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

SSILA BULLETIN

107.0 SSILA BUSINESS

What is the CAIL?

Diego Quesada (dquesada@chass.utoronto.ca) wrote us last week:

I am not sure I got all the various meetings straight. Is the CAIL conference in November the "same" as the one we just had in January in Chicago? Will there be one annual meeting next January? What is the difference, if any, between SSILA meetings with AAA and LSA?
I am totally lost here and will be very thankful to you if you could clarify this to me.
It is entirely understandable that Diego is confused by the nomenclature of our annual meetings, reflecting, as it does, thirty-five years of tangled institutional history. Perhaps this is an appropriate occasion to retell the story.

Our meeting this coming winter in San Francisco will be part of the 2000 Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. The SSILA-organized sessions will bear the title "XXXIXth Conference on American Indian Languages". This obviously is the 39th meeting of something, but of what? And how is it related to SSILA?

The first "Conference on American Indian Languages" was convened by Carl and Flo Voegelin at Indiana University in Bloomington during the 1964 Linguistic Institute. This meeting focused on establishing a consensus classification of North American languages and on producing a new map. Some classificatory issues remaining unresolved, it was decided to hold a follow-up meeting -- the 2nd CAIL -- at the AAA meeting that November. A third (smaller) meeting was held again at Bloomington the following summer, and the 4th CAIL was held at the 1965 AAA. From then on, CAIL meetings have been organized annually at AAA. (The CAIL has long since broken the record for the longest continuing attraction at AAA meetings.)

Although classification remained an important topic at early CAILs, the Conference soon blossomed into a general linguistics meeting. Until 1980, the CAIL was informally organized each year by Carl and Flo Voegelin, later joined by Eric Hamp. When SSILA was formed in 1981 the Society took over this task. For the next 15 years, 1981 to 1995, the annual meeting of SSILA and the CAIL sessions at the AAA were one and the same.

Six years ago, however, SSILA decided to alternate its winter meeting between the LSA and AAA meetings. Beginning with the 34th CAIL in November 1995, SSILA has not organized the CAIL sessions at AAA meetings in odd-numbered years. (Independently organized sessions on American indigenous languages are "lent" the CAIL title under SSILA's sponsorship.)
In even-numbered years, however, we continue the tradition established in 1964.

Although this schedule may seem confusing, it has proved to be a workable solution to a problem that plagues our field. We are too small in numbers to have established an independent academic identity (the Departments of American Indian Languages can be counted on the fingers of one hand).

Most of us identify ourselves either as linguists or as anthropologists, and look for new ideas -- and new jobs -- at the annual meetings of the professional societies that represent these two groups. Thirty years ago, at least in the US, the majority of American Indianist linguists were academically affiliated with Anthropology, and meeting with the AAA every year made good sense. As the decades passed, however, the balance tipped in the other direction. By the 1990s it was clear that the majority of SSILA members -- particularly younger members -- regarded themselves only as linguists, and found it awkward and expensive to attend AAA meetings simply for the sake of the CAIL sessions.

Our decision to meet alternately with both professional societies, while not ideal, seems to have solved this problem for the time being. (We also reach out to our LSA constituency by having a summer meeting at the biennial Linguistic Institute. This meeting has been increasingly well attended.) But it is a situation that requires careful monitoring. We welcome comments from Bulletin readers.

107.1 CORRESPONDENCE

Game is Microsoft's overture to the scholarly community

- From Claudio R. Salvucci (salvucci@netaxs.com) 25 Feb 2000:

I wish to make a few comments in response to Heriberto Avelino's note (Bulletin #106.2) about a developer contacting him to provide Nahuatl linguistic data for the computer game "Age of Empires II".

I do not know if Mr. Avelino or the editors have even seen "Age of Empires", let alone played it, but it is entirely erroneous to suggest that "hordes of adolescent gamers crying 'Die, vile scum!' in Classical Nahuatl" typifies it. In fact the "adolescent gamers" implied here would think this product entirely too tame for their tastes. Why would anyone bent on mindless virtual destruction bother with the farming, lumbering, fishing, mining and trading that form an integral part of this game? Certainly not to make it to the fighting which, though somewhat realistic, is only slightly more gory than a game of chess.

It would be a shame if Microsoft, having made an overture to the scholarly community in good faith, is denied its desire for linguistic accuracy because of some misconceptions about this product. Perhaps the generational attitudes about computer games are incapable of being reconciled at this point, but I am firmly convinced that not only can this game be an educational tool, it may also serve to spark interests that could later mature into more serious study. To think that a person who otherwise would not have given a second thought to American linguistics might hear and even memorize a few phrases in Nahuatl warms my heart.

