

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

\*\*\* SSILA BULLETIN \*\*\*

An Information Service for SSILA Members

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180.0 SSILA Business

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\* 2002 elections  
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The 2002 Nominations Committee (Scott DeLancey, Karen Dakin, and John O'Meara) has recommended the following slate of candidates for the SSILA offices to be filled in the 2002 elections:

Vice President (2003) and President-Elect for 2004: David Rood  
Member-at-Large of the Executive Committee (2003-05): Douglas Parks



closing down, or being put under entirely nonlocal control.

NCLB requirements for comprehensive testing create a huge barrier to the spreading phenomenon of Native American language nests and immersion schools. The human and financial resources simply do not exist to create testing materials in Native American languages that properly meet NCLB guidelines. (The State of Hawai'i's Department of Education is giving up on the idea of full Hawaiian testing in its Hawaiian medium schools, and even Puerto Rico is challenged to produce in Spanish a complete set of high quality tests to meet NCLB standards for its Spanish medium school system.)

Testing Native American language immersion children in English, especially in the elementary grades before students have extensive academic exposure to English, would be a disaster, since school and state funding is tied to children's success on these tests. In fact, early English medium test results would likely be inversely proportional to success, since the most successful international models for language revitalization include late and carefully designed introduction of the national language (i.e., English for the USA). In these models high fluency in the endangered language is developed first and achievement in the national language becomes evident only in the later grades after academic achievement through the indigenous language and cultural base are solidified.

Some other provisions of NCLB are also detrimental to Native American languages, most important the credential requirements that will eliminate large numbers of Native American language teachers and teachers aides. These individuals work in bilingual education, Native American language as second language programs, and immersion programs, and are typically the most fluent speakers.

Faculty in our Hawaiian language college here at the University of Hawai'i, Hilo, have worked with Dr. William Demmert (Tlingit) of Western Washington University to draft a resolution on NCLB for the National Indian Education Association. The Oklahoma Native Languages Association has also recently passed a resolution calling for the removal of barriers in NCLB.

Other groups are also developing resolutions and sending them in to us. The resolutions will be forwarded to Senator Daniel Inouye (D-Hawai'i), chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee. Having introduced the 1990 Native American Languages Act of 1990, Senator Inouye is especially sensitive to Native American language concerns.

For further assistance to a group on developing a resolution, or other information, contact me at <[pila\\_w@leoki.uhh.hawaii.edu](mailto:pila_w@leoki.uhh.hawaii.edu)>.

--Bill Wilson  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo

\* Texas language tapes  
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From Tony Woodbury ([acw@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:acw@mail.utexas.edu)) 31 Oct 2002:





([peggy.kane@bowneglobal.com](mailto:peggy.kane@bowneglobal.com))

\* Object-initial languages  
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From Ron Kuzar ([kuzar@research.haifa.ac.il](mailto:kuzar@research.haifa.ac.il)) 24 Oct 2002:

In his recent textbook, *\_Syntax: A Generative Introduction\_* (2002), p. 18-19, Andrew Carnie says:

"Oversimplifying slightly, most languages put the order of elements in a sentence in one of the following word orders: SVO, SOV, VSO. A few languages use VOS. No (or almost no)[6] languages use OSV, OVS."

Note [6] reads:

"This is a matter of some debate. Derbyshire (1985) has claimed that the language Hixkaryana has object initial order."

Are there really no object initial languages? What is currently thought about Hixkaryana?

Obviously, the very definition of the term subject (and object) may depend on theoretical considerations (ergative languages?), and clearly, the notion of default order is slippery. So let me narrow down my question: the word order that I am interested in is the one used for narrating a story.

--Ron Kuzar  
University of Haifa, Israel  
([kuzar@research.haifa.ac.il](mailto:kuzar@research.haifa.ac.il))

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## 180.2 Endangered Language Fund Makes Awards for 2002

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The Endangered Language Fund has announced its awards for 2002. Of the twelve proposals that were funded, ten are focused on North or South American languages. These include:

\* Valerio Luciani Ascencio, "Preservation of the Kwaki Language."  
[L. is the youngest fluent speaker of Kwaki, an Aymaran language of Peru. His ELF grant will allow for the purchase of supplies and for the printing of materials for the Kwaki classes he teaches in the village of Cachuy.]

