LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

As we head into the autumn 2003 quarter, I’m pleased to report in the Chair’s column on activities of the Linguistics Department during the past spring and summer. I hope that it will reach our alumni, supporters and community associates and draw them to stay in touch with us. We were disappointed to receive very little feedback from the two issues mailed in August, 2002 and March, 2003. We would like to get all of your email addresses to keep you posted with electronic announcements. Please take a moment to send your email address to phoneme@u.washington.edu and to include the addresses of other friends of Linguistics.

We spent an especially busy spring hosting an international conference on semantics (SALT); sponsoring two major Walker-Ames lecturers, Deborah Cameron and Ray Jackendoff, welcoming 150 alumni and friends to our 40th anniversary celebration; and honoring our BA, MA, PhC and PhD recipients, one of whom was the Dean’s Medalist for the Humanities. Another notable point this year is that the $500,000 endowed professorship by Howard and Frances Nostrand to the Department of Linguistics has passed the $250,000 threshold and Fritz Newmeyer has been named Nostrand Professor. Let me detail some of these highlights.

This past year, Linguistics faculty have been recognized nationally and internationally for their research and professional service. All faculty members gave papers at institutions of note in Europe, Asia and the Americas during this time. Professor Newmeyer—in addition to publishing numerous articles and giving a dozen invited talks in four countries—finished his term as President of the Linguistic

DEPARTMENT RECEIVES GIFTS

Bauer donation
We want to thank Lois and Alan Bauer for generously donating one hundred shares of Microsoft stock to the departments of Linguistics and Germanics. Linguistics has directed its half, $1,200, into a symposium series beginning this fall (see Symposium, p. 4) and into faculty development. The symposium series brings together research in computational linguistics from Germanics, Linguistics and Microsoft. Alums from the two departments currently employed at Microsoft—Michael Gamon, James Lyle and Britta Simon—See Bauer, p. 4

Smith bequest
The Department gratefully acknowledges a $3,000 bequest from Helen Strangeland Smith, who died in Enumclaw, WA on July 14, 2003 at the age of 95. Mrs. Smith was born in Seattle on April 16, 1908 and graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Washington in 1929, where she was a member of Alpha Phi sorority. She later pursued graduate study at the University of Berlin and upon her return married Rufus Clark Smith in Sacramento, CA in 1938.

She resided in Enumclaw for over 50 years and was

Editor’s note
We want to express our appreciation to Paula Johnson for her creative talent and the many hours of labor she donated to development of the newsletter and to editing its first two issues. We wish her all the best as she passes on the editorship in order to pursue other endeavors.

Jim Armagost
Editor
Society of America. Professor Brame published two co-authored books and one critical edition, and Professor Hargus—who gave the Belcourt Lecture at the University of Manitoba—co-edited and contributed to a volume on Athabaskan Prosody. Overall the ten faculty produced 14 articles in refereed journals and 24 chapters in collections. Professor Kaisse continues her work as the principal editor of Phonology, the flagship publication in her field.

We made substantial progress in the development of Computational Linguistics, hiring Emily Bender (PhD Stanford University) to fill the position in 2003-2004 while we search the permanent position. John Goldsmith, who had accepted the computational position last year, returned to the University of Chicago in Winter 2002 and by February decided that—for a variety of reasons—he would decline our offer and instead remain in Chicago. The College restored the position to the Department as a temporary appointment for 2003-2004, and we were quite fortunate in attracting Dr. Bender. She is poised to move forward on the many initiatives that have been started this year to create the new computational linguistics program. We are establishing ties to UW Outreach to create a stand-alone MA that is financially self-sustaining, and we continue to foster relations with Computer Science, Electrical Engineering and Microsoft. Next year, in addition to Dr. Bender’s computational courses, we are offering an evening course on Perl programming.

