The Northeast India Project

by Scott DeLancey

The six states of northeast India—Meghalaya, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh—are home to an undetermined number of languages, probably in the range of 200–300. Almost all of these languages belong to the Tibeto-Burman family, although Tai, Munda, and Indic languages are also found. The northeast includes some of the remotest, least accessible territory in India, and until fairly recently it was neither legally possible nor safe to do fieldwork in much of this area, even if you could get there. Thus, most of the languages of northeast India have never been properly described and documented, and many are completely unknown to linguists.

Times are changing, however: the roads are better, the insurgencies are dying down, and linguists are finding their way to Assam and the northeast. In February 2006 the first conference of the Northeast Indian Linguistic Society (NEILS) was held at the Department of Linguistics at Gauhati University in Guwahati, the capital of Assam, attended by linguists from India, Australia, France, and the U.S., including Gwendolyn Hyslop, a graduate student from Oregon. The Gauhati linguistics department, under the leadership of Professor Jyotiprakash Tamuli, used the occasion of the first NEILS meeting to publicize their intention to make the languages of the northeast their primary focus (somewhat unusual in India, where the fashion is to concentrate on Chomskyan theory), and to ask the assembled international linguists for their support.

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As a Tibeto-Burmanist, and a descriptivist with a yen for the exotic, I have lusted in my heart after the languages of northeast India since I was a graduate student. So, when Gwen came back from NEILS full of stories about the new opportunities in the region, I got pretty excited. In fall 2006 I visited Gauhati to meet Professor Tamuli and talk about prospects for cooperation between Gauhati and Oregon. The upshot of our conversations is that Gauhati University would be delighted to provide a home base and other support for UO students doing fieldwork. As our contribution to Gauhati linguistics, we will encourage these students to do some teaching in the Gauhati program while in India—beginning with Gwen Hyslop, who expects to spend a few months in Guwahati teaching a linguistics course on her way to her fieldwork in Bhutan. UO students going into the field will also take along master’s students from Gauhati as research assistants.

The demand is great in northeast India for both language documentation and language development projects. Not only are few of these languages adequately documented from the linguist’s point of view, most of them are still purely oral languages, with no standardized writing system. While some of these languages are spoken in quite large communities—Boro and Karbi have more than half a million speakers each—many are spoken by only a few thousand people, and all are under serious pressure from Assamese (the majority and official language of Assam), Hindi, and even English (which is the official language of Nagaland). There is growing awareness among the “tribal” communities of northeast India that their languages are likely to disappear unless they take steps to avert that now.

While I was in Guwahati, I visited a workshop in literacy organized by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the Don Bosco Institute of Technology, and the Gauhati linguistics department, where teams representing about a dozen minority languages showed off the elementary school reading materials they had developed over the last year. Many of these communities are very eager for the help of linguists. Many would love to have grammars and dictionaries of their languages written. A couple months after I came back from Assam, I got an e-mail from a Karbi literary organization asking if we could help them with a grammar and dictionary project—and, if all goes as planned, in about a year one of our students, Linda Konnerth, will begin fieldwork with the Karbi to write their grammar for her Ph.D. dissertation.

Gwen Hyslop has already headed off to Arunachal Pradesh, into some of the most remote places in India reachable by road, with an international team of Tibeto-Burmanists, including Martine Mazaudon and Boyd Michailovsky from Paris and Rob Burling, the elder statesman of field linguistics in northeast India. She reports a friendly and enthusiastic welcome all along the way, and more Tibeto-Burman languages than you can count on your hands and feet.

At present we are exploring means to bring students from Gauhati to Oregon for training in field linguistics and language development. The interest among Gauhati students is very high, and we are looking forward to a long-term academic relationship between Gauhati and Oregon. We have only just begun the groundwork, but the future looks very exciting.
A Talking Head

Welcome to the first fall issue of the University of Oregon’s Department of Linguistics newsletter. Our last issue was only from spring 2007, but we find that we have just as much new information to share as before.

