

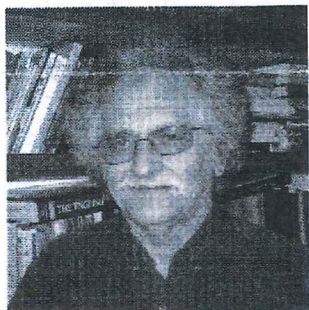


Newsletter

Fall 2004
Issue 3

logo by Russell Hugo

Greetings alumni, students, faculty and others,



Since our program has grown so significantly and we still have the very good fortune of having Sonja Thoma as the assistant at least for this fall quarter, we thought that we would try to get another newsletter out before the holidays. You'll find a few changes highlighted in this edition: we've adopted a new logo created by Russell Hugo, have made more liberal use of photos, and again have highlighted some faculty members.

The big news has been the growth and record size of the program. We started with nearly a hundred majors this fall quarter and expect to peak at 120-125 this year, no doubt making ours one of the largest undergraduate linguistics programs in the nation. Dwan Shipley started out the fall with 521 students enrolled in our two 200-level courses alone. Some statistics that might be of interest to you:

- Approximately 30% of the current 100+ majors are double majors.
- 42% of the majors are choosing to fulfill their language requirement by taking Japanese or Chinese.
- 44% of the majors have chosen to use foreign languages as their concentration.
- More students are using multiple languages for their area concentration than are using a single foreign language concentration.
- TESOL, English and Communication Sciences and Disorders are in a virtual tie for second most popular area of concentration.

WWU is tuned in to linguistics: counting introductory courses offered in English, Anthropology, TESOL as well as the Linguistics Program, approximately 1680 students (14%) of our students are introduced to linguistics each year.

The Linguistics Club is going strongly and is even planning a student conference for the spring. Our web page has also been spruced up by our webmaster Brian Hutchinson and our assistant Sonja. We are also still in the process of planning a linguistics journal. You'll also note dates of some upcoming events. We've already had one guest speaker in our speaker colloquium series on Oct. 28. Dr. Natsuko Tsujimura of Indiana University spoke on mimetic words in Japanese in a very successful presentation. More are to follow along with a considerable number of student presentations in the various student colloquia. We will also try to feature alumni success stories as we receive news of them.

We appreciate any responses you wish to make or any information which we might be able to share in a newsletter. On that note, any contributions you have made and wish to make to the program has been and will continue to be greatly appreciated. These may be sent to WWU Alumni Association and earmarked for the Linguistics Program. The annual fundraising Phonathon for Western will be in a month or two.

Dr. Rudolf Weiss

kont^hent^h

New Logo

Club Activities

Faculty Highlights

Call for Alumni News

Fall Student Colloquium



Our new logo submitted by
Russell Hugo

*First Linguistics
Undergraduate
Conference at
Western to happen in
May*



*The
Linguistics Speaker Series
featured
Dr. Natsuko Tsujimura
from Indiana University. She
spoke on Japanese mimetics,
a word class that differs
greatly from other lexical (or
functional) classes.
The Speaker Series provides
linguistics students with
insights into current issues in
linguistics research and
creates an important
opportunity to broaden
knowledge.*

Logo Contest Winner

In the last newsletter we solicited submissions for new logo ideas. We are happy to announce that a winner was identified from the six submissions, and **Russell Hugo** can call a brand new Encyclopedia of the English Language by David Crystal his own.

Congratulations!

Linguistics Club

The Linguistics Club is very active this year, and has already organized many activities and meetings, such as discussion groups on scholarly articles relevant to linguistics. As one of the most exciting projects this year, Jason Rudd and Chelsea Loeffers of the Linguistics Club are organizing the very first Undergraduate Conference of Linguistics at Western. The event will take place on Western's campus in early to mid-May on a Saturday, and all undergraduate linguistics students from Pacific Northwest colleges are invited to present a linguistics topic of their choice for about 10-15 minutes.

The Conference will give students (you!) an opportunity to present research to peers, to socialize, and find out what's happening out there in the world of linguistics. It should be a lot of fun to get together with others who are equally into linguistics as you are, and it also is a good opportunity to present a real life linguistics talk. Be sure to keep looking for further announcements and the call for papers, which will follow early in the winter quarter.

For more information on the Linguistics Club and its activities check the Linguistics message board, or write to linguisticsclubwwu@hotmail.com

Fall Student Colloquium

As every quarter, linguistics students presented some of their research projects to their peers and faculty as part of the major requirement. The colloquium this fall was on December 2.

Students and faculty took the opportunity to get together and share knowledge, food and drink. Students also get a chance in these colloquia to find out what fellow students are researching and are able to practice giving a real life linguistics talk.