Our students, both undergraduate and graduate, are of very high caliber, as evidenced by awards they have received. Six of the 35 graduates (17%) of this year’s BAs were nominated as Dean’s medalists, while 16 (46%) were invited to join Phi Beta Kappa. Undergraduate Juliane Gust was one of only four Dean’s Medalists in the College of Arts & Sciences. The superiority of our graduate students was shown in several awards. Susannah Levi won an AAUW year-long award, while seven other grad students won summer and year-long FLAS awards.

Interdisciplinary activity included involvement with a number of other departments and the Simpson Center for the Humanities. We maintain a good deal of interaction with the Romance Department where a number of our graduate students teach Spanish, French and Italian. Next year, as in many years past, two of our graduate students will be Assistant to the Coordinator in Seattle and in the Cadiz program. We taught courses cross-listed with Computer Science, Psychology, and Anthropology. In Winter 2003 I taught an interdisciplinary graduate seminar on second language acquisition and bilingualism at the Simpson Center for the Humanities. The Humanities course brought together faculty and graduate students from language-related programs across campus (Linguistics, English, Asian, Scandinavian, SPHSC, College of Education) to study language acquisition and use from several theoretical perspectives. The students were also involved in the John Stanford International School, whose support contributed to the seminar.

Spring was quite busy. In May 2003, the Department sponsored the Semantics and Linguistic Theory Conference organized by Professor Oghihara, who raised over $10,000 from the Graduate School, the Simpson Center, the College of Arts & Sciences, and the departments of Linguistics, Philosophy and Computer Science. The SALT conference attracted presenters from the US and several countries in Europe and Asia. Our sponsorship of two Walker-Ames lecturers—as primary host to Ray Jackendoff (Brandeis University) who delivered the Walker-Ames lecture of May 20, 2003 and secondary host to Deborah Cameron, whose lecture was April 8, 2003—brought collaboration with English, Communications, Women’s Studies, CSE, EE, Anthropology, Music, Psychology and the Simpson Center. We continue our traditional professional/social functions of the weekly colloquium, Autumn dinner and Spring Graduate Celebration in the Faculty Club for students earning the BA, MA or PhD in our programs. Alumni, Friends of Linguistics, and members of the Advisory Board are always welcome at these events. The Department’s 40th Anniversary celebration (June 5-7, 2003) attracted about 150 participants to a Faculty Club reception, a Humanities Center series of talks by returning alumni, a keynote address and a dinner for 100 at my home.

The Department continues to support maintenance of endangered languages. We were able again to offer the course on this topic taught by one of our graduates, Dr. Alice Taff, who works on Alaskan indigenous languages. Dr. Taff and Professor Wright also gained grant support from the University of London to record a range of spontaneous speech of Alaskan endangered languages. Finally, Dr. Taff organized and engaged departmental support for a Breath of Life no-fee workshop held in September. She garnered monetary and in kind support from the University, as well as several days of volunteer time from faculty members and alumni who are experts in language preservation.

Please stay in touch and help us make sure that your Linguistics friends are receiving the newsletter too.
In early June about 150 faculty, students, alums and friends gathered for three days of activities in celebration of the Department’s 40th anniversary. An opening reception included Jim Hoard (PhD ’63) filling in with impromptu jazz when the pianist engaged to perform failed to appear. Presentations by alums Thomas Hess (PhD ’67), Dawn Bates (PhD ’88), Tatsuya Suzuki (PhD ’88), Simin Karimi (PhD ’89), Pascual Masullo (PhD ’92) and Randall Gess (PhD ’96) attracted an overflow audience and held their attention despite the heat. In his keynote address Fritz Newmeyer was not optimistic on the question “Could language be perfect?” Participants enjoyed a buffet dinner at Julia and Michael Herschensohn’s after which some attended an Orchestra Seattle/Seattle Chamber Singers concert. The celebration ended with informal socializing and sightseeing. Many thanks to Hiroshi Yoshiha for the photos. Contact the Chair (herschen@u.washington.edu) to order uncropped full color copies of these and other photos taken at the reception and the Herschensohns’ dinner.
SYMPOSIUM SERIES LAUNCHED

This fall sees the inauguration of The Linguistic Symposium, a joint venture of Linguistics, Germanics and Microsoft. Four linguists—UW alums Michael Gamon and James Lyle (Linguistics) and Britta Simon (Germanics), along with Robin Lombard (PhD ’97, University of Texas-Arlington)—developed the symposium series, which will deal with computational and statistical linguistics and terminology.

