

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

SSILA BULLETIN

An Information Service for SSILA Members

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102.0 SSILA BUSINESS

Program change for the Chicago meeting

Johannes Helmbrecht has had to withdraw his paper on “Nouns and Verbs in Hocank” (Session III-A, Semantic and Lexical Categories, Friday, Jan. 7, 2:00 - 5:00 pm). In its place the following new paper has been added to the program:

- Yolanda Lastra (UNAM), “Otomi dialects: peculiarities found in nine locations.”

SSILA website continues to have problems

Once again, we apologize for problems at the SSILA website. For three days in mid-December the site was inaccessible, owing to an unexpected change in servers at UC Davis. Although the site is up again, the databases cannot be searched because of another glitch in the search-engine software.

The SSILA web manager, Autumn Bouck, is working on this problem, and is also reviewing alternatives to the UC Davis servers we have been using. This is all very frustrating for us....Our very own Y2K bug.

102.1 CORRESPONDENCE

Language Foundation planned in Canada

- From Marianne Ignace (m_rignace@bc.sympatico.ca) 26 Dec 1999:

Merry Xmas and Happy New Year!

My name is Chief Ron. E. Ignace. I am the chair of the National Chiefs' Committee on Languages for the Assembly of First Nations (Canada). I would like to inform you of our agenda and to enlist all the support I can. The Committee's objective is to get our languages legally recognized by way of legislation and to set up a Language Foundation (as a Royal Commission), which can be capitalized to \$100 million, of which \$50 million is to be raised privately. We are establishing a committee called "Friends of Aboriginal Languages"; we hope, with the support of our National Chief, to enlist Senators, MP's, business leaders, sports personalities, musicians, and other individuals who are interested and concerned.

The AFN Chiefs in Assembly have declared 2000 a year dedicated to Aboriginal languages. The AFN's next National Assembly, which will be held in Montreal, is dedicated to Languages. There will be fund raising activities leading up to and during the Assembly. All proceeds will be targeted at the communities which are the cradles of the languages and to facilitate ntergenerational transfer of the languages. I would appreciate your support.

If you have any questions or suggestions you can e-mail me at the address below or phone 613/241-6789 (Louise LaHache, language sector, AFN).

Happy Holidays,

~Chief Ron. E. Ignace
(m_rignace@bc.sympatico.ca)

Help needed on tribal identification

- From Richard Warren Welch (welch@sirinet.net) 30 Dec 1999:

Here is a small puzzle that perhaps a reader of the SSILA Bulletin can help me solve.

Matthew Brayton, aged seven, was captured by Indians in Ohio in 1825 and spent thirty-four years in captivity before returning to his family in 1859. He spent much of his captivity with a tribe in northwestern Canada or Alaska. His later description of the geography of the region and the tribe's name (he called them "Copperheads") don't provide much help in identifying the tribe. Newspaper articles in 1859 and a book in 1860 give us a few names and perhaps someone can identify the linguistic pattern.

The writer of an article in the Cleveland Daily Herald on August 30, 1859, phonetically spelled the released captive's name as "Mo-kos-e-que-qua", but this was spelled "Owah-owah-kish-mewah" in later articles and in the 1860 book. His father-in-law's name was spelled "O-wash-kah-ke-naw" in 1860, and Matthew said he was the "principal chief" of his band. The newspaper article had the name spelled "Ma-co-chew-a-wa", although this name might refer to a different individual. Mathew says the title of the principal chief was "Inkupudia". An article in the Cleveland Daily Herald on Saturday, November 26, 1859, gives his wife's name as "Tefronia", which was translated as "Tame Deer", and his children's names as "Tefrona", a daughter who was born about 1854, but spelled "Tefronia" in later accounts, and "Tuloosa", a son born June 1857. The son's name is also spelled "Qululee" in some accounts, but "Tululee" seems to be the accepted pronunciation. These names are the only hints as to the linguistic group of the released captive's tribe. Tom Andrews, Sub-Arctic Archeologist in Yellowknife, says the names do not match the linguistic patterns of Athapaskan and appear to be Cree, an Algonquian language. Can anyone confirm that, or perhaps identify the tribe with this linguistic pattern?