For those new to our mailing list, let me clarify that the American English Institute (AEI) is now fully integrated within the Department of Linguistics and has its own column within these pages—as does the Language Teaching Specialization master’s program and the Northeast Indian Language Institute. Broadly speaking, this newsletter aims to provide connections for a diverse community of people associated with linguistics at the University of Oregon. If you would like to send us the address of someone who you think would appreciate this newsletter, please send the address to lingnews@uoregon.edu. If for some inexplicable reason you would rather not receive this newsletter, please send us a note to remove you from our mailing list. Of course, we would really appreciate information for future “Where Are They Now?” columns and letters of any kind.

For those interested in an electronic version of the newsletter, a PDF file of all published issues will be available soon on our website: logos.uoregon.edu. Related to our feature article this issue, the UO’s IT Connections magazine has an article on the use of technology by the Kurtoep project in Bhutan: it.uoregon.edu/itnews/fall07/kurtoep.shtml. Members of our department go around the world and news of this comes back home! This academic year, we have students working in Assam (India), Bhutan, China, Ethiopia, Mexico, Peru, and Suriname.

As always, there is a shifting of faculty members around the department as well. Spike Gildea has returned from sabbatical and is enjoying his first regular term at the UO when he is not department head (it’s not a bad job really). Out on sabbatical this year is Susan Guion, currently visiting our affiliate Hanyang University in Seoul. Both Scott DeLancey and Cynthia Vakarelyksa are applying for sabbatical in 2008–9. Speaking of Cynthia, her eagerly awaited book on the Curzon Gospel will be published in the next few months, page 10 for a description of these two rather substantial volumes.

We also have a new interim director of the Language Teaching Specialization program: We are very excited to have Trish Pashby joining us, though sad to be losing the departing director, Sarah Klinshammer. Sarah did a splendid job with both setting up and administering the language teaching specialization program for the past several years. After this term, she enters retirement and we will miss her terribly. Thanks for all your efforts, Sarah!

With technological advances creating an explosion of interest in psycholinguistics, from the growing concern for international second-language learning, and because of the growing concerns about the future of minority languages, there is no better time to be a linguist. I would immodestly add that there may be no better place to be a linguist than at Oregon. We give only a sampling of the projects with which we are involved in this newsletter. Each year we seem able to expand our mission further, as students and others are drawn to this good work. We have had an explosion of students joining our department. By the last count, there are 102 undergraduate majors, twenty-two language teaching master’s students, and thirty-six theoretical-general linguistics graduate students. Physical space has become a serious problem as the studious clog the hallways, and offices that once were considered small for a single instructor now house two or three.

However, our primary struggle is financial. The entire university struggles with graduate student support, and our department is no exception. That our students accomplish so much with such limited resources speaks volumes for their talent, diligence, and ingenuity. Of course, the charitable contributions we receive from many of you help enormously as well. If you are in a position to contribute to the educational and research mission of our department, please pull out the envelope for contributions and help however you can.

Our department is firmly committed to the diversity campaign of the UO and of the College of Arts and Sciences (see vpdiversity.uoregon.edu). Linguistics sees a particular value in helping speakers of minority languages receive the training they need to document, preserve, and teach the heritage of their speech communities. Unfortunately, these minority language speakers typically have the most to overcome financially in managing an advanced education in linguistics. Accordingly, our current number one priority for fundraising is to establish a fellowship fund for such identified students.

Yours, in language and thought,

Eric Pederson
Susan Guion
The fall 2007 term finds Susan Guion in Seoul, Korea, as a visiting professor at Hanyang University, where she is teaching a course on phonology and administering the Hanyang-Oregon Joint TESOL program with Hanyang counterpart Professor Ik-Sang Eom. She is also collecting data for a project on the acquisition of Korean stops by native English speakers. Korean has three P-like sounds, whereas English only has P and B. With collaborative help from Ph.D. student Kyoung-ho Kang, this project investigates English learners’ ability to retune their perceptual system and more heavily weight certain acoustic cues used to signal phonological distinctions in the second language. Other projects under way include the revision of a paper on the origin of tone and its impact on the prosodic system (i.e., stress and intonation) of Nahuatl, a Uto-Aztecan language. The fieldwork for this paper was conducted in the Mexican state of Guerrero in collaboration with Jonathan Amith of Gettysburg College. Doctoral students Chris Doty and Irina Shport are also contributing to this project.