A chief aim of the symposium is the establishment of ongoing opportunities for contact between academic and corporate linguists. Organizers are planning for three to four meetings per year, variably at UW and the Microsoft campus. Each will feature a minimum of one speaker from UW and one from Microsoft, with a following reception providing an atmosphere suitable for networking, discussion of current trends in the industry and demonstration of technology developed in academic and business environments.

The anticipated mutual benefits of collaborative endeavors of this type are especially significant and welcome as Linguistics begins its new program in computational linguistics.

BAUER, from p. 1

and fellow employee Robin Lombard planned the series that will treat such topics as machine translation, speech recognition and parsing. In addition to the obvious benefits of this collaborative effort, we feel that it will begin a significant tradition for our developing computational linguistics program.

The Bauers’ gift has also helped faculty gain new software skills. Sharon Hargus, one of our faculty members who specializes in the phonology of indigenous languages, has taken a course in Photoshop thanks to the gift. Sharon finds that she uses more and more graphics in teaching and research. For example, in dictionaries that she writes, she includes scanned photos of cultural items gleaned from anthropological sources (such as a diagram of a fish weir). She wanted to be able to touch up scanned images and determine which graphic formats are best for which purposes, among other functions.

DONATIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT

Donations to the Department such as the Bauers’ and Mrs. Smith’s are extremely important at this time of diminishing state resources. We especially lack support for faculty travel and research help, so we consider ourselves fortunate to have the option of using gifts in this way. We want to stress that every donation, whether large or small, contributes to the support of the Department’s activities and is sincerely appreciated. Please consider becoming a Friend of Linguistics by returning your gift in the enclosed postage paid envelope—or see the back page for online giving.

DEPARTMENT AND COMMUNITY

The Department is committed to mutually beneficial relations with the community.

This commitment has spurred a major effort to contact alumni, donors and the general public. In addition to other forms of interaction, it is hoped that wider appreciation of our role in research, teaching and community involvement will be reflected in an increased number of critically needed donations.

This year’s $3,513 in donations to the Friends of Linguistics nearly matched the $4,140 given last year. These funds help us sponsor colloquia, pay for student travel to conferences and fund special events in the department.

A very significant long range fundraising project is the Nostrand Endowed Professorship in language and cultural competence, a $500,000 gift that will next year be initiated to fund the research of a professor of Linguistics while furthering the vision of the Nostrands. The donation is to be completed over five years by the Nostrands, who have already made a significant gift of over $300,000. Donations to the Nostrand Professorship totaled $112,040 last year.

As part of the outreach effort the Linguistics Advisory Board collaborated on implementing the 40th anniversary celebration, on initiating publication of the newsletter and on updating our website (http://depts.washington.edu/lingweb/).

The Board also increased the Department’s visibility through community outreach and improved relations with local industry. Member Michael Gamon has facilitated our collaboration with Microsoft’s University Relations, and he and fellow member James Lyle have been involved in the planning of a 2003-04 symposium series on computational research (see Symposium Series above).
NEWS FROM JAPAN

Hiroshi Yoshida received his MA (‘78) and PhD (‘83) in Linguistics at UW and was a Visiting Scholar in the Department from April to August, 2003. Following his return to Aoyama Gakuin University in Tokyo, where he is an Associate Professor of English Linguistics, Hiroshi recalled some of his recent experiences at UW, among them joining the Phonetics meetings during Spring quarter and giving a Colloquium talk on the Japanese vowel hierarchy in May. In his official capacity as a VIP instrumental in establishing and maintaining the student exchange program between UW and AGU, he met 10 exchange students from AGU while here and interviewed 15 UW candidates for this year’s exchange programs with AGU and Keio University. Finally, as a Husky alumnus, he thoroughly enjoyed attending the various activities of the 40th anniversary and serving as unofficial recording photographer at both the opening reception and the dinner at the Julia Herschensohn’s. We suspect we may see him around UW again one of these days.

