

UW LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT

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LETTER FROM CHAIR

After the autumn 2002 quarter and the excitement of the holiday season, I'm pleased to report in the Chair's column on activities of the Linguistics Department during the fall. I hope that it will reach our alumni, supporters and community associates and draw them to stay in touch with us. We were somewhat disappointed that we received NO feedback from the printed version that we mailed out last summer, and we fear that we won't get all of your email addresses to announce the future electronic versions. Please take a moment to send your email address to phoneme@u.washington.edu and to include the addresses of other friends of Linguistics.

The Department continued to be quite active professionally during the past months. We are thrilled that our new faculty member, John

Goldsmith, was able to teach two courses in computational linguistics this autumn and that he will join our faculty officially in September 2003 to devote himself to the creation of a first rate Computational program. Not only did he teach the introductory course 472 (that you may have taken with Jim Hoard in the past), but he also offered a seminar on programming in C#. John is developing five new courses to constitute the framework of a specialization in Computational Linguistics. Thanks to his work, and the collaboration of Professor Richard Wright, the Department became the fortunate recipient of five Dell desktop computers and development software provided by the generosity of Microsoft Research. So the Computational Lab is off to a good start!

During the past year, Linguistics



faculty gave papers in Europe, Asia and the Americas. Fritz Newmeyer, as President of the Linguistic Society of America, went to Atlanta to give the presidential address in January (but not before a trip to Paris for Christmas). He's already been to Warsaw, Paris, and D.C. since last August's newsletter. He spoke on language evolution in Paris, on form and function at Georgetown, and on the split-CP hypothesis in Warsaw.

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LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT SEEKS SUPPORT

The establishment last year of an Advisory Board for Linguistics marked the beginning of an official support group to help the department accomplish its mission and strengthen ties with alumni and friends. We appreciate our good fortune to have help with newsletter editing (Paula Johnson), website development (Mark Haslam), event planning (Jim Armagost), relations to industry (Michael Gamon and James Lyle) and monetary donations. However, especially in this

period of financial stress, we need even more assistance. Friends of Linguistics provides the funds to produce the newsletter, invite outside speakers to our colloquia, sponsor the SALT Conference and develop graduate workshops, among other things. The 40th Anniversary celebration events will be a function of your donations. Major gifts such as the Nostrand Professorship can at once honor a special purpose and provide graduate fellowships, faculty benefits or tar-

geted aid for a specific recipient such as the Phonetics Lab.

Since we depend totally on your generosity, we encourage largesse in your contributions to Friends of Linguistics, and we have enclosed an envelope for your convenience. \$25 sponsors a colloquium, \$100 pays an honorarium, \$1000 sends a newsletter, and \$100,000 endows a graduate fellowship. Please help us by giving a little or a lot.

Special points of interest:

- Updates regarding Celebration of 40 years!
- Linguistics Bike Pool
- Ronald McNair Program: Alicia Wassink
- Send your contact info!
- NEW website!
- Find out the latest news about professors, fellow alumni, and current students

LETTER FROM CHAIR CONTINUED...

Ellen Kaisse just returned from Mexico where she presented at the "VII Encuentro Internacional de Lingstica en el Noroeste". (VII International Meeting of the Northwest Linguistics Society of Mexico) at the Universidad de Sonora in Hermosillo, entitled "Alineacion de un contorno entonativo en un dialecto argentino" ("The alignment of an intonational contour in an Argentinian dialect")-in Spanish! She was also an invited panelist at the LSA on a symposium concerning journals in linguistics. She and Colin Ewen, as editors of *Phonology*, gave a short presentation about ethics in journal publication. Maybe we can get her a column in the *New York Times Magazine*.

Michael Brame's book with Galina Popova, *Shakespeare's Fingerprints*, rolled off the press on December 17, 2002. The authors have already been interviewed by *New York Times* correspondent William Niederhorn. A second book, edited by Brame and Popova with an extensive afterward, is scheduled to appear in February of 2003. It is entitled *Secret Shakespeare's Adventures with Freeman Jones*.

Karen Zagona has a new article coming out in *Probus* on verbal aspect. Heles Contreras was a keynote speaker of the Going Romance Conference in Groningen, The Netherlands, November 28-30. Toshi Ogihara has begun serious planning to sponsor the *Semantics and Linguistic Theory (SALT)* conference next May. Abstracts are due in January, so he's even busier now. Fortunately, he has an organizational committee to help. The SALT web page is <http://depts.washington.edu/salt13/>. Toshi has also prepared a talk entitled "Tense, Adverbs, and

Quantification" that was given in Japan in January.