Susan Guion will be back in Oregon, but on sabbatical, and focusing on research for winter and spring terms. She plans to work on three projects that have long awaited completion. The first involves tonogenetic sound changes conditioned by trilled R. Working with Ratre Wayland of the University of Florida and Chris Doty, data have been collected from several languages to determine the effects of trilled R on the pitch of the following vowel and its possible role in conditioning high or falling tones. The second project involves the development of vowel systems in Japanese-English bilingual children and is a collaborative effort with Jim Flege of the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Katsura Aoyama of Texas Tech University (located in Susan Guion’s birthplace—Lubbock, Texas!). The project investigates the differentiation (or lack thereof) of the English and Japanese vowel systems in children over a year’s time. The final project is a continuing collaboration with Eric Pederson to investigate the role of attentional orienting while learning new phonological contrasts. Eric Pederson and Susan Guion will write up the next paper in this project and begin collecting data for the next experiments.

Derek Olsen
Derek, originally from Federal Way, Washington, is delighted to finally be a part of a linguistics community! Ever since he discovered his passion for language learning at the age of fourteen, Derek has been an enthusiast for language and all its anomalies and intricacies. He began by studying Spanish, Welsh, German, Norwegian, and Sanskrit, but eventually decided that no single language could satisfy his piercing desire to understand how language works—its structure, its cognitive basis, its genealogies, its power. That is what compelled Derek to become a linguistics major.

Derek is currently in his second year with the department. Last year, he worked with Doris Payne in researching agentive and instrumental nominalizations in Maa. Their findings were presented at the thirty-eighth Annual Conference on African Linguistics in Gainesville, Florida, as well as a cognitive linguistics workshop here at the UO. In addition to linguistics, Derek will major in Spanish and minor in theater arts. He also works on campus as a barista.

Credits:
Edited by Kyoung-Ho Kang, Ph.D. student • Design by Creative Publishing
Comments can be directed to lingnews@uoregon.edu.
Nathan Soelberg
Nathan Soelberg is originally from Seattle, and after being away for seven years he is excited to be back in the Northwest. He had been considering becoming a teacher ever since high school, but at the time didn’t know what he wanted to teach.

During a two-year stay in Korea, he fell in love with the people and the language. Upon returning to the States, a nonnative Chinese professor inspired him to try to become a Korean teacher. He graduated with a B.A. in Korean studies in 2005, but was still unsure about his goals and plans for the future.

He decided to think things over while teaching English in Korea for a year. It was during this time that he discovered the Hanyang-Oregon TESOL program, which helped him immensely with his teaching skills and his understanding of learners and the second-language acquisition processes. After a few months off, he returned to Korea to work, apply what he had learned, and wait for the UO portion of the language teaching specialization program to begin.

His life has not been the same since he learned a second language and experienced life in another culture. He hopes to be able to share that experience with other people, whether it’s through teaching international students, helping them to reach their goals in English while they study here in America, or exposing more American people to Korean.

Rosa Vallejos Yopán
Rosa’s main interests are descriptive linguistics, language documentation, and bilingual education. Since 1997, she has been participating in various projects involving indigenous people from the Amazonia. She has been working on Kokama-Kokamilla, a deeply endangered language spoken in the Peruvian Amazon. At present, only about 4 percent of the Kokama-Kokamilla population speaks the language in very restricted situations, and natural processes of language transmission have been interrupted. Thus, her linguistic research is part of a longer-term plan to document Kokama-Kokamilla, and she intends to write a grammar of the language for her dissertation.

At present, with the financial support of the Hans Rausing Endangered Languages Project and the National Science Foundation, she is carrying out a documentation project of Kokama-Kokamilla. For this project, she has teamed up with two main collaborators, Victor Yuyarima Chota, a Kokamilla speaker, and Rosa Amías Murayari, a Kokama speaker. Rosa Amías is a great storyteller and interviewer, and always sharp in her observations; she has been helping with the analysis and documentation of the language since 2001. From September 2006 to March 2007, the three have conducted one of the fieldwork components of the project. They visited nine communities along the Huallaga, Samiria, and Nanay rivers, and have collected video and audio data from twenty-three speakers. Although they were aware of the situation, it was shocking to confirm how endangered the language is, since the average age of the interviewed speakers was 69.7 years old.
This year marked the tenth summer institute of the Northwest Indian Language Institute (NILI). Eighteen Native language teachers and apprentices from tribal communities in Oregon, Washington, and California attended. In addition, we were honored by the participation of elders from the Burns Paiute Reservation, the Chinook Tribe, and the Yakama Nation.

