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

--Correspondence should be directed to the Editor--

Number 31: March 14, 1996

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31.0 DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACTS FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO MEETING

SSILA members are reminded that tomorrow (Friday, March 15) is the announced deadline for receipt by the SSILA Program Committee of abstracts for the CAIL sessions at the AAA meeting next November. As always, the Committee will try to accommodate last-minute submissions, but all materials MUST be in the Committee's hands by the morning of Friday, March 22. All materials should be sent to: Victor Golla, SSILA, Dept. of Ethnic Studies, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521. Tel: 707/826-4324. E-mail: gollav@axe.humboldt.edu.

31.1 TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS ON LANGUAGE PRESERVATION

* Native Language Communities: A Descriptive Study of Two Community Efforts to Preserve Their Native Languages. Christine P. Sims. 130 pp.

This field study, carried out for the National Indian Policy Center, reviews the historical background and language experiences of the Zia Pueblo in New Mexico and the Karuk Tribe in northern California. It examines the factors contributing to language maintenance and language loss in these communities and analyzes the approaches each has taken to language preservation. Topics include: the role of Native literacy, school-based language programs, community-based maintenance strategies, and language planning resources. The study concludes with a series of national policy recommendations.

Available free of charge from: National Indian Policy Center, 2021 K Street, N.W., Suite 211, Washington, DC 20006 (tel: 202/973-7667; fax: 202/973-7686; e-mail: barnold@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu)

* _Stabilizing Indigenous Languages_, edited by Gina Cantoni.

The proceedings of two symposia sponsored by the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) at Northern Arizona University in 1994 and 1995.

Among the contents are:

Jon Reyhner, "Rationale and Needs for Stabilizing Indigenous Languages"
Michael Krauss, "Status of Native American Language Endangerment"
Barbara Burnaby, "Aboriginal Language Maintenance, Development, and Enhancement"
Dang T. Pham, "OBEMLA's Commitment to Endangered Languages"
James Crawford, "Seven Hypotheses on Language Loss: Causes and Cures"
Joshua Fishman, "What Do You Lose When You Lose Your Language?"
Damon Clarke, "What My Hualapai Language Means To Me"
Kauanoa Kamana & William H. Wilson, "Hawaiian Language Programs"
Beverly Williams, Kathy Gross, & Duane Magoon, "Lower Kuskokwim Bilingual Programs"
Norbert Francis & Rafael Andrade, "Stories for Language Revitalization in Nahuatl & Chichimeca"
Joshua Fishman, "Maintaining Languages: What Works and What Doesn't"
Anthony C. Woodbury, "Selected Resources on Endangered Languages"
"A Model for Promoting Native American Language Preservation and Teaching"

Available early in April for \$2 mailing costs. Write: Jon Reyhner, Bilingual/Multicultural Education Program Coordinator, Center for Excellence in Education, P. O. Box 5774, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-5774. Make checks out to Northern Arizona University. No purchase orders please. Tel: 520/523-0580; fax: 520/523-1929; e-mail: <Jon.Reyhner@nau.edu>.

31.2 CALL FOR PAPERS FOR 1996 ATHAPASKAN LANGUAGE CONFERENCE

The 1996 Athapaskan Language Conference will be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 15-16, 1996, at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Abstracts for 20-30 minute presentations should be received by *APRIL 30* and may be submitted by e-mail, fax, or regular mail. Please indicate with your abstract, in addition to name, address, e-mail address, telephone & fax numbers, if you require audio-visual support such as an over-head projector, liquid-crystal display, tape recorder, VCR & TV monitor, etc.

The registration fee is \$15 (CDN or US funds) for students, \$20 (CDN or US) for non-students. This fee covers xeroxing, and light refreshments during the conference. On-campus housing (with common washroom) is available (single \$24.64 CDN, double \$33.60 CDN) as well as suite-style accommodations at a residential hotel adjacent to campus (single bedroom with kitchenette \$62 CDN, double bedroom \$85; these rooms also feature pull-out sofa-beds in the living room). These accommodations must be confirmed by May 15.