\* Thomas McIlwraith, Regina Louie, Angela Dennis & Sally Harvard, "Talking to the Animals: Tahltan-language Animal Stories and Forms of Address." [Tahltan is a critically endangered Athabaskan language spoken by fewer than 100 people in NW British Columbia. The texts collected in this project will be made available on a CD-ROM.]

\* Maximilian Viatori, "A Practical Zapara Phonology and Morphology."

[Zapara, a member of the small and highly distinct Zaparoan language family, is spoken in Pastaza Province, Ecuador, by only three elderly people. V.'s materials will be used both for scholarly and pedagogical purposes.]

\* Rosalind Williams, "Creation of a Secwepemc Wordlist 2002." [W. will expand and refine the lexical materials available for the Splitsin dialect of Secwepemc (Shuswap), an Interior Salishan language of British Columbia. There are 16 remaining fluent native speakers, and four nearly fluent learners, of whom W. is one.]

\* Chris Beier & Lev Michael, "Iquito Language Documentation Project." [B. & M. will work with members of the Iquito-speaking community of San Antonio in lowland Peru to implement a language revitalization program. Documentation of Iquito will proceed simultaneously with training of the speakers themselves as linguists.]

\* Gessiane Lobato Picanço, "Documentation of Kuruaya, a Moribund Language of Brazil." [Kuruaya, a Munduruku language of the Tupi stock, has only five elderly speakers. L. will document the language, and the audio and video recordings obtained will be made available to the Kuruaya people, local institutions, and other linguists.]

\* Nicolai Vakhtin, "Siberian Yupik Eskimo Conversation Book." [The lifting of the Iron Curtain has allowed Siberian and Alaskan Yupiks to visit one another freely for the first time in half a century. Yupik is the lingua franca of these encounters, and Siberian Yupiks, many of whom do not know the language well, are in need of practical "Berlitz"-like materials, which V. will prepare based on his 30 years of work on the language.]

\* Pamela Bunte, "Using San Juan Southern Paiute Narratives in a Language Revitalization Program." [Recent language loss has spurred the San Juan Paiute tribe to set up a revitalization program that will include short immersion camps. B. plans to record traditional narratives on videotape for use in these immersion camps, and to provide a lasting legacy for the community.]

\* Connie Dickinson, "Tsafiki Dictionary Project." [While Tsafiki (Colorado), spoken by about 2000 people in Ecuador, is not in imminent danger, the speech community is under tremendous pressure from Spanish. D. will contribute to a dictionary that is expected to play a significant role in the fight to maintain Tsafiki.]

\* Susan Doty, "Muskogee Creek Language Traditional Song Preservation." [D. will visit Creek Indian churches in Oklahoma to record traditional hymns sung in Creek. As Creek congregations dwindle and become isolated from one another, this formerly strong song tradition is weakening. D. plans to make her recordings widely available, in an effort to share and preserve the tradition.]

The two grants awarded for projects involving other languages were:

--Naomi Nagy, "Preserving Faetar in the School." [A Franco-Provençal dialect spoken in Italy.]

--Doug Marmion, "Wutung Language Maintenance and Literacy Development."  
[A Sko language of coastal Papua-New Guinea.]

For further information about the Endangered Language Fund, including  
deadlines for 2003 proposals, write to:

ELF, Dept. of Linguistics  
Yale University  
PO Box 208366  
New Haven, CT 06520-8366  
([elf@haskins.yale.edu](mailto:elf@haskins.yale.edu))

or visit the ELF website:

<http://www.ling.yale.edu/~elf>

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180.3 Cree Conversation CD Available  
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From Marie-Odile Junker ([mojunker@ccs.carleton.ca](mailto:mojunker@ccs.carleton.ca)) 22 Oct 2002:

If you are living, teaching, working or visiting in a Cree community in Quebec, and you would like to learn some basic Cree conversation skills, this CD is for you. It covers 21 different topics of everyday-life interactions in a Cree community. From greetings to social gatherings, from school to hunting and trapping, each phrase is first given in English, then in French, and then in four Cree voices representing different dialects and generations of speakers: East Cree Southern (Inland, Coastal), East Cree Northern (older, then younger person). There is a long enough pause between phrases to allow you to repeat what you have heard. You can turn off the English and French voices, in order to only hear Cree. A special headphone enhancement technique has been used to improve sound quality when listening with headphones. An accompanying manual is available for free as a PDF document.