Participants spent all day in the classroom, beginning with a choice of three language classes: Sahaptin, taught by Yakama elder Virginia Beavert and Joana Jansen of NILI; Tolowa, taught by Loren Bommelyn, M.A. ’97, of Smith River Rancheria; and Chinuk Wawa, taught by Tony Johnson, Chinook tribal member and cultural education coordinator of the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Scott DeLancey of the linguistics department worked individually with each student during the day.

Students also enrolled in one of two linguistics classes, depending on their language of study. The courses covered phonetics, phonology, morphology, and syntax of Northwest languages. Students contributed examples and completed in-class exercises and daily homework in their language.

are best suited to natural language development, and plan and present a language activity. Four guest instructors from different Northwest communities contributed as presenters: Tony Johnson (Chinook), Patsy Whitefoot (Yakama), Loren Bommelyn (Tolowa), and Modesta Minthorn ’93, M.A. ’05 (Umatilla). For final projects, students created and demonstrated a language-learning activity.

The course Methods, Materials, and Technology for Language Teaching was taught by Judith Fernandes and Racquel Yamada, with assistance from Jesse Blackburn Morrow. Since students of the institute teach and learn language in a number of environments ranging from traditional classrooms to one-on-one sessions with elders, the course was designed to introduce students to learning materials that work in a variety of situations. Some were trained in the use of video and audio documentary materials. The classes met in the technology rooms in Knight Library, and students had daily access to laptops preloaded with the software used in the class. Each day included a demonstration and explanation of a game, activity, or technique. In addition, students learned computer applications, and created teaching and learning materials for their own languages.

The Department of Linguistics cohosted two dinners at the Many Nations Longhouse. One of the dinners involved both summer institute participants and linguistics students attending the new summer session program in language documentation. The event allowed students and their families, guest speakers, and instructors from both programs to come together for an evening of food, conversation, and learning.

The 2008 summer institute (its theme is “From the Classroom to the Family”) is scheduled for June 16–26. Instructors, guest presenters, and participants will focus on ways that community members and teachers can promote and facilitate language use outside the classroom.
The UO’s American English Institute began its fall term welcoming five new full-time faculty members after a national search that brought in applications from all over the world. They bring their expertise and new ideas to all of our programs: intensive English, academic English for international students, international graduate teaching fellows, teacher training, and the language teaching specialization. They are: Robert Elliott, M.A. (TESOL), San Francisco State University Alicia Going, M.A. (TESOL), School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vermont Elizabeth Root, Ph.D. (communication), University of New Mexico Bonnie Tibbits, M.A. (linguistics), University of Oregon Keli Yerian, Ph.D. (linguistics), Georgetown University

The institute underwent a review last year by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA), and has been accredited through 2016. The CEA is a specialized accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Its goal is to ensure high quality in intensive English language programs such as AEI, and the agency’s approval is something that sponsors and students consider when selecting a program. English programs from abroad are now interested in this accreditation, and the commission just completed its first accreditation of an overseas language program in Abu Dhabi. Deanna Hochstein has been the chair of the international committee, and next year will chair the CEA.

Teacher training is a focus of much AEI effort as the institute works ever more closely with the Department of Linguistics. A successful online teacher training program, Critical Thinking Skills E-Teacher Course (sponsored by the U.S. Department of State), continues to be offered. Two courses are being held this fall and two more are planned for the spring. Teachers and administrators from places as wide-ranging as Bangladesh, Cuba, Kyrgyzstan, Niger, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand are participating in the program. Another online program, Shaping the Way We Teach English, continues to be offered around the world. This teacher-training program, designed by Leslie Opp-Beckman and Sarah Klinghammer, was also state department-sponsored. It is being offered both online and in person. Leslie Opp-Beckman and Kay Westerfield traveled to Saudi Arabia this fall to offer teacher training workshops to educators there.

A video-conferencing project with Thailand is also under way. Designed by Opp-Beckman, the project is sponsored by the institute and UO Media Services with the Royal Thai Distance Learning Foundation, the Thai Ministry of Education, and other colleagues in Thailand. Sessions are taped in Thailand and Oregon and rebroadcast throughout several countries in Asia. The AEI faculty has participated in hosting different sessions, such as Project-Based Learning, Creating a Resource-Rich Classroom, and Critical Thinking Skills.

