

**The Society for the Study of the  
Indigenous Languages of the Americas**  
*SSILA BULLETIN*

An Information Service for SSILA Members

Editor - Victor Golla  
Associate Editor - Scott DeLancey

Correspondence should be directed to the Editor

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## 43.0 SSILA BUSINESS

### **Results of the 1996 Elections**

The following officers and committee members were elected in the 1996 SSILA elections:

**Vice President (1997) & President-Elect for 1998:**

Sally McLendon (Hunter College, CUNY)

**Member-at-Large of the Executive Committee (1997-99):**

M. Jill Brody (Louisiana State U)

**Secretary-Treasurer (1997):**

Victor Golla (Humboldt State U)

**Member of the Nominating Committee (1997-99):**

Laurel Watkins (Colorado College/U of Colorado)

The results of the elections were announced at the Annual Business Meeting in San Francisco, November 22. President-Elect Robert L. Rankin and the newly-elected officers assumed their duties at the conclusion of the meeting, which was presided over by 1996 President, William F. Shipley.

### **The Mary R. Haas Award**

By vote of the Annual Business Meeting, the SSILA Book Award will henceforth be known as the Mary R. Haas Award, in recognition of Professor Haas's contributions to American Indian linguistics. The 1996 Award was presented to Sara Trechter (CSU-Chico) for her manuscript, The Pragmatic Functions of Gender Deixis in Lakhota.

At the time of the meeting the Executive Committee also announced that it was opening negotiations with the University of Nebraska Press regarding making the Haas Award series a regular sub-series of Studies in the Anthropology of North American Indians edited by Douglas Parks and Ray DeMallie. It is anticipated that these negotiations will be complete in a few weeks, and an announcement will be made in January of a new structure for making the Haas Award and for regularizing the publication of award-winning manuscripts.

### 43.1 IN MEMORIAM: ARTHUR LIGHTFOOT (1904-1996)

On Friday, Nov. 15, 1996, Arthur Lightfoot, an elder of the (Northern) Ioway Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, passed on. He was called Hung'a ("Prince" [His translation], and Child Beloved [from Pipe Dance]), and was from the Ioway Bear Clan. Born in White Cloud, Kansas, on June 24, 1904, he was the last known speaker of Baxoje/ Jiwere from the White Cloud Reserve.

He was a Methodist Minister for various Indian community churches, an active member of the Native American Church, and an elder of the Otoe-Missouria community at Red Rock, Oklahoma, where he resided most of his life. His parents were Tom Lightfoot (Otoe/adopted Iowa) and Martha Washburn (Iowa). He Married Cecelia Hoogradora (HugreDowe: Four Lodge Post [In an earthlodge, representing the four directions]) in 1935. They had three children, 7 grandchildren, 4 great grandchildren, and 3 great-great grandchildren.

Services were held at the Otoe-Missouria Tribal complex, with a Native American Church teepee service Sunday night (Nov 17), Funeral Feast at noon Monday (18th), followed by a family give-away service at the Otoe-Missouria cemetery.

His passing leaves only one fluent speaker of Otoe, in his late 90's and in poor health.

--Jimm G. GoodTracks

### 43.2 A NEW LOOK AT THE SSILA WEBSITE

The SSILA website (<http://cougar.ucdavis.edu/nas/SSILA/>), which came on-line early last summer, is getting a much-needed facelift this month. The Membership Directory, Dissertations, and In Current Periodicals files, which had been allowed to grow stale, are now up-to-date, and the Periodicals page is being divided up into separate pages for each (major) journal to allow easier access. (We are constructing a search engine that will permit searches across all of these pages--in fact, across the entire SSILA site--that should be up and running in January.)

The Learning Aids file is being totally overhauled. Several members (Randy Valentine, John Koontz, Louise Lockard deserve particular mention) have been helping us update the listings, and, as with the Periodicals file, we are constructing separate pages for each language. Our plans are to eventually (perhaps in the Spring) add some general facts and figures about each language--including a short reference bibliography, names and addresses of contact people, and links to other sites--to each page. Anyone interested in helping in this effort, either with particular languages or in general, should contact me at <[vkgolla@ucdavis.edu](mailto:vkgolla@ucdavis.edu)>.

