Sawicke, Rochester, Michigan; Mensa Bulletin, April 1997, pp. 6-7.]

171.2 ELF & LINGUIST LIST TO ESTABLISH ONLINE LANGUAGE QUERY CENTER

From Doug Whalen (whalen@alvin.haskins.yale.edu) 3 Jul 2002:

The Endangered Language Fund, along with the Linguist List, is creating a new function for language communities and linguists called the Language Query Room (LQR). This effort is being funded by a grant from the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF). This note is to give you a preview of the LQR and to ask for volunteers for an advisory board of native speakers.

The LQR will be a space where questions about how to say things in different endangered languages can be posted. Someone who needs to have a form translated, typically a language learner or a linguist, will post a query via a form at the LQR site. An automatic email will be sent to everyone who has registered an interest in that language. If a native speaker feels like responding, they will use a similar form on the site, and everyone on that language's list will be informed that new material is present. We hope to have both text (in the native orthography) and audio supported. All of the material will be archived for future searching.

Our current plan is to recognize the contribution of the native speaker volunteers as official "Language Consultants." They will have their status listed as such on LQR, and a brief biography will be posted (if desired). The primary motivation is the interest in the language and the desire to see it more widely recognized by allowing progress to be made on it outside of the field. We are also hoping to have an endangered language chat room, which would allow speakers of the designated languages to converse with each other, with the only "cost" being to have the discussions archived. We will have a pop-up keyboard that will make input of unusual orthographies much simpler (we hope), for those languages that have such an orthography.

As we work on the design of the LQR, we want to make it as useful to the native communities as possible. To help with that effort, we are assembling an advisory board, composed of speakers of endangered languages. We would like to invite any who qualify to contact us about joining the board. The criteria are:

- * Is a native speaker of an endangered language (since we already have the viewpoint of the professional linguist well represented).
- * Has email and internet access (since the LQR will only exist on the web, and the advisory board will only have virtual meetings by e-mail).
- * Is fluent in English (since the membership is intended to be world-wide and those of us on the grant have only English as an interlanguage).
- * Is able to spend a few hours over the next year reading email and contributing an opinion about the best way to make the LQR function (the time demands are small and on an email schedule rather than a phone or meeting schedule).

Those who do not meet these criteria but who have comments about the LQR are welcome to contact us as well, at the e-mail addresses below.

We hope to have a functioning site up this year. The LQR will, with luck, expand the range of language material that is used in linguistic theorizing and enhance the stature of the endangered languages in the process.

--Durbin Feeling (Cherokee), Chair, LQR Advisory
Board

(dfeeling@ou.edu)

--Douglas H. Whalen, President, Endangered Language
Fund

(elf@haskins.yale.edu)

171.3 POSITIONS OPEN

* Linguistic anthropologist at U of Iowa
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From Laura Graham (laura-graham@uiowa.edu) 3 Jul 2002:

The University of Iowa Department of Anthropology invites applications for a tenure track faculty appointment in linguistic anthropology at the Assistant Professor rank to begin August 2003.

We seek candidates with active empirical projects and innovative theoretical approaches to how language mediates sociocultural life. Candidates should have strengths both in descriptive linguistics and in sociocultural anthropology. We are particularly interested in candidates who will enhance the linguistic component of the department's strength in cultural politics and representation, as well as other departmental foci. Geographic area open, teaching experience and publications preferred. Applicants must hold the Ph.D. by the date of appointment. Teaching load is four courses per year.

Send a letter of application, curriculum vitae, and contact information for three references to: Laura Graham, Chair, Search Committee, Department of Anthropology, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242.

Screening of applications will begin on December 1, 2002. The University of Iowa is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. This employer does offer employment benefits to domestic partners of employees. This employer does prohibit discrimination on the basis on sexual orientation/preference and gender identity/expression.

171.4 WEBSITES OF INTEREST

* Bibliography on Language Endangerment
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From Tasaku Tsunoda (tsunoda@tooyoo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp) 2 Jul 2002:

A "Bibliography on Language Endangerment" was placed at the following website in May 2002:

http://www.tooyoo.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~tsunoda/dlg_lst.html

members. If you would like your homepage address to be added to this list, please send it to the editor (golla@ssila.org). We will publish addresses as they come in -- the addresses received since the last Bulletin are noted below. The cumulative list will be available soon at the SSILA website. --VG]

Fishman, Joshua <http://suse-www.stanford.edu/~joshuaafishman/>
Payne, Thomas <http://www.uoregon.edu/~dlpayne>
Payne, Doris <http://www.oegon.edu/~tpayne>

171.7 E-MAIL ADDRESS UPDATES

The following additions or changes have been made to the SSILA mailing list since the last Bulletin:

Bischoff, Shannon T. daniilkharms@earthlink.net
Heinemeyer, Annette annette.heinemeyer@asu.edu
Steele, Susan..... ssteele@csl.stanford.edu

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