The Korea National University of Education (KNUE) sent forty-four public-school teachers to the AEI during the summer for a month-long teacher-training program that involved workshops, site visits to public schools, and cultural visits.

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around Oregon. KNUE offers six-month English and teacher-training programs to public-school teachers from around Korea: five months at KNUE and one month at a major university in the U.S., with Oregon having been selected last year. Bonny Tibbits from the AEI organized and taught in the program along with Trish Pashby and Iris Moye. Several AEI faculty members offered teacher-training workshops.

In addition, the institute offers several specialized programs for universities or sponsors who want tailor-made programs. Last year, the Institute of International Education sent to the AEI a Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship recipient for five months and a Humphrey pre-academic language training program participant for eight weeks. Humphrey fellows, supported by the State Department, are mid-career professionals working on social change in their countries. After academic, cultural, and language support at the AEI, they go to major universities around the U.S. for nine months of study and internships. Participants came from countries such as Afghanistan, Burma, Comoros, Namibia, Togo, and Vietnam. Other specialized programs included those for Pyeongtaek University in Korea, Waseda and Daido universities in Japan, University of Rosario in Argentina, and Chinese high-school students from Beijing.

The AEI intensive program continues to attract students from all over the world. Courses are offered from beginning through advanced levels for students who want to learn academic English. With its experienced teachers, the AEI provides excellent observation opportunities for language teaching specialization students and others to see how teaching methods, curriculum, classroom management, and technology are combined to provide high-quality language-learning courses for students. Its cultural activities, host family program, and conversation partners are also important in making students feel comfortable and adapt more quickly to U.S. culture and the university environment.

LTS News

The Language Teaching Specialization (LTS) program is well into its fourth year, with a new cohort of master’s students from all over the world—Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, and the U.S. In addition to taking courses in linguistics, language teaching pedagogy, education, and computer-assisted language learning, a number toward language learning.

On campus, several students landed teaching positions: Natsumi Ueno is teaching Japanese 101, Beth Sheppard is teaching German 101, and Nate Sohlberg and Kelley McMinn are teaching an ESL course at the American English Institute. Kelly Butler is working as a tutor at the institute; at the World Languages Academy, Ornuma Chingchit is teaching Thai and Zahra Foroughifar is teaching Farsi; and Bene Santos is teaching Portuguese at the UO and LCC.

Although the LTS program is intensive (it is designed to allow students to finish the sixty units in fifteen months) and teaching can add stress to a busy study schedule, most students appreciate the opportunity. According to Nate Sohlberg, “Teaching now gives me a good idea of what I will or will not want to do later on.” At Willagillespie, the Korean teachers agree that time management is tough, as they must spend so much of it writing lessons and developing teaching materials. All, however, find the experience valuable. Jung Soo Lee explains that teaching gives her “confidence” to better understand what is covered in her LTS courses. Jiwon Chun’s rewards come from the children in her class: “I learn from the students—I get energy from them.”
Another UO Linguistics Experience

by Tam Nguyen

I became interested in general linguistics after I contacted Professor Delancey in 2003. From an e-mail conversation with Professor Delancey about the family of one minority language spoken where I live in Vietnam, I wanted to know more about theories of linguistics because I thought they could help explain different aspects of some minority languages in my hometown.

In 2004, I got a Vietnamese government scholarship to study for a master’s degree in linguistics at the University of Oregon. I hadn’t known how hard theoretical linguistics would be until I took my M.A. classes. For a native of a simple typological language such as Vietnamese, different morphological language types challenged me for a while. It was even more of a challenge being a non-English speaker studying in the U.S.A. However, after overcoming these challenges, I became more interested in theoretical linguistics. It is interesting to find out how languages show people’s thinking in different ways. The more I understood theories of linguistics, the more I wanted to study. So, I decided to continue with a Ph.D.

Although linguistics is fun, it is difficult and sometimes makes me crazy. In addition to the encouragement from Professor Delancey and the department, I needed important support from a very special person who understands me and has always encouraged me to learn what I wanted to. Last February, between studies for the two degrees, we were married in Vietnam. Now I get support from my husband, who doesn’t know anything about linguistics, but knows that his wife really wants to study more.

