

The Gosling



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Linguistic News from Around the World

Cornish language no longer extinct, says the UN

The Cornish language, a Celtic language of Cornwall in southwest England, is no longer considered “extinct” by UN and UNESCO. It has instead been reclassified as “critically endangered”, since revival efforts over the past few decades have been moderately successful.

Full story from BBC World News (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-11935464>)

Faculty Spotlight



Molly Babel is a faculty member in her second year at UBC. Her PhD is from Berkeley and deals with phonetic and social selectivity in speech accommodation.

The Gosling: How are you enjoying your second year here as opposed to your first?

Molly Babel: I’m having more fun and stressing less. There are some things I was concerned about last year that I’m no longer concerned about. For example, I care less now about coming across professionally. When I’m teaching a large lecture, if I’m too concerned with coming across professionally I have less fun.

TG: Are you finding time to get your research done?

MB: Yes! I was surprised at how productive last year was, and the summer was very productive. I credit that in part to the undergrads, who helped me be productive. All the RAs I’ve hired have been phenomenal. They’re independent, they take responsibility, they tell you when you’re wrong, catch you on things.

TG: Is UBC like you expected?

MB: I have nothing to compare faculty life to, so I don’t really know. It’s more beautiful than I had anticipated. I’m always struck by how pleasant and inspiring my bike ride in is. I can’t imagine living somewhere ugly after living here.

TG: What’s exciting about phonetics these days?

MB: What isn’t?! I feel like phonetics is just becoming more interdisciplinary. It’s not just about sounds, it’s about how sounds interact with other aspects of the language system and human behaviour.

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TG: What's your advice for students?

MB: Get involved in research. They should care about the learning, and the interactivity that goes with learning. I was taking courses during my last year while I was writing my dissertation. Courses are fun! You don't learn very much when you just sit in your office and read. Ideas come out of interaction. I actually wish more people worked in the department. In Berkeley the offices were laid out in a circle, so I used to go for a walk a couple of times a day and visit people.

TG: You have a New Zealand connection; can you tell us about that?

MB: It was through an NSF program called the East Asian Pacific Summer Institute. You had to find a host somewhere in East Asia or the Pacific and propose a project. It was great – everyone should go to NZ to do research! It was a great experience to see another department and to be there for an extended period of time. Plus I got great data. New Zealanders give good data.

TG: Do you have advice for students about the job application process?

MB: Start applying before you're ready so that you get used to rejection. I went on the job market in the fourth year of my PhD program. I ended up having a couple of LSA interviews and had to go give a job talk. It was low pressure, I had no dissertation done, these people were crazy to be interviewing me. That gives you a feel for how the process works. My advice is to have fun.

If you don't kind of enjoy the job interview process, that means you don't enjoy your research.

TG: Do you feel overworked?

MB: Yes, but not to the point where I'm losing my mind. I LIKE to work.

TG: What's it like being the youngest faculty member?

MB: I've decided not to care about it.

TG: What about living in Canada?

MB: As a Minnesotan, we're the most Canadian state. Vancouver is a 50-50 combination of Northern California and Minnesota, culturally and in its climate. I felt at home immediately.

Consultant Spotlight

Beatrice Bullshields is a Blackfoot elder who was born in Cardston, Alberta, in 1945. She moved to Vancouver in 1974 and since then, she has been going back and forth to Alberta to visit her family. Currently, she is working as a language consultant in the Linguistics Department at UBC. Before, she worked as a social worker on the East side at the Native Family Support Work. She also has done some stone carving work in Coquitlam.

Beatrice started to work as a language consultant in 1999 when she was introduced by her cousin

Brodrick Prairie Chicken to UBC linguists. In 2005 she participated in a Field Methods course taught by professor Martina Wiltschko. She remembers that in her first class she felt overwhelmed because she had never taught in a classroom setting, but once she got to know the students she felt better. Now, she really enjoys the work. She feels proud of the students because all the hard work and effort they put in to learn her language.

Being a language consultant has been a very good experience that has enriched her life experience, mainly with respect to her own language. "In the past (in Boarding School) I was prohibited to speak my language and many times I got punished for doing it." Being able to teach her language again to other people has had a good impact on her.

Blackfoot is a hard language and having these students willing to learn it is a good thing, and she gives them the credit for doing it. Beatrice is also happy because during this process of teaching her language she has made herself improve her way of speaking her own language. Because she has to think about her "words", about what she is saying. "Teaching my language makes me feel that I am worthwhile."

One of Beatrice's plans for the future is to go back to Alberta to be close to her family.

"Mokakit ki iikakimat" ("Be smart and try hard")

Staff Spotlight

Edna Dharmaratne is the Departmental Administrator for the UBC Department of Linguistics.

The Gosling: How long have you been working at the University of British Columbia?

Edna Dharmaratne: I have been working for UBC for 24 years.

TG: When did you start working for the Linguistics department?

ED: I started in 1998.

TG: How did you get this job? Did you start out as the administrator?

ED: I was working for the nursing department but wanted to move, so when I saw the ad, I contacted the then secretary. She told me the people were nice, so I applied. I worked as the secretary for 9 years and in 2007 a part time position was created. So a secretary was hired to work with me, however in 2008 the position was made permanent- that was when I became the administrator.

TG: What do you find most challenging about your job?

ED: At the beginning, the job was a one-person position, there was no holiday for me, which meant working more hours. Also if you are the only one, then anything that goes wrong becomes your problem (responsibility). That period was very challenging.