Marina Tarlinskaya gave a couple of lectures in St. Petersburg, Russia this fall. She talked about problems of authorship, "Parameters of verse form that may serve as indicators of an individual style" (illustrated by the double authorship of "Henry VIII") and "Formal approaches to verse study" (generative metrics). Soowon Kim is busy



working on a book on Case with Joan Maling of Brandeis University and another book on Korean syntax with James Yoon of University of Illinois. He's also published recently on adverbial Case, honorifics and argument structure, and parasitic gaps.

Alicia Wassink, Richard Wright and I finished up our grants from the UW Center for Mind,

Brain and Learning, and now we are analyzing the substantial data collected. Jeff Stevenson and I will continue our project, the acquisition of Spanish by first graders at the John Stanford International School, by testing the children (now in second grade) three more times this year. We presented our research at the Boston University Conference on Language Development in November. I also gave a talk in St. Andrews, Scotland in September on acquisition of French. The Wassink-Wright project examining perception of vowel length, (particularly as it relates to parent input to children) has amassed data (from the field) on Jamaican Creole vowel length, and on English vowel length. A wealth of material to be mined! Alicia and Richard, each independently received a Royalty Research Fund award from the UW. These are prestigious awards that will help to further their current research endeavors.

Two of our faculty members are on sabbatic leave this quarter. Jurgen Klausenburger has been focusing on his next book, an evaluation of the definition and role of Romance Linguistics through the past century. His project draws on his expertise in French while contributing an important historical perspective on phonological theory of the 20th Century. Sharon Hargus is completing a Sekani grammar / dictionary (very nearly finished) and is developing a project on Deg Xinag, another endangered language. Her past work with these two languages has been quite extensive and has resulted in numerous publications. Her research contributes to theoretical scholarship, to documentation of endangered languages, and to the communities where the languages are spoken.

FACULTY NEWS

Marina Tarlinskaya is our featured faculty member for this newsletter. She is currently a Research Professor for the UW Linguistics Department. Dr. Tarlinskaya has two degrees, a PhD and a Doctor of Philological Sciences. She is the author of about 90 scholarly articles and three books, with one currently in the works. Marina specializes in applied linguistics, verse form and verse semantics, Shakespeare scholarship, comparative metrics, and theory of translation. She is internationally known as a Shakespeare scholar and metrist. She is also a professional translator, an accredited member of the American Translators' Association (ATA), translating both verse and prose. Marina also loves cooking and enjoys writing cookbooks—including a book published in 1989 entitled "Cooking Russian in America!"

VISITING SCHOLARS:

BYONG-SEON YANG,
HYUN-GU LEE,
MOHAMED GUERSEL

Three visiting scholars enrich the Department this year, Byong-seon Yang Of Jeonju University (Korea), Hun-gu Lee of Korean Nazarene University, and Mohamed Guerssel of Universit du Qubec (Montreal).

Byong-seon Yang holds a Ph.D. from SUNY Buffalo, and he does work in role and reference grammar. His most recent book is *Introduction to Role and Reference Grammar* (1998). He has also worked on unaccusativity and psych verbs in Korean.

Hun-gu Lee, whose Ph.D. is from Korea University, is a phonologist working on post-lexical phenomena. A couple of recent articles include one in *Studies in Language*

on vowel insertion in English loanwords, and another on phonological acquisition by Korean children.

Mohamed Guerssel, who got his Ph.D. at the University of Washington, is currently working on projects on verbal derivational morphology in Arabic and on the sound structure of Berber. Recent publications include "Why Arabic guttural assimilation is not a phonological process" and "The metathesis effect in Classical Arabic and the representation of geminates."

ENDANGERED LANGUAGES REVITALIZED

This is part 2 of the 2 part series on Endangered Languages. Visit the Linguistics Department website and view the 1st part in the series in our Fall 2002 newsletter. Thanks to Sharon Hargus, Alice Taft, and Nancy Emery for putting this interview together!

Tell me what about the work that you have done in the past has led you to this topic.

