

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

SSILA BULLETIN

An Information Service for SSILA Members

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94.0 SSILA BUSINESS

SSILA website still under repair, but with new URL

Our webmaster, Autumn Bouck, reports that the web administrator for the Teaching Resource Center at UC Davis (our host) is currently working on a solution to the software problem that has temporarily disabled several of the pages at the SSILA site. We hope to have the site fully functional again soon.

Meanwhile, SSILA has registered the domain name “ssila.org”, and has signed up with Mydomain.com for automatic forwarding. This means that, from now on, SSILA’s website can always be accessed by pointing your browser to <<http://ssila.org>>, regardless of where the site is actually located. (We plan to stay at <<http://trc.ucdavis.edu/ssila>> for the foreseeable future, assuming that the current software problems get sorted out, and we will continue to be accessible through that URL.)

In addition, the SSILA office can now be reached by e-mail through the “ssila.org” domain name. Henceforth you can address the Editor at <golla@ssila.org>. Mail to this address will automatically be forwarded by Mydomain.com to <gollav@axe.humboldt.edu>.

Anti-Chief resolutions at AAA and LSA

The campaign against the use of an offensive Indian mascot at the University of Illinois, which SSILA committed itself to at this year’s Summer Meeting, will continue this winter at the AAA and LSA meetings. Resolutions will be introduced under SSILA sponsorship at the business meetings of both organizations. If adopted, they will put those groups on record as urging the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to replace their ‘Chief Illiniwek’ symbol with one that does not “promote inaccurate, anachronistic, and damaging stereotypes of Native American people, or indeed members of any minority group.” For information on the LSA resolution contact Sally Thomason (thomason@umich.edu), and for the AAA contact Brenda Farnell (bfarnell@uiuc.edu).

Winter meeting

Fifty-eight paper proposals for the winter meeting (Chicago, Jan. 6-9 2000) were received by the submission deadline. In addition to regular sessions of volunteered papers, SSILA will co-sponsor (with the LSA) a special invited symposium on “Field Relationships: Balancing Power and Priorities in Language-Based Fieldwork”, organized by Megan Crowhurst. The preliminary version of the SSILA meeting program will be announced in the next Bulletin.

94.1 CORRESPONDENCE

Re: Mahala ‘woman’

- From William Bright (William.Bright@Colorado.EDU) 27 Aug 1999:

Regarding Emanuel Drechsel’s query about a personal name “Mahala” being derived from a word for ‘woman’ in some Indian language: MAHALA was used in California during the Gold Rush to mean ‘Indian woman’, and the term still exists as a California place name (Mahala Creek, Humboldt County). One hypothesis is that it’s from Spanish MUJER. Another is that it’s from

one of the dialects of Yokuts that were spoken in the gold mining area, such as Chowchila MOKHEELA ‘woman’ or Yawelmani MOXELO ‘old woman’ (this information is from Geoff Gamble).

MAHALA MAT is the name of a native shrub in the Pacific Coast states. As a woman’s personal name, however, MAHALA -- pronounced with a “long a”— may have a different source. One dictionary says it is “biblical”; I don’t have an index to the Bible to check this, but perhaps others can provide further information. (Cf. also the name of Mahalia Jackson, the famous gospel singer.)

MAHALA meaning “Indian woman”, on the other hand, is pronounced with a “short a”, according to the Random House dictionary. The California placename is currently pronounced still a 3rd way, with IPA [a].