TG: How do you combine the job with your private life?

ED: I see the Ling. Dept. as part of my extended family in that the job has become part of my private life.

I tell the students to come to me if they have any problems. I know the faculty members and their needs, so that is not work for me. I don't separate the job from my private life - we are all a big family.

TG: What has been the most surprising thing about your job and why?

ED: There are a lot of things that surprise me but I can't share that -this being a newsletter...but there are things I like a lot that make me stay.

TG: You wanted to leave?

ED: There were a couple of times I wanted to leave but what made me stay was the students. I liked the fact that people come from different parts of the world to study. I always want to see them finish.

TG: What is your most memorable day at work and what happened?

ED: There was a day one of our Master's students had to submit her thesis, it was the deadline. Her disc wasn't working. FOGS had said that 4:30 was the deadline, if by then she had not submitted it, she would have to register for the following term. She called and told me this, so I told her to email me part of the thesis. I went to FOGS with the uncompleted thesis at about 4:25 and told them I was Christine. They told me I wasn't Christine, but I insisted that I was and was presenting my thesis. They started arguing with me, but I stood my ground and told them that Christine had beaten the deadline so they should accept the thesis whether I was her or not. As we went on with the argument Christine came and submitted the full thesis.

I was very happy because she didn't have to register for another term and we had achieved our aim.

Another time... there was a colloquium and Lisa [Matthewson] came to call me to come in and listen to the ongoing talk. I asked her why because I don't (typically) listen to the colloquiums. She insisted, so I went in with her... and there I realized they had all contributed to buy me an iPod which had been on my list for a long time. I think Donald [Derrick] told them I needed one, because I had mentioned it to him and made enquiries about it. It was a very expensive iPod and I use it up till today.

TG: What do you find most amusing?

ED: Lots of things ...but I can't share. One thing though is managing people. It is stressful and challenging because everybody is different. What makes one person happy makes another cry. One would think that since they are all interested in one area, Linguistics, they would be similar, but that is not the case...people are so different.

TG: What stresses you out most?

ED: Disharmony. I am of the view that the department should have one voice and be a family. When that does not happen it stresses me out. As for work- I can handle it, but disharmony stresses me a lot.

TG: When was your happiest day at work and why?

ED: It was when I won the Dean's Staff award for excellence. I was the first person from the Faculty of Arts to win that award. It was amazing!

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Afterwards I requested they give more - it used to be just one - they agreed and now they give about six.

TG: Has anything ever saddened you at work?

ED: What saddens me is when the students - who have become family - leave. I am always happy for them for finishing, but a part of me gets sad that I might not see them again.

TG: Have there been any changes in the kinds of things you do as the administrator?

ED: There are always things changing - like more students, more programmes, more finances. When I joined the department, there were 6 faculty members and 12 graduate students; now we have 14 faculty and 56 or so graduate students....so then things change.

TG: What do you think is likely to change over the next five years?

ED: Probably nothing will change for the next 5 years. I would like the department to become bigger, but the way financing is I don't think there will be any change soon.

TG: As you work with faculty, staff and students, what trend do you see with anything?

ED: I worked with other departments like Medicine Science etc. There were a lot of entitlement issues. The faculty here treats everyone as equals. It was not like that where I worked before - students were students, faculty were faculty, staff were staff - everyone stayed in their place. Here people are treated as friends.

TG: If you are not at work for some reason, who takes your place?

ED: No one.

TG: So the work waits for you?

ED: Yes. I also take care of work at home - the good aspect of having a laptop. I can always work at home if I am not here.

TG: What was your dream work as you were growing up, to be an administrator?

ED: I always wanted to be a journalist - because I am not afraid of anything. Because I come from a third world country, I didn't have the opportunity. I wanted to be a journalist and go to places even where there are wars or whatever.... but being here is what I have. At one point in time I had heard women were being stoned in a certain country, so I wanted to go there to expose those doing that.... but I didn't get the chance. As I said, I have been planted here so I am growing here - one has to grow wherever they are.

TG: If you weren't the administrator of Linguistics Department, what would you be doing instead?

ED: I would want to work with the SPCA (for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).

TG: What do you do aside from working as the administrator of the Linguistics Department?

ED: At church I cook for the homeless people downtown. I have a food bank, I even have one here for the students, and I collect things for the food bank at Surrey.

TG: What else would you want to add?

ED: What I want to add is that I am very proud of our students. Some come here with a lot of hardships - finances, family issues, all sort of problems. For example some of our students have family members who are sick but they all work hard to finish on a good note.

They inspire me a lot. For me, it is a privilege to work here - for students have all sort of problems but they always finish well... 5-6 years isn't easy but they go through successfully. So it is really a privilege to be part of this.

Graduate Student Spotlight

Patrick Littell is a third-year student in the PhD program. At the moment he's writing his second Qualifying Paper on the syntax of focus in Kwak'wala. His future research plans are to look hard at both semantics-syntax and intonational phonology in Kwak'wala, and the interactions between them.

The Gosling: Why did you come to UBC?

Patrick Littell: More than any other school I looked at, this department seemed to be the one that most embodied what I thought was very important (and that a number of places didn't seem to agree with), that fieldwork has to be informed by theory in order that we ask the most interesting questions and that theory has to have a rich empirical testbed in unfamiliar languages.

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The other thing was that when I was accepted here, Hotze [Rullmann] wrote to me and he said “based on what you said in your personal statement, I’m sure that you will be most happy here.” And when I mentioned that any other university accepted me, he was always quick to point out that I wouldn’t be as happy there! And he was right.