SH: Since for about 20 years my research interests have been on Native American languages, and languages which are endangered, I got interested for scientific reasons. We want to document these languages to the fullest extent possible while we still can. But you can't help but get caught up with the needs of the community when you work with speakers. The needs of the community being, "Language is a powerful cultural symbol and we want to continue that, we don't want to be culturally obliterated". Now it's arguable whether the culture will be obliterated or not if the language doesn't continue, but for many people language is this very powerful symbol of culture so they want to perpetuate it. I think that anyone who works on Native American language gets caught up in these issues.

And in the 20 years that you've been working, what kind of changes have you seen, in both directions - in terms of progressive loss, or efforts to turn things around.

SH: It's been unfortunately mostly progressive loss. But there have been more and more efforts to perpetuate the language as well. At the same time, the resources, the remaining fluent native speakers, become fewer and fewer. People in the communities turn to outsiders like me, linguists who are there to do research, to also be their consultants on language maintenance, and really that's not my main interest when I'm there working on the language. I can tell them some things I know about what's going to make a language program successful and what's not, but I'm really only capable of giving them consulting advice, and it really has to come from within the community to get the program going.

And you've been doing documentation.

SH: That's my main interest, but of course the documentation has easy pedagogical spin-offs. A lot of people can catch onto reading the language, but writing consistently is a major challenge for most people. Teachers like to have written materials to teach from, we all do. Being able to come up with written materials for the

classroom - even though it's not what I'm there to do, I often get called upon to do that because I can do it. I've also been involved with training people to read and write their languages.

AT: I came to this work from education, from being a teacher in schools where kids spoke a different variety of English than the standard, and



where a native language was being taught as a second language. I came into academic linguistics to be able to make a better contribution to the classroom teachers and communities who are doing language revitalization. I see a lot of the classroom programs continuing, but they don't have the resources that they need. One of them is the recognition that a very oral class would serve the goals and expectations better than reading and writing. It's this clash between the end result and what's considered to be the proper method again. There are some very interesting things going on though, that do seem to be achieving good results, like the Master - Apprentice program in California, where adults are paired with a family member who's a speaker and they're supported financially, say half time for a few months. So they do have the time to spend with this person, learning the language in a very personal immersion situation, which I think is a brilliant model because it doesn't require development of materials, it doesn't require a building. It doesn't require anything but to recognize the fact that two people need to be together and they need to have the financial support so that they don't have to spend all their time working during the day and then come home exhausted and then try to do (language lessons).

Like Sharon was saying earlier, if you're 80, a 2 year old, a bunch of 3 year olds might be a little tough to handle but...

AT: Yeah, I think that the successful models of

the languages nest programs have the younger people, the 30 and 40 year olds, managing the children and working effectively with the speakers and the children and they get an opportunity to learn too.

The apprenticeship maybe could ready somebody who is in that middle age to be doing most of the dealing with the children at some later point.

SH: Eventually, I think that's probably the situation that Maria Pascua is in at Neah Bay, where she's learned from elders as a 2nd language how to speak a good deal of Makah.

Do you see broader effects to the revitalization efforts, in terms of community building or how people feel?

AT: When I see a community begin to revitalize in dance or song or language, there's a huge upswelling of pride, just a bursting of the people. I've seen this happen and it's amazing. I have been talking with people about documenting health effects of language loss versus language revitalization, I think it would be a really important thing for some study to be done on. One of the really dangerous notions in this whole issue is that if I speak language A, I won't be able to speak language B, language B is the one that I'm going to use when I get a job. And this is a notion that has been buttered across this country. Elsewhere it's not considered to be anything unusual for people to be able to speak two or three or more languages, it's the way the world is.

What are some of the reasons that people stop speaking their language? You had been saying there were threats and intimidation and physical punishment to force people to stop speaking their languages.

AT: There has been a policy, whether it's overt or covert, in this country that Native languages shouldn't be used and it was enforced through the school system. I was talking to someone yesterday who told me that where he's from in the United States, it's still happening today. If we want to speak about this issue world-wide, there are languages in danger of extinction in every continent on the planet, there are a variety of different kinds of situations. In some cases all the speakers are killed, either militarily or by disease. In some cases people make a choice for practical reasons, in some cases they make a choice for more emotional reasons or they're coerced into it.

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ENDANGERED LANGUAGES CONTINUED...