~Bill Bright

[Editor’s note: If MAHALA was borrowed into Gold Rush-era English from Indians in the Mother Lode, as seems plausible, it was not necessarily borrowed from Yokuts, at least not directly. According to Saxton T. Pope, Ishi, the famous Southern Yana Indian who first encountered whites as a middle-aged man in 1911, used “mahale” for ‘woman’ in “broken English” communication with Kroeber and others during his years at the Museum of Anthropology in San Francisco (_The Medical History of Ishi_, 1920). He also used “camisa” for ‘shirt’ and “baka” for ‘cow’. Kroeber believed that these and a few other Spanish words had been borrowed into Yana in the early 19th century as the result of sporadic trading contacts. On the other hand, Valley Yokuts /mokhe:la/ ‘woman’ appears to have a solid etymology in Yokuts as a derivation from the root *mok- ‘be fertile, bear children’ (Tulamni <megok> ‘child’, Yawelmani /mokye:/ ‘marry, have sexual intercourse’; also Wikchamni /muk’ash/ ‘woman’), which in turn has a believable source in Proto Penutian (cf. Klamath /mok-’a:kl?a/ ‘have a baby’, Alsea /mukw-a?sli/ ‘woman, female’). Could it be that a trading jargon developed in Central California in Mission times in which the term for ‘woman’ had a dual source in Yokuts and in Spanish, the two accidentally similar terms reinforcing one another? -- VG.]

Lakota publishing

- From Marion BlueArm (mwobbel@hotmail.com) 1 Sep 1999:

My husband Gene and I are venturing into trying something really significant for the preservation and revitalization of the Lakota language on the Cheyenne River Reservation (South Dakota) and beyond. We are planning on starting a publishing company, to produce and help distribute literature written in Lakota. With me finishing my master's in Curriculum Development, I am especially interested in the production of appropriate language-learning materials for the schools (K-12 and also post-secondary). This would include the production of CD-ROMs, audio tapes, video tapes, posters, and whatever else anyone can think of. We have a name picked out and want to start this as a business, hopefully sponsored by the tribe for initial financial funding. We are both educators and not too good with corporate law and general business matters. If anyone has any good ideas on how to get started, appropriate funding sources (we are exploring private and federal grant sources, but it could save us some time for all that research), and other vital information, we would greatly appreciate a hint dropped here or there or any help we can get from you experts.

~Marion BlueArm
1043 King Street, Spearfish, SD 57783
(mwobbel@hotmail.com)

UNESCO grants?

- From Jonathan David Bobaljik (jbobal@po-box.mcgill.ca) 10 Sep 1999:

A while ago there was some discussion in the SSILA Bulletin about the 1998-1999 round of UNESCO Endangered Language grants (they recently announced the next competition). People were having trouble getting information out of the Conseil International de Philosophie et Sciences Humaines in Paris, who are administering the grants. I have another problem to report. I was officially notified in March 1998 that I was successful in the programme, but that the committee had not yet finalized funding arrangements with UNESCO. Despite faxes, e-mails and letters from me, I have yet to hear anything further. Do any readers of the Bulletin know what has happened? I'm finding "UNESCO support" to be a good line on my CV in attracting other funding, but I've basically written off the idea of getting any actual money from them.

~Jonathan David Bobaljik
Department of Linguistics, McGill University
(jbobal@po-box.mcgill.ca)

94.2 KUNA LIST SERVER & DATABASE

- From Marta de Gerdes (marta.degerdes@tema.gu.se) 8 Sep 1999:

Following a suggestion from Joel Sherzer, we are currently preparing a list server and a database for Kuna scholars and researchers. The project will be sponsored by the Museion Program of the University of Gothenburg (Sweden) in collaboration with the Ethnographic Museum of Gothenburg.

If you have carried out research on the Kuna language and/or culture, we would be interested in hearing from you. Please send us:

- (a) Your e-mail address (and the addresses of other Kuna researchers you know of).
- (b) Titles and abstracts of your publications, if you have this information handy.
- (c) A brief caption about yourself including your name, institution, and area of research (history, religion, environmental studies, linguistics, gender studies, linguistic anthropology, aesthetics, or any other term that describes your research interest).

Thanks in advance for your cooperation. We hope that these electronic resources will help advance Kuna scholarship in the next century. We think good communication is true to the Kuna spirit.

