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

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

An Information Service for SSILA Members

Editor - Victor Golla (gollav@axe.humboldt.edu)  
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27.1 CORRESPONDENCE

Preserving Documentation

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>From Joel Sherzer, 25 Nov 1995:

As we become ever more concerned with the preservation of endangered languages, those of us who possess substantial unpublished documentation on Native American languages should be giving some serious thought to the archiving and preserving of our materials. Perhaps it would be useful if I described my own efforts over the last couple of years with the Kuna materials that I have been collecting since 1970. I am sure that I am not unique, but there is not a lot of knowledge out there on what people are doing.

First, I took all of my Kuna tapes, on both reel to reel (Nagra and Uher) and cassette -- including artistic performances and traditional grammatical and lexical elicitation -- and transferred them, first to video cassette (which some people think is better than tapes for long-term storage) and then to several sets of cassette backups. I then gave all of the original tapes to the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University for permanent storage. They also make cassette backups. I made an extensive log of all of this material, which documents what is recorded, when, and on what machine, at what speed, etc., and what written transcriptions and/or analyses go along with each tape -- written notebooks, texts on computer disks, published articles, etc. All of this is available through Indiana as well as through me. In addition, when I have completed this work, I will give a set of tapes and log to the major anthropological museum in Panama City. Cassette tapes are always made available to Kuna who want them.

Simultaneous with this I have made CD copies of all of my photographs and slides of the Kuna, as well as videocassette backups of these.

While the world is not perfect, I feel I have done as much as I can toward a permanent documentation of my ongoing work with the Kuna. I really think everyone should go at least as far as I have in this regard, all the more so because the technology is widely available, is relatively inexpensive, and is not difficult to use. What is needed is the commitment and the effort. For me it was easy. All I had to do was realize that I am practically the only person to have done linguistic work with the Kuna, and am surely the only person to have made quality recordings of verbally artistic performances, in many cases by individuals no longer living. I feel very responsible for preserving this material and archiving it to the best of my ability.

--Department of Anthropology  
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Austin, TX 78712-1086  
jsherzer@mail.utexas.edu

Help on Choctaw?

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>From Amoena Norcross, 29 Nov 1995:

I'm posting this request on behalf of a friend of mine who is working on a manuscript concerning Choctaw history: that is, the history of the Choctaw people, not the language. However, she is including some Choctaw language data and requires the assistance of a linguist who is familiar with the structure of Choctaw. If you are a Choctaw linguist and are interested in assisting with this project, or if you know of someone who might be able to help, please reply directly to me. Thanks in advance.

SSILA Lifetime Membership

>From Tapani Salminen, 21 Nov 1995:

Many societies have an optional lifetime membership fee, usually ten times of the annual fee or so. Should SSILA have such an option, I would gladly remit \$120. Well, \$100 might be quite enough, but that is to be decided by the relevant SSILA organs. Anyhow, if you think this is a good idea, please present it to the SSILA board. I should think that such an option would be helpful to many of us, and would even benefit the SSILA budget in the long run, given the steady flow of new members.

--Fleminginkatu 14 A 18  
00530 Helsinki, FINLAND  
tasalmin@cc.helsinki.fi

I'll present Mr. Salminen's proposal to the SSILA Executive Committee at our meeting in San Diego in January. The fee he suggests (10 times the annual rate) may be too low. The LSA offers life membership for \$1500, which is about 24 times the current annual fee of \$65. The AAA offers life membership for \$2000, which, depending on the specialty section one chooses to join, can be from 15 to 24 times the annual fee. Using these ratios, an appropriate life membership fee for SSILA would range from \$180 to near \$300. --V.G.

"Woissereg"?

>From John Dyson, 20 Nov 1995:

On the back of a tanned hide appears the word WOISSERREG. No other information is available, including the kind of animal. Does anyone recognize the word?

--Spanish and Portuguese  
Indiana University  
dyson@ucs.indiana.edu

27.2 LINGUISTIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA STATEMENT ON LANGUAGE RIGHTS

[The following statement was prepared by Peter Tiersma of the Loyola Law School (LA) in consultation with other members of the LSA Committee on Social and Political Concerns. It has been subsequently endorsed by the LSA Executive Committee and will be submitted for the approval of the LSA membership at the business meeting in San Diego in January. The LSA also hopes that other organizations will adopt this or a similar statement.]

\* \* \*

1. The vast majority of the world's nations are at least bilingual, and most are multilingual, even if one ignores the impact of modern migrations. Countries in which all residents natively speak the same language are a small exception, certainly not the rule. Even nations like France, Germany and the United Kingdom have important linguistic minorities

within their borders. Furthermore, where diverse linguistic communities exist in one country, they have generally managed to coexist peacefully. Switzerland and Finland are only two of many examples. Where linguistic discord does arise, as in Quebec, Belgium, or Sri Lanka, it is generally the result of majority attempts to disadvantage or suppress a minority linguistic community, or it reflects underlying racial or religious conflicts. Studies have shown that multilingualism by itself is rarely an important cause of civil discord.