NEW MEMBERS JOIN BOARD

UW alums Nancy Ackles and Philip Harrison were recently named as the newest members of the Linguistics Advisory Board.

Nancy Ackles (PhD Linguistics, ‘97) teaches English to speakers of other languages, usually at the University of Washington, and a course in syntax each year for Seattle Pacific University. The first person to hire her to teach ESL (in Lewiston, Idaho) was Dale Sloat, the first person to complete a doctorate in linguistics at UW. Nancy wrote her dissertation on the historical rise of the definite and indefinite articles within a principles and parameters approach, and has since written a textbook especially useful for ‘generation 1.5’ users of English who are preparing for university education—it has a great explanation of the use of definite and indefinite articles! She’s looking forward to the new experiences of serving on the Board.

Philip Harrison (PhD Applied Mathematics, ‘88) is an Associate Technical Fellow at Boeing specializing in text analysis technology. He has developed core technology in parsing and lexicon management, and is one of the principal developers of the Boeing Simplified English Checker, a controlled-language grammar checker used extensively by aerospace technical writers. His current research is in dialog systems and knowledge-based text classification for application to decision support, autonomous vehicles and security downgrading. Phil is excited to be on the Board because it presents a great opportunity to develop synergies between the University and local companies that are active in computational linguistics.

The Advisory Board currently consists of eleven members living on three continents. Our European representative is Jeff Kallen, who lives in Ireland. Representing East Asia is Tatsuya Suzuki in Japan. All the Board members welcome your questions, suggestions and other feedback. You can email them at the addresses below.

Advisory Board Members

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Are you an alum of the Department? Others would enjoy knowing what you’re doing these days. Why not take a moment to return contact information? (See the form on the back page.)

NOSTRAND PROFESSOR NAMED

The Department is very pleased to announce that the first recipient of the Howard and Frances Nostrand Endowed Professorship will be Frederick J. Newmeyer. The Nostrands are generously contributing $500,000 to further their goals of developing cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity as well as the study of language.

Professor Newmeyer is on sabbatical leave this year in Europe. He just completed a stay in Sardinia teaching at the Association for Linguistic Typology Summer School, and is now in Paris where he is a visiting scholar in the Département d’Études Cognitives at the École Normale Supérieure. He will spend winter 2004 in Lyon at the Institut des Sciences Cognitives, and then the month of April in Leipzig at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology.

We will celebrate the naming of the new Professorship at a reception a few months from now.
WALKER-AMES

DEBORAH CAMERON

In April the departments of Speech Communication, English and Linguistics sponsored a Walker-Ames Lectureship visit by Deborah Cameron, Professor of Languages and chair of the School of Culture, Language and Communication at the Institute of Education, London University. A sociolinguist and discourse analyst with particular interests in the study of spoken language and issues of gender, Professor Cameron is the author of many books including Language and sexuality (Cambridge UP, 2003), co-written with anthropologist Don Kulick. In her lecture, titled “Must Have Excellent Communication Skills”: Speaking, Skill and the Story of an Ideology,” Dr. Cameron addressed the (post-) modern world’s preoccupation with “skill” in talking, noting that all kinds of problems are said to be communication problems whose solution is to communicate better. She discussed where this preoccupation came from, what lies behind it and whether it is reasonable or helpful—the story, she argued, of one of the most powerful ideologies of the last 50 years.