For further information about the conference or to submit an abstract, please contact: Sally Rice, Dept. of Linguistics, University of Alberta, 4-60 Assiniboia Hall, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E7, CANADA tel: 403/492-0809; fax: 403/492-0806; e-mail: rice@nova.ling.ualberta.ca).

31.3 SUMMER CD-ROM WORKSHOP ORGANIZED AT U OF IOWA

Brenda Farnell (bfarnell@blue.weeg.uiowa.edu) tells us that she has had a very positive response to her proposal for a summer workshop on the creation of CD-ROMs for Native American linguistic materials. She sends the following update:

The first CD-ROM WORKSHOP for American Indian Languages will be held at the University of Iowa this summer from June 17th through July 12th. Speakers, language program teachers, and linguists will collaborate on the design and production of CD-ROM materials in the following languages:

Cayuga (Six Nations, Ontario); Swampy Cree (Manitoba); Chippewa dialect of Ojibwa (Wisconsin); Assiniboine (Montana); Yuchi (Oklahoma); Pomo (California); Iewa and Mono (California); Garifuna (Belize); and Xavante (Brazil).

Participants in each team will work closely with specialists in graphic design, instructional technology, and CD ROM production from the U of Iowa's "Second Look Computing" to focus on the needs of their own project. Some projects are oriented towards archiving and disseminating language materials in a user friendly format, while others will produce curriculum materials for language maintenance programs in schools and tribal colleges.

The response from Native American communities has been extremely

enthusiastic--not to mention enquiries from as far away as Aboriginal Australia! Students from the U of Iowa Native American Studies Program and members of the Meskwaki Community will help us make our guests feel welcome.

SSILA members are invited to drop in and see what is going on if they are in the Iowa city area this summer.

31.4 PRELIMINARY PROGRAM FOR MANITOBA SYNTAX WORKSHOP

A Workshop on STRUCTURE AND CONSTITUENCY IN NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES will be held at the University of Manitoba, March 29th - 31st, 1996. The following papers are on the preliminary program:

FRIDAY 29 MARCH

- 10:00 Filomena Sandalo (U of Pittsburgh & Carnegie Mellon U), "Category projection and phrase structure in Kadiweu"
- 10:40 Kevin Russell (U of Manitoba): "What's with all these long words anyway?"
- 11:35 Liliana Sanchez (CSU, Long Beach), "Why does Southern Quechua agree in person nominally?"
- 12:15 Eleanor M. Blain (UBC), "Restrictive complementizer ka- in Plains Cree"
- 2:40 Leslie Saxon (U of Victoria), "Reflections of Syntax in the Athapaskan Verb"

SATURDAY 30 MARCH

- 10:00 Shapley Allen & Heike Schroeder (MPI for Psycholinguistics), "Discourse effects on argument representation in early Inuktitut spontaneous speech"
- 10:40 Alana Johns (Memorial U), "The Decline of Ergativity in Inuktitut"
- 11:35 Martha McGinnis (MIT), "Is there syntactic inversion?"
- 1:35 Michelle Long (U of Manitoba), "Obviation and clausal relations"
- 2:15 Charlotte Reinholtz (U of Manitoba), "Real vs look-alike determiner movement in Swampy Cree"
- 3:10 Jose Camacho & Liliana Sanchez (USC and CSU, Long Beach), "Conjunction in Southern Quechua"
- 4:05 Rose-Marie Dechaine (UBC), "What Algonquian morphology is really like: Hockett revisited"

SUNDAY 31 MARCH

- 10:00 Roundtable: Current trends in Native American Linguistics

For further details contact the workshop organizer, Charlotte Reinholtz, at <reinholt@cc.umanitoba.ca>.

31.5 J. P. HARRINGTON SESSION AT CALIFORNIA ARCHAEOLOGY MEETING

The 1996 Annual Meeting of the Society for California Archaeology, to be held in Bakersfield, California, April 3-6, will feature a symposium on Thursday morning, April 4, on "JOHN PEABODY HARRINGTON: REEL TO REAL".