TG: Did UBC live up to your expectations?

PL: Yes – I think UBC linguistics does a very good job of advertising what they really are and what kind of research they are interested in.

TG: Have there been any surprises?

PL: I was surprised that at least for me, fieldwork means driving out to the east part of the city and hanging out in living rooms. The main ‘hardship’ I undergo is bad rush-hour traffic and a lack of wireless access!

TG: Any ideas for changes in the department?

PL: A few of us have been talking about needing a nice comfy chair for the fieldwork room. And glossy pictures of the consultants, headshots with signatures. We should re-model the fieldwork room to be our VIP room, to show the extent to which we value the expertise of the people we bring there. At the very least, glossy autographs of all our language celebrities.

TG: What are your plans for after your PhD?

PL: Sleep for six months.



TG: What are your thoughts about the field of linguistics these days? Where we’re headed?

PL: I think we’re in a very interesting time because there’s more interesting dialogue between subfields and traditions and between different disciplines. A lot of the most interesting work coming out now amalgamates ways of working and perspectives that in the past people may have considered completely incompatible at a fundamental level.

For example, two fields that very rarely talk are field linguists and computational linguists. That’s a place where the conversation is just getting started. I think is a valuable conversation because the computational linguists have a lot of tools that would address some of the central problems that we’re facing in the field, because we’re working under deadline and a lot of times we get more data than we truly have time to analyze.

I’ve been spending a lot of time looking at ways that the techniques of computational linguistics can both increase the speed at which we can collect, analyze and present data and allow us to do things with that data that we wouldn’t have thought of until the tools were available.

TG: Like what?

PL: Automatic morpheme breakdowns and glossing, converting all of Boas’s Kwak’wala materials into a modern orthography, or converting between orthographies. In Kwak’wala there are four orthographies and it’s a political decision which one you choose. This choice is now embedded into Joel [Dunham]’s database for Kwak’wala, you can choose which orthography to see the data in.

Ayako Moewaki

Ayako Moewaki is in the second year of her Masters at UBC. She is originally from Japan.

The Gosling: What are you working on for your thesis?

Ayako Moewaki: Quantifiers in Kwak’wala.

TG: Was that what you had planned to work on when you came here?

AM: No! I was planning to work on Japanese.

TG: Why did you change your mind?

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AM: I took the field methods class and I found it was interesting and it's also important. It's more important than studying my own language, because I can use my native intuition any time. Also, the department has strengths in fieldwork and I don't know whether I will be able to stay here after my Masters, so now is the time to do this kind of work.

TG: Why did you originally come to Vancouver?

AM: After doing my BA in Japan, I came to Vancouver to study English, in order to work in business. I became interested in their teaching methods, which are very different from Japanese teaching methods, even compared to my university, which is famous for its foreign language programs.

The teachers in my English language school, especially those with a linguistics background, tended not to focus just on English grammar, but more on differences between languages, and I found that interesting. So, when I graduated from the school and got an opportunity to take UBC undergrad courses, I started taking linguistics classes.

Then, when I took Henry [Davis]'s Ling 201 class, I understood where my English teachers were coming from. Henry's teaching style was interesting; he gave us difficult but intriguing puzzles which I really wanted to solve. So Henry made me think that I wanted to become a linguist, especially a semanticist (which is interesting since he is a syntactician).

So I am quite happy to be working with Henry for my thesis, but I also want to learn more about other fields within linguistics. I might want to be a phonetician, I just don't know!



I took a phonetics course but it's difficult when I don't have the background knowledge. I had limited background in other areas of linguistics when I started grad school, and I sometimes have a hard time expressing my interest to teachers due to my culture/language problem. I would also like to get a broader perspective from other linguists outside UBC in the future. So I'm planning to apply for PhD programs.

TG: Will you go back to live in Japan?

AM: I'm not planning on that yet!

TG: What do you find are the strengths and weaknesses of our department?

AM: UBC is very different from my Japanese university department, and I like this way. My BA was in French, and we just learnt the language, we didn't do any research. Also all my teachers there were Japanese. Here the teachers have different backgrounds, different native languages, their knowledge is not just based on a Japanese bias, so I find it more interesting.

TG: Do you have any advice for international students coming to UBC/Vancouver?

AM: Especially for Asian people it's a very good place, because there are a lot of Asian people in Vancouver. I don't feel like it's 'abroad' so much, compared to other cities.

Undergraduate Student Spotlight

Connor Mayer graduated very recently with a BA in Linguistics from UBC, and is now studying towards a BSc in Computer Science.

The Gosling: Why did you decide to do the Computer Science degree?

Connor Mayer: It's something I've been interested in, and it's also a way of hedging my bets between academia and the normal world.

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One of the reasons I'm interested in computer science is because it has a lot in common with linguistics. In the context of language, both are trying to capture this real-world behaviour using some kind of model (formal, statistical, etc.), but in computer science it's taken one step further into implementation of the model to perform some kind of useful/beneficial function. I like this practical aspect. I also think that it's useful for people in linguistics, particularly phonetics, to have some kind of computer chops since it tends to save a lot of time when you're analyzing data.

TG: How long does it take to add the BSc?

CM: About two years, but I might take a little longer because of doing Co-op.

TG: What will you do for the Co-op?

CM: I don't know yet. Something in computer science. Ideally I'd like to do something related to language in some way, but people get hired by cellphone companies or software companies etc.

