

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

*** SSILA BULLETIN ***

An Information Service for SSILA Members

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202.0 The Boston Meeting: Last-Minute Details

* Program changes
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Two papers have been withdrawn from the session on Phonetics and Phonology (Th 2-6:20 pm):

Philip LeSourd, "Stress Assignment and Vowel Elision in Meskwaki"

Misuki Miyashita, "Asymmetry to Symmetry: Gap-Filling Vowel Shift in Tohono O'odham"

Chairs have been designated for the following sessions:

Phonetics & Phonology (Th 2-6:20 pm) -- David Rood

Inflection & Derivation (Fr 9 am-noon) -- Douglas Parks

Grammatical Categories & Semantic Classification (Fr 2-5 pm) --
Pamela Munro

Grammatical Relations (Sat 9-10:40 am) -- Roberto Zavala

Lg Documentation & Revitalization (Sat 9 am-noon) -- Akira Yamamoto

Lg Change: Borrowing, Re-Analysis & Creation (Sat 2-5 pm) -- Leanne Hinton

The full program can be viewed online at the SSILA website (www.ssila.org).

* Audio-visual equipment

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As was announced in the Call for Papers, all meeting rooms will be equipped with microphones, an overhead projector, and a screen. Any additional equipment required -- in particular LCD projectors for PowerPoint presentations -- must be provided by the participant.

In the past, SSILA has rented LCD projectors for use in selected meeting rooms. The escalating cost of renting such equipment (our A/V bill for the Atlanta meeting was over \$2000) has made it impossible for SSILA to continue offering this service to participants. Although it is normal policy for a meeting hotel to allow A/V equipment to be used only if it is rented from the hotel's authorized vendor, the LSA office has been assured by the Sheraton Boston that they will raise no objection if individual participants in LSA or SSILA sessions use their personal LCD projector and other PowerPoint equipment. Equipment will be used at the participant's risk, and it is possible that compatibility problems may arise in connecting to the speakers supplied by the hotel.

* Session chairs needed

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Two sessions still require chairs. If you are interested in chairing either of these sessions, contact Victor Golla (golla@ssila.org):

Discourse (Th 7-9 pm)

Genetic & Areal Research (Fr 2-3:40 pm)

202.1 SLA Awards: Call for Nominations/Submissions

From Niko Besnier (besnier@ucla.edu) 12 Dec 2003:

Below are announcements of the two prizes to be awarded by the Society for Linguistic Anthropology next year. Note that the deadline for nominations or submissions is only a month away

For further information contact Niko Besnier (besnier@ucla.edu) or Leanne Hinton (hinton@socrates.berkeley.edu).

The Sapir Book Prize

The Society for Linguistic Anthropology invites nominations for the Edward Sapir Book Prize, awarded in alternate years to a book that makes the most significant contribution to our understanding of language in society, or the ways in which language mediates historical or contemporary sociocultural processes. SLA invites nomination of books with conceptual and theoretical focus, as well as ethnographic and descriptive works. Single-authored or multi-authored books, but not edited collections, published within the last three years are eligible (publication dates of 2001-2003). A substantive letter of nomination, a copy of the book, and published reviews, if available, should be sent to Leanne Hinton, Dept. of Linguistics, 1203 Dwinelle Hall, Univ. of California Berkeley, Berkeley CA 94720-2650. Nominations by authors are welcome. Deadline: Jan 15, 2004.

Student Essay Contest

The Society for Linguistic Anthropology invites graduate and undergraduate students to submit a paper on linguistic anthropology. Graduate student winners will receive \$100, an invitation to submit their papers for review in the Journal of Linguistic Anthropology, and have their names and abstract published in AN. An undergraduate prize also will be awarded if the quality and number of entries merits it. Undergraduates will receive \$100 and will be recognized (along with the faculty member for whom the paper was written) in AN. Unpublished papers will be judged on originality; organization, quality, and clarity of writing; cogency of argument; contributions to theory with use of empirical materials; and timeliness. Papers should be limited to 45 double-spaced pages in total using the style sheet of the Journal of Linguistic Anthropology. Snail mail four copies of the manuscript to Leanne Hinton, SLA President, Department of Linguistics, 1203 Dwinelle Hall, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA 94720-2650. Be sure to include a cover letter with mailing and e-mail address, telephone, institutional affiliation and student status (graduate or undergraduate). The first page of each paper should specify paper title, but not author's name. Deadline: Jan 15, 2004.

202.2 Short Deadline for Smithsonian Fellowship and Visitor Programs

From Ives Goddard (Goddard.Ives@NMNH.SI.EDU) 16 Dec 2003:

The Smithsonian Federal appropriation for 2004 has provided funding for the Fellowship Program. The Office of Fellowships is now accepting applications for the 2004 Smithsonian Fellowship Program as well as nominations to the Short Term Visitor Program.

The postmark application deadline for the Smithsonian Fellowship Program will be January 15, 2004. Application guidelines and materials are available on the Office of Fellowships' website:

<http://www.si.edu/research+study>

For an application for the Short Term Visitor Program, which offers grants to support shorter visits at the Smithsonian by outside researchers

in a language as a proxy for functioning literacy, and estimated that two thirds of the world's languages do not have that level of written availability. His remarks are archived in an issue of the FEL newsletter "Ogmios" at: <http://www.ogmios.org/117.htm>

Russ Bernard:

There is an important distinction to be drawn between having an orthography and having a tradition of printed literature. Many languages of the world have writing, in the sense that at least one orthography has been proposed by a linguist, bilingual educator, missionary, or local language committee. Few languages of the world, however, have printed literary traditions, with continual production of affordable reading materials.

1742 of the 6129 languages for which the number of speakers is estimated in the Ethnologue (28% of all languages) are spoken by just 1000 or fewer speakers, totaling about 0.0001 (one hundredth of one percent) of the world's people. It's a good bet that the vast majority of those languages have no literary tradition, even if someone has produced an orthography or a dictionary or a grammar or translations of the Bible or other sacred texts.

For more on the power of print for small language communities, see: <http://nersp.nerdc.ufl.edu/~ufruss/commodit.html>

Julia Sallabank:

See my article on "Writing in an unwritten language: The case of Guernsey French", in Reading Working Papers in Linguistics 6: <http://www.rdg.ac.uk/slals/wp6/sallabank.pdf>

Eduardo Rivail Ribeiro:

A number of Brazilian indigenous languages have orthographies, introduced mostly by missionaries, but this doesn't necessarily mean that writing in the native languages became a tradition. Among the Karajá, for example (for whom there is an orthography developed by SIL members), writing is generally a "school thing," and rarely acquires any social or professional use beyond that. Once a student is out of the village school (where teaching in the native language goes up to 4th grade), there is virtually no use for reading or writing in Karajá, unless one is to become a teacher at the village school or a linguistic consultant (very limited job markets, as you could imagine). There is a translation of the New Testament, but very few people read it, even among those converted into Pentecostal denominations.

Mike Cahill:

The editor of the Ethnologue (Ray Gordon, who has now replaced Barbara Grimes) realizes its imperfections. Ray would welcome new information, accompanied by good documentation. If there is a conflict of claims, the editor must weigh the evidence, of course, and it is a given that such a database as the Ethnologue cannot satisfy everyone. A new edition of the Ethnologue will come out in 2004. Due to a small staff, we can't post up-to-date corrections to the web version, which reflects the 2000 edition.