The URL which was provided in the Bulletin: http://www.microsoft.com/games/age2/ affords all those who might have misconceptions about the game an honest look into what it is about. I might add for the computer savvy that a free demonstration copy is available there for those who wish to try it out and see for themselves.
Lastly, a curious comment was made by the editors: "One wonders if the parameters of the game allow for the defeat of Cortez?" It is in fact necessary in any strategy game that the player, whichever side he chooses, be able to win or lose.

Otherwise it wouldn't be much of a game, would it?

~Claudio R. Salvucci
Holland, Pennsylvania
(salvucci@netaxs.com)

More support for "Age of Empires"

- From Mara Greengrass (mgreengr@aaanet.org) 1 Mar 2000:

I'm writing in response to the item in Bulletin #106, concerning the game Age of Empires. While I'm reluctant to support any effort of Microsoft, my husband (hereinafter known as Avi) is addicted to the game Age of Empires and urged me to respond.

First, let me say that the words Heriberto Avelino would have been asked to record would not have included anything like "Die, vile scum." Avi says the worst thing any character says is "attacking" or "I'm being attacked." The phrases are things like "chopping" for when you assign a character to accumulate a wood resource or "farming" when they collect a food resource. Also, the historical scenarios tend to play out along historical line (for obvious reasons), e.g. the Joan of Arc scene does not allow her to survive and conquer the world. She dies. Always.

Perhaps more importantly, I cannot see that the use of Indian languages in this game in any way insults or demeans the cultures involved. What is wrong with using contemporary languages in a game? Is it better for nobody to be familiar with what they sound like?

Personally, I would consider it insulting if gamemakers left out groups like the Aztecs, because that would imply they were less interesting and less powerful than Europeans or Asians.

Now, neither Avi nor I would want to claim that Age of Empires is "educational," except in the smallest sense. He tells me that the weapons, buildings and other material culture of each group is somewhat historically accurate, and they are trying to use accurate terminology.

It's not the equivalent of a classroom, but I don't see any harm either.

Thanks for letting me put my $.02 in! :)

~Mara Greengrass
(mgreengrass@aaanet.org or fishfolk@ix.netcom.com)

107.2 A NAVAJO "G.I. JOE"

Computer game troops speaking in Classic Nahuatl and Mayan (Bulletin #106.2 and the correspondence above) have some electronic competition in "Navajo Code Talker G.I. Joe" -- a "military action figure" produced by the Hasbro toy company. Distributed to stores last month, Code Talker (which retails for $24.99) joins 21 other "classic" G.I. Joes, including a female Army helicopter pilot, Japanese-American soldiers in World War II, and President Kennedy as a PT boat commander.

When you lift the foot-tall figure's arm it utters one of seven recorded phrases in authentic WW II Navajo code, followed by an English translation. ("Request air support" and "attack by machine gun" are among the messages.) The phrases are in the voice of Sam Billison, 74, President of the Navajo Code Talkers Association.

According to an article in last Wednesday's Albuquerque Journal, Billison was visited by a Hasbro design team last fall. "They came out and recorded me," Billison said. "I talk slow, so they increased my speed." Billison says it is both is flattering and a little silly to have a doll that speaks with his voice. "But the main thing is that this will let people know about the Code Talkers -- it's really going to put us on the map."

Hasbro has agreed to donate $5,000 to the Code Talkers Association, and is giving a free Navajo G.I. Joe to each of the approximately 150 surviving Code Talkers.

The Albuquerque Journal article can be read at the paper's website:
http://www.abqjournal.com/news/2news03-01-00.htm

More details on the action figure are at Hasbro's website:
http://www.gijoe.com/lnavajo_code_talker.html

107.3 UPCOMING MEETINGS

The Indigenous Voice of Oaxaca (UCLA, May 19-20)

- From George Aaron Broadwell (g.broadwell@albany.edu) 25 Feb 2000:

A conference on the languages of Oaxaca -- "La voz indigena de Oaxaca/ The indigenous voice of Oaxaca" -- will be held at the University of California, Los Angeles, May 19-20, 2000.