2. The territory that now constitutes the United States was home to hundreds of languages before the advent of European settlers. These indigenous languages belonged to several major language families. Each native language is or was a fully developed system of communication with rich structures and expressive power. Many past and present members of the Society have devoted their professional lives to documenting and analyzing the native languages of the United States.

3. Unfortunately, most of the indigenous languages of the United States have become extinct or are severely threatened. All too often their eradication was deliberate government policy. In other cases, these languages suffered from simple neglect. The decline of America's indigenous languages has been closely linked to the loss of much of the culture of its speakers.

4. Because of this history, the Society believes that the government and people of the United States have a special obligation to enable our indigenous peoples to retain their languages and cultures. The Society strongly supports the federal recognition of this obligation, as expressed in the Native American Languages Act. The Society urges federal, state and local governments to affirmatively implement the policies of the Act by enacting legislation, appropriating sufficient funds, and monitoring the progress made under the Act.

5. The United States is also home to numerous immigrant languages other than English. The arrival of some of these languages, such as Dutch, French, German, and Spanish, predates the founding of our nation. Many others have arrived more recently. The substantial number of residents of the United States who speak languages other than English presents us with both challenges and opportunities.

6. The challenges of multilingualism are well known: incorporating linguistic minorities into our economic life, teaching them English so they can participate more fully in our society, and properly educating their children. Unfortunately, in the process of incorporating immigrants and their offspring into American life, bilingualism is often wrongly regarded as a "handicap" or "language barrier." Of course, inability to speak English often functions as a language barrier in the United States. But to be bilingual -- to speak both English and another language -- should be encouraged, not stigmatized. There is no convincing evidence that bilingualism by itself impedes cognitive or educational development. On the contrary, there is evidence that it may actually enhance certain types of intelligence.

7. Multilingualism also presents our nation with many benefits and opportunities. For example, bilingual individuals can use their language skills to promote our business interests abroad. Their linguistic competence strengthens our foreign diplomatic missions and national defense. And they can better teach the rest of us to speak other languages.

8. Moreover, people who speak a language in addition to English

provide a role model for other Americans. Our national record on learning other languages is notoriously bad. A knowledge of foreign languages is necessary not just for immediate practical purposes, but also because it gives people the sense of international community that America requires if it is to compete successfully in a global economy.

9. To remedy our past policies towards the languages of Native Americans and to encourage acquisition or retention of languages other than English by all Americans, the Linguistic Society of America urges our nation to protect and promote the linguistic rights of its people. At a minimum, all residents of the United States should be guaranteed the following linguistic rights:

A. To be allowed to express themselves, publicly or privately, in the language of their choice.

B. To maintain their native language and, should they so desire, to pass it on to their children.

C. When their facilities in English are inadequate, to be provided a qualified interpreter in any proceeding in which the government endeavors to deprive them of life, liberty or property. Moreover, where there is substantial linguistic minority in a community, interpretation ought to be provided by courts and other state agencies in any matter that significantly affects the public.

D. To have their children educated in a manner that affirmatively addresses their linguistic deficiencies in English. Children can only learn when they understand their teachers. As a consequence, some use of their native language is often desirable to educate them successfully.

E. To conduct business and to communicate with the public in the language of their choice.

F. To use their preferred language for private conversations in the workplace.

G. To learn to speak, read and write English, so that they can fully participate in the educational and economic life of this nation. All levels of government should adequately fund programs to teach English to any resident who desires to learn it.

10. Notwithstanding the multilingual history of the United States, the role of English as our common language has never seriously been questioned. Research has shown that newcomers to America continue to learn English at rates comparable to previous generations of immigrants. Our government has a legitimate interest in ensuring that this trend continues by promoting the widespread knowledge of English. Nonetheless, promoting our common language need not, and should not, come at the cost of violating the rights of linguistic minorities.

#### 27.3 1996 SUMMER PROGRAM IN ANDEAN LINGUISTICS, CUZCO, PERU

The CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS REGIONALES ANDINOS "BARTOLOME DE LAS CASAS" (Andean College, Cuzco, Peru) is organizing a summer session in 1996 focusing on the socio-economic and cultural conditions of the Andean Region, from Venezuela to Argentina. Among the programs of study will be one on Andean Linguistics and Bilingual Education, which will run from July 1st to August

16th, 1996. The program will take a multi-disciplinary point of view, concentrating on three areas: (a) Quechua language (a 45 hour course given in 4 sections, from beginning to advanced); (b) linguistics and literature (120 hours of coursework in Quechua and Aymara grammar, semantics and lexicography; and colonial, republican and contemporary literature); and (c) culture. There will also be visits to several archaeological sites, museums, and colonial churches.