~Marta de Gerdes
Museion Program for Research and Learning
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(marta.degerdes@tema.gu.se)

94.3 WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Salish & Muskogean material

- From Timothy Montler (montler@unt.edu) 27 Aug 1999:

SSILA members may find something of interest at my web site:

<http://www.ling.unt.edu/~montler/>

I've posted a lot of Klallam, Saanich, and Alabama material. On the Klallam page you will find a Classified Word List, a Klallam Story, and some Useful Klallam Phrases. The Saanich page has a Classified Word List and an Outline of Saanich Morphology and Phonology. The Alabama page has a version of the Alabama Dictionary. A Coeur d'Alene Dictionary is also coming soon.

~Tim Montler
University of North Texas

Navajo code talkers

The "Navajo Code Talkers" page is maintained by the US Navy & Marine Corps World War II Commemorative Committee, a service of Navy Chief of Information Office. It outlines the vital role that Navajo speakers played in the War and describes the nature of the "unbreakable code", based on Navajo words, that was used by about 400 specially trained Navajo Marines in the Pacific theatre. The URL is:

<http://wae.com/webcat/navajos.htm>

An EL homepage at the LINGUIST site

- From Martha Ratliff (martha_ratliff@wayne.edu) 26 Aug 1999:

Below is a call that will be circulated on the LINGUIST list soon. I thought you all would be among those most interested. Volunteers to serve as page managers are welcome!

~Martha Ratliff
Department of Linguistics, Wayne State University
Chair, LSA Committee on Endangered Languages and their Preservation

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A new Endangered Languages homepage on LINGUIST will bring together materials on the study of endangered languages to serve the needs of both the linguistic profession and communities interested in language revitalization or maintenance programs. As a start, the following pages (with appropriate links) are proposed:

1. national and international professional or service organizations involved in the endangered language documentation and revitalization effort;

2. community organizations which are working to preserve their own languages;
3. “linguist wanted” ads; a list of communities and linguists in the field needing technical assistance (this page will be managed by Megan Crowhurst);
4. an archive of on-line discussions and on-line conferences on ELs;
5. programs of (traditional) conferences on ELs, and calls for papers;
6. notices and reviews of books and journals on ELs and linguistic fieldwork;
7. information about and reviews of fieldwork tools such as software and questionnaires;
8. information on linguistics departments with a specialty in training fieldworkers (and which accept “Grammar of X”-type dissertations) and information on short-term training programs;
9. pedagogical materials for fieldwork courses and other courses on linguistic diversity;
10. funding opportunities for fieldwork projects;
11. a list of people to contact who are currently working on particular languages/groups of languages, with their permission. (Alana Johns is building a page which will include 5-page descriptions of projects in progress authored by different fieldworkers which can be linked to this page.)

Interested linguists are invited to volunteer as the “curator” of any of these proposed pages (except #5, which has been claimed). Suggestions for additional pages are also welcome. Please contact Martha Ratliff (martha_ratliff@wayne.edu).

Additions to Chinook Jargon Site

- From Jeffrey Kopp (jeffkopp@teleport.com) 6 Sep 1999:

Klahowya! Jargon fans and friends who have visited my Chinook Jargon Web site (“Tenas Wawa On-Line”) will be interested to know that there are some additions to the site.

Two of the principal Jargon references have been placed on-line:

- George Gibbs’ dictionary (Smithsonian 1863):
www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/6460/gibbs.htm
- George C. Shaw’s dictionary (Rainier Printing Co. 1909):
www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/6460/shaw.htm

Gibbs was retyped, and a friend has helped me proofread it. Shaw was scanned and converted by OCR, and required extensive editing. I am reasonably sure of Gibbs, although an undiscovered error or two might still lurk within. Shaw, however, is still a “proofing draft.” These books have passed into the public domain due to their age. You are welcome to print them out. (Warning: Shaw runs over 200 pages.) If you should happen to have a copy of Shaw and spot any errors in my version, I’d be most grateful for an email.