~Richard Welch, Director
Museum of the Great Plains
(director@museumgreatplains.org)

102.2 JAPAN SUPPORTS RESEARCH ON LANGUAGES OF THE NORTH PACIFIC RIM

- From Osahito Miyaoka (omiyaoka@ling.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp) 26 Dec 1999:

A major research project is now under way in Japan, funded by the Ministry of Education, to support systematic and swift measures to preserve endangered languages of Pacific rim minorities where research has been lagging, at the same time retaining a long-term perspective. Priority will be placed on languages whose continued existence is in question and will focus on four areas:

- (1) Gathering and sorting records from previous linguistic surveys;
- (2) Undertaking new field work
- (3) Recording, organizing, and analyzing linguistic data; and
- (4) Publishing the results (dictionaries, grammars, textbooks, etc.) and entering this information into databases.

In the fiscal year beginning in April 2000, three-year projects will be launched on planned research topics (around 35 in all) and research proposals will be publicly solicited. Projects will take the form of focused linguistic surveys and research (Type A) or cross-disciplinary research (Type B) on theory, methodology, and information processing, intended to back up Type A efforts. A total of seven topics have been selected according to region and research content:

A01: South Pacific Rim

A02: North Pacific Rim (including the Ainu language)

A03: East and Southeast Asia

A04: Japan (includes Japanese spoken abroad)

B01: Methods for surveying endangered languages

B02: Dynamic research on language extinction and preservation

B03: Survey research support through information processing

Applications for both types will be accepted again in the autumn of 2000. Overseas linguists can join the project by forming a group with a Japanese researcher who works on the same (or a close) language. For further information (in English) visit:

http://www.elpr.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp/index_e.html

Or contact Prof. Osahito Miyaoka (Professor, Graduate School of Letters, Kyoto University) at: omiyaoka@ling.bun.kyoto-u.ac.jp

102.3 WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Karuk-Irish site

- From Dennis King (donncha@eskimo.com) 15 Dec 1999:

While we're on the topic of unusual websites -- cf. "Quechua lessons (and robot theater)", #101.3 -- Bulletin readers might want to have a look at my Karuk-Irish site:

<http://www.eskimo.com/~donncha/karuk.html>

It's basically, I guess, a kind of honoring of one minority language by another. I had fun putting it together.

~Dennis King

Chumash site

- From John R. Johnson (jjohnson@sbnature2.org) 15 Dec 1999:

SSILA members may be interested in the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History's new "Chumash Life" website that contains some linguistic information, e.g., an interactive body "map" where Barbareno names pop up when the cursor is pointed at different body parts. There is also a section on placenames in the Santa Barbara and Goleta areas and a map of native Chumash towns with linguistically correct names in an orthography adapted for English speakers (as reconstructed by Kathryn Klar, Sally McLendon, Kenneth Whistler, Richard Applegate, etc.). The site may be found at: <http://www.sbnature.org/chumash/>

~John R. Johnson, Curator of Anthropology
Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
(jjohnson@sbnature2.org)

Dead link & new material

From Jon Reyhner (jon.reyhner@nau.edu) 25 Dec 1999:

I think your internet link for Navajo Community College under Navajo is dead. The college changed its name about a year ago to "Dine College" (with an accent over the e in Dine). I tried to load from your page and it would not come up (finally the server "refused" me). I know they have made a lot of changes in their web sites in the past couple of years.

Meanwhile, I have added some new material to my Teaching Indigenous Languages web site at: <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jar/TIL.html>

~Jon Reyhner
Northern Arizona University
(jon.reyhner@nau.edu)

102.4 E-MAIL UPDATES

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