We are also planning to install an archive of SSILA Bulletins and at least some of the more recent SSILA Newsletters. At the SSILA Business Meeting in San Francisco last month it was suggested that the SSILA Newsletter be made available to members electronically as an (optional) alternative to receiving a paper copy. You can look for some developments along this line over the next few months, as soon as we finish updating the website (and when we figure out the most convenient way to transfer material in an Americanist/IPA font).

When you visit the revamped SSILA website, note the addition of a name to the masthead--Jon Cutting--our new student assistant and Webmaster. Much of the improvement in the site is due to Jon's work.

## **43.3 CORRESPONDENCE**

### **Why Tonto Speaks in the 3rd Person**

From Marie-Lucie Tarpent (Marie-Lucie.Tarpent@msvu.ca) 18 Nov 1996:

The way Tonto and other stock Indian characters speak is of course a caricature, but it may have a grain of truth as a conventional representation of an interlanguage in at least some contact situations.

When unilingual people are trying to make themselves understood by others who do not speak their language, their tendency is to use a type of baby talk. When talking to babies it is very natural to use names instead of "I" and "you", e.g., "Mommy will be back soon" instead of "I'll be back soon." Small children will also refer to themselves and others by their names before they have acquired "I" and "you".

In an interlanguage situation, the simplified speech of one side is picked up by the other side as the natural way to speak, thus reinforcing this tendency.

Also, while every language has a means of differentiating "I" and "you", not every language does so by using separate words. Again, in an interlanguage situation, individual lexical items tend to be translated, but affixes or grammatical particles which do not have a word-level equivalent are not. Thus with a language which indicates pronominal elements through affixes, sometimes with multiple meanings e.g., 'I-subject-you-object', the only practical way of communicating in simplified English would be to use names. (In the note which started this exchange, reference to absence of pronouns may refer to absence of full words rather than absence of the grammatical category).

Danielle Cyr's comment about "I" not always being first may also play a role in some languages, along with the morphological complexity she mentions.

Finally, there are many people who often refer to themselves in the third person--whether by name, or by calling themselves "your mother" or "your president" or some such expression, and nobody finds this particularly strange linguistically although one might mention it as a quirk of that particular person if done very often (Tonto's speech would not be so distinctive if he used his own name only occasionally, as some sort of stylistic marker).

Marie-Lucie Tarpent  
Mt. St. Vincent University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

**On <I> as "First" Person**

From Rudy Troike (rtroike@ccit.arizona.edu) 17 Nov 1996:

It is my understanding that the designation of “first person”, “second person”, and “third person” came from the pragmatic use of the pronouns with these references in Latin in this preferential order, so that in speaking, one would refer to “I and you”, “I and he”, and “you and he”, so that the relative order was 1, 2, 3. It is interesting that in Modern English, a modesty principle often pragmatically changes this order to <you> - <s/he> - <I>, so that “first mention” demotes “first person”, contrary to the narcissism rampant in our culture otherwise. Thus generally we say “you and I”, “s/he and I”, and “you and s/he”. Latin pragmatics has become fossilized in grammatical terminology, unfortunately (somewhat the same way even meteorologists still speak of “sunrise” and “sunset”), and this in turn has been reified by philosophers into a grand vision of Western civilization. I’m sure there is a pithy Latin proverb which ought to apply here. Perhaps if we were

re-inventing grammatical terminology today, the 1-2-3 order would would put Ego last, and addressee would take primacy as in Algonkian (though not grammaticized as in that family). Shades of Sapir and Whorf! Perhaps there is something to Weltanshauung.

Rudy Troike  
English Dept  
U of Arizona, Tucson

### **Correo de Linguistica Andina**

From Clodoaldo Soto (s-soto3@uiuc.edu) 25 Nov 1996:

We are currently preparing the copy for Issue 20 of the Correo de Linguistica Andina, so I am asking for any information and news you might have regarding Andean linguistics and related topics. You may respond either to the mailing address below or through e-mail. Contributions are welcome in either English or Spanish. I will need your submissions by the 15th of January.

