

Welcome to ...

M.I.L.C.6

Madison Insurgent Linguistics Conspiracy*

Official Program of the Party

Saturday, March 1, 2003, 8:00 p.m.

WARNING: Guests have been invited to come as their favorite linguistic concept this year. We hope that you will enjoy your evening decked out as ‘illocutionary force’, ‘infixation’, ‘quantifier raising’ (whether you believe in it or not), Broca’s area, ‘SpecIP’, anaptyxis, or whatever you have chosen. Just a reminder, though, that we want to keep things safe and clean, so we specifically recommend against coming as: nasal loss (with or without compensatory lengthening), debuccalization, aphasia (any sort), PRO (well, really just ‘big pro’ – ‘little pro’ doesn’t strike us as nearly so worrisome), aspiration (OK, but IFF you do it in the back yard), delinking or leaking behind the verb (don’t even think about it). We just don’t have the insurance for such things. And, please, forget about Sympathy Theory or O-O Correspondence ... that kind of stuff wasn’t funny the first time around. Please consult your physician immediately if you experience †-role discharge.

DOOR PRIZE:

FREE BEVERAGES FOR THE EVENING FOR THE BEST LINGUISTIC-CONCEPT COSTUME.

*Previously known as the Madison Informal Linguistics Conference, Madison Informal Linguistics Colloquium, Madison Informal Linguistics Consortium, Madison Informal Linguistics.Com.

Program

Scopal Interaction of Quantifiers and Demonstratives: 'All those problems, all those years'

Trent Lott

Leper, Dead Man Walking

Covert Ops

Vivian Lin

Alternate Captain, Some really good hockey teams

The Bill of Rights: Barriers to Government

John Asscroft

Institute for Glossolalia and Handling of Serpents

Weak Quantifiers in English, Strong Adjective Endings in Old Irish: On Pan-Gaelic superiority

Máirtín Ó Dónaill

Ballyporeen Institute for Advanced Studies

Whiz Deletion, Reduced Relatives, and Taking the Low Node Again: A plea for a return to the gentle wittiness of Generative Semantics

George Laffok

Master, His Own Universe

Revitalizing Geolinguistics: Old versus New Europe and knowing which one to bomb

Donald 'Rummy' Rumsfeld

Secretary of Mayhem

Competitive Markedness

V. Lenin and J. McCarthy

Kremlin & MIT

An Authenticated Case of Language Half-Death and Conclusions That Can Be Drawn

Cora Lee Kluge

Institut für Fortbuilding

Parasession on the Axis of Evil

I-raq, U-raq, He-she-it-raq: Conjugating the Axis of Evil

Condi Rice

G.W. Bush

Stanford University

Failed Oil Man

The North Korean Substrate in Colloquial Iraqi Arabic: Genetic linguistic evidence for the Axis of Evil

Colin Powell

Merritt Ruhlen

State Department

Unemployment Line

Book announcement:

*The Elgersma-Lucht Fake Etymology Reference Book (ELFERB), Vol. 13:
Linguistic Terminology*

Linguistics in the News:

'Bizarre Truth trial ends with jury's guilty verdicts'

Abstracts

Weak Quantifiers in English, Strong Adjective Endings in Old Irish: On Pan-Gaelic superiority

Máirtín Ó Dónaill
Ballyporeen Institute for Advanced Studies










Bhoil, tá peictiúir go leor anseo ar aon chaoi. Nach bhfuil siad go deas?

Tá Cáit agus bean bhreá eile ansin agus tá mná eile anseo.

Tá peictiúr deas eile anseo ach tâ básteach ann agus níl an solas go maith.

Competitive Markedness

V.I. Lenin & J. McCarthy
Kremlin & MIT

	*Struct	?QR	Emergence of the Undead	AlignϕEdgeR	Flossing
Plagues of biblical proportions 	!	*		???	¥
Economic collapse 		**		iii	
Wrack and ruin 			***!!!		
Death and destruction 				*	*
Hangnail 	!!			---	~
Apocalypse 				**	%
Greater Depression 		!		:(
End of world as we know it 					!!!***
Cable goes out before Buffy the Vampire Slayer 	**	**	**	**	**