TG: Who is doing stuff related to language in the Computer Science department?

CM: There's a graduate class in computational linguistics that I'm going to try to take in the future, offered by Guiseppe Carenini. He works on automatic summaries, among other things.

TG: How come you came to UBC from Edmonton in the first place?

CM: Partially just to leave Edmonton. Also my girlfriend – now my fiancée! – went to UBC for film production, so I came along.

TG: You still seem to be hanging out in the ISRL (Inter-disciplinary Speech Research Laboratory)?

CM: Yes, I've got some unfinished projects. I worked for Eric [Bateson] over the summer in his lab, and Bryan [Gick] and I have two papers that we're trying to finish before Christmas.

TG: What were you doing for Eric?

CM: It was mostly data analysis and working on this experiment on bilabials, first whether people can tell the difference based on visual info, and whether computers can. There's a perception study (which Alexis Black and Jen Abel are working on) and a production study. In the production one we're analyzing the video with optical flow to see if there are systematic differences between different bilabials.

TG: Are you planning to go to grad school?

CM: I haven't decided yet. I'll definitely work for a while first, take a break and then decide.

TG: Why did you end up doing phonetics when you got about 99% in the semantics class you took with me?

CM: I do think all parts of linguistics are cool. The phonetics was the part that was probably the most challenging for me. Also when I was taking Ling 316 I got hired as an RA in Bryan's lab, and being able to do that practically made me more interested in it.

TG: Do you have any comments about having been a linguistics major at UBC?

CM: It's a really nice department to be in because it's small and tight-knit. I don't have much objective experience but from what I've heard it's a good department. I wish linguistics had a statistics course. I ended up learning from the school of hard knocks, but having some kind of grounding would have saved me from a lot of errors.

If I had advice for students it would be to try to get involved in projects that are happening because there are lots of professors that are looking for people to get involved.

My other piece of advice would be to take field methods. It's a pretty incredible experience being able to do work on an endangered language.

We're so lucky to be in Vancouver right now, not many other places have that kind of opportunity. It makes you better at everything that you're interested in. It takes it outside of the classroom.

Previous Graduate Student Spotlight

Carrie Gillon got her PhD from UBC in 2006, took up a postdoc at Memorial immediately after that, and right after that was offered her current position as an Assistant Professor at Arizona State University. This fall she is spending a research semester in Vancouver to continue her earlier research on Squamish Salish.

The Gosling: How is life post-PhD?

Carrie Gillon: Much better! Not having a thesis hanging over your head is much better.



TG: How is your current department different from ours at UBC?

CG: We are not just linguists. In our department we have everything from creative writing to linguistics, literature, rhetoric and composition.

TG: Was it an advantage to you in getting that job that you work on native American languages?

CG: Yes, my position was for someone who works on the semantics of native American languages. Working on native languages is definitely a plus. We have another position right now for a syntactician, an applied linguist, who works on native American languages.

TG: What do you think of the state of linguistics these days?

CG: I think it's very vibrant; there are so many different things you can do. The field is getting bigger and bigger, there are more people, more fields, more interesting questions, more interaction with other fields like psychology and philosophy. I feel like there's so much out there now, setting aside the whole recession which did slow things down. It feels like jobs are picking up again.

TG: What is your advice for students currently in a graduate program?

CG: Don't be afraid to apply for jobs that are not in a linguistics department. I was a little wary about joining an English department, but it's okay. They try as much as possible to look at you as a linguist and not as a literature person. Also, don't get discouraged if it feels like you're not getting anything done when writing your thesis. Sometimes you have to sit on a problem and mull it over.

TG: Are you supervising any PhD students?

CG: Not yet, because we're not allowed to be someone's chair until we have tenure. I'm on committees though.

TG: What's Arizona like?

CG: Good and bad. It's beautiful (outside of Phoenix!). I love the desert, the sun, the saguaro cactuses. Did you know they have to be 75 years old before they grow an arm?! And the people are very friendly. You can buy a nice house for \$150,000, so that's a bit different from the Vancouver housing situation.

One bad thing about Arizona is you have to have a car to live. It's very conservative/libertarian so that's doesn't fit my political views. You can carry guns into bars. In my county we have a famous sheriff who makes all the inmates wear pink and makes them sleep in tents outside in summer.

TG: What are you working on these days ?

CG: I'm still working on Innu-Aiman and Inuktitut because of my project on bare nouns. I'm excited to be working on Squamish again. We'll be looking at evidentials. There are a couple of epistemic-looking elements to compare, and you can stack them which is cool.

Jason Brown

Graduation from UBC: Ph.D. 2008

Thesis: Theoretical aspects of Gitksan phonology

Current Location: University of Auckland

Current position: Lecturer (equivalent to Assistant Prof. in North America)

The Gosling: What do you enjoy the most about your new position?

Jason Brown: There are a lot of things: I have a new lab under construction. All I ever teach is phonology and field methods. My office has a killer view and is next door to Miriam Meyerhoff's. Morning tea-time. The research funding is good. I could go on...

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TG: What are the challenges?

JB: The department I'm in has been a very long time without a phonologist, and so there's a bit of building that is going on. But it's positive. I've also found there's layers and layers of bureaucracy. It's taken me a while to learn the ropes (especially as I started my position in semester 2 of the academic year), but my colleagues have been extremely helpful in getting me settled into the university system.

TG: Current research projects?