RAY JACKENDOFF

The departments of Linguistics, Psychology and Computer Science and Engineering sponsored Ray Jackendoff as Walker-Ames Lecturer in May. Prof. Jackendoff, one of the most respected semanticists in linguistics, has taught at Brandeis University since 1971. His research centers on the theory of meaning in natural language, how it interacts with linguistic expression and how it interacts with thought. He is the author of numerous articles and books, most recently Foundations of language: Brain, meaning, grammar, evolution (Oxford UP, 2002). In his lecture, titled “Toward a cognitive science of culture and society,” he explored what it takes for an individual to participate in social categories and cultural institutions (i.e. “socially constructed” entities). He noted that the question has strong parallels with contemporary linguistics, which investigates the cognitive structure required to be a speaker of a human language (another “socially constructed” entity), and argued that the two cases are consistent both with acknowledging cultural diversity and with a substantive universal cognitive framework that underlies the ability to learn and function in one’s culture.

BREATH OF LIFE

UW OPENS LINGUISTIC TREASURES TO TRIBES

Thirty-two participants from 12 Pacific Northwest Indian tribes gathered at UW in early September for a Breath of Life workshop designed to open the linguistic riches of the UW campus and assist in tribal efforts to revitalize indigenous languages.

Members of the Nooksack, Chehalis, Cowlitz, Lummi, Tulalip, Colville, Yakama, Samish, Muckleshoot, Squaxin Island, Lower Rogue and Unangax tribes and nations participated in the no-fee workshop Sept. 8-12. They worked with a dozen linguists, primarily UW linguistics PhDs and graduate students, and library archivists to learn the basics of linguistics and explore material in their languages that is stored at UW.

“All of the participants are working to revitalize imperiled languages, and some of these languages have no fluent speakers today,” said Dr. Alice Taft, a research associate in UW’s Linguistics Department who coordinated the workshop.

“We call these ‘sleeping’ languages when there are no speakers. But you can wake up a language. For example Hebrew, in the context of daily conversation, was sleeping and is now quite awake.”

During the workshop, participants went to class in the mornings to learn linguistic skills that would aid them in their work in the archives. In the afternoons, archivists helped them explore and sort through the material in their language. To focus their archives search, each participant worked on a project related to revitalizing his or her language.

The UW archives and the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture contain a number of collections with material devoted to the languages of native peoples of the Pacific Northwest. The largest is the Melville Jacobs Collection. Jacobs was chairman of the Anthropology Department for nearly 30 years, and from 1926 to 1939 did extensive field research on Indian language and music in Washington. His collection, which fills about 150 boxes, includes numerous field recordings, many originally made on wax cylinders, as well as his notebooks and cards and material collected by some of his students.

The Northwest Linguistics Collection contains miscellaneous material including more than 800 audiotapes and countless microfilm copies of linguistic field notes. The Ethnomusicology Collection, housed in the School of Music, is one of the largest in the country and contains material related to the songs of Washington and Pacific Northwest Indians. The Metcalf Collection, stored in the Burke Museum, contains 76 one-hour tapes, primarily of songs and music collected around Puget Sound in the 1950s.

“Many academics built their careers on the backs of linguistic data that Indian people gave them, so it behooves UW to turn around and open the archives to their descendents who are working to revitalize their language,” said Taft.

She hopes the workshop will continue in future years and found strong support for this among the participants. But even if it doesn’t, she thinks the weeklong program was successful in showing participants how to use the archives, know the University and feel comfortable enough to come back at their convenience in order to continue their work.

The UW workshop was modeled and named after a similar program to revitalize Indian languages in California held every other year since 1996 at UC Berkeley.

(Adapted from a press release by Joel Schwarz.)

