

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

*** SSILA BULLETIN ***

An Information Service for SSILA Members

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that may have been misrepresented in press accounts.

First, and most important, N & S's conclusions are based on a convergence of several different types of linguistic and gestural evidence that point to a complete, systematic understanding of time in which the FUTURE IS BEHIND EGO and THE PAST IS IN FRONT OF EGO. Many documented languages (as the previous correspondence has pointed out) have words or morphemes which, on their own, refer to the past by means of some spatial term that references the space in front of the speaker. But detailed fieldwork, including gesture and a full linguistic account of the metaphors for time, must be carried out on these languages to ensure that these isolated uses are part of a larger systematic understanding of the PAST as IN FRONT. It is common for a language to have isolated cases that appear to activate this metaphor, even though the rest of the linguistic and gestural data fall under the normal pattern of FUTURE IN FRONT OF EGO and PAST BEHIND.

Researchers must be careful not to assume that every word or morpheme that links 'back/behind' with 'future' activates the FUTURE IS BEHIND EGO metaphor. A common metaphor for time is TIME IS AN OBJECT MOVING TOWARDS THE EGO. In this metaphor, events that are just about to happen are located in front of events that are located more "distantly" in the future. From this perspective, future events are behind current events. When studying metaphors for time it is crucial not just to identify what spatial terms are used, but also to identify to what metaphorical landmarks these terms are oriented.

Finally, I do not think N & S intended to say that Aymara speakers are the only speakers in the world to systematically activate this understanding of time. They simply noted that, thus far, Aymara is the only language in which this conceptual system has undergone a detailed study. I'm sure they would encourage others to do similarly detailed field work involving gesture and language with the intention of adding other languages to the category of those who have a "reversed" conceptualization of time.

-Jenny Lederer
UC Berkeley
(jennylederer@hotmail.com)

* And still more...

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From Koontz John E (John.Koontz@Colorado.edu) 18 Sept 2006:

Harriet Klein (SSILA Bulletin #243) writes:

Institute for Cognitive Science
University of Colorado at Boulder
(Diane.Lesley-neuman@colorado.edu)

* SIL responds to criticism

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From M. Paul Lewis (Paul.Lewis@sil.org) 12 Sept 2006:

Hein van der Voort's letter regarding Ethnologue and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 639-3 draft standard (SSILA Bulletin #242, 25 July 2006) requires some clarification and correction. He misrepresents the process by which the ISO 639-3 draft standard was developed and the role of Ethnologue and SIL International in the management of the standard.

The previous standard for language identifiers (ISO 639-2) provided language identification codes for approximately 400 languages. In 2002, ISO invited SIL International to participate in the development of an expanded standard that would provide identifiers for all known languages. While there are other valuable inventories of languages, the Ethnologue inventory is widely known, includes more than only endangered languages or languages of a particular region, and so provided a good starting point. With the publication of the 15th edition of the Ethnologue, SIL adjusted the three-letter codes used in the Ethnologue to align with existing ISO 639-2 codes and the result became the 639-3 code set (which also incorporates codes for ancient and constructed languages supplied by Linguist List).

The ISO 639-3 standard is as much a standardized process for assigning language identifiers as it is a defined set of codes. The standard recognizes that research in language identification is ongoing, changes over time, and is subject to both linguistic and sociolinguistic criteria. Language identifiers should reflect the state of the art in scholarship as well as the best consensus of the linguistic community (both scholars and language users) as to what constitutes "a language."

The standard establishes clear criteria for the creation of new language identifiers, modification of existing identifiers, and removal of identifiers. SIL International has agreed to submit to those requirements and wishes to participate with the larger academic community in the ongoing development and refinement of the code set. While the initial code set proposed in the new standard is largely based on previous work published in the Ethnologue, with the acceptance of the ISO 639-3, Ethnologue becomes a user of the standard and not the definer of it.