JB: I was just awarded a grant to investigate consonant harmony. I'm also beginning work on Pacific languages, including Samoan, and I'm conducting a survey of Micronesian languages. At the moment I'm also supervising a summer scholar who is working on a large corpus of phonological data from Polish immigrants acquiring English.

TG: Messages to the department?

JB: To new/recently graduated students: the job market is tough, and getting a job will probably be a fight. So don't give up right away, but also don't be afraid to have a backup plan in case you don't get the type of employment you're aiming for. To students completing BAs/MAs: come work on your MA/PhD with us in Auckland!

If you see James Thompson in the hall, give him a hug.

Tyler Peterson

Graduation from UBC: Ph.D. 2010

Thesis: Epistemic modality and evidentiality in Gitksan at the semantics-pragmatics interface

Current Location: Leiden University Centre for Linguistics, The Netherlands

Current Position: Post-doctoral researcher

The Gosling: What do you enjoy the most about your new position?

Tyler Peterson: The department here has a very supportive and engaging environment. They also have this nice tradition here where they stop for coffee breaks (like a regular job!) and frequently have lunch together. This means people are always interacting, and it's easy to get to know what everyone is working on and your mutual interests. It's also quite diverse in terms of the languages people work on and areas of study. You have historical, descriptive, typology people rubbing shoulders with the hardcore minimalists! So, you can always fit into a conversation.

TG: What are the challenges?

TP: Post-docs at Leiden have many of the responsibilities as permanent faculty, including supervising dissertations. It's an excellent experience, but I went from supervisee to supervisor (!) literally within a couple weeks.

But the biggest challenge by far is being away from the language I work on (Gitksan). I miss not having regular meetings with my consultants and going to the community - it seems so far away sometimes.

TG: Current projects?

TP: I'm currently a part of a three year project on evidentials. But I have my own project on mirativity, for which I just applied for a grant. Also, they like collaborating a lot here, so I'm involved in a couple other projects that are related to mine: one on exclamation, and another one looking at the semantics of different predicates embedded under modals.

TG: Messages to the department?

TP: To the students: there is an end to a PhD!! And it's really only the beginning of greater things! There are many interesting possibilities for a life afterwards, where you can elaborate and build on the research you started with your PhD. I was always told this, and I can confirm it's true.

To the faculty and staff: it seemed hard sometimes, but I'm beginning to really realize how well you prepared me.

I've talked to a lot of different people, and they all hold our program in high regard. It's nice to be a part of that. Good luck with all your work.

Karsten Koch

Graduated from UBC: Ph.D. 2008

Thesis: Intonation and Focus in Nl̓eʔkepmxcin (Thompson River Salish)

Current location: Department of Linguistics at the University of Calgary.

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Current Position:

I have been an Instructor here since September. Before that, I spent 2 years as a SSHRC Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Zentrum für Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft in Berlin, Germany.

The Gosling: What do you enjoy the most about your new position?

Karsten Koch: I enjoy doing some teaching again after a break from it in the past year.

I am currently teaching introduction to linguistics for undergraduate students, and an advanced seminar in intonation and the phonology/syntax-semantics interfaces for the graduate students here in Calgary.

TG: What are the challenges?

KK: Teaching courses in a new environment always means a lot of prep work. Some of this is just down to the use of different textbooks, a different web system, and different administrative traditions, all things that take time to learn. It's challenging to set aside time for research with a new teaching load, but participating in local conferences and research colloquia always helps.

TG: Current projects?

KK: Yes, I'm working on a two-headed project in Nt̓el̓kəpmxcin (Thompson Salish) discourses. The theoretical goal is to identify how focus sensitive items similar to English *always*, *not*, *happy about*, *especially*, etc. pattern in Thompson Salish; this is a follow-up to work I did on focus sensitive *only*, *also*, and *even* with Malte Zimmermann of the University of Potsdam.

The empirical goal is to record some narratives about life in the old days in Lytton - encountering rattlesnakes while working on the farm, salmon fishing with dipnets, swimming across the Fraser River on a horse (true!).

TG: Messages to the Department?

KK: If you have the chance to do a post-doc somewhere after you graduate, I would highly recommend it. It's a great opportunity to start several research programs, collect plenty of data, cement working relationships with other researchers in your area, and generally have a good time.

For students nearing the end of their program, I would recommend taking the opportunity to teach a course if you get the chance while ABD [all but dissertation]. It's been a very valuable experience to have on the resume when looking for work after graduation. Teaching as a TA in tutorials is also really good experience.

Hi everyone, keep up the good work! Whenever I get the chance to mention relevant research by UBC people at talks or conferences, I do, and it's a tribute to the quality of work coming out of the department that I'm able to do so easily.

Bryan Gick, Donald Derrick (PhD Candidate) and Ian Wilson (PhD Alumnus, Associate Professor at U. Aizu in Japan) have completed the draft for their textbook entitled *Articulatory Phonetics*. It is undergoing external review from the publisher and is expected to be released in 2011. Dr. Gick has also had three papers published in the Proceeding of Acoustics Week in Canada, which was held in Victoria last month: "Perceptual Effects of Visual Evidence of the Airstream" (with C. Mayer and T. Weigel, UBC Undergraduate Students, and D.H. Whalen), "Two Phonological Segments, One Motor Event: Evidence for Speech-Motor Disparity from English Flap Production" (with D. Derrick and I. Stavness, UBC Graduate Students) and "Speaker-Specific Place of Articulation: Idiosyncratic Targets for Japanese Coda Nasal" (with N. Yamane, UBC Graduate Student).

