

UT Arlington

The Department of Linguistics & TESOL

From the Chair's Desk.....

We have had a lot going on since I started as Chair in August 2008, and we've started 2009 with some excellent momentum. We decided to bring back the departmental newsletter as a way of letting alumni, friends, and department members know what we've been up to and to get to know new faces. In this issue, we have profiles of our two new tenure-track hires, Cindy Kilpatrick and Joey Sabbagh. They've already brought so much energy to the department, inaugurating reading groups, mentoring student research and teaching, and helping with our faculty discussions in putting together a proposal for a BA in linguistics. That's right, we hope to have a proposal by the end of 2009 and then we'll start it through the long process of approvals.

Our faculty have received a number of honors recently: Don Burquest was named Professor Emeritus; Laurel Stvan received the Alicia Wilkerson Smotherman Award for her work with recently graduated doctoral student Katie Welch; Laurel Stvan, David Silva and Don Burquest were all "Phi Kappa Phi Recognized professors," and David Silva received a state-wide honor along with only 8 other UT Arlington faculty, when he was selected in the inaugural group of recipients for the UT System Board of Regents' Outstanding Teaching Awards. Jerry Edmondson is currently in Taiwan on leave, working with the Monsoon Asia Project. With our curriculum revisions to the doctorate starting in Fall 2009, we will see the first of our seminar offerings in Spring 2010