SIL has created a separate office for the ISO 639-3 Registration Authority and is contributing its resources to the launch and ongoing maintenance of the standard. Joan Spanne, a skilled and experienced reference and research librarian is the ISO 639-3 registrar and is responsible to see that the criteria and procedures of the standard are carried out meticulously. A Joint Advisory Committee of ISO is responsible to oversee the process and to make sure that the Registration Authority handles its duties responsibly. Once the draft standard has been fully approved by ISO, detailed procedures for submitting change requests will be published via the ISO 639-3 web page (www.sil.org/iso639-3). Dr. van der Voort accurately points out that linguists "with documentable knowledge have been invited to submit their corrections on special forms that are to be evaluated for the Americas by an independent committee of SSILA members." It is hoped that similar evaluative and consultative bodies will arise for other parts of the world. Those evaluations will be part of the justification for proposed changes presented annually for public comment and review. Readers of this Bulletin are encouraged to take advantage of the process already set up within the SSILA or to contact the ISO 639-3 Registrar directly (iso639-3@sil.org).

Quite apart from changes proposed to the language code identifiers through the ISO process described above, Ethnologue continues to actively welcome feedback regarding other language data. We are happy to engage in dialogue with anyone who can improve the breadth, depth, and quality of what we publish. These submissions are subject to our established editorial policies (described in the Introduction to the Ethnologue) which aim to provide consistency and comparability across the languages of the world. For Ethnologue correspondence contact the Ethnologue Editor (Editor_Ethnologue@sil.org).

Finally, Dr. van der Voort's mischaracterization of SIL International merits comment. SIL International is an organization that engages in language development work (linguistics, literacy, translation) in partnership with local communities providing translations of the Bible in many of the places where we work. SIL International believes that a first step towards creating space for the less-commonly used languages is to provide a way for the world to know that they exist. The Ethnologue and our cooperation with the development of the ISO 639-3 standard reflect this conviction. In addition, we are committed to the training of speakers of the languages themselves in linguistics, literacy, and translation skills so that they can be the documenters of their own languages and the developers of their own literature. Far from replacing indigenous cultures, we hope in this way that the value, richness and communicative depth of local and indigenous languages will provide a basis for confidence and pride on the part of their speakers. Thus, contact with

Martinez was being driven from Santa Fe to her home at Ohkay Owingeh (San Juan Pueblo). She had just returned from Washington, DC, where she and 11 other folk and traditional artists had been named 2006 National Heritage Fellows by the National Endowment for the Arts. She received a standing ovation at the ceremony for her life's work preserving her native Tewa language and traditions.

"To lose a national treasure as beloved as Esther Martinez in such a senseless manner is truly tragic," NEA chairman Dana Gioia said. "New Mexico and the entire country have lost an eloquent link to our past. We can find solace in remembering her lifelong commitment to keeping her culture alive and vibrant."

Martinez was born and raised in northern New Mexico and was known in her Pueblo as P'oe Tswa, or Blue Water. She was a Tewa language instructor in Ohkay Owingeh pueblo schools for more than 20 years. During her tenure at San Juan Day School she published The San Juan Pueblo Tewa Dictionary, which was digitized into a CD-ROM for use in the classroom, along with language-curriculum guides. She also served as a Native language consultant at other pueblos, helped prepare a Tewa translation of the New Testament, and won countless awards.

In recent years Martinez had become well known to non-Tewa audiences in New Mexico and elsewhere for her English renditions of traditional Tewa stories.

244.3 Changes at K'in al Winik and Yax Te' Books in Cleveland

From Laura Martin (ixiloom@yahoo.com) 4 Sept 2006:

K'in al Winik

This fall the programs running under the name K'in al Winik at Cleveland State University since 1986 celebrate twenty years of public education about Mayan culture. Under the direction of Laura Martin, these programs have provided audiences with current knowledge about the art, literature, culture, history, language, and achievements of Mayas, past and present, and about the contemporary issues that affect modern Mayan communities. The active participation of native Mayas has enhanced the experience of scholars, K-12 teachers and students, and citizens. Since 2003, the programs have operated year-round as the K'in al Winik Cultural Center,

with Martin as Director

However, all things change, and, as any Maya would say, twenty years completes a k'atun cycle -- one of the most important units in the Mayan calendar and traditionally a time of change -- and so it is no surprise that things are changing for K'inil Winik. A new dean recently decided to alter the mission and staffing of the Center. As a result, Martin and her invaluable assistant Nadine Grimm have left the Center. Phil Wanyerka has been named Interim Director.