In the Mekong Delta area, people live on rivers. They travel by boat. That is the really interesting thing for many people, including me. My husband lives there, so in order for my family to come visit his family for the wedding, we need to cross the river. Metaphorically speaking, Vietnamese people hope that I am on the “happy boat” to go to the new “bank” of my life.

I am preparing for my dissertation, which will be a grammar sketch of Ede, an Austronesian language spoken in Vietnam. Besides studying, I like to attend international events on campus, where I have met a lot of friends from different countries. I also like teaching Vietnamese and telling people about Vietnamese culture. At present, I am a Vietnamese presenter for the International Cultural Service Program at the UO.

Inez Heglund, student worker

Inez is starting her third year as a student office worker in the Department of Linguistics. During her college career she has received a scholarship from her tribe, the Klamath Tribes. The scholarship is given each term to university students who have applied and met the 2.50 GPA requirement. As Inez said, “This is the first of many steps the tribes will take in supporting students pursuing higher education.”
Books

The Curzon Gospel: An Annotated Edition by Cynthia Vakareliyska is a transcription edition of a previously unstudied medieval Bulgarian gospel manuscript, datable to c. 1354, that contains highly unusual and significant orthographic, linguistic, and textual features. The edition includes a critical apparatus and an index verborum containing all orthographic and morphological forms that appear in the manuscript.

The Curzon Gospel: A Linguistic and Textological Introduction by Cynthia Vakareliyska is a comprehensive analysis of the manuscript, focusing on the relationship between the manuscript's orthographic system and the phonological features of the underlying Middle Bulgarian vernacular; evidence of Serbian influence in the manuscript's orthographic and lexical features; reconstruction of the features of the hypothetical common-ancestor manuscripts shared by the Curzon Gospel and its two closest relatives; and the manuscript's calendar of saints, which reflects a rare and archaic eleventh-century Constantinople tradition transmitted to Bulgaria through an Italo-Greek source. The analyses and critical apparatus are based on a comparison with a corpus of twelve gospel manuscripts and more than 700 Slavic, Greek, and Latin calendars of saints.

Both volumes are in press at Oxford University Press and are scheduled for release in early 2006.

"Where Are They Now?"

Tim Thrones, M.A. '96, Ph.D. '03

Tim received his Ph.D. at Oregon in 2003 and remained as an adjunct professor and research associate until this year, supported mainly through a grant from the National Science Foundation to continue with the documentation of the Northern Paiute language. Currently, he is an assistant professor in the Department of Writing at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. He teaches undergraduate-level linguistics courses and is assisting in the development of a new major in linguistics, the first one in the state. This spring he is looking forward to teaching a special topics course in syntax, doing his part to bring West Coast functionalism to the far corners of the world.

Tim Thrones and daughter, Lillian
Summer Session in Language Documentation, 2007

This summer, the Department of Linguistics and the Northwest Indian Language Institute (NILI) conducted an innovative new program, Summer Session in Language Documentation. Eighteen undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Oregon, Purdue University, and the University of Maine enrolled in the four interrelated courses. Each team-taught, four-week intensive course introduced different aspects of endangered language, documentation, preservation, and revitalization through practical, experiential learning.

The Language Documentation Methods course, taught by Tim Thorne with assistance from Joana Jansen, introduced students to current language documentation practices, including audio and video equipment selection and use, data management, archiving, and best practices. The Language Documentation Laboratory, also taught by Thorne and Jansen, allowed students to put into practice techniques learned in the first course. Students recorded and processed language data using audio and video equipment. Reina Gaspar, a native Mixteco speaker, served as a language consultant for this course, affording students the opportunity to work with a language none of them had been exposed to before. The Curriculum Design and Development course was taught by Janne Underriner with assistance from Jeff Magoto, Judith Fernandes, and Racquel Yamada. In it, students learned about the basic elements of curriculum design and lesson planning with an eye toward producing documentary materials that can meet the needs of speech community members interested in language preservation and revitalization. The Topics in Documentary Linguistics course introduced students to a different topic each week. Ethical Issues in Field Work, taught by Scott DeLancey with assistance from Racquel Yamada, examined fieldworker responsibilities to speech and academic communities with particular emphasis on collaborative, reciprocal, community-based research methodologies.

