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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 36: May 29, 1996

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36.0 SSILA ON THE WEB

Readers of the *Bulletin* are invited to visit the SSILA Homepage at the UC-Davis Native American Studies Website. Accessible from the homepage are:

- An up-to-date SSILA Directory (with e-mail addresses)
- 10-year backfiles of Dissertations, Books, and Journal Contents noted in the SSILA Newsletter
- Learning Aids for North American Languages. (The Learning Aids file was recognized by The Scout Report for May 24, 1996 as one of the most useful sites to come on the Web that week.)

Information on SSILA membership is also available.

We will soon be adding the current issue and a backfile of the *SSILA Bulletin*. Comments and suggestions for further site development are welcome, including suggestions for better structuring the pages. Corrections and additions to the Directory and Learning Aids files are especially welcome.

The URL for the SSILA home page is:

<http://cougar.ucdavis.edu/nas/SSILA/SSILA.html>

Comments about site content should be addressed to <vkgolla@ucdavis.edu>.

Comments about page structure and other technical details should be addressed to Alexiss Holden at <aaholden@ucdavis.edu>.

36.1 MEMORIAL FOR MARY R. HAAS

A Tribute to Mary R. Haas, who died on May 17, will be held on Friday, June 28, at 2 pm, at the Alumni House on the University of California, Berkeley campus. Invited speakers will address the various aspects of Prof. Haas's career. In addition, remarks will be welcomed from anyone who wants to say a few words. If you would like to speak, please let Leanne Hinton know by e-mail at <hinton@violet.berkeley.edu>, or telephone her at 510/643-7621.

This memorial will constitute the afternoon session of the first day of the 1996 Hokan and Penutian Languages Workshop.

36.2 REMINDER: ABSTRACTS DUE FOR HOKAN-PENUTIAN/J.P.HARRINGTON MEETINGS

The 1996 Conference on Hokan and Penutian Languages will be held on Friday June 28 and Saturday June 29, 1996, in the Toll Room of the Alumni House on the UC-Berkeley campus. It will be immediately followed--in the same location--by the 1996 Working Conference on the Papers of J. P. Harrington, on Saturday June 29 and Sunday, June 30.

The conferences are being co-hosted by the Department of Linguistics at UC-Berkeley and the Department of Native American Studies at UC-Davis.

The Friday sessions will be entirely devoted to Hokan-Penutian papers. The Sunday sessions, similarly, will be devoted to presentations on the Harrington materials. The Saturday sessions, however, will be divided between the two topics depending on the number and nature of the paper

proposals.

Abstracts for both meetings should be submitted as soon as possible.

For the Hokan/Penutian Conference: please mail or e-mail a title and brief abstract of your paper to:

Leanne Hinton
Dept. of Linguistics
UC-Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-2650
(hinton@violet.berkeley.edu).

For the J. P. Harrington Conference: please mail or e-mail a title and brief abstract of your paper to:

Martha Macri & Victor Golla
J. P. Harrington Conference
Dept. of Native American Studies
UC-Davis
Davis, CA 95616
(mjmacri@ucdavis.edu) & (vkgolla@ucdavis.edu)

(E-mail sent to Victor Golla should be copied to Martha Macri, since he will be out of the country during much of June.)

34.3 BOOK EXCHANGE

Willem de Reuse (wdereuse@ccit.arizona.edu) has a copy of:

Geoghegan, Richard Henry. 1944. [Facsimile Reproduction 1964]
The Aleut Language. The Elements of Aleut Grammar with a dictionary
in two parts containing basic vocabularies of Aleut and English.
United States Dept. of the Interior. Facsimile: The Shorey
Book Store, spiral-bound, transparent plastic covers. 169 pp.

He would be happy to exchange this for something on Siouan, Athabaskan, Quechua, or Eskimo.