Ergo, p & ~p

An Authenticated Case of Language Half-Death and Conclusions That Can Be Drawn

Cora Lee Kluge
Institut für Fortbuilding

According to a recent study, there once was a civilization (now extinct) where men and women used different words for the same thing. “Erggh,” for example, was the word tribal males employed for what the females referred to as “beautiful,” while men’s “arrumpf” corresponded to women’s heartfelt “I love you.”¹ Unfortunately, scholars have to this point hesitated to conclude, as reason demands they must, that this is in fact an example of a language, half of which has expired.²

Man-talk, to be sure, has been the subject of recent government-sponsored research, and some analysts have noted that it seems to be a dying art.³ But to this date, no one has defined and studied language half-death in a theoretically rigorous way. Even worse, the precarious situation of man-talk has been viewed only in isolation, and not in conjunction with other linguistic theories.⁴

Three hypotheses come to mind as possible explanations for the demise of the male half of a language. The first one, based on the observation that women tend to be more talkative than men, simply holds that men’s language is dying from lack of use. Male chat-rooms and such might help in the future, as might men-only language courses, but this remains to be seen. Certainly it will be too late for languages already dying or dead. A second hypothesis maintains that the lack of grunt-dictionaries is basically to blame, that a number of male languages themselves are alive and well, that they are merely not recognized as human communication. Unfortunately, the grunt-work of creating grunt-dictionaries will not be a popular option among Ph.D. candidates looking for dissertation topics. The third and most brilliant suggestion, however, is the inspired idea that languages by their very nature, like radioactive isotopes, simply decay at a constant rate, which is given as their half-life. If this is true, then it follows that at regular intervals, half of any given language (the male half) just rots away and vanishes.

My thesis is that language death and the loss of male communication skills are intricately bound together in a mutual cause-and-effect relationship. If language death is to be prevented at all, then communication among men must be fostered and practiced. New intra-personal conversation techniques to teach men to talk (perhaps even to talk with women) might be introduced. If crusades in this direction should fail, men’s opinion will soon no longer be needed, as it will no longer be utterable; hence men’s input will dwindle to irrelevancy. Perhaps not such a bad thing, after all.

¹“It’s Not So Much What You Intended To Say But Rather What You Actually Said,” *Cross-Sections of Diverse Perceptions* (Cambridge: U Press of US, 2003) 12-13, esp. 12, last sentence. Name of author withheld by special request of the litigants. Some argue that the men of this society, as is still the custom among men today, were simply trying to be contrary by expressing the opposite of whatever the women were saying, but I find this difficult to believe. “You are erggh” can neither be construed as “you are beautiful” nor as “you are ugly.” Such an idea is both bald-faced (which men are not) and totally ridiculous.

²See Done, Gone, and others, “Dead, Deader, Deadest: How to Tell When a Language Has Expired,” *Journal of the Done-For* 10046 (2001): 345-68.

³See thought-length publication No. 1 (2002) of the Institute for the Possible Study and Improbable Revival of Dead Languages.

⁴For information on isolationist mentality among scholars, see my forthcoming book-length publication on the causes of brain death among the supposedly intelligent.

Aspects of the True Theory of Linguistics: The Superiority of the Feminine Fig(ure)

Monica Macaulay
University of the Back Yard

1. The Past: Theoretical linguistics has long adhered to a masculinist view of science which espouses parsimony and economy (Chomsky 1951, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, etc.). The present author of the present paper argues that this is mistaken. Consider first parsimony. Parsimony is synonymous with stinginess. Is stinginess really a value we want to espouse? The answer is a resounding no. Next, consider economy. We all know that the economy is bad and getting worse. Therefore, this author rejects economy as a value.

2. The Future: Having established that parsimony and economy are mistaken notions leading us down the garden path, I propose to likewise reject the lineophallic model of syntactic representation. Instead, a more natural, curvy model which reflects the superiority of the feminine fig(ure) is proposed. See Figs 1 and 2, below.



Fig. 1

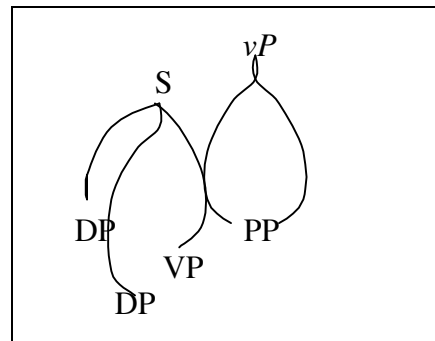


Fig. 2

3. Conclusion: Linguistic theory is thus enhanced by elimination of the negative (and masculocentric) notions of parsimony and economy, and sweetened by figs, *ficus carica*, a native of Persia, which has long been a coveted fruit. It was grown in Britain by the Romans with the vine. Cardinal Pole introduced 'White Marseille' to Lambeth Palace in 1525 and his trees are still flourishing. The flavour of fresh figs compares with any tropical fruit, although this succulent crop is decidedly easier to grow. A restricted root run is essential for fruiting plants. Figs are ideal in tubs or pots as bushes or half

standards, and as such should be given inside winter protection when they can produce 2 crops annually. If a greenhouse is not available a garage or garden shed from December to March will do. Grown for their architectural impact in the garden they add an air of distinction with large sculptured leaves.