In addition to course work, students had opportunities to socialize with each other and with participants in the NILI summer institute. A catered dinner at the Many Nations Longhouse brought participants, guest speakers, and instructors from both programs together for an evening of food and conversation. In addition, most students stayed together in campus housing, fostering a spirit of camaraderie that was evident in their classroom interactions. Despite the high-demand nature of the intensive program, students were positive, engaged, and enthusiastic throughout the four-week session.

Siberian Yupik Project

Members of the Siberian Yupik Project are working with a local family in Eugene to help them relearn their heritage language, Siberian Yupik, and has further plans to launch a long-term documentation project. Thanks to a Bakony grant, the family went to Alaska over the summer with collaborating linguist Kayo Nagai. They made recordings with native Siberian Yupik speakers to accompany pedagogical materials already in existence. Plans are in the works to apply for an Endangered Language Documentation Program grant in order to document the language and many aspects of the culture before it disappears. Kayo Nagai, the principal investigator, is looking for research assistants in Eugene to help with the documentation and its application to revitalization and pedagogy outside the community, working with the local family as a case study. If you are interested in joining the project as a research assistant, please contact Kayo Nagai at knagai@tc4.so-net.ne.jp or Gwen Hyslop at glow@uoregon.edu.
Recent Graduates

Carey Benom, M.A., '03, Ph.D. '07

"An Empirical Study of English 'Through': Lexical Semantics, Polysemy, and the Correctness Fallacy"

In my dissertation, I investigate the meaning of the word *through*, and how linguists can approach this type of study in an empirically responsible manner. As part of the methodological consideration, I describe what I call the 'correctness fallacy,' a carryover from folk philosophy that has been prevalent but unwarranted in scientific studies of meaning. The correctness fallacy assumes that there is a unique correct answer to every question. In my analysis of *through*, I show how steps can be taken to avoid falling victim to the correctness fallacy. A figure representing some of my findings is explained below:

- Through, across, and over, being semantically complex prepositions, are represented by longer horizontal shapes, iconically invoking a path (which is present in prototypical instances of all three words).
- Through and across are based on in and on, respectively. Over, however, is related to above as well as on, suggesting a more distant relationship with through.

Kyla Nagel Memorial Room Dedication

After discussing various ways in which we might remember Kyla, who was our beloved graduate coordinator from March 2004 until August 2006 when she passed away, it was decided that we would name our conference room in Kyla's honor. A small ceremony was held last spring with Kyla's family—her husband, daughters Emma and Lucy, mother, father, sister, and brother—and members of the department to dedicate the room to her memory. Eric Pederson spoke about how he would make excuses to come to the office just to talk to her, Scott DeLancey expressed his joy in knowing that graduate administration was in very capable hands, Jesse Blackburn-Morrow reminded us of the joy and commitment she expressed toward everyone, and Linda Campbell told of the extra mile she went to help out the faculty and students.

In an effort to make the room appear-pearance honor the vibrant and joyful person that we all knew Kyla to be, members of GLOSS, the Department of Linguistics student organization, have been working on various fundraising efforts, including pizza sales, T-shirt sales, and soliciting donations. These funds will be used to make improvements to the Kyla Nagel Memorial Room, including a new coat of paint and the installation of electronic equipment and a storage cabinet. We are also planning on replacing the haphazard arrangement of bulletin and chalk boards with framed artwork. If you would like to donate funds to be used to purchase a piece of framed artwork for the new conference room, please contact Chris Doty, cldoty@uoregon.edu.
New Faces

Martin Endley, visiting professor
Martin J. Endley joins the Department of Linguistics this fall as a visiting assistant professor teaching second-language acquisition. He is originally from Britain, where he received an M.Phil. and a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge. For the last four years, he has been based at Hanyang University in Seoul, Korea, where he works as a professor and academic coordinator on the Hanyang-Oregon joint TESOL program, offering courses in second-language acquisition, linguistic principles of English grammar, and teaching methodology. Prior to going to Korea, Martin spent four years working in Turkey, including two years on the prestigious Bilkent University Teaching English as a Foreign Language program in Ankara. Coming from a foreign language teaching background, he has a strong interest in issues relating to language pedagogy. He is particularly concerned with the role of instruction in the development of high-level listening skills in an English-as-a-foreign-language context.