36.4 PROGRAM FOR 1996 ATHAPASKAN CONFERENCE

The 1996 Athapaskan Languages Conference will be held at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, 15 June 1996, in Room 227 of Athabasca Hall. The *tentative* program is:

- 8:45 On-site registration (\$20 for non-students, \$15 for students)
9:15 Sharon Hargus, "Verb Theme Category Diagnostics in Hitsuwit'en"
9:45 Sally Rice & Valerie Wood, "Postpositions and Verbal Semantics
in Chipewyan"
10:15 Chad Thompson, "Nominalization and Relativization in Koyukon
Athabaskan"
10:45 Refreshment Break
11:00 Clay Slate, Kip Canfield, Lydia Begay, & Tulley Nakai, "Navajo
Place Names Project"
11:30 Bernadette McQuarrie (Nadleh Whut'en) & Bill Poser, "The Carrier
Kinship System"
12:00 Michael Asch, "The Problems of Translation from English to Dene

-
- in Negotiations"
12:30 Lunch Break
1:30 Bill Poser, "Opviation in Carrier"
2:00 Brian Potter, "Tense, Modality, and Force in the Western Apache
Clause"
2:30 Diamandis Gafos, "Consonant Harmony: An Articulatory and
Perceptual Account"
3:00 Refreshment Break
3:15 Trisha Causley, "Dogrib Dialect Survey: A Preliminary Report"
3:45 Ed Cook, "Sound Change, Grammatical Change, and Paradigm
Regularity in Chipewyan"
4:15 Jim Kari, "Hyronymic Districts in Athapaskan Prehistory"

A Dinner and Party are scheduled for the evening.

If you are planning to stay in either Campus Towers Hotel Suite or on-campus in Lister Hall and haven't already made reservations, please do so immediately. Please mention that you are part of this conference.

For further conference information, please contact Sally Rice at either: <rice@cepra.ling.ualberta.ca> or <srice@pu.srv.ualberta.ca>. She can also be reached by telephone at 403/492-0809 or by fax at 403/492-0806. A conference homepage is on the Web at:

<http://www.ualberta.ca/~linguist/athapask.htm>

36.5 BELEM CONFERENCE LAUNCHES PAN-AMAZONIAN LANGUAGES NETWORK

[Francisco Queixalos (qx1s@marajo.ufpa.br) has sent us a report on the conference on Amazonian languages held at the Museu Goeldi in Belem, Brazil, in March. Thanks to Colette Craig for translating.]

The Museu Goeldi, Belem, Para, hosted an international conference on "Amazonian Languages in Science and Society" March 26-29. The event was attended by 90 participants from all nine Amazonian countries, more than a quarter of whom were members of indigenous communities.

Plenary talks offered the participants an overview of the linguistic situation of the region, thoughts on the issue of language endangerment, reflections on how the scientific community is dealing with the study and documentation of little known languages, a detailed panorama of the situation of minority languages in a European country, as well as a report on a project of literary production in Amerindian languages.

In a series of workshops, each country presented reports on the state of its indigenous languages, on its official language policies, and on the scientific knowledge of the indigenous languages.

A newsletter dealing with the themes that were treated at the conference will be distributed through the Internet. This is the first project of LINDA (INDigenous Languages of Amazonia), a network which was created during the conference.

It is hoped that his unprecedented gathering will be the springboard for intensified Pan-amazonian exchanges on the indigenous languages of the region. The proceedings of the conference will be published soon.

For further information on the conference or on LINDA, contact: Francisco Queixalos (qx1s@marajo.ufpa.br) or Denny Moore (moore@marajo.ufpa.br).

[Another dispatch from Jim Crawford, our man in Washington.]

On May 16 Senator Ted Stevens cancelled a long-anticipated committee vote on S. 356, the "Language of Government" bill. After interested parties on both sides had sat through nearly two hours of unrelated business -- a markup session of the Governmental Affairs Committee -- chairman Stevens abruptly pulled S. 356 from the agenda.