Gunnar Ólafur Hansson had a book published this year with the University of California Press, entitled *Consonant Harmony: Long-Distance Interaction in Phonology*. It is a revised version of his 2001 dissertation. Soon, the book will also be downloadable for free from the following website: <http://escholarship.org/uc/ucpress_ucpl>. Dr. Hansson's survey article "Diachronic explanations of sound patterns" is being reprinted in the 2nd edition of John Goldsmith's *Handbook of Phonological Theory* (currently in press). Dr. Hansson has also received a SSHRC grant (with Doug Pulleyblank as Co-Principal Investigator) to investigate various aspects of root-internal phonology and its relationship to the phonology of larger domains.

Several graduate students have been involved with this project. Finally, Nora Oppenheim, whose B.A. Honours thesis Dr. Hansson supervised last year, won one of the prestigious Baggett Fellowships at the University of Maryland, where she will do research on sign language perception for a year.

Lisa Matthewson is working on modality and mood. She had a paper on St'at'imcets mood published in *Semantics and Pragmatics* and has a paper on methods in cross-linguistic semantics that will appear in the new *Handbook of Semantics*. Dr. Matthewson has received grants to create storyboards for semantic fieldwork. A website is being developed where the public can access these storyboards. Dr. Matthewson is also supervising students working on evidentials in courtroom language, modality in Blackfoot, aspect in Okanagan, event modification and distributivity in Blackfoot, the progressive in English and Icelandic, and free choice in Russian.

Douglas Pulleyblank will be giving a talk at a conference called, "Phonology in the 21st Century: In Honour of Glyne Piggott". This conference will be held at McGill University in May, 2011. He will also be teaching a course with Diana Archangeli at the Linguistic Society of America Institute in Boulder, Colorado in July, 2011. Dr. Pulleyblank and Eun-Sook Kim have had a paper recently published in *Linguistic Inquiry* on Nuu-chah-nulth. He also has two papers in preparation on Yoruba. One is on tone (co-authored with Rose-Marie Dechaine,

Bryan Gick and Oladiipo Ajiboye (University of Lagos)) and the other is on nasality in a dialect of Yoruba (co-authored with Oladiipo Ajiboye). Dr. Pulleyblank is currently working on various aspects of harmony, with an eye to ways in which a model of Emergent Grammar makes predictions that are different from Universal Grammar. His work on this topic involves collaboration with Diana Archangeli of the University of Arizona and Jeff Mielke of the University of Ottawa.

Martina Wiltschko and **Rose-Marie Dechaine** received a funded standard research grant from SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada). They are studying syntactic interface relations: Evidence from 3 Algonquian languages. This is the first project which seeks to investigate syntactic differences between 3 Algonquian languages (Blackfoot, Plains Cree, and Ojibwe). It involves researchers from across Canada: M. Wiltschko (Principal Investigator), R.-M. Dechaine (Co-Investigator), Chris Wolfart (UManitoba, Co-Investigator), Eric Mathieu (UOttawa, Co-Investigator), Elizabeth Ritter (UCalgary, Collaborator), and Glyne Piggott (McGill, Collaborator).

Penelope Bacsfalvi recently published an article in the *Canadian Journal of Speech Language Pathology and Audiology* on habilitation of 'r' for individuals with profound hearing loss and disordered speech: Bacsfalvi, P. (2010).

Attaining the lingual components of /r/ with ultrasound for three adolescents with cochlear implants.

Canadian Journal of Speech Language Pathology and Audiology, 34(3), 206-217. In addition, in November 2010 she co-presented at the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) Annual Conference with Dr. Fiona Gibbon and Dr. Bill Katz, "Application of Biofeedback to Motor Speech Disorders" discussing the use of ultrasound in speech habilitation. She also co-taught a short course: "Interventions for Speech Sound Disorders". This short course provided an overview of 20 evidence-based intervention approaches for Speech Sound Disorders in children. Penelope also contributed to a book chapter with Dr. May Bernhardt and Dr. Joe Stemberger, "Vowel Intervention" in *Interventions for Speech Sound Disorders in Children*, 2010, Ed. Williams, McLeod & McCauley.

Department Events

Hudu Fusheini and Calisto Mudzingwa defended their Ph.D. dissertations this past summer on "Dagbani tongue-root harmony : a formal account with ultrasound investigation" and "Shona morphophonemics : repair strategies in Karanga and Zezuru".

Peter Jacobs and Atushi Fujimori defended their dissertations on "Control in Skwxwú7mesh" and "The correspondence between vowel quality and verbal telicity in Yamoto-Japanese", respectively.

Solveiga Armoskaite defended her dissertation in December on "The destiny of roots in Blackfoot and Lithuanian".

Our undergraduate association SALSA (Speech and Linguistics Students Association) hosted its annual Wine and Cheese night, which was a success.

40th Anniversary Event : a pictorial review

We held our 40th Anniversary Event at Totem Field studios in April 2010.

Over 120 alumni, faculty, staff and students attended. Here are some of our photos.

We hope you will join us for some of our future alumni events. Stay tuned....



Gunnar presenting a poster



Joe in traditional Slovenian clothing



Live music



Ruby, Henry and Jen



Susannah and Soraya



Traditional dancing



Happy birthday Linguistics!



Hannah and Stacey

Grad Student News

Heather Bliss presented a co-authored paper with Elizabeth Ritter and Martina Wiltschko at the 42nd Algonquian Conference in St. Johns, Nfld called "A Comparison of Theme-Marking in Blackfoot and Nishnaabemwin."