Hema Sirsa, Ph.D. student
Hema Sirsa received her M.Phil. from the University of Dehli. She worked as a visiting faculty member in four colleges during 2005-7, teaching linguistics, mass communication, and undergraduate courses. She received a B.Sc. and a postgraduate diploma in journalism, but shifted to linguistics in 2003. Linguistics is where her heart lies, which may be due to her language background. She speaks six languages—Hindi, Telugu, Tibetan, Kannada, Oriya and English—and can understand many other Indian languages.

Her linguistic interests include typology, phonology, field methods, and syntax. She always wanted to utilize her knowledge of different languages to give something back to the society. She chose the UO linguistics program because of its commitment toward the functional approach and its excellent reputation in the field of typology.

Xuanwei Peng, visiting scholar
Xuanwei “Alex” Peng is a professor at the English and linguistics departments at Beijing Normal University, and a standing council member (vice secretary general) of the Chinese Association of Functional Linguistics. He headed a project titled “A Comprehensive Comparison between English and Chinese Texts,” sponsored by the National Social Science Fund (ninth five-year plan) in 1996–98. He is now responsible for (1) a project funded by the humanities and social sciences division of the Chinese Ministry of Education (2005); (2) studies in a new systemic-functional linguistics model from a social-cognition perspective, called “process grammar,” supported by the Chinese Ministry of Education’s “Programme for New Century Excellent Talents in University” (2005); and (3) a project for the National Fund for Philosophy and Social Sciences (2007). His present research interests are in both theory and practice, particularly in the combination of cognitive and functional linguistics, contrastive linguistics, narratology, bilingual lexicography, discourse analysis, cognitive metaphor theory, construction grammar, and stylistics.

2007–8 Visiting Scholars

Hyeonkee Ahn, Associate Professor, Department of English Language Education, Seoul National University, Seoul Korea

Zoraide dos Anjos Goncalves da Silva, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Xuanwei Peng, Department of English, School of Foreign Languages and Literatures, Beijing Normal University, China (see article above)
Selected departmental publications and conference presentations in 2007:


Christopher Doty, Stress and boundary effects on anticipatory and preservatory nasal airflow. Paper presented at the Sixteenth International Congress of Phonetic Sciences (with Melissa A. Redford).


M.A. Redford and R. Miikkulainen, Rate effects on structure in a source-filter model of phonologic development. Language 83.


R.S. Tomlin, Attention and grammar: The cognitive re-analysis of theme and topic and their reflections in grammar. Peking University, Shanghai, PRC, April 19, 2007 and Fudan University, Shanghai, PRC, April 16.

R.S. Tomlin, Myths of cognition: Theoretical and empirical issues in incorporating cognitive claims into linguistic theory. Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, PRC, August 19, and Southwest University, Chongqing, PRC, August 17.


Racquel M. Yamada, “From Chamber Orchestra to Symphony: Collaborative Linguistic Fieldwork,” presented at the Conference on Endangered Languages and Cultures of Native America, Center for American Indian Languages, University of Utah, April 13–15.

Grants

The Department of Linguistics and the American English Institute have been awarded a number of grants. Take a look.

Linguistics


American English Institute


Your Contributions at Work

Our donors continue their generosity. As a result, we have been able to pay for the following graduate students to attend conferences and go on research trips.


Kun Yue, Research trip to Sichuan (Chongqing), China, collecting data for dissertation, August 2007.


Yolanda Valdez, Conference on Indigenous Languages of Latin America, Austin, Texas, October 2007.
Please consider making a gift to the Department of Linguistics

Contributions of any size make a real difference. Here are examples of how your support can help:

A $25 donation finances school materials.
$100 could help with a visiting lecture or field research equipment.
$500 contributes to graduate student research trips and professional conferences.

Your contribution enhances educational opportunities for our students or research and instructional resources for our faculty. Please consider giving to our established endowment, the Departmental Gift Fund.

Checks can be made out to the UO Foundation, Department of Linguistics, and mailed to the UO Foundation, P.O. Box 3346, Eugene OR 97403, or donations can be made by credit card. If you have questions or would like more information about any of our programs, please feel free to contact Jane Gary, executive director for college advancement at (541) 346-3951, jgary@uoregon.edu.