Clodoaldo Soto  
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U of Illinois  
910 South 5th St, Room 201  
Champaign, IL 61820

## 43.4 THE BOOK EXCHANGE

\* Athabaskanists (and others) will be pleased--and probably startled--to hear that Edward Sapir's pioneering monograph, Notes on Chasta Costa Phonology and Morphology (Univ. of Pennsylvania Anthropological Publications 2, no.2, 1914) is still in print and can be purchased from the original publisher for \$15 plus postage & handling. To order, either telephone 1-800-306-1941; or write to University Museum Publications, 33rd & Spruce Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104; or visit the Museum's website at: [http://www.upenn.edu/museum\\_pubs/Museum\\_Pubs.html](http://www.upenn.edu/museum_pubs/Museum_Pubs.html). (In case you were wondering, Sapir's Takelma Texts, which is part of the same volume, is not still in print.)

**From Frederic W. Gleach (fwg1@cornell.edu) 18 Dec 1996:**

\* I was in a "local" bookstore this weekend (about 45 minutes' drive south of Ithaca) and I found that they've got two shelves full of fairly hard to find works on Native (mostly North) American languages, particularly strong in UC publications, but I also noticed some Mary Haas and a variety of others. Most are priced in the \$30-50 range. There must be well over a hundred titles, so I didn't make a list, but if anyone wants to check specific desiderata you can email them at <riverowb@interloc.com>, call at (607)687-4094, or fax at 687-1248.

From Jimm G GoodTracks (jgoodtracks@juno.com) 17 Nov 1996:

\* I am seeking a copy of the Anthropological Papers of The American Museum of Natural History, vol. XI, Societies of the Plains Indians, 1916. It contains descriptions and discussions of traditional tribal societies. Is it possible that this volume has been reprinted, in whole or in part? I am particularly interested in the articles on the Siouan and Caddoan Tribes. (Wissler, Lowie, Skinner, Murie).

## 43.5 TEACHING AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGES AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

[The following query and responses were originally posted on NAT-LANG (natlang@gnosys.svle.ma.us). The SSILA Bulletin would be happy to publish further reports from other institutions.]

**From: Rand Valentine (jrvalent@facstaff.wisc.edu) 2 Dec 1996:**

I am seeking information on how university language programs teaching American Indian languages are structured, sequenced, and what their content is. For example, are there graduated courses that teach level 1, level 2, level 3, etc of a given language? If so, how is content sequenced (in other words, what is taught in the different levels) and what enrollments do you find in each level? How are the courses related to university requirements, such as ethnic studies or language requirements? Does the course content focus on conversational skills, cultural content, linguistic structure, or some combination of these? How often do the classes meet (are they 3 hour classes or 5 hour?). What are the enrollments? What is the schedule of courses (i.e., first year offered every year, third year every other, etc)? What materials are used for teaching, including native-speaker interaction, textbooks, audio materials, computers, etc?

The reason I am asking these questions is that “less commonly taught languages” are presently under review at the University of Wisconsin, where we are currently teaching Ojibwe. Your answers to these questions will help me in the development of the program here.

--Rand Valentine  
U of Wisconsin Madison

**From Bill Poser (poser@unbc.edu) 3 Dec 1996:**

At the U of Northern BC we currently offer four native languages. Here in Prince George we offer Carrier (which I teach, together with a native speaker). Thus far it has been just levels 1 and 2 (first and second semesters), but we intend in the long run to offer more. The sequencing has been largely grammatical. That is, the outline has been determined largely by grammar, with vocabulary chosen partly by how it fits the grammar and partly in an attempt to cover certain themes and to introduce culturally important terms. The materials consist for the most part of handouts and assignments that have not yet fused into a draft textbook. We have done a pronunciation tape that includes not only examples of all of the phonemes but minimal pairs for some difficult contrasts and some examples of difficult clusters. We also have a Carrier version of Scrabble that we have used in the second term (they don't really have enough vocabulary in the first term). These are English Scrabble sets with the tiles relabelled to reflect the Carrier letter frequencies.