Stevens's stated reason: the bill's sponsor, Senator Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) did not approve of an amendment Stevens had planned to offer that would have exempted a long list of federal activities from the bill's English-only mandate. These would have included, among other things: Native American, foreign-language education, and bilingual education programs; bilingual provisions of the Voting Rights Act; communications between members of Congress and constituents; and public documents, acts, statements, votes, hearings and proceedings for the protection of public health. This amendment, if approved, would reduce S. 356 to a primarily symbolic "official English" declaration -- not a palatable change for U.S. English, English First, and (presumably) Senator Shelby.

Stevens's unstated reason: he apparently feared that supporters did not have the votes today to "report out" S. 356 in any form. Before taking the bill off the agenda, Stevens made several references to colleagues who were expected to arrive momentarily. None did. Besides the chairman, only two Republicans showed up for the markup. (Four Democrats were also in attendance). While other Republicans had no doubt given Stevens their proxies, it seems there are currently only 5 to 7 English-only votes on the committee, which has 15 members.

According to the best estimates of committee staff, opposition lobbyists, and other semi-informed sources, here's how the Governmental Affairs votes appear to break down:

5 solidly in favor: Stevens (R-Alaska), Roth (R-Del.), Cochran (R-Miss.), Smith (R-N.H.), and Brown (R-Colo.)

5 1/2 solidly against: Glenn (D-Ohio), Levin (D-Mich.), Lieberman (D-Conn.), Akaka (D-Hi.), Dorgan (D-N.D.), and McCain* (R-Ariz.).

4 undeclared or uncommitted: Cohen (R-Me.), Thompson (R-Tenn.), Nunn (D-Ga.), and Pryor (D-Ark.)

Senator John McCain's name is asterisked because his position is politically problematic. On the one hand, in communications with constituent groups he has reaffirmed his longstanding opposition to English-only legislation -- even implying that he would stage a filibuster against S. 356 on the Senate floor, if necessary. On the other hand, now that English-only has become a partisan issue, his opposition creates tensions with fellow Republicans. McCain is now being mentioned as a possible running mate for Bob Dole, an English-only supporter who may decide to exploit the issue during his Presidential campaign. Thus far McCain has managed to absent himself at two hearings, and at today's markup, on S. 356.

Meanwhile, the Clinton Administration has become more aggressive in

lobbying against the bill. A May 14 letter from Andrew Fois, assistant attorney general for legislative affairs, detailed a range of objections to S. 356 and to Stevens's draft amendment, in particular their potential threats to governmental efficiency, law enforcement, and the constitutional rights of language-minority Americans. Fois cited the underlying problem of official language legislation: that it is unnecessary, divisive, and inefficient. Therefore, the Justice Department opposes the [Stevens] amendment, as well as the Shelby bill.

While this position is heartening to opponents of English-only legislation, the White House has yet to be heard from. Whether President Clinton would veto such legislation therefore remains an open question.

According to Democratic sources, the next possible date for committee action on S. 356 is a markup session scheduled for June 13. Alternatively, Shelby could offer the bill as an amendment to other legislation on the Senate floor -- as he attempted to do two weeks ago when the Senate debated the illegal immigration bill. (Once again, however, it appeared that support was soft. That assessment, combined with parliamentary considerations involving the Democrats' efforts to force a vote on the minimum wage, led Majority Leader Dole to pull the amendment.)

No action on English-only legislation has been scheduled in the House. Indeed, nothing has moved since the Economic and Educational Opportunity Committee hearings concluded last December. But this could change quickly if Speaker Newt Gingrich, an English-only proponent, chooses to push the issue. The Emerson bill, H.R. 123 (identical to S. 356), has 196 co-sponsors -- 218 votes being necessary to pass legislation when all members are voting.

In sum, the outcome of the current English-only offensive -- the most formidable to date -- remains uncertain because of the large number of uncommitted members of Congress. For anyone inclined to communicate arguments on the issue, now is the time.

--Jim Crawford
73261.1120@compuserve.com

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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
Website: <http://cougar.ucdavis.edu/nas/SSILA/SSILA.html>