SH: As you were saying, this idea that you can only speak one language, you've got to speak the language that's going to get you a job, that's a real powerful effect on language loss I think, the socio-economic incentives to know the language really well that is going to make you rich or allow you to support your family. It's probably not conscious a lot of the time. It may be conscious for young people: "Am I going to study the language, or am I going to study C++?" Which one is going to get you a better job. Which one is going to get me a job, period.

So it's sort of a false choice, you could be bilingual...

SH: Definitely.

... but it does take time to learn a language, it takes effort.

SH: Certainly for a 2nd language, for adult learners, it does. That's why the Master - Apprentice program provides the time and the financial resources for people to study these languages to perpetuate them. That's a very important part of that program.

For language communities that have enough speakers of an age that they could teach (children), there have been some stories of success where children in ancestral language immersion programs have also been able to learn the dominant language as a subject and later come out pretty well, academically.

AT: Yes, we have these stories from Hawaiian and Navajo programs: the kids who are strongest in their ancestral language are also the strongest in the academic kind of English that's going to be economically helpful. I mentioned before the issue of health, and people who feel good about themselves and strong are going to healthier and more useful, if you will, to society at large, even outside their own language community.

There's this class on endangered languages being offered by this department now. Can you talk a little bit about that?

AT: The class provides students with a lot of information about what endangered language means, how it happened, levels of viability of

language. Then, what people are doing for revitalization around the world, and how we can be involved in language revitalization. And why it's important, what are the benefits inside and outside of the community. One of the big benefits is the pool of human knowledge that is dried up every time a language ceases to be used. The world view that a language embodies and the specific knowledge that is passed on in the language.

SH: Like traditional ecological knowledge, for example. Gene Hunn, in Anthropology has been

"When I see a community begin to revitalize in dance or song or language, there's a huge up-swelling of pride, just a bursting of the people... it's amazing."

doing quite a lot of research on that with the Zapotec groups he works with in Mexico. The people who know Zapotec know a lot more about the environment than the people who grow up speaking Spanish. That kind of other stuff tends to get lost as well, along with the language.

AT: Students are also working on projects to create new knowledge. One is to develop a class to teach Basque here at the University of Washington through the Experimental College next fall. Basque is a very interesting language because it's an isolate, there are no other branches of its family, so it's important to take a look at this language and see how it's structured. Another project is for students to look into what it will take to establish in Seattle a center for Native American language learning, so that urban people will have a place to find resources for them to learn, or just use their language. A center where it's good to speak your language, where you can find books and tapes and videos about your language, and you can be connected (hopefully through videoconferencing or some other face to face long distance technology) with people at home, so you can carry on conversations in the language and still be connected with grandma even though you're here working in the city. And then we have a third project, one of the students is Tsimshian or Sm'algyax from Metlakatla, Alaska and she is working on materials and methods that she'll be using at home to teach her language.

Are there any further thoughts you want to leave people with?

SH: Just that it's nice to see that linguists in general are becoming more and more worried about language endangerment, both on the national level, the LSA, and here in the department. I think there's a lot more support these days for doing this, doing both research on endangered languages and on trying to do things to revitalize them, than when I started 20 years ago. It's nice to see.

AT: The field of linguistics has taken a swing from an initial interest in documenting exotic language, where the role of linguists was to go off to some rural area of the world and find people whose language had never been heard before and make recordings, to a more theoretical focus where we plow into each language and analyze it. And the exotic language linguists were not so popular. But now the pendulum has swung back some and all of a sudden there is this world crisis. It could be that we will not have any living speakers, who learned the language as a first language, of half of the world's languages in our lifetime. So if we say there are around 6000 languages in the world today, in our lifetime there will only be 3000.

SH: I do have one more thing to say. Sometimes I get approached by people who say they want to do some work on these languages. What these languages need are people who really know what they're doing. Because when you're working with the last two speakers of a language, this is no time to be learning about what kind of things we should be documenting. So if you want to work on these languages, pay attention to what you're learning in your classes, get the best kind of linguistic training that you can. The work on these languages is just getting harder and harder, it's not getting easier.

Are there other ways for people to get involved?

AT: People can always vote in a supportive way, and stay informed. But some people don't realize that if you're going to work in endangered languages it's going to be your life.

SH: That's true.

LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT BIKE POOL

This article was featured in the Fall 2002 Quarterly Newsletter for UPass. To see the complete article please visit and further information: http://www.washington.edu/upass/news_and_reports/newsletters.html

When it takes approximately 40 minutes to walk round-trip across campus to pick up payroll, petty cash, etc., you need to be resourceful with your time. To reduce staff errand time, the Linguistics Department created a "Bike Pool." The Bike Pool is healthy for the department's budget, personnel and the environment as it eliminates the cost and pollution of using a motor pool or personal vehicle to travel across campus—and gives employees a little exercise.

Dan Stiefel, Computing Specialist, noticed bikes in the UW Surplus Property warehouse while he was surplus computers for the Linguistics Department. He also knew the office staff needed to get around campus quickly to run errands. The surplus bikes seemed to be the link to solve his department's problem. Dan approached Julia Herschensohn, Linguistics Department Chair, about the idea of creating a Bike Pool. She was in favor of his proposal and gave him the go ahead to use the department's budget to purchase bikes and parts for the new Bike Pool. It is Julia's feeling that, "the recycled bicycles are a boon for staff, faculty and students who need to commute or run errands across our ever-growing campus."

The department's investment is minimal; the department pays for the surplus bikes and Dan donates his time to recondition the bicycles that might have been headed for scrap metal.

Dan purchased six bikes from Surplus Property. The bikes have since been taken apart to create three reconditioned bicycles. Four other bikes were also purchased privately by members of the department for recreational use and to commute to and from campus. The bikes are mostly 18-21 speed mountain/city commute bikes with upright handlebars that needed fenders, racks, kick stands and seats. Two of the bikes required very little fixing, but they were all cleaned, oiled and adjusted. Purchasing extra bikes for parts was the most economical way to re-build the bikes.

Dan states, "It's a grab bag. They're all dirty—if there are any expensive bikes they'll probably be sold in the Surplus auction that takes place approximately every six weeks. I look for medium quality bikes such as Univega, or Raleigh with Shimano components. If you have less time and more money, buy the slightly more expensive \$20-\$40 bikes from Surplus. If you are really brave and resourceful, buy their \$1 bikes!" The Linguistics Department bikes cost about \$5 from Surplus Property. After being renovated, the total cost of the bike is approximately \$50 including the bike parts, helmet and five-foot cable lock or a U-Lock. While most parts came from other bikes, Dan used his U-PASS to receive a 10

percent discount at Recycled Cycles on other parts he needed to complete the restoration. From the department budget, three bike helmets were purchased for only \$10 each with a U-PASS from Hall Health. The helmets came with different sets of pads, making them adjustable for other riders.

Initially, the bikes are intended for faculty and staff use. As the new quarter begins, if Teaching/Research Assistants and others in the department request bikes for daily campus travel, the department will consider adding to its Bike Pool from UW Surplus Property's ever-changing stock of homeless bikes.

To keep the bureaucracy to a minimum, the check-out procedures are simple. The keys, backpacks to carry items, and helmets all hang in one location. The bikes are locked in the bike rack outside the building. When a person wants to ride the bike, they remove the keys and helmet from the hook and use the bike.

Departments who don't have a "Dan on-hand" willing to do the labor to put together a Bike Pool should investigate bicycle partners such as ASUW Bike Shop, Recycled Cycles, BikeSport, Cloud EV or Bike Works, which provide a 10-20 percent discount on parts and accessories to U-PASS holders. Additionally, Dan states, "If you want to create a "Bike Pool" and don't have a volunteer, it's the \$20-\$40 surplus bikes you should be buying."

ALUMNI NEWS

We are hoping to hear back from many of you soon so we can include updates and information about alumni around the world! Last issue we introduced you to the newly formed advisory board. The board is still working hard to help deliver on the departments development goals. Visit the new linguistics website to learn more about the exciting plans for the Linguistics Department and to contact us with

your stories. For this issue we are including an introduction to one of our new Linguistic Advisory Board members.

James Lyle (PhD, '97) began studying in the UW Linguistics Department in 1991, specializing in theoretical syntax. He earned his PhD in 1997, with a dissertation on ergative case marking and aspect in Georgian syntax. After that, he taught linguistics and English gram-

mar in adjunct roles for UW and Western Washington University, until joining the Natural Language Group at Microsoft in 1999. He now enjoys putting natural language processing software through its paces and working with a number of UW Linguistics alumni.