Yax Te' Books

One of the most important changes is that Yax Te' Books, formerly run by the Center, is moving from Cleveland to become a project of the Maya Educational Foundation, a non-profit organization based in Vermont (<http://www.mayaedufound.org>). MEF and Yax Te' share many of the same goals and activities, and this new relationship will permit a much more active publication program for Yax Te' than was possible within the university structure. Martin and Grimm will continue to direct Yax Te' Books and expect to produce several new publications within the next few months. Look for Yax Te's new web presence at <http://www.yaxtebooks.com> (available now but fully operational after September 15th). Yax Te's new book in English on Sumpango weaving traditions is available for purchase.

Future projects

Martin and Grimm intend to continue their engagement with Mayan cultural education, in the US and internationally. On-going projects with a departmental branch of the Guatemalan Ministry of Education, with the Proyecto Lingüístico Francisco Marroquín in Antigua Guatemala, and with Ohio State University will continue, as will school-based projects and teacher professional development programs in Ohio. They expect to be operating under the title The Ixiloom Project, based on the Mayan name given to Martin some years ago and meaning "the visionary woman." Make that plural! They can be reached at ixiloom@yahoo.com.

244.4 Web Resources

* Cheyenne materials online
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From Wayne Leman (wayneleman@netzero.com) 31 Aug 2006:

You should add a link for the Cheyenne Dictionary online:

<http://www11.asphost4free.com/cheyennedictionary/default.htm>

Also please note that my Cheyenne language website is now at:

http://www.geocities.com/cheyenne_language

Versions of the Cheyenne dictionary are also available for purchase in book form, multimedia CD, or PDF download at:

<http://www.lulu.com/cdkc>

* Karuk language list

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From Andre Cramblit (andrekar@ncidc.org) 12 Sept 2006:

You are invited to join the Karuk Language Restoration Issues (Karuk Language) listserv. Its purpose is to provide a place for those interested in the Karuk language to discuss items, events, learning strategies, ideas, etc. You can subscribe at:

<http://lists.topica.com/login.html?al=s&sub=1&loginMsg=12051&location=listinfo>

or you can send an e-mail to KarukLanguage-subscribe@topica.com

You can also visit the Karuk Language website at:

<http://www.ncidc.org/karuk/index.html>

244.5 E-Mail Address Updates

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

- Babel, Molly mbabel@berkeley.edu
- Berez, Andrea aberez@umail.ucsb.edu
- Caballero, Gabriela gcaballe@berkeley.edu
- de Souza, Sueli Maria sm.desouza@hotmail.com

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von Wichert, Paul battlehard@mts.net
Werle, Adam werle@u.washington.edu
Wood, Tess tess-wood@earthlink.net
Yamada, Racquel ryamada@uoregon.edu

When your e-mail address changes, please notify us (golla@ssila.org).

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The SSILA Bulletin is distributed electronically to all members of SSILA. Non-members may subscribe free of charge by sending their e-mail address to the editor (golla@ssila.org).

SSILA also publishes a quarterly hard-copy Newsletter that contains book reviews, notices of journal articles and recent dissertations, and other news and commentary. The Newsletter and other publications of the Society are distributed only to members or to institutional subscribers.

SSILA welcomes applications for membership from anyone interested in the scholarly study of the languages of the native peoples of North, Central, and South America. Dues for 2006 are \$16 (US) or \$20 (Canadian) and may be paid in advance for 2007 and 2008 at the 2006 rate. Checks or money orders should be made payable to "SSILA" and sent to: SSILA, P.O. Box 555, Arcata, CA 95518. For further information, visit the SSILA website (<http://www.ssila.org>).