Alice has said that teaching school in Alaska’s Pribilof Islands led to her interest in endangered languages and her pursuit of a doctorate in linguistics. She completed her degree at UW in 1999 with a dissertation titled Phonetics and phonology of Unangan (Eastern Aleut) intonation (Alaska). Immediately after the completion of the Breath of Life workshop she returned north to begin a new Unangan Tunuu documentation project (http://admin.urel.washington.edu/uweek/archives/issue/uweek_story_small.asp?id=1230&pggroup=section). At the same time she will be continuing her earlier revitalization work with speakers of the Athabaskan language Deg Xinag (http://www.adn.com/life/story/1994446p-2096145c.html).
The University of Washington hosted this year’s Semantics and Linguistic Theory conference on May 9-11. SALT 13 was held under the auspices of the Graduate School, the Simpson Center for the Humanities, the College of Arts and Sciences and the departments of Linguistics, Germanics, Philosophy and Computer Science. Sessions were held in Henry Art Gallery and Boeing Auditorium, and the program consisted of 15 abstract-selected papers and four papers from invited speakers Angelika Kratzer, Manfred Krifka, S.-Y. Kuroda and William Ladusaw. Prof. Ogihara, who along with several of his students organized the conference, remarked on the international flavor of the sessions with scholars attending from Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Israel and several other countries. This diversity was seen in the papers as well, which dealt with data drawn from English, German, Chinese, Bulgarian, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese and Salish.

Uncropped full color originals of the photos above and additional SALT 13 photos can be found at the following website: http://depts.washington.edu/salt13/cgi-bin/slideviewer.cgi?list=salt

STUDENT NEWS

Sixteen graduate degrees were earned during the year beginning Fall, 2002. Dissertation, general exam presentation or thesis title follows students’ names.

PhDs

Chia Hui Huang, Restructuring of case theory: Evidence from S-selected case.

Lorna Rozelle, The structure of sign language lexicons: Inventory and distribution of handshape and location.

Hiromi Sato, Selection for clausal complements and tense features.

Tomoko Sekiguchi, The syntax and interpretation of resultative constructions.

Hong Ki Sohng, Topics in the syntax of East Asian languages: Long-distance anaphora and adverbial case.

Cinzia Russi, The grammaticalization of Italian clitic pronouns.

PhCs

Kumiko Kato, History of linguistics in Japan from the 1930s through the 1960s and On Japanese Gapping in Minimalist Syntax.


Setsuko Shirai, The duration of function words and Absence of consonantal syllables in Mon-Khmer languages.

MAs

Misty Azara, The role of pitch accent in discourse.

Aixa Heller, Minimalism and movement in French causatives.

Julia Miller, An acoustic analysis of tone in Doig River and Blueberry River Beaver.

Laura Partanen, Poverty of the stimulus in L2 Spanish: The overt pronoun constraint.

Joyce Parvi, Rules or no rules? An examination of the L2 acquisition of French intransitive verbs.

Melissa Preston, An acoustic study of Turkish vowel harmony.

Chih-Chi Wen, Phonological change in Atayal.

SPECIAL MENTION

Students who sent news about themselves.


Lesley Carmichael served a spring quarter internship with Dr. Sharon Oviatt’s team at the Center for Human-Computer Communication at the Oregon Graduate Institute of Science & Technology (http://www.cse.ogi.edu/CHCC/). In her research she found that children interacting with a multimodal computing system regularly employed specific prosodic fortification techniques in attempting to resolve simulated system errors.

Jeff Stevens has been awarded a 2003-2004 FLAS fellowship to study Uzbek.
You too can be a proud owner of COOL memorabilia from the Department! Email phoneme@u.washington.edu with your order for t-shirts or car window stickers for LSUW.

T-shirts: $10 + $2.50 postage (per shirt)
Stickers: $3 apiece or 2 for $5 + $0.50 postage (per sticker)

Do you put pocket change in a jar to spend as “mad money”? Consider supporting the activities of the Department. Our online gift page makes it easy at https://secure.gifts.washington.edu/common/gift.asp?page=funds&source_typ=2&source=EBF

Visit the Department website at http://depts.washington.edu/lingweb/
Many thanks to Joyce Parvi for her hard work in re-doing the site!