The CD was produced as part of participatory research action project between a linguist at Carleton University, Cree students, and the Cree Programs department of the Cree School Board of Quebec. Profits from the sale go toward Cree language preservation and linguistic documentation training for Cree youth.

The CD will also be of interest to Cree speakers who want to improve their English or French or are just interested in the differences between the two dialects, or differences in ways of speaking between generations.

For more information about the production, contact :

Marie-Odile Junker  
French & Cognitive Science  
Carleton University  
Ottawa, CANADA K1S 5B6  
([mojunker@ccs.carleton.ca](mailto:mojunker@ccs.carleton.ca))

To order the CD or to download the manual visit:

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180.4 Websites of Interest

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\* Scientific American article  
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The full text of the well-researched article on language endangerment that appeared in the August 2002 issue of Scientific American ("Saving Dying Languages" by W. Wayt Gibbs) can be found on-line at the Linguistic Data Consortium site:

<http://www ldc upenn edu>

(The link is at the bottom of the left-hand column.)

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180.5 Positions Open

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\* Curriculum development specialist, Sealaska Heritage Institute  
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From Iutzi-mitchell Roy ([roy.iutzimitchell@sealaska.com](mailto:roy.iutzimitchell@sealaska.com)) 28 Oct 2002:

The Sealaska Heritage Institute, in Juneau, Alaska, is seeking a Curriculum Development Specialist to work with the Institute Sociolinguist.

Primary responsibility will be Tlingit language immersion curriculum development, including curriculum guides, lesson plans and teaching materials for elementary grades: Duties include: Develop Tlingit language immersion curriculum based upon culturally appropriate themes in coordination with curriculum team; research as necessary resources to support curriculum development; assist communication among all parties involved in the project; assist field testing and delivery of curriculum to children in an elementary setting working towards meeting of district and state standards; provide training to adult students on the use and implementation of the immersion curriculum; contribute to performance reports and assist evaluations for meeting project goals; maintain Tlingit curriculum documentation and materials; provide input on the planning for project objectives; and other duties as assigned by the Sociolinguist

Desired skills, knowledge & abilities include: Curriculum development knowledge and skill; ability to provide education to children in an elementary classroom setting; ability to train teachers/adult learners how to use and implement the curriculum; demonstrated effective verbal, writing, and interpersonal communication skills; proficiency in computer applications for word-processing; strong organizational and planning





Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology  
Personnel Administration  
Prof. Dr. Bernard Comrie  
- Postdoctoral fellow position -  
Inselstrasse 22  
D-01403 Leipzig, Germany

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180.6 E-mail Address Updates

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The following additions or changes have been made to the SSILA mailing list since the last Bulletin:

Anderton, Alice ..... [wordpath@yahoo.com](mailto:wordpath@yahoo.com)  
Fought, John G. .... [jgfought@adelphia.net](mailto:jgfought@adelphia.net)  
Kershner, Tiffany Lynne ..... [tkershne@carleton.edu](mailto:tkershne@carleton.edu)  
Kibrik, Andrej ..... [kibrik@comtv.ru](mailto:kibrik@comtv.ru)  
Mattei-Muller, Marie-Claude .... [matteim@cantv.net](mailto:matteim@cantv.net)  
Meyer, Kirsten ..... [meyerk77@hotmail.com](mailto:meyerk77@hotmail.com)  
Romero-Figueroa, Andrés ..... [amazon@cantv.net](mailto:amazon@cantv.net)

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THE SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF THE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES OF THE AMERICAS

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