Chenhao Chiu presented a paper with Molly Babel titled "Effects of syllable positions on Taiwanese Mandarin sibilant perception" at the International Symposium on Chinese Spoken Language Processing (ISCSLP 2010), Nov. 29 – Dec. 3, 2010, at National Cheng Kung University, Tainan, Taiwan.

-- presented a paper titled "Attentional weighting of Polish and Taiwanese Mandarin sibilant perception" at The 2010 Canadian Linguistics Association Annual Conference, May 29 – 30, 2010, at Concordia University, Montréal, QC.

-- presented a poster titled "Towards a dynamic biomechanical model of the face for speech production" at the Biomedical Engineering Workshop, Nov. 24, 2010, at the University of British Columbia.

(continued on page 13)

Christiana Christodoulou presented “Verbal inflection in Cypriot Greek Down Syndrome: New Data, New Perspectives” at *Language Disorders in Greek 3*, in Lefkosia, Cyprus, June 2010.

-- presented with Martina Wiltschko “Function without Content: Evidence from Greek Subjunctive na.” at *The Language Design, Biolinguistics Network*, in Montreal, Canada, May 2010.

Analia Gutierrez received a Jacobs Research Grant to do fieldwork in Nivaclé, Paraguay summer 2010.

-- received a UBC Graduate Student International Research Mobility Award to visit the Institute for Linguistic Research at the Universidad Nacional de Formosa, where she attended a workshop on the typology of the Chaco Languages, coordinated by Dr. Bernard Comrie.

Patrick Littell chaperoned the high-school U.S. Linguistics Olympiad team to the international finals in Stockholm July 2010 (<http://www.ioling.org/2010/>), where they won six medals including a gold, the highest cumulative score trophy, and three Best Solution prizes.

John Lyon was published in *Northwest Journal of Linguistics* 4.2:1-106 (2010) with a paper titled "Lawrence Nicodemus's Snehitsu'umshtsn File Card Collection in Dictionary Format".

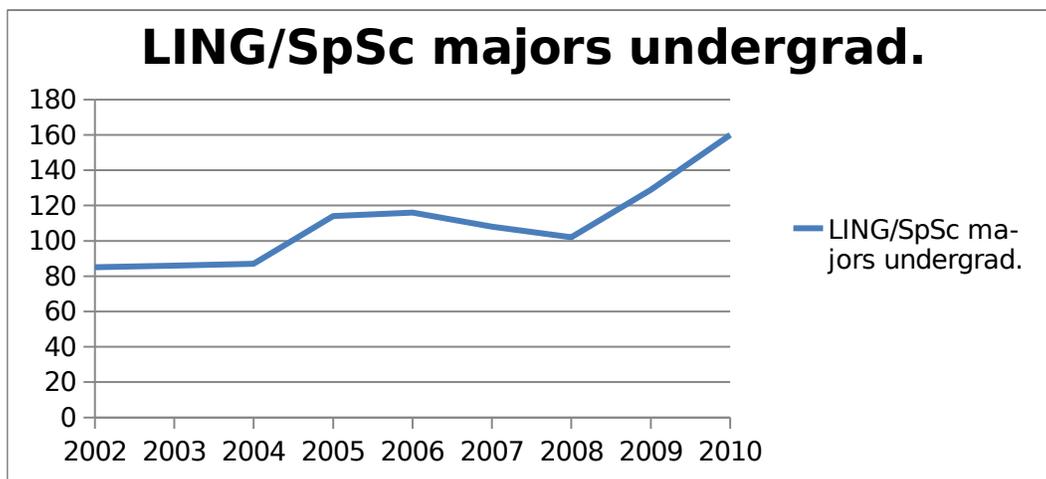
Amélia Reis Silva received the UBC Graduate Student International Research Mobility Award to spend one month abroad doing research activities in summer 2010. She went to Universidade de São Paulo in Brazil, and participated in the VIII Workshop on Formal Linguistics, held on August 6-7, 2010, where she presented a paper titled "The expression of modality in Blackfoot".

-- gave an invited talk, "Semantic variation in the Blackfoot modal system", at the Universidade Estadual de Campinas, where she did her Master's.

Sonja Thoma received a 10-month scholarship from September 2010 to July 2011 from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), for which she is researching so-called Discourse Particles in the Bavarian-German dialect spoken south of Munich.

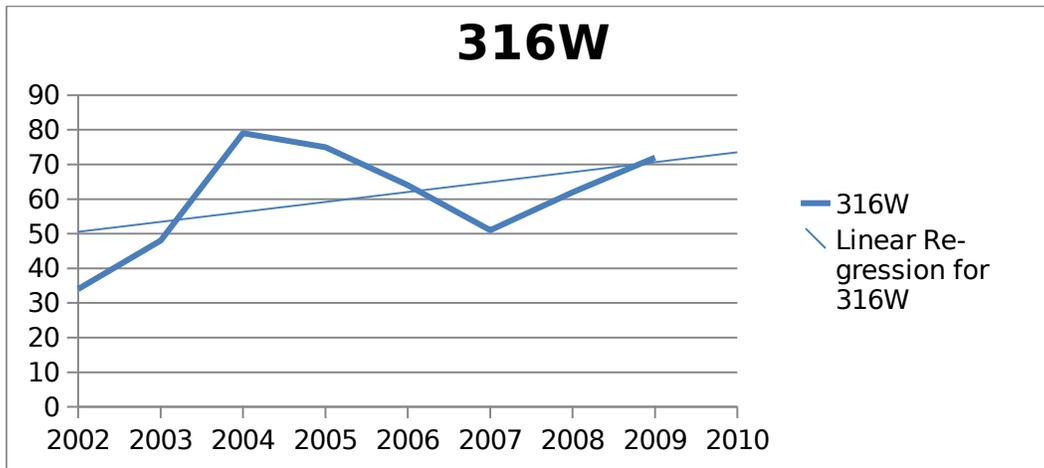
Departmental Trends in Linguistics

Our department is growing. This issue we include some stats from our undergraduate division.