We warmly welcome James to the Linguistics Advisory Board and look forward to his contributions to the department!

LINGUISTICS DEPARTMENT TURNS 40!

Arrangements continue for celebrating the department's 40th anniversary next June 5 - 7. Several Linguistics alums representing the 1960s through the 1990s have responded enthusiastically to our invitation to deliver short overviews of the evolution of their linguistic thought since leaving UW, i.e. where they've come from and where they're heading in terms of theoretical background and research pursuits.

Here's the preliminary overall schedule of events:

Thursday, 5 June

5:30 - 7:30 Opening reception, wine and hors-d'oeuvres. Welcome, introduction of Linguistics Advisory Board.

Friday, 6 June

11:30 - 3:00 Brown bag lunch, invited speakers Thom Hess, Dawn Bates, Simin Karimi, Randall Gess, Antxon Olarrea and others (per above).

3:30 - 4:30 Keynote talk by Fritz Newmeyer.

6:00 - Dinner at department chair Julia Herschensohn's.

Saturday, 7 June

Time open Mix and match: a variety of tours, picnics, etc. expedited by the Linguistics Department.



We're all looking forward to this celebration of UW Linguistics' 40 years, and we hope you'll be able to join us.

RONALD E. MCNAIR: 2001-2002 MENTOR OF THE YEAR

We would like to give special thanks to Vega Subramaniam, the Academic Advisor for the McNair Program. She is the author of this article, which was originally written for the McNair Program Summer 2002 newsletter. Dr. Alicia Wassink (pg.2 photo) was named as Mentor of the Year by the McNair Program in Spring of 2002.

Ever since Dr. Alicia Beckford Wassink joined the University of Washington's Linguistics Department faculty four years ago, she has been committed to mentoring undergraduates, both within and outside of her department. In a largely research-oriented university setting, this commitment is rare and welcome. Her personal background and academic experiences, along with her generosity and compassion, combined to develop this dedication to undergraduate achievement.

Dr. Wassink was the first in her family to go to college. She received her Bachelors degree in linguistics in 1990 from Houghton College, a liberal arts college in western New York state. During most of her undergraduate years, she was undecided about what she wanted to do. She ultimately majored in communications, creative writing, and Spanish. She found herself fascinated not so much by these majors but by the working of language itself and by quantitative work and problem-solving. During the second semester of her senior year, she took her first linguistics class. And suddenly, it all clicked. Linguistics combined her interests in quantitative problem-solving, the study of the underlying structure of language, and cross-cultural communications.

In many ways, her interest in linguistics had personal roots. She grew up in a home where one part of her family spoke African-American English, and another part spoke Jamaican Creole. Because she also lived in the United States, where mainstream English was considered the only "correct" English, she was intimately familiar with conflicting ideas about language and what is valued in the way we speak. Her family's language patterns were simultaneously considered "cool" and "choppy and sloppy." For some, her family's way of speaking was a "language," and for others it was a "dialect." In linguistics, she found a field where she could actually conduct research on precisely those issues. And she could perhaps even do something about her concerns through education and public policy changes.

Upon graduating with her Bachelor's degree, Dr. Wassink took some time off from academics. But during this time, she stayed involved. In her spare time, she went to the library and read books on linguistics. And she kept in touch with her linguistics professor at Houghton, Dr. Charles Bressler. Alicia eventually applied for and was accepted to the University of Pennsylvania, Yale University, and the University of Michigan. Ultimately, she decided to attend Michigan, in their Center for Afro- and Afro-American Studies.

Graduate school offered its own challenges, some of them welcome intellectual challenges, others unwelcome and based on racial stereotypes and lack of support for first-generation college students. On her very first day, as she was walking down the hall in the linguistics department, a professor stopped her and asked, "You're Black; how do you say [phrase] in Black English?" Similarly, when the department hired a Black faculty member, she remembers hearing comments that he was only hired because he received "minority money." Because she received the Rackham Merit Fellowship, a fellowship aimed at minority students, Alicia worried

that she would be perceived as "fulfilling a quota" rather than having merit. Not only that, but her own confidence was suffering: how good was she academically, after all? These attitudes clearly had an

effect on students of color on the campus. Ten African American students began graduate programs in Arts and Sciences at the same time that Alicia did. Only two made it through to achieve their PhDs.