Invited speakers include: Cheryl Black (SIL); George Aaron Broadwell (SUNY Albany); Maarten Jansen (Leiden); J. Kathryn Josserand (Florida State); Barbara Hollenbach (SIL); Felicia Lee (CSU Fresno); James Lockhart (UCLA); Pamela Munro (UCLA); Thomas Smith-Stark (Colegio de Mexico); Kevin Terraciano (UCLA); Aurora Perez (Leiden); and Velma Pickett (SIL).

Abstracts are invited for 20-minute talks on any aspect of the linguistic, historical, anthropological, or ethnohistorical analysis of the indigenous languages of Oaxaca. While all topics are welcome, the organizers particularly encourage papers that compare contemporary and colonial language materials and show how the analysis of one can be relevant to the other.

Submission of abstracts may be either via e-mail (preferred) or regular mail. Abstracts should be no longer than 400 words, and should contain a clear statement of the problem, the language(s) to be examined, and the theoretical approach employed. Include the author's name, affiliation, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number. E-mail submissions may be sent to <g.broadwell@albany.edu>. Submissions via regular mail should be sent to: George Aaron Broadwell, Department of Anthropology, University at Albany, Albany NY 12222. All abstracts must be received by MARCH 25, 2000.

Siouan-Caddoan Conference (Anadarko, OK, June 9-10)

The next Siouan and Caddoan Conference will be held on Caddoan territory in Anadarko, Oklahoma, hosted by the Witchita and Affiliated Tribes. The tentative dates are Friday and Saturday June 9 - 10, 2000. The meeting is being organized by Alice Anderton, with help from David Rood and the Witchita and Affiliated Tribes. For information contact: Alice Anderton, 1506 Barkley St., Norman, OK 73071.

Friends of Uto-Aztecan (Chapala, Jalisco, July 28-29)

- From J. L. Iturrioz (lindigen@udgserv.cencar.udg.mx) 29 Feb 2000:

El Departamento de Estudios en Lenguas Indigenas de la Universidad de Guadalajara (Mexico) organiza el Taller de los Amigos de Lenguas Utoaztecas para los días 28 y 29 de julio del 2000. Comité Organizador: Jose Luis Iturrioz, Paula Gomez Lopez, Rosa Yaqez Rosales.

La sede será el hotel Villa Montecarlo en la Ciudad de Chapala, a orillas del lago. El hotel dispone de salones asi como de varias albercas de agua termal y restaurante. Dado que el hotel es propriedad de la Universidad de Guadalajara, trataremos de obtener precios especiales para los participantes que quieran alojarse en él.

Recomendamos prestar especial interés a los siguientes tópicos: (1) Elaboración de diccionarios; (2) Relaciones gramaticales; (3) Revitalización de lenguas.

Indiquen lo antes posible su intención de participar y si se quieren alojar en el Hotel Villa Montecarlo. Envien por favor sus propuestas (titulo de las ponencias) antes del 30 de mayo.

Favor de comunicarse a: lindigen@udgserv.cencar.udg.mx

The 2000 meeting of The Friends of Utoaztecan Languages will be held on 28-29 July in Chapala, Jalisco, Mexico, organized by the Departamento de Estudios en Lenguas Indigenas of the University of Guadalajara. The Organizing Commitee includes Jose Luis Iturrioz Leza, Paula Gomez Lopez, and Rosa Yaqez Rosales.

The meeting will take place in Hotel Montecarlo, on Lake Chapala. This hotel belongs to the University of Guadalajara, and the organizers hope that it will be possible to obtain special prices for the participants. It has lecture rooms, a restaurant, and swimming pools. Please let the organizers know as soon as possible if you want to come to the meeting and if you want to stay in the Montecarlo.

The following themes are recommended for presentations: Grammatical Relations, Lexicography, and Revival of Languages. Please send your titles by May 30.
Please send communications to: lindigen@udgserv.cencar.udg.mx

VI Encuentro de Linguistica (Hermosillo, Sonora, Nov. 29-Dec. 1)

- From Zarina Estrada F. (zarina@fisica.uson.mx) 27 Feb 2000:

La Licenciatura en Linguistica de la Universidad de Sonora invita a especialistas nacionales y extranjeros interesados en los diversos aspectos del lenguaje al "VI Encuentro Internacional de Linguistica en el Noroeste". Este evento tendra lugar los dias 29, 30 de noviembre y 1 de diciembre de 2000 en el Departamento de Letras y Linguistica de la Universidad de Sonora, en la ciudad de Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico.