Organized by Lynne E. Christenson and Cindy T. Stankowski (San Diego State U), the papers in this symposium will focus on the archaeological and material-cultural relevance of the work of one of the greatest field workers in the history of American Indian linguistics. Presentations will include:

Linda Agren, "The Exploration of Burton's Mound: John P. Harrington, Santa Barbara, 1923"
 Chad Tritt, "The San Diego State University Burton Mound Collection"
 David Earle, "Field Research among Takic-Speaking Groups during the Early 20th Century: Evaluating Harrington's Fieldwork within a Wider Ethnographic Context"
 Brian Haley & Larry R. Wilcoxon, "The Implications of Revision: Point Conception's Sacredness Revisited"
 Ken Hedges & Ken Gary, "The Harrington Mojave Collection at the San Diego Museum of Man"
 John R. Johnson, "Chumash Political Succession as Reconstructed from Harrington's Ethnographic Papers and Mission Records"
 Bruce Love, "Luiseño Place Names, Harrington's Notes from Pechanga and Pala, and Archaeology"
 Cindy Stankowski, "Baskets Full: The SDSU-John Peabody Harrington Native American Basket Collection"
 Susan Wolfe, "Going Places in the Southern San Joaquin Valley with J. P. Harrington"

For further information contact Lynne Christenson, Dept. of Anthropology, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA 92182-0377.

31.6 UPDATE (#4) ON ENGLISH-ONLY LEGISLATION IN THE U.S.

Our Washington correspondent, Jim Crawford, sends us the fourth in his series of reports on the progress of "English-Only" legislation in the U.S. Congress, with special attention to the impact it might have on American Indian languages.

* * *

March 9, 1996

Senate backers of the "Language of Government Act" (S.356), hoping to make the proposal more palatable to their colleagues, plan to exempt "the use of indigenous or foreign languages in education" from the bill's English-only mandate. Sen. Ted Stevens (Alaska), chairman of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, endorsed this "clarifying amendment" at a March 7 hearing on S.356.

As currently drafted, the legislation requires that English be used by "all employees and officials of the Government of the United States while performing official business." Exceptions are allowed only for purposes of foreign-language teaching, international trade and diplomacy, public health, protection of the rights of victims of crimes or criminal defendants, and "terms of art ... from languages other than English."

The amendment, which is supported by some Democrats otherwise skeptical of S.356, would shield programs funded under the Bilingual Education Act and the Native American Languages Act from the bill's restrictions. It would do nothing, however, to safeguard other rights and services now available to limited-English speakers, including bilingual voting.

A broad coalition of educators, civil libertarians, and minority rights advocates has argued that S.356 "cannot be fixed" to eliminate its ethnically divisive and discriminatory impact. But a few Native American groups have campaigned merely to exempt indigenous languages from the English-only policy.

Sen. Stevens attempted to exploit this division at the March 7 hearing, the first opportunity for opponents of S.356 to be heard. (At an earlier hearing on December 6, only supporters were allowed to testify.) Five Native American witnesses — all but one selected by Stevens — detailed their concerns about the bill's threat to their languages, many of which are already endangered.

Stevens asked Ilidor Philemonof, an Alaska Native linguist, whether "the Aleut people would still oppose the bill" if the amendment were approved. Philemonof called the exception for language education "an improvement" and said "I'm not sure they would really oppose the bill" now. Speaking personally, however, he added, "I would still have some problems with it."

None of the other Native American witnesses commented on whether the amendment satisfied their objections. JoAnn Chase, executive director of the National Congress of American Indians, objected to a provision of S.356 that would protect only English speakers from language-based discrimination. It would be equally wrong to deny government services to Native Americans on that basis, she said, making no mention of other minority language speakers.

Leonard Chee of the Navajo Tribal Council, which has voted to oppose any version of English-only legislation, cited a range of adverse effects for Navajos who speak little English, including the denial of services at Social Security offices.

Kauano'e Kamana, president of the 'Aha Punana Leo immersion schools in Hawaii, proposed amendments to S.356 that would enhance federal support for indigenous language education and give Native American programs priority in funding ahead of programs for immigrant language groups. (Currently, criteria for awarding grants under the Bilingual Education Act focus on program quality, with no set-asides for any language group. Under the 1994 version of the law, priority is given to funding school programs that stress full proficiency in two languages and to serving diverse populations of limited-English-proficient students.)