While she was getting her Ph.D. from Michigan, her father decided to go to college. He began attending St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia. They encouraged and helped each other make it through their respective programs – and they were scheduled to graduate at the same time. Tragically, he passed away before he was able to finish. Alicia went on to finish her Ph.D. in 1999 and create a new family educational tradition.

Dr. Wassink's research is largely quantitative and focuses in the areas of sociolinguistics, phonetics, and Pidgin and Creole linguistics. She is currently conducting two research projects. One involves the phonological analysis of Jamaican Creole. Dr. Wassink is interested in understanding what features of the language are derived from English, from West African languages, and from Jamaica itself. These answers will also give us a clearer sense of history, such as from what parts of West Africa enslaved Africans were originally brought.

Her second research project, also conducted in Jamaica, is a cross-linguistic study of exaggerated speech processes, in which speakers modify ways that they articulate sound in various contexts. Speakers adapt their speech for intelligibility. Adaptations to compensate for noise are different from adaptations to preserve information or those made when speaking with children. Dr. Wassink will compare mothers speaking American English to mothers speaking two varieties of Jamaican: Jamaican English and Jamaican Creole. Her findings will elucidate how languages work and how the manipulation of quality and quantity cues in language in various settings helps children learn language.

Even a brief encounter with Dr. Wassink makes it clear that she is passionate about and delights in her research. She is also passionate about support-

ing and encouraging undergraduates from non-mainstream backgrounds. She has a strong sense that the experiences of first-generation college students are fundamentally different from those of students with college-degreed parents. They need to have places to find answers to the questions that everyone would have them believe are "too silly to ask," such as how to take good notes, or if there is a set of classes that everyone "knows you should take." And they struggle with the effects of moving into a different social class from their parents. Dr. Wassink also deeply understands that students and faculty alike are enriched by the kinds of knowledge and understanding of the world brought by students from underrepresented groups, and that colleges need the representation of their voices to broaden scholarship and minds.

Where does this commitment to mentorship come from? Dr. Wassink's own experiences have taught her the importance of mentorship. At Houghton College, Dr. Bressler's ceaseless encouragement played a large role in her pursuit of a graduate degree. He always encouraged her to call him, even collect if she couldn't afford the long-distance charges. He took the time to explain and lead her through the process of applying to graduate schools. For example, it was Dr. Bressler who explained to her that she could *get funding* to go to graduate school – and indeed, that she should not go to a school that did not offer her funding. He also continued to assure her that she had the academic background and talent to get into the best graduate schools in linguistics, and that she had what it takes to become a solid researcher in this field. While in graduate school, her two advisors, Drs. Beddor and Milroy, were also dedicated to mentoring. Finding a supportive community was invaluable to her academic success and personal well-being. Perhaps because of these experiences, she herself is compelled to give back and mentor students here at the University of Washington.

Dr. Wassink has worked with two of our McNair Scholars: Christina Roberts (now graduated and pursuing a Ph.D. in English at the University of Arizona) and Kapi'olani Laronal (now conducting a research project in New Zealand, under Dr. Wassink's guidance). Both Christina and Kapi'olani have only glowing words to say about their experience working with Alicia. Aside from her contributions to their knowledge and intellectual development, she is enormously approachable and caring. Each of them was eager to work with her, even though neither is a linguistics major! Christina in English and Kapi'olani in sociology nevertheless felt that she was most able to connect with them and provide them the academic guidance they needed to do their projects. Every time McNair has sent a student to meet with her, the student returns feeling warm, supported, and excited about continuing their research. Her gift for inspiring excitement in students for the research endeavor is unparalleled, and her ability to recognize and meet the needs of low-income, first-generation, and underrepresented students is uncanny. As a scholar, professor, mentor, and person, Dr. Wassink is a valuable resource and role model for our staff and our scholars.

"Even a brief encounter with Dr. Wassink makes it clear that she is passionate about and delights in her research."