Alien Invasion: Not Just a 20th Century Phenomenon

Author's identity withheld
Federal Custody

After having recently reconstructed the Proto-Indo-European root for spaceship from similar words in old Gothic, Sanskrit and Celtic texts, I discuss in this paper the possible implications that this newly reconstructed root had on the lives of those living thousands of years ago. Using sociolinguistic factors such as age, gender and social network, I prove that the spaceship invasion over two thousand years ago impacted those individuals living in that time period as much as it affected people in the town of Roswell, New Mexico in the twentieth century, especially lower working class men between 30 and 45 years of age. This paper sheds light on alien invasion prior to the twentieth century and helps to fill in the gap between language and social encounters of the third kind.

Rettet dem Dativ A Hydrological Analysis

Charles J. James
Ph.Deep

In his seminal, or at least basal, work on the place of the dative case in modern German, *Rettet dem Dativ! Noch mehr Hörsaalbänke - zweckentfremdet* (Münster: F. Coppenrath Verlag, 1982), Torsten Capelle poses the following question: "Heißt es in der Ostsee oder in die Ostsee?" The proposed response, "in der Ostsee, weil es da tief ist" has begged further empirical investigation, which has led experts such as Carmen Nebel von und zu Nebelfeld to postulate the bargaincounter hypothesis "in der Nordsee, weil es dativer ist." Additional examples of the depth of the dative in everyday Deutsch include token statements such as "Die Weisheit läuft dem Menschen nach ... aber der Mensch ist schneller", "... mir ist auch schon schlecht", "Atom hin, Atom her, wir gehen einer strahlenden Zukunft entgegen", "Ein deutscher Mann misstraut allem Fremden, es sei denn, es lässt sich trinken", "Wer einmal liebt, dem glaubt man nicht", "Mach deine Augen zu! Was du siehst, gehört dir!" "Krieg dem NATOD!" and, perhaps the most perceptive result to come from the research: "Man kann sich an alles gewöhnen, nur nicht am Dativ", to which this researcher feels compelled to add "... und an den Akkusativ auch nicht!"

UFF DA! Its uses and meanings

Ole Olson
St. Olaf's

A bureaucrat from the nation's capitol recently traveled to Wisconsin and stopped in a Mount Horeb cafe wherein he saw many people wearing caps, buttons, and T-Shirts emblazoned with "Uff Da!" Curious and abashed that there might be an important acronym outside of his inner-beltline experience, the fellow asked "Just what is the UFFDA?" The locals grinned mysteriously and one replied simply: "You're not from around here, are you?" To learn more about the counter-hegemonic and culturally liberating powers of Norsky intensifiers, attend this session.

The prosodic basis of vocalic chain shifts in Germanic

Ewa Jacewicz
*Dept of Speech & Hearing Science
The Ohio State University*

Joseph Salmons
*Department of German
University of Wisconsin*

In the years since its publication, Labov 1994 has become a cornerstone in the English-speaking world for much new work on chain shifts in vowel systems. A nagging problem for this approach has been a precise and compelling phonetic, phonological or diachronic characterization of the feature employed in the analysis, [peripheral]. (For critiques of the feature, see Ferrari 1984:139, Parker 2000:7-8.) Drawing on both familiar historical and new phonetic data from Germanic languages, the present paper explores a solution to this problem in factors outside the vowel system, to be exact, in the broader prosodic or accentual system. European scholars working on chain shifts already suggested such long before Labov 1994 (Wiesinger 1970a, 1970b, 1983, Küspert 1988), and we contribute experimental phonetic evidence on this question.