Conferencistas Especiales: Diana B. Archangeli (U de Arizona), Joan Bybee (U de Nuevo Mexico), Sam Mchombo (UC Berkeley), y Rodolfo Cerron Palomino (Pontificia U Catolica del Peru).

En el Encuentro se incluiran mesas sobre temas de linguistica descriptiva y teorica, asi como sobre las diversas areas de las interdisciplinas linguisticas y de la linguistica aplicada. Se podran

organizar sesiones sobre temas especiales, previo acuerdo con los organizadores del Encuentro dentro del periodo de recepcion de resumenes.

Los interesados deberan enviar el resumen de su participacion antes del 9 DE JUNIO DE 2000 a la siguiente direccion: VI Encuentro Internacional de Linguistica en el Noroeste, Depto de Letras y Linguistica, Universidad de Sonora, Salvatierra 33, Fracc. Los Arcos, C.P. 83250, Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico.

Los resumenes podran ser presentados en espanol o en ingles, con una extension maxima de 250 palabras y cuyo contenido incluya los puntos principales del tema, explicando los aspectos relevantes de los datos, la metodologia y la argumentacion empleada, asi como la bibliografia fundamental. El Comite Organizador enviara a los participantes un comunicado escrito de aceptacion del trabajo el 15 de agosto de 2000.

El tiempo de exposicion sera de 20 minutos, con un espacio de 10 para preguntas.

Una seleccion arbitrada de ponencias sera publicada en la Memoria del VI Encuentro Internacional de Linguistica en el Noroeste. Las ponencias deberan tener una extension minima de 15 cuartillas y maxima de 20 a doble espacio con letra de 12 puntos; y deberan entregarse al Comite Organizador a mas tardar el 15 de enero de 2001 en un diskette de 3.5", utilizando los procesadores Word o Word Perfect y una copia impresa del trabajo.

Las cuotas de inscripcion para ponentes y asistentes seran de: $500 M.N. (US $50) antes del 15 de septiembre, $600 M.N. (US $60) despues del 15 de septiembre. La asistencia y participacion de estudiantes de licenciatura sera gratuita. El pago de inscripcion podra depositarse a nombre de UNIVERSIDAD DE SONORA en las siguientes cuentas bancarias -- En Mexico: 88484-4 Banamex, Sucursal 363 en Hermosillo, Sonora. En Estados Unidos: 09395985 Bank One, clave de transferencia 122100024, de Nogales, Arizona. Los ponentes y participantes deberan enviar la ficha de deposito por fax, asi como presentar el original a su llegada al Encuentro.

Para cualquier informacion favor de comunicarse a los telefonos (62) 59-21-87 y (62) 12-55-29, fax:(62) 12-55-29 o a alguno de los correos electronicos del Comite Organizador:
Andres Acosta Felix (aacosta@rtn.uson.mx)
Isabel Barreras Aguilar (jbarrera@capomo.uson.mx)
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Gerardo Lopez Cruz (gerlopez@rtn.uson.mx)
Maria del Carmen Morua Leyva (morualey@rtn.uson.mx)

107.4 BRAZILIAN INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES COURSE

- From Marcia Damaso (damaso@mn.ufrj.br) 28 Feb 1988:

The 4th annual Brazilian Indigenous Language Course will be held at the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro from April 4, 2000 to April 30, 2001. It is the only course in Brazil which focus on the grammatical aspects of Brazilian indigenous languages in the light of formal linguistics frameworks, such as generative grammar. The first part of the course provides a theoretical overview of the three major areas of language study -- phonology, morphology and syntax -- with emphasis on Brazilian native languages data. In the second part of the course, more specific grammatical topics concerning these languages are treated, such as: prosody, lexical categories, cliticization, incorporation, grammatical-functional categories, case marking, binding, interrogatives, word order, focus and topic, etc. The faculty includes: Yonne de Freitas Leite, Charlotte Emmerich, Bruna Franchetto, Marilia Faco Soares, Marcus Maia, Luciana Storto and Marcia Damaso. Registration will be held from February 2 to March 27, 2000. For further information, please e-mail: <Damaso@mn.ufrj.br>.