LECTURES AND CONFERENCES ON CAMPUS

During the autumn 2002 quarter our colloquium series sponsored a range of talks from UW faculty and Microsoft researchers. Lynne Werner of Speech and Hearing Sciences discussed infant auditory development, while Eugene Hunn of Anthropology treated children's acquisition of botanical terms in Zapotec. Heles Contreras gave a restricted view of head movement, Joe Voyles (Germanics) talked about Proto-Indo-European, and Alicia Wassink presented her new phonetic measurement system for quantifying vowel overlap. Ciprian Chelba of Microsoft talked about syntactic modeling and Fritz Newmeyer practiced his LSA presidential lecture "Grammar is grammar and usage is usage." Mike Brame finished the quarter with a provocative proposal on Shakespeare authorship "Did Shakespeare write poetry at age-2?" The discussion following his presentation was lively, to say the least! Our colloquium room proved too



small for almost all the talks, so next quarter we're going to expand to a 50 person room.

The winter quarter includes talks by the following linguists: Zev Handel (Asian), Martina Wiltschko (UBC), Lee Osterhout (Psychology), Karen Zagona, Soohee Kim (Asian), Felicia Lee (UBC), Chuck Barrack (Germanics), Eric Ringger (Microsoft), Henry Davis (UBC), Edward Vajda (WWU) and Jeff Kallen (Trinity College, Dublin). In the spring we will see the following: Deborah Cameron (London University), Katarzyna Dziwirek (Slavic), Simon Corston-Oliver (Microsoft), Marina Tarlinskaja, Mike Shapiro (Asian), Ray Jackendoff, and speakers at the SALT conference. Fritz Newmeyer will be the keynote speaker at our 40th Anniversary Celebration. Check our website for more details on the colloquium series.

NOSTRAND
PROFESSORSHIP UPDATE

The Department is thrilled that Frances and Howard Nostrand's most recent contribution brought the Nostrand Professorship to the threshold level of activation, \$250,000. The Department will now be able to nominate a faculty member to hold the professorship starting next year. We're planning a celebration for the Nostrands and donors to the professorship when we name the Professor.

Don't forget to visit the new Linguistics Department Website:

<http://depts.washington.edu/lingweb>

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STUDENT NEWS

Our graduate students have also been busy professionally. Bridget Yaden did a presentation on her dissertation research at the 5th Conference on the Acquisition of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Iowa in October 2002. The title of her paper was "Mental Representations of Spanish Morphology: Rules or Analogy?" Jay Munson's work on another aspect of Spanish, "An Empirical Study of the Effect of Formal Phonetic Instruction on Adult L2 Learners" was presented at the Southwestern MLA meeting in Austin, Texas. Cinzia Russi published her WECOL paper and also presented at the High Desert Linguistics Conference in Albuquerque in November, "On the allomorphy of the Italian masculine definite article: a language-use based approach." Current grad students Emily Curtis and Haewon Cho have joined with alumna Ph.D. Soohee Kim to write a first year Korean language textbook and accompanying workbook for non-heritage (novice) learners, called Hankukmal hasineyo (You speak Korean!). It will be self-published and has the sponsorship of the Korea Foundation publication grant. Susie Levi gave a paper entitled "Representing underlying distinctions between vowels and glides." Both Chia-Hui Huang and Aixa Heller will be presenting at the Indiana University Graduate Linguistics Forum in

"Laura Partanen and Misty Azara completed their Masters degrees in December of 2002"

April.

Laura Partanen and Misty Azara completed their Masters degrees in December of 2002. Laura worked with Julia Herschensohn on "Poverty of the stimulus in L2 Spanish: The Overt Pronoun Constraint." Currently, she's completing a second masters in TESOL and is going to Mexico to pursue her career in second language learning and teaching.

Misty Azara worked with Richard Wright on "The Role of Pitch Accent in Discourse". She investigated intonation prominence as a cue to mark higher level information at the discourse level and the use of pitch in marking global and local focus. Currently, Misty is working at Xerox Park in the Silicon Valley and applying for graduate school to earn her PhD in Speech Technologies.



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*Donate to the department today! Help sponsor our
40th Anniversary Celebration! Contact us today!*

Visit the new website for linguistics TODAY
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Many Thanks to Joyce Parvi for her hard
work in re-doing the Website!

***Birthday Celebration for UW Linguistics
Department!!!!!! Yes Folks, we're cele-
brating 40 years this next year! Mark your
calendars today. Join us on June 5-7 for
fun filled events, learn about the depart-
ment's current endeavors, and help cele-
brate our vibrant and thriving department!
See page 5 for details!***

UW LINGUISTICS MEMORIBILIA

You too can be a proud owner of COOL
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