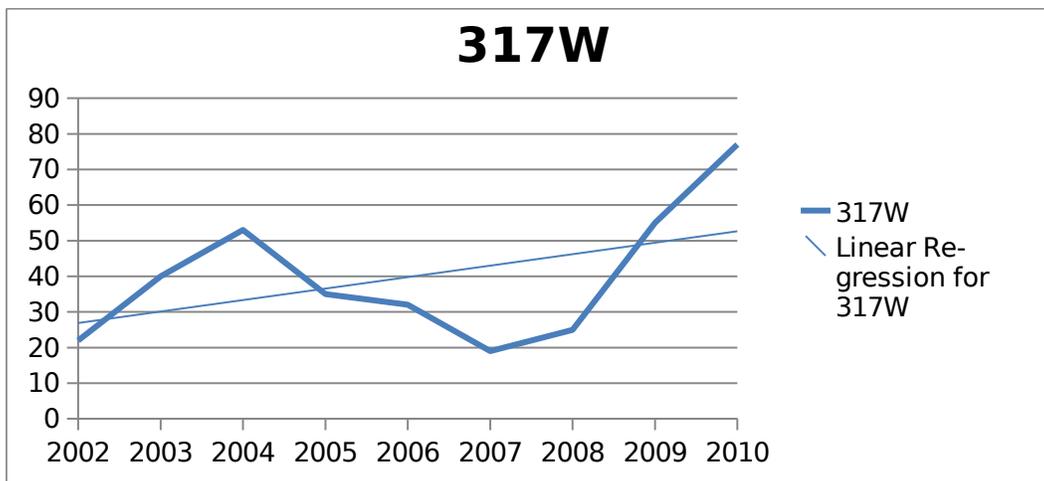


Undergraduate students declared as either Linguistics or Speech Sciences

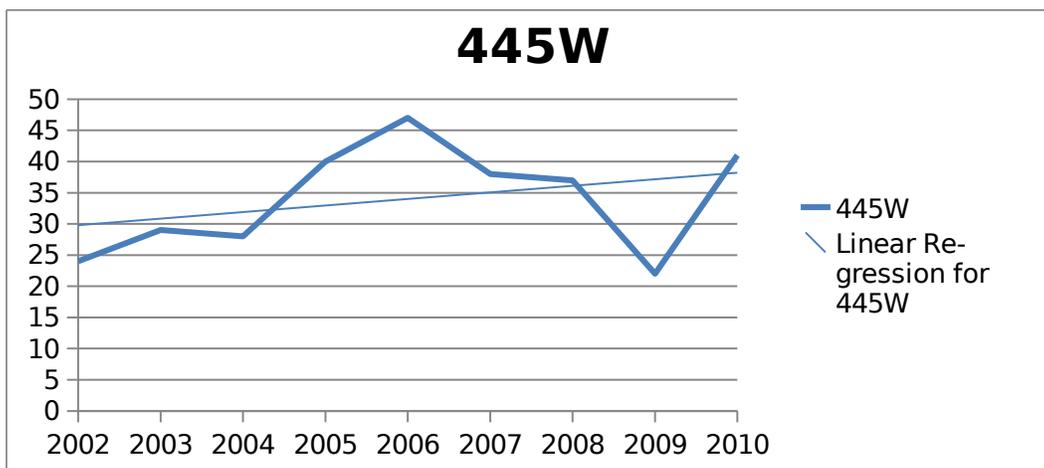
Winter term enrolment numbers for LING 316 (Introduction to Phonetics)



Winter term enrolment numbers for LING 317 (Instrumental Phonetics)



Winter term enrolment numbers for LING 445 (Sociolinguistics)



Advertisements

The **Online Linguistic Database** (OLD) is an open source web application designed to help groups of researchers share their linguistic fieldwork data. The system was designed by Joel Dunham with technical contributions by Patrick Littell, Connor Mayer and Michael McAuliffe and user feedback provided by users of the various OLD instances: the Blackfoot Language Database (BLD), the Kwak'wala OLD, the Ktunaxa OLD and the Okanagan OLD. Martina Wiltschko (with collaborators Strang Burton (Stó:lo Nation), Elizabeth Ritter (UofC Linguistics) and Giuseppe Carenini (UBC CPSC)) has been awarded a SSHRC Image, Text, Sound and Technology grant ("Development of an online linguistic database and fieldwork data-sharing application") to fund further development of the OLD and to add data to the BLD. If you would like to learn more about or get involved with this exciting project, please visit the OLD web site (<http://www.onlinelinguisticdatabase.org>) or contact Joel Dunham (jrwdunham@gmail.com).

Newsletter Committee:

Penelope Bacsfalvi
Lisa Matthewson
Michael McAuliffe

Contributors:

Ruby Becky
James Crippen
Heidi Johnson
Stacey Menzies
Amélia Reis Silva

And special thanks to Martina Wiltschko for the name of our newsletter!!