Stevens has been solicitous of indigenous language advocates, first, because of strong feelings among his Alaska Native constituents, and second, because the support of at least some Native American groups could exert a decisive influence on wavering members of Congress. The vote on the Language of Government Act is expected to be especially close in the Senate.

Apparently sensing that the time is not yet ripe to move the legislation, Stevens has decided to postpone committee action on S.356 from March 28 until sometime in June, according to staff sources.

Several Democratic members of Congress testified against the bill on March 7. Sen. Paul Simon (Ill.) criticized it as a "not very subtle symbolic attack" on Hispanic and Asian Americans. "It's very interesting to me," he said, "that frequently the people who say, 'Let's make English the official language' are the very people who oppose appropriations for the education" of non-English speakers.

Sen. Jeff Bingaman (N.M.) characterized the English-only mandate as an attempt "to label one language and culture superior to others" that is profoundly offensive to the multicultural citizens of his state.

Rep. Patsy Mink (Hawaii) said the legislation would impede her efforts

to conduct official business as a member of Congress, which require her to communicate with constituents who speak numerous languages.

Rep. Nydia Velasquez (N.Y.) argued that the bill would legitimize discrimination against minority language speakers while doing nothing to help anyone learn English, citing the long waiting lists for adult English classes in her district.

Del. Robert Underwood (Guam) noted the irony of a bill that purports to foster national unity but is having precisely the opposite effect: "The implication is that citizens who speak another language, as I do, are somehow creating fault lines in the American body politic. There is no problem with the use of English today in the American civic and economic and political life. Immigrants recognize the need to learn English and they are learning it faster than ever before." He continued:

No one questions the fact that the Potomac is the largest river flowing through Washington, D.C. How absurd it would be to propose legislation declaring the Potomac to be the only official river. Clearly, the intent of such legislation would be for no other purpose than to belittle other rivers. Rather than resolving any particular problem in government, mandating English as our official language is to communicate a negative and divisive message about people who can speak other languages.

Juan Perea, a law professor at the University of Florida, warned that a section of S.356 would create "great mischief" by giving "any person standing to sue any [government official] for speaking a language other than English." He added that, like an Arizona English-only measure ruled unconstitutional in federal court, the bill would violate the First Amendment by creating "a chilling effect on federal employees who need to speak other languages" on the job.

Karen Narasaki, executive director of the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium, outlined in detail the potential impact of S.356 on minority rights, public services, due process, law enforcement, and government efficiency. When she finished, Stevens said: "I don't have time to argue with you, but I disagree with many of your assertions."

At times the chairman appeared defensive and uncertain about the bill's implications. No other Republican attended the hearing and Sen. Richard Shelby (Alabama), the chief sponsor of S.356, did not appear as scheduled to question witnesses. Sen. Stevens repeatedly invoked the views of his late friend and colleague, Sen. S. I. Hayakawa (Calif.), who sponsored the first constitutional Official English amendment before his retirement in 1983.

At one point Stevens argued that S.356 is needed to prevent "a Quebec-type situation" from occurring in the United States. At another he charged that "in California there are several schools that teach only in a foreign language" at taxpayers' expense and "there's no act to [prohibit] that."

Later he insisted: "I do not think [a federal official] can force a non-foreign-language-speaking citizen to deal in another language in an official capacity. That's what this bill is dealing with. Sen. Shelby can explain it further -- it's not my bill."

--Jim Crawford
(73261.1120@compuserve.com)

31.7 QUECHUA WEB SITE

Russ Gibbons (gibbons@best.com) is creating a web site for Quechua, including poems, songs, stories and eventually an on-line dictionary. If you would like to see what is already there, or submit something to post, please check: <http://www.best.com/~gibbons/>

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

Victor Golla, Secretary-Treasurer & Editor

Native American Studies
Humboldt State Univ.
Arcata, CA 95521 USA

OR:

Dept. of Anthropology
Univ. of California, Davis
Davis, CA 95616 USA

707/826-4324 - fax: 707/826-4418 - e-mail: gollav@axe.humboldt.edu
OR: 916/754-9808 - fax: 916/752-8885 - e-mail: vkgolla@ucdavis.edu
