

Clearly Heard Forever

J. P. Harrington Database Project Newsletter

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Quality Control

The goal of the J. P. Harrington Database Project is to increase access to the ethnographic and linguistic notes collected by Harrington during the first half of the twentieth century. The notes are being typed and coded for inclusion in a central database. The process of transcribing the notes requires knowledge of Harrington's handwriting, and familiarity with the keystrokes assigned to specific phonetic characters and symbols used throughout the notes. Quality control has, from the beginning, been built into every aspect of this project.

A central part of the training process for students and community coders is to familiarize themselves with Harrington's handwriting, and with various abbreviations and conventions he used. Coders are provided with a master list of phonetic characters and the corresponding keystrokes.

During the initial training, the transcribers work closely with project personnel. During the first several weeks, they go over their file record by record with the project coordinator until she is satisfied that they are prepared to work on their own. Even after this time the project coordinator is available in the Native American Language Center, either in person, or by phone and email, for those in other locations. Files are sent to the project coordinator via mail or email and are checked and corrected as needed and returned, so that the transcribers are immediately aware of any errors they are making.

After a reel or other segment of material has been completed, the computer file is given to a second coder to compare the transcription against the original notes, and to check for errors or incompleteness in the coding. This is either the project coordinator, or another of the experienced coders who themselves have completed several reels.

A third check for quality control occurs as the material is being prepared for distribution. At this point the project coordinator or other experienced coder and one of the project directors review the entire electronic file. They specifically examine the coding of words in the Indian language and their English and Spanish glosses, consistency and completeness in the consultant's name, language/dialect name, transcriber's name, and other fields. Once the material has been printed, the project coordinator and the director review it again. Only then is the electronic file ready for distribution and inclusion in the master database.

An additional level of quality control applies to material for languages being further analyzed by specialists in those languages. Here, word analysis may include comparisons and evaluations of several "hearings" of words or phrases in the Indian language. They consult the project's electronic file along with the original notes.

These procedures insure the production of a rigorous transcription of Harrington's notes. Realistically, there may be errors introduced in the process, and we remind those doing detailed linguistic analysis that the database is above all an index to the original corpus of Harrington's handwritten notes.

Mutsun Training

This spring we have conducted a second training for coders from the Ahma Mutsun Ohlone Band working on the Mutsun language. Among those present were Elizabeth Orozco and Marion Martinez, daughters of Martha Herrera, who was Harrington's assistant while he was working on the Costanoan and other languages of California. They are delighted to be transcribing material originally recorded by their mother, and have some interesting anecdotes about Harrington. We will have more about Martha and her daughters in the next newsletter.

Also among the participants at the April training was Quirina Luna-Costillas, the author of the Mutsun language version of *Green Eggs and Ham*. She is currently teaching Mutsun language classes. You can read more about Quirina's work in *Sleeping Languages: Can They Be Awakened*, Chapter 31 in *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*, edited by Leanne Hinton and Ken Hale (Academic Press, 2001).

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians (Serrano)

Lisa Woodward, Project Coordinator, met with James Ramos of the San Manuel Band, and Christopher Loether, tribal linguist. The project has begun coding the Serrano notes in anticipation of their use in the Serrano language revitalization program next fall.

Harrington Correspondence

Georgie Waugh, Ph.D., a retired archaeologist and a project research associate, is creating an index of Harrington's letters from the 17 microfilm reels of Harrington's personal and professional correspondence. Most of the items were originally found with his ethnographic notes, but were separated from their original context in the process of organizing the linguistic material.

Currently the letters are ordered alphabetically by the name of the author (incoming, 11 reels) or the name of the addressee (outgoing, 5 reels) and one reel of records from the Bureau of American Ethnography. Our index includes date, addresses, tribe/language, and a summary of the contents. The index has already contributed valuable information to our understanding of how Harrington was finding and employing speakers and assistants, his relationships with other scholars, and the dates and locations of his extensive travels throughout California, the West, and even Latin America.

Georgie has currently finished through the letter *B* of the incoming letters (over 800 pages). Additional volunteers for this interesting project are welcome.

Language Is Life: 11th Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference

June 11, 2004, Martha Macri and Lisa Woodward will present *Putting the J.P. Harrington Materials on Line*. The meeting will take place in the Martin Luther King Student Union at UC Berkeley. This follows the *Breath of Life* conference that takes place June 7–11.

Society of Ethnobiology Conference

In March, Martha Macri and Lisa Woodward made a presentation on the value of the J. P. Harrington Database Project to ethnobiologists.

Language Notes Currently Being Coded or Checked

California: Cahuilla, Chimariko, Chumash: Barbareño, Obispeño, Ventureño, Luiseño/Juaneño, Chocheño, Mutsun, Northern/Central Pomo, Rumsen, Serrano, Wikchamni
Other languages: Coos, Ute

Coming Soon. . .

In our next Newsletter we expect to be able to deliver official news from the National Science Foundation about our pending grant proposal.

General Information

John Peabody Harrington (1884–1961), hired in 1915 by the Bureau of American Ethnology as a research ethnologist, devoted nearly half a century to field work on Native American languages. The men and women he interviewed were often among the last remaining speakers of their languages.

The J. P. Harrington Database Project,

administered through the Native American Language Center at the University of California, Davis, received initial funding from the National Science Foundation in August of 2001 (BCS01-11487) and bridge funding from the Office of Research, U.C. Davis. Principal investigators: Martha Macri, Victor Golla. Project director: Lisa Woodward. Research associates: Ben Burgess, Margaret Cayward, Michael Grofe, Kirsten Meyer, Karen Santana, Sheri Tatsch, Suzanne Wash, Georgie Waugh.

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Newsletter name Harrington frequently wrote "ch." next to a word or phrase to indicate that he had asked the speaker to repeat it, so it could be "clearly heard." If he had asked the speaker to repeat it slowly several times, and was absolutely certain of the accuracy of his phonetic transcription, he would write "ch. forever."
Lisa Woodward, Martha Macri, Editors