Students may take up to 45 additional hours of courses in Andean anthropology, sociology and history. Relevant offerings include: Mitología andina; Historia de las religiones andinas; Lingüística andina; Culturas y sociedades prehispánicas; Política y sociedad en los Andes; Introducción al estudio de la cultura en los Andes; Arte y simbolismo andino; Historia oral andina.

The distinguished international faculty will include: Enrique BALLON AGUIRRE (U of Arizona); Julio CALVO PEREZ (U de Valencia, Spain); Rodolfo CERRON-PALOMINO (U Católica del Perú, Lima); Juan Carlos GODENZZI (Centro Bartolome de Las Casas); German de GRANDA (U de Valladolid); Nancy HORNBERGER (U of Pennsylvania); Rosaleen HOWARD-MALVERDE (Institute of Latin American Studies, U of Liverpool); Ricardo KALIMAN (U de Tucuman, Argentina); Luis Enrique LOPEZ (Director of Bilingual Education, Puno, Peru); Bruce MANNHEIM (U of Michigan); Walter MIGNOLO (Duke U); Ruth MOYA (Director of Bilingual Education, Ecuador); and Catherine WALSH (U of Massachusetts, Boston).

Applicants must be registered at a university college or other institution of higher education. Applicants without a university or higher studies degree must have some research experience or knowledge on the topics covered by the course.

Applications will be accepted until April 30th 1996. The application fee is US \$10 for Latin American students and US \$25 for those from other countries.

Students may take all the courses scheduled on the program for a tuition of US \$1,500, or they may take individual courses for \$25 per hour. Tuition costs include library and information services.

Limited dormitory accommodation is available at the Andean College residence for those students who may require it. The cost of a dormitory room (with board) during the course is US \$1,000.

For further information, contact: Centro Bartolome de Las Casas, Colegio Andino, Pampa de la Alianza 465, Apartado 477, Cuzco, Peru (phone: 51-84-236494; fax: 51-84-238255; e-mail: laeb@cbccus.org.pe).

#### 27.4 ENDANGERED LANGUAGES SURVEY

On the agenda of the SSILA Business Meeting in San Diego, January 6, will be a report from Akira Yamamoto on the Endangered Languages Survey that was circulated to SSILA members last spring. Akira would like to pose some questions to us, including: 1) Should we continue to compile information on endangered languages that SSILA members work with? 2) If so, is the current survey form sufficient? 3) How should we make this information available to linguists and the public? Akira will prepare sample handouts for the meeting.

The following is a summary of the data compiled so far.

AUSTRALIA (1)  
Wambaya, West Barkly [Rachel Nordlinger]

BELIZE (1)  
Belize Creole [Ken Decker]

BRAZIL (8)  
Baniwa of Igana, Hohtdene, Siucm; North Arawak [Alexandra Aikhenvald]  
Bare, North Arawak [Alexandra Aikhenvald]  
Jarawara Dialect of Madi, Arawa Lg Family [RMM Dixon, Alan Vogel]  
Kadiweu, Maikuruan Lg Family [Filomena Sandalo]  
Kwaza, Affiliation unknown [Hein van der Voort]  
Tariana, North Arawak [Alexandra Aikhenvald]  
Marekena of the Xie River, North Arawak [Alexandra Aikhenvald]  
Xavante (Shavante), Gj Lg Family [Laura Graham]

CANADA (7)  
Cayuga, Iroquoian Lg Family [Michael Foster, Marianne Mithun]  
Maliseet-Passamaquoddy, Algonquian Lg Family [Karl Teeter]  
Mohawk, Iroquoian Lg Family [Marianne Mithun]  
Oneida, Iroquoian Lg Family [Bryan Gick]  
Onondaga, Iroquoian Lg Family [Hanni Woodbury]  
Tuscarora, Iroquoian Lg Family [Marianne Mithun]  
Wyandotte, Iroquoian Lg Family [Bruce Pearson]

CHINA (1)  
Salar, Turkic (Oghuz Lg Family) [Arienne Dwyer]

DAGHESTAN REPUBLIC (2)  
Ginix (Dodoi), Tsezic group, Nakh-Daghestanian Lg Family [Rajabov Ramazan]  
Tsez, Tsezic group, Nakh-Daghestanian Lg Family [Bernard Comrie, Maria Polinsky, Rajabov Ramazan]

FRANCE (1)  
Gascon Dialect of French, Romance Lg Family [Francis Karam]

GERMANY (1)  
Sorbian (Upper and Lower), West Slavic Lg Group [Gunter Schaarschmidt]