The coordinator and contact person for the quarterly Linguistics Program Colloquium is Dr. Kristin Denham, Humanities 341 650-3217, kristin.denham@wwu.edu

Presenters and their topics were:

Brayde Ridenhour
*Attitudes Toward American Sign
Language: Bilingualism and Deaf
Education*

Amanda Rodgers
V2 and German Verb Raising

Quinn Mc Carthy
*Language Attitudes towards
President Bush*



Anne Lobeck continues to teach introductory linguistics, the history of English, language and gender, and English sentence structure in the English department, and the introduction to syntactic theory for the Linguistics Program. During 2003-2004 she presented an invited paper on a panel on linguistics and education at the National Council of Teachers of English annual conference (other presenters included Ray Jackendoff, the President of the Linguistic Society of America), and invited papers on linguistics and education at the Western Conference on Linguistics (forthcoming in a volume from Mouton de Gruyter), and at the University of Washington Linguistics Colloquium. She is currently writing a second edition of her textbook *Discovering Grammar: Introduction to English Sentence*

structure for Oxford University Press. She will present her work on language attitudes at the University of Washington Linguistics Colloquium this spring, and this winter will present a paper at the Linguistic Society of America meeting, *Using Description to Teach (about) Prescription*. Her paper, *A Critical Approach to Standard English*, was recently published as a chapter in a volume forthcoming from Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates, *Language in the Schools: Integrating Linguistic Knowledge into K-12 Teaching*, which she co-edited with **Kristin Denham**.



Kristin regularly teaches the English department's introduction to linguistics course, the history of English, English grammar, and two new courses she has created: one on dialect, literacy, and standardization,

and the other on Salish literature and translation. She also teaches Advanced Syntax for the Linguistics Program. This past year, she was invited to present her recent work on linguistics and education at the University of Washington in a paper entitled "Acquiring Prescriptive Rules." She presented another paper at the Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar entitled "Teaching about Grammar with Examples from Language Change." She also authored a book chapter, "Teaching Students about Language Change, Language Endangerment, and Language Death," which appears in *Language in the Schools: Integrating Linguistic Knowledge into K-12 Teaching*, a book co-edited with Anne Lobeck and forthcoming from Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates. She is presenting a paper at this year's Linguistic Society of America meeting called "A Nonstandard Approach to the Standard."

Denham and Lobeck

Collaboratively, Professors Denham and Lobeck have produced a number of scholarly contributions to the emerging field of linguistics and education. In addition to the Lawrence Erlbaum volume, they are under contract to write an introductory linguistics textbook that specifically targets English majors. This book will be completed in 2006, published by Wadsworth/Thomson. They have also organized a symposium, *Forging Connections Between Linguists and Educators*, for the 2005 Linguistic Society of America conference. Anne will present the paper *Using Description to Teach (about) Prescription*, and Kristin *A Non-Standard Approach to the Standard*. Together they have written a prospectus for another volume tentatively titled *Language and Education: Social Perspectives and Models for Change*. Dr. Denham and Dr. Lobeck continue to co-edit the journal *Syntax in the Schools*, the publication of National Council of Teachers of English Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar (ATEG), and were program organizers for the annual ATEG conference held in Seattle this year.



Dwan Shipley just successfully defended his PhD thesis proposal at Simon Fraser University. Besides the work involved in his thesis on toponyms, Professor Shipley is teaching the *Introduction to Linguistics* and *Sociolinguistics* classes. This fall he had 521 students enrolled in his courses. Quite a workload!



Fallou Ngom traveled to Senegal this summer as a Postdoctoral fellow to collect texts and digital images of Wolof, Pulaar and Mandinka Arabic-based writings known as Ajami (a generic term used to refer to African languages written with Arabic scripts), used in major Senegalese Muslim communities. His goal was to collect as many texts and digital images as possible of these types of Ajami writings, and to visit communities where they are

typically used. He is currently studying the linguistic variations in these writings and the possibility of standardizing and modernizing them across the country, and ultimately across West Africa—a possible and positive step toward the linguistic unification of West Africa. Ngom says that he had long been aware of the religious use of Arabic-based scripts in areas beyond the spheres of influence of European languages in Senegambia. He was stunned, however, to see its widespread secular use. During the fieldwork, Ngom found that the statistics of the literacy rate in Senegal from UNESCO and the Senegalese *Direction de la Prévision et de la Statistique* did not take into account Ajami users. Apparently, the available literacy statistics do not reflect the realities in rural parts of the country where Arabic writing

scripts still remain important means of written communication. Ultimately, Ngom hopes that governmental and non-governmental researchers will collaborate on the standardization and modernization of Ajami writings in Senegal and across West Africa. He believes that this could provide a basis for designing new curricula for Qur'nic schools, which could involve the teaching of modern science, mathematics, geography, history, et cetera. (generally unavailable in typical Qur'nic schools). Such research would also open new avenues for scholars into the extensive body of knowledge still buried in Arabic-based writings across sub-Saharan African Muslim communities.