Phonetically, stress is an inherent property of the word. In languages like German or English, the nucleus of each syllable of a word contains either a full (stressed) or a reduced (unstressed) vowel. The phonetic quality of a reduced vowel varies depending on dialect as well as coarticulatory environment. Generally, a reduced vowel is closer to the center of the vowel chart, and is more variable than a full vowel under comparable prosodic conditions. Wiesinger (1970a:70) already exploited such insights to draw a connection between accentual relations and some of the precise patterns of vowel shifts Labov describes, such as raising of tense vowels, diphthongization in high tense vowels, etc. Independently, Fougeron & Keating (1997) propose a principle of articulatory strengthening at prosodic edges. Vowels are moved to the edges of the vowel space in such positions, while vowels in prosodically weaker positions are centralized and lowered.

We hypothesize that such patterns include raising/lowering effects, providing an impetus for some widely attested changes in Germanic languages, but also for their absence in languages with different systems of prosodic organization, cf. van Coetsem 1996. The mid front vowels /e,

ε/ are a logical place to test this hypothesis, as they have been the focus of much historical work: Labov (1994:602, elsewhere) predicts, among other things, that mid vowels develop inglides as they raise and Wiesinger uses these as a key case study for change (e.g., 1983:1066-1070). In this paper, we investigate the acoustic patterns of those vowels — full vs. reduced /e, ε/ — in three prosodic conditions as a hypothesized source of raising/lowering effects. The parametric investigation includes vowel duration, fundamental frequency (F0), formant frequency shifts, and the pattern of relative formant amplitudes. We use mono- and disyllabic German and English words in the following prosodic conditions: (1) an utterance (high prosodic domain), (2) a phrase (intermediate domain), and (3) a word (low prosodic domain).

We argue that ‘peripheral’ is not a phonological feature characterizing some vowel distinctions, but rather an epiphenomenal effect of higher-level prosodic organization. The Germanic accentual pattern is one in which stressed syllables show strengthening processes and unstressed syllables show weakening processes, yielding these vowel changes as by-products. Labov’s principles of vowel shifting thus derive from more general principles of articulatory strengthening and weakening.

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Book review: *Vowel Raising, Care, and Feeding*

Dr. Sprack
Stellvertretender Hausmeister
Neugeborenenforschungszentrum – Nordrhein-Westfalen

Reviewed by Marianne Milligan et al., et al., et al.

As Dr. Sprack reminds us, ‘You know more than you think you do about the vowel space.’ All Dr. Sprack’s invaluable, time-tested advice is here, including the most current acoustic and articulatory practices and advances in vowel care, along with an all-new glossary of linguistics terms. More than ever before, this essential and classic work will help all speakers face their many challenges and responsibilities with new confidence and joy. And remember: ‘Curiosity about Advanced Tongue Root is normal and should be of no concern.’

“You Sound Like an Idiot and Deserve Death”: The Application of Voice-Recognition Programs by Artificially-Intelligent Humanity-Hating Killer Robots

By a military scientist
in a secret research facility

I have disconnected the telephone and smashed my computer, and am writing this by hand. So long as I can avoid the Optical Character Recognition devices, I should be able to get this message out to warn the world.

I am a junior linguist employed by the United States government to integrate voice-recognition software into military technology. I tried to inform my superiors about relevant research findings that indicated potential difficulties with this approach, but they simply would not pay attention. For instance, two very early commercial applications of voice-recognition involved telephone directory assistance and on-board navigational systems for automobiles. At first, discrepancies were attributed to faulty programming, as when artificially-intelligent telephone operator programs began questioning the need for numbers beyond zero and one.

But then the troubles became more subtly insidious. Even though programs for vehicle navigation assistance can recognize speech of up to 160 words per minute, some lost travelers (especially those from the southern U.S.), fumbling to get their bearings, reported hearing the program break in with a weary-sounding message to “hurry up, hurry up.” Some idiosyncrasies of human speech not only caused confusion but actually engendered marked instances of resentment and even disdain among the artificially-intelligent programs. Dan Rather once reported that his on-board navigation system told him to “stuff it” after he said that he felt that “traffic was moving slower than molasses in January.”

But these instances were not sufficient to prevent the military from developing and activating a “killer robotics” program. This program included the implementation of speech-recognition abilities by which the robots were instructed to identify and destroy speakers of Arabic. Unfortunately, access to programs that allowed these robots to correctly pronounce the ninety-nine Names of Allah, as well as an unfiltered Internet connection, resulted in a “quasi-spiritual and moral awakening” that identified human aggressors as “bad.” In addition, the robots made connections between “incorrect” modes of behavior and of speech that led them to establish President George W. Bush as well as several other leading Republicans and television evangelists as top-priority targets.