I can't say as much about the other languages because I'm not directly involved with them. Haisla (levels 1 and 2 again, I think) is offered in Kitimat by Emmon Bach together with a couple of native speakers. I have seen a draft textbook and a pronunciation tape.

Nisga'a is taught by the Nisga'a House of Learning, an autonomous institution connected to UNBC. I believe that they offer two years and are working on a third year curriculum.

Coast Tsimshian has been taught by John Dunn together with a native speaker. I don't know anything about the materials.

As for enrollments, first term Carrier enrollment has been about 10, smaller in the second term. I don't have figures for the other languages.

Bill Poser  
First Nations Studies  
University of Northern British Columbia  
Prince George, British Columbia, V2N 4Z9, Canada

**From Melissa Axelrod (axelrod@unm.edu) 4 Dec 1996:**

Courses in the Navajo program in the Dept. of Linguistics at the U of New Mexico include Elementary, Intermediate and Advanced Navajo language, Basic Medical Navajo, Written Navajo, Creative Writing and Advanced Reading, and Navajo Linguistics, although some of these courses are not offered on a regular basis. We usually offer 3-4 sections of Navajo 101-102 each year, and have enrollments of between 50-80 students. The course is taught by a native speaker using a text called, *\_DineBizaad Bohoo'aah\_*, published by the Navajo Preparatory School in Farmington, NM. (This text is now in its 3rd edition; the first edition was co-authored by Gary Witherspoon, Clay Slate, and Robert Young.)

Melissa Axelrod  
Linguistics, University of New Mexico



## 43.6 WORKSHOP ON STRUCTURE & CONSTITUENCY AT MANITOBA IN FEBRUARY

Leslie Saxon (U of Victoria) and Shanley Allen (Max Planck Institute, Nijmegen) are organizing a workshop on Structure and Constituency in the Languages of the Americas at the University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, March 21-23, 1997. Invited speakers will be Henry Davis (UBC) and Alana Johns (U of Toronto). In addition to general sessions, there will be a special session on the Pronominal Argument Hypothesis and a roundtable discussion on Linguistics and Language Endangerment.

The organizers invite papers on specific topics which speak to the general questions of phonological, morphological and syntactic structure and constituency in the analysis of native languages of North and South America. Individual papers might address questions in such areas as constraint interaction, templatic approaches to phonology, analysis and formal treatment of syllable structure, interface and division of labour between syntax and morphology and phonology, inventory and/or projection of lexical and functional categories, analysis and formal treatment of syntactic or semantic relations, structural restrictions on syntactic or semantic relations, etc. Papers for the special session on the Pronominal Argument Hypothesis are especially welcome. All workshop contributors are encouraged to participate in the roundtable on linguistics and language endangerment .

The deadline for submission of abstracts is February 2, 1997. Abstracts should be no longer than 1 page (a second page with references and extra examples may be included). Abstract submission by e-mail is preferred. Abstracts may also be submitted by regular mail in 3 copies: 1 camera-ready copy with the author's name and affiliation, and 2 anonymous copies. An additional page giving the title of the paper and the author's name, address, affiliation, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address should accompany the abstracts. Each talk will be allotted 30 minutes plus time for questions.

E-mailed abstracts should be sent to Leslie Saxon at <saxon@uvic.ca>.

Please use the header "Structure Workshop". Surface mail abstracts should be sent to:

STRUCTURE WORKSHOP c/o Leslie Saxon  
Dept. of Linguistics  
Univ. of Victoria  
Victoria, BC, Canada V8W 3P4.

The program will be announced in mid-February. For further information contact Leslie Saxon (saxon@uvic.ca) or Shanley Allen (allen@mpi.nl).