I have also added a RealAudio sound file to the pages

- Duane Pasco singing “Klootzman Kopa Wayhut,” which appears in the Moola John saga sung by the character “Chikamin Charlie”:
• <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Delphi/6460/sj11.htm#klootzman>

I'd like to add more Jargon speech and music to the Web site, but there is a dearth of recorded material available. If you know of any (or if you might record some of your own), please let me know.

eanwhile, the second annual Chinook Jargon Workshop was held on the weekend of August 13-15 at the Grand Ronde Reservation in Oregon. Tony Johnson, Henry Zenk and Dave Robertson conducted instruction sessions, and Tony and Jim Holton did a terrific job arranging the event. More than thirty people attended. For further information you can visit the workshop website:

<http://www.adisoft-inc.com/chinook.html>

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94.4 UPCOMING MEETINGS

Symposium on Language Endangerment (Melbourne, Australia, Nov. 29-30)

- From David Bradley (d.bradley@latrobe.edu.au) 28 Aug 1999:

A symposium on “Language Endangerment and Maintenance: an active approach” will be held at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia, November 29-30, 1999. It will be convened by David Bradley. The symposium will start with a panel discussion on issues and strategies in the area of language endangerment, including David Bradley, Alexandra Aikhenvald (ANU/La Trobe), Michael Clyne (Monash), Bob Dixon (ANU/La Trobe), Peter Muehlhaeusler (Adelaide), and Steven Wurm (ANU), and will conclude with a general discussion on this topic.

Case study presentations on individual communities will be given by these and other scholars, including Barry Blake, Kate Burrige and Maya Bradley (La Trobe), Margaret Florey (Newcastle), Rob Amery (Adelaide) and others. These case studies will include Australian Aboriginal and migrant communities as well as indigenous and migrant communities in various other countries including Indonesia, Thailand, China, Canada and the Netherlands.

All others who wish to make a presentation (20 minutes plus 10 minutes discussion) should submit a one-page abstract and e-mail or fax address by November 1; notification of acceptance will be sent by email or fax on November 14. The symposium is free and open to the public. All inquiries and abstracts should be directed to the Department of Linguistics, La Trobe University, Bundoora VIC 3083, Australia (Linguistics@latrobe.edu.au). There is a conference website at: <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/www/linguistics>

Call for participation in ICA symposium (Warsaw, July 10-14, 2000)

- From William F. Hanks (wfhanks@nwu.edu) 1 Sep 1999:

En el marco del proximo 50 CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE AMERICANISTAS a celebrarse en la ciudad de Varsovia del 10 al 14 de julio del 2000, estamos organizando el simposio “LAS LENGUAS INDOAMERICANAS Y SUS HABLANTES ANTE EL NUEVO MILENIO.” Los objetivos principales de este simposio son los de establecer un foro de discusion y analisis acerca de los problemas concernientes al desarrollo de las lenguas indoamericanas y al futuro de las comunidades linguisticas en contacto con otros grupos dominantes. Se trataran cuestiones teorico-metodologicas, asi como aquellas relativas a la situacion socioeconomica de sus hablantes, con miras al nuevo milenio.

Temas a cubrir:

- El estado actual y perspectivas de la descripcion de las lenguas nativas del continente americano.
- Teorias y metodos del trabajo linguistico.
- Estudios inter- y transdisciplinarios (de los campos de la sociologia, la antropologia, la educacion y la computacion).

- La investigación ante las agencias de gobierno, la comunidad lingüística y la ética.
- Las lenguas indígenas ante la globalización. Peligro de extinción.

LAS PROPUESTAS DE PONENCIAS TENDRAN UNA EXTENSION MAXIMA DE 250 PALABRAS.

LA FECHA LIMITE PARA LA ACEPTACION DE PROPUESTAS ES EL 15 DE DICIEMBRE DE 1999.

PARA MAYOR INFORMACION SOBRE EL CONGRESO, CONSULTAR LA PAGINA DE LA RED:

<http://www.cesla.ci.uw.edu.pl/50ICA>

Atentamente,

~Ramon Arzapalo Marin, Coordinador
UNAM

(arzapalo@servidor.unam.mx)

~Annette Veerman-Leichsenring, Co-Coordinadora
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(leichsenring@pcmail.leidenuniv.nl)

~William Hanks, Co-Coordinador
Northwestern University

(wfhanks@nwu.edu)

94.5 E-MAIL UPDATES

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