Below is an example of Ajami writing with a phonetic transcription and translation

Transcription of Wolofal Text Using IPA & English Translation	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arabic: [assalaamu ʔalajikum wa rahmatul laahi] (Peace be upon you and God's blessing) 2. [jeen mbakki jullit ji "daaraj ʔajxul xadiim"] (You Muslim brothers in 'Shaykhul Xadiim's house') 3. [ã nekk karée "lajeen" ci mbakke, ñoo jeen di] (who are in the layeen district in Mbacké, we are) 4. [jagal dajeb lisaam buraj bu ñuj amal-] (informing you about the Islamic meeting organized) 5. [dibeer, ñaar fukki fan ak benna, ci weeru] (on Sunday, 21st day, in the month of) 6. ["rakkaati gammo" tallook 11 / suljee / 2004] ("Rakkati Gammo" corresponding to July 11, 2004) 7. [bu fukki waxtu jatee ci suba, in[aa?alaahu] (at 10 o'clock in the morning, God willing) 8. [ñuj sakku seen teewaa] jeen ñeppo] (We are asking for the presence of all of you)

Figure 4: Meeting Announcement in Wolofal Found on a Wall, Mbacké, Senegal

¹ Third month of the Wolof lunar calendar, literally "sibling of the sibling of Gammo," *Gammo* being the Celebration of Prophet Muhammad's birthday, which occurs in the first month of the Islamic calendar.

Edward Vajda is the recipient of a research grant, which will allow him to spend part of his sabbatical, from January through June, at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany. There he will be writing an etymological dictionary of Ket, a Yeniseian language spoken in Central Siberia, as well as work on a historical grammar of Ket. Dr. Vajda is excited about this opportunity, as many international experts on Siberian languages will come together in Leipzig for several months and work on their respective projects in a highly stimulating work environment.



Masanori Deguchi is primarily working on the syntax and semantics of Japanese, but more recently has been conducting a comparative study of the phonology of two Native American languages: Wichita and Pawnee. On November 6, 2004 he presented some of his findings in a presentation/paper titled "Consonant Cluster Alternations in Pawnee" at the University of New Mexico. His research involves working on an Optimality-theoretic account of consonant cluster alternations in those related languages. It is also greatly thanks to his efforts that we had Dr. Natsuko Tsujimura on our campus to speak on Japanese mimetics.



Faculty Assistant

If you've ever communicated using our e-mail address linguistics@wwu.edu, chances are you received a reply from Sonja Thoma. Sonja has been the linguistics assistant for our program for almost two years. She has also been a truly stand-out student in our program. She will be graduating this quarter with majors in Linguistics and Spanish. Sonja has been the driving force behind the program, overseeing the production of two newsletters, tracking our ever-growing number of majors, scheduling events, and takes care of the many details to ensure we have the smoothest running office we have had in the history of the program.



Sonja is planning on doing an internship for the Bertelsmann Foundation in Germany while she is waiting for admissions answers from various universities she applied to for graduate studies in Linguistics. We hope, however, that there will be some way to keep her on until the end of the academic year, but know that we will have to lose her eventually. When that time comes, it will be a considerable loss to the program.

Shaw N. Gynan was invited by Ohio State University to return to Paraguay last summer to lecture on Paraguayan bilingualism. Dr. Gynan extended his stay to teach a course on Psycholinguistic Aspects of Paraguayan bilingualism at the Evangelical University of Paraguay's Faculty of Modern Languages. Dr. Gynan also delivered two keynote addresses at the National Congress on the Guaraní Language. He spoke on US language policy at the annual Paratesol conference. Dr. Gynan was also asked to serve as linguistic consultant for the Aché, one of a half dozen indigenous groups in Paraguay that still speak pre-Columbian Guaraní. The Ministry of Education invited him to give a workshop on Paraguayan sociolinguistics at the Department of Curriculum. Through the Ministry, Dr. Gynan also traveled to the Chaco to conduct a workshop on mother tongue literacy and maintenance for the Enxet, the largest indigenous community in Paraguay, comprised of about 12,000 members.



Our Newsletter needs a name!

If you have any creative ideas, suggestions or hints, do let us know! Please submit electronically to linguistics@wwu.edu, or in person to Dr. Weiss or to Sonja Thoma.

The winning name will head our future newsletters, and the submitter will get "credit" for it, too!



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Dear Alumni

We would love to hear from you! If you would like to share any of your current activities, news and ideas with us, please contact linguistics@wwu.edu to let us know.

We are hoping to be able to include an alumni news section in our next edition of the newsletter, so don't be shy...

This issue of the Linguistics Newsletter is supported in part through the financial assistance of the WWU Alumni Association. We encourage alumni who are not currently members of the WWU Alumni Club to join. Contact the Alumni Office at 800-676-6884 or 650-3353.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.ac.wwu.edu/~linguist/



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