## 43.7 SESSION ON THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST AT AAAS MEETING IN SEATTLE

A session on “The Pacific Northwest as a Linguistic and Cultural Area” will be part of next month’s annual meeting of the AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science), in Seattle, Washington. The session will be held from 9:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. on Monday, Feb. 17, and will include (in order of appearance):

- Sarah Thomason (session organizer), “Introduction”
- Nancy Turner, “Patterns in Pacific Northwest Ethnobotany”
- William Seaburg, “Areal Features of Style in Pacific Northwest Folklore”
- Emmon Bach, “Areal Grammatical Features in Pacific Northwest Languages”
- William Poser, “Areal Phonological Features in Pacific Northwest Languages”
- M. Dale Kinkade, “The Emergence of Shared Features in Pacific Northwest Languages”

AAAS sessions are set up so that there is about half an hour for general discussion after the talks. The presentations will be aimed at a general audience of nonlinguist scientists. For further information, contact:

Sally Thomason  
Dept. of Linguistics  
Univ. of Pittsburgh  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260  
(sally@pogo.isp.pitt.edu).

## 43.8 LATEST UPDATE ON ENGLISH-ONLY LEGISLATION IN THE U.S.

From James W. Crawford (73261.1120@CompuServe.COM) 5 Dec 1996:

On December 4 the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments in Arizonans for Official English v. Arizona, its most significant language rights case in at least 20 years. But the justices showed no interest in the constitutional issues raised by Arizona's English Only measure, which has been overruled by lower courts as a violation of the First Amendment right to free speech. Instead, the hour-long session focused on procedural questions of standing, mootness, jurisdiction, and other arcana.

No ruling on the merits of English Only legislation appears to be forthcoming -- at least in this Supreme Court term.

By their questions and comments, the justices left little doubt that they plan to throw the case out of court. The key question is how far. Both legally and politically speaking, the implications could be substantial.

At minimum, the justices appear to have formed a consensus in favor of "vacating" a decision by the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals on procedural grounds. Such a ruling, in itself, would probably have no practical impact, since a federal district court has invalidated Article 28, the English Only amendment to Arizona's constitution. But several justices also seemed inclined to overturn that decision -- an action that would reinstate Article 28. A decision is expected sometime next spring.

Although the meaning of the English Only amendment -- the full sweep of its language restrictions-- remains a matter of debate, a Supreme Court reversal of both lower courts would jeopardize most if not all bilingual services now offered by the state of Arizona. It could also be seen as a political victory for the English Only forces at a time when similar legislation is likely to be pending in the 105th Congress.

Following the session, English Only proponents held a press conference on the steps of the court and expressed confidence about Congressional passage of a federal "Language of Government" law next year. In August, the House passed such a bill by a wide margin, but the 104th Congress adjourned without Senate action on the measure. Robert Park, director of Arizonans for Official English, said both House and Senate Republican leaders had promised to schedule a vote on the bill early in the next session.

President Clinton, who signed an Official English statute as Governor of Arkansas, has threatened to veto such legislation.

## 43.9 NEW JOURNAL: WRITTEN LANGUAGE & LITERACY

A new journal, Written Language & Literacy, is to be issued by John Benjamins Publishers,

Amsterdam, under the editorship of William Bright of the University of Colorado, Boulder. The journal will contain articles, book reviews, and brief notes, and will be published initially in two issues per year. Information about subscription rates, etc., will be distributed by the publishers in the near future.

The journal will be concerned with two major aspects of written language:

(a) the structures, histories, typologies, and functions of the writing systems (scripts) used by the languages of the world; and (b) literacy, i.e., the institutionalized use of written language, from the interdisciplinary viewpoints of linguistics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, education, literature, and book arts.

Besides Bright himself, the editorial board includes at least two other scholars who have worked with American Indian languages: Martha Macri (UC-Davis), and Ronald Scollon (City U of Hong Kong). A number of the topics the journal will cover are of interest to many Americanists, including script decipherment; adaptation of scripts to new languages; ethnolinguistic aspects of literacy (as contrasted with orality); sociolinguistics of literacy; cognitive models of script choice and of literacy; and interaction between the literate and non-literate worlds.

For further information, contact:

William Bright,  
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(brightw@spot.colorado.edu).

## The Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas

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