GREENLAND (2)  
West Greenlandic (Inuit), Eskimo-Aleut [Jerrold Sadock]  
Inuktitut, Eskimo-Aleut [Jerrold Sadock]

GUADELOUPE (1)  
Guadeloupean French Creole, Atlantic Lesser Antilles French Creole  
[Gregory Paul Meyjes]

GUATEMALA (2)  
Chuj, Mayan Lg Family [Judith Maxwell]  
Kaqchikel, Mayan Lg Family [Judith Maxwell]  
(Mayan dialects of Mexico and Guatemala [Eleanor Frankle])

ITALY (1)  
Faetar of Francoprovençal, Romance Lg Family [Naomi Nagy]

JAPAN (1)  
Hokkaido Ainu, Ig isolate [George Simeon]

MEXICO (10)

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Azoyt Tlapanec, Tlapanecan Lg Family [Soeren Wichmann]  
Coatzacoapan Mixtec, Mixtecan, Oto-Manguean [Priscilla Small]  
Kiliwa, Yuman Lg Family [Mauricio Mixco]  
Kwaza, Yuman Lg Family [Mauricio Mixco]  
Mocho, Mayan Lg Family [Laura Martin]  
Paipai, Yuman Lg Family [Mauricio Mixco]  
Potosino of Huastec, Mayan Lg Family [Barbara Edmonson]  
Southeastern Tepehuan, Uto-Aztecan Lg Family [Thomas Wilet]  
Textistepec Popoluca, Mixe-Zoquean Lg Family [Soeren Wichmann]  
Tzeltal of Tenejapa, Mayan Lg Family [Luisa Maffi]  
(Mayan dialects of Mexico and Guatemala [Eleanor Frankle])

PAKISTAN (6)  
Dameli, Dardic or Nuristani, Indo-Iranian [Ken Decker]  
Kalasha, Dardic, Indo-Iranian [Ken Decker]  
Khowar, Dardic, Indo-Iranian [Ken Decker]  
Phalura, Dardic, Indo-Iranian [Ken Decker]  
Ushojo, Dardic, Indo-Iranian [Ken Decker]  
Yidgha, Pamir, Indo-Iranian [Ken Decker]

RUSSIA (1)  
Western Itelmen, Chukchi/Koryak (?) [Jonathan Bobaljik]

USA (30)  
Absentee Shawnee, Algonquian Lg Family [Bruce Pearson]  
Acoma dialect of Keresan, Lg isolate [Hilaire Valiquette]  
Caddo, Caddoan Lg Family [Wallace Chafe]  
Central Pomo, Pomoan Lg Family [Marianne Mithun]  
Chukchansi Yokuts, Yokuts Lg Family [Robert Lyday]  
Chochiti dialect of Keresan, Lg isolate [Hilaire Valiquette]  
Costanoan languages, Utian Lg Family [Catherine Callaghan]  
Delaware, Algonquian Lg Family [Bruce Pearson]  
Eastern Band Cherokee, Iroquoian Lg Family [Robin Sabino]  
Havasupai, Yuman Lg Family [Akira Yamamoto]  
Hwalbay (Hualapai), Yuman Lg Family [Akira Yamamoto]  
Karuk, Hokan (?) [William Bright]  
Kechayi of Chukchansi, Penutian [Robert Lyday]  
Laguna dialect of Keresan, Lg isolate [Hilaire Valiquette]  
Loyal Shawnee, Algonquian Lg Family [David Costa]  
Maliseet-Passamaquoddy, Algonquian Lg Family [Karl Teeter]  
Mandan, Siouan Lg Family [Mauricio Mixco]  
Miwok languages, Utian Lg Family [Catherine Callaghan]  
Montana Salish (Flathead), Salishan Lg Family [Sarah Thomason]  
Oneida, Iroquoian Lg Family [Bryan Gick]  
San Felipe dialect of Keresan, Lg isolate [Hilaire Valiquette]  
Santa Ana dialect of Keresan, Lg isolate [Hilaire Valiquette]  
Santo Domingo dialect of Keresan, Lg isolate [Hilaire Valiquette]  
Seneca, Iroquoian Lg Family [Wallace Chafe]  
Snchitsu umshstsn (Coeur d'Alene), Salish Lg Family [Gary Palmer]  
Tuscarora, Iroquoian Lg Family [Marianne Mithun]  
Wiyot, Algic [Karl Teeter]  
Yavbi of Yavapai, Yuman Lg Family [Akira Yamamoto]  
Yuchi, Lg isolate [Mary Linn]  
Zia dialect of Keresan, Lg isolate [Hilaire Valiquette]

VENEZUELA (2)  
Kari'ña, Northern Carib [Andris Romero-Figueroa]  
Warao, Lg isolate [Andris Romero-Figueroa]

--Total number of languages/dialects reported: 78