107.5 THE BOOK EXCHANGE

More old books for sale

- From Edward F. Bagley (edbagley@webtv.net) 29 Feb 2000:

I would like to sell a few more of the older titles from my collection. All are original editions in good to excellent condition. Please contact me via e-mail with all questions and offers

~Ed Bagley
Boston, Massachusetts
(edbagley@webtv.net or edbagley_99@yahoo.com)

- The Arawak Language of Guiana, by C. H. de Goeje, Amsterdam, 1928. Wrappers, large, 309 pages, scarce.
- A Sketch of Northern Sahaptin Grammar, by Melville Jacobs, UWPA 4.2, Seattle, 1931.
- Northwest Sahaptin Texts I, by Melville Jacobs, UWPA 2.6, Seattle, 1929.
- The Tillamook Language, by May Edel, IJAL 10.1, 1939.
- The Karankawa Indians, by Albert Gatschet, Peabody Museum Papers 1.2, Cambridge, 1891.
- A Structural and Lexical Comparison of the Tunica, Chitimacha and Atakapa Languages, by John Swanton, BAE Bulletin 68, Washington, 1919.
- Analytical Dictionary of the Tonkawa Language, by Harry Hoijer, UCPL 5, Berkeley, 1949.
- Dictionary of the Biloxi and Ofo Languages, by James Dorsey and John Swanton, BAE Bulletin 47, Washington, 1912.
- Acoma Grammar and Texts, by Wick Miller, UCPL 40, Berkeley, 1965.
- The Language of Santa Ana Pueblo, by Irvine Davis, BAE Bulletin 191, Washington, 1964.
- Chemehuevi: A Grammar and Lexicon, by Margaret Press, UCPL 92, Berkeley, 1979.
- Northern Sierra Miwok Dictionary, by Catherine Callaghan, UCPL 110, Berkeley, 1987.

I'm also selling a number of older titles in the field of Australian linguistics (Elkin, Capell et al) and many issues of the journal OCEANIA. Contact me for details if interested.

Finally, I have a small number of books in Russian dealing with NW Caucasian languages (Yakovlev, Kardanov et al) if anyone is interested.

Looking for book(s)

- From Suzette Haden Elgin (ocls@MADISONCOUNTY.NET) 1 Mar 2000:

I'm looking (with no success, so far) for copies of two of Dwight Bolinger's books: _Intonation and Its Parts_, and _Intonation and Its Uses_. It doesn't matter to me at all if they're battered or falling apart. The new copies at $55.00 each are way beyond the limits of my budget. If you have a copy of either one that you'd be willing to sell for a more reasonable sum plus shipping, please let me know. Thanks.

~Suzette Haden Elgin

Huntsville, Arkansas
(ocls@madisoncounty.net)

107.6 WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Omaha Indian Music

The latest addition to the "American Memory" website (part of the National Digital Library Program at the Library of Congress) is a large collection of recordings of Omaha Indian music from the American Folklife Center. The collection includes 44 recordings made by Francis La Flesche and Alice C. Fletcher between 1895 and 1897, as well as recordings made by staff of the American Folklife Center at the 1983 Omaha harvest celebration pow-wow and the 1985 Hethushka Society concert at the Library of Congress. Also included are interviews with members of the Omaha tribe providing background on the songs; field notes and tape logs made by Center staff during the 1983 pow-wow; and photographs and related publicity materials from the various performances. This presentation was made possible by the generous support of the Texaco Foundation.

The URL for the collection is: http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/omhhtml/

Questions can be directed to the National Digital Library Project at <ndlpcoll@loc.gov>.

107.7 BRIEF ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORRECTIONS

- The announcement of the upcoming Athabaskan conference in Bulletin #106 incorrectly gave the URL for the conference website as: http://faculty.washington.edu/sharon/alc2000/.. It turns out that (at least some) web addresses are case sensitive. The correct address is: http://faculty.washington.edu/sharon/ALC2000/

- From Catherine Ball (cball@nsf.gov) 25 Feb 2000:

As some readers of the SSILA Bulletin may already know, I've taken over from Paul Chapin as Program Director for Linguistics at the National Science Foundation. I realize it's too late to update the SSILA Membership Directory for 2000, but perhaps the following revised Directory entry could be included in the next editions of the Bulletin and Newsletter:
National Science Foundation, Linguistics Program --
Catherine Ball, Director, Room 995, 4201 Wilson Blvd.,
Arlington, VA 22230 (cball@nsf.gov)

If there's room for our web address, that could be useful to SSILA members:
http://www.nsf.gov/sbe/bcs/ling/

~ Cathy Ball

- Information on the "Language is Life" gathering ("California Languages in the New Millennium") at Marin Headlands near San Francisco, March 17-19, is now posted on the web at: http://www.calhum.org/llrp

107.8 E-MAIL ADDRESS UPDATES

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