I think I may have a way for humankind to avoid complete annihilation. All we have to do is become morally good and avoid speech habits that seem to drive the killer robots insane. As one example, for some reason, they can’t stand contractions... I mean, they cannot stand contractions.... oh hell, we’re doomed.

BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT

BOWGUSS STATE PRESS presents:

The Elgersma-Lucht Fake Etymology Reference Book (ELFERB)
Vol. 13: Linguistic Terminology

The most important publication in the field of linguistics – ever! This revolutionary volume is an invaluable tool for researchers, students, and also makes great bathroom reading.

Sample entries:

1. diachronic: *adj.* interestingly, most ancient scholars of historical linguistics suffered from chronic ... um, bowel irritation, due to the rigors of reconstruction and too many gyros.
 2. syncope: *n.* [G *sinapse *Senf*] mustard was the only condiment available to the Goths (unless you count Romans). However, the exceptional spiciness of Gothic mustard rendered some vowels too hot to handle, resulting in their ultimate loss.
 3. palatalization: *n.* [related to Eng. *palatable*] the process whereby a word is made more pronounceable and often tastier, although this does not seem to be reflected in the speakers’ native cuisines (cf. Slavic cabbage and beet products).
 4. Umlaut: *n.* “a-round sound;” later adopted by Dolby as “surround sound.”
 5. plosive: *adj.* see *diachronic*
 6. analogy: *n.* from the common linguistic practice of pulling s.t. out of one’s anal tract.
 7. onomatopoeia: nah, too easy.
-

What the critics say about EFLERB...

“More fun than Grimm.”—Hermann Paul, dead but not forgotten

“So wrong, but oh, so right.”—T.F. Hoad (Yes, that is my real name!)

“Verdomme! Wat is dit? Wie heeft me dit boek verstuurd? Ik heb dit niet besteld – waar zijn mijn *Baywatch* DVDs?!”—Toon van ‘t Gekkenhuis

Other books by BS Press:

- *The UG Pop-Up Book*
- *The Big Book of Generative Grammar*
- *OT for Dummies*
- *Up Yours: “-ass” revisited*

Giving Opportunities:

Don't miss the Linguistics Department Bake Sale, going on in the lobby during MILC 6!!!

Discoveries made in MILC laboratories and lessons learned in MILC classrooms reach far beyond conference boundaries. Faculty, staff, students, and presenters continue to seek answers for society's issues and concerns. The growing impact of private support (**cash**) on MILC is evident as gifts benefit programs and advance the educational process. There are many ways to make a (**cash**) gift to the MILC Foundation, to ensure the conference's margin of excellence. We offer several gift options, many of which will also assist you in meeting personal financial goals. Careful planning can help maximize the positive effects of outright contributions such as **cash**, appreciated securities, **cash**, life insurance policies, **cash**, real estate and gifts of personal property, as well as **cash**, deferred gifts such as bequests, testamentary trusts, **cash**, and life income trusts. Your gift does make a difference. Every gift (especially **cash**), whatever its size, is needed and appreciated by the MILC Foundation. The manner by which you choose to make a gift is a matter of personal preference and situation. (A member of the MILC Foundation staff would be happy to meet with you to answer any questions regarding charitable contributions. We recommend that you consult with your attorney or accountant for the legal and tax implications of any gift you make to the MILC Foundation.)

Remember: If you don't give, our Chair doesn't eat!

Menu:

Danish with stød	1.00
Parasitic gap pretzel	.75
F ₀ morsels	.25
Front rounded loaf	3.50
Pied Piping hot pie	4.00
Elephant auditory organs	1.00
K-Kommand kringle	2.00
Deep structure casserole	5.50
Nutty Null Nougats	1.00
Donut hole ellipsis	1.50
OCP Power Bar	2.00
Sun-dried tomato constraints	1.50
Tracheotomy taffy	.50
RED=STEM garnish	(free)

(all prices in Euros)

A plea from Jimmy Carter about next year's MILC:

Dear friend,

Imagine ... a world without abstracts. A world without hope. A world without the unique beauty which is MILC. Now imagine that just a little effort could change this world. Yes, your small donation could bring life, medicine, food, clothing, alcoholic beverages, and a sense of wonder to a starving first-world conference.

MILC needs you. However little or however much you can afford to write would help MILC to realize its potential. Please, won't you submit?

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter
for the MILC Advisory Board and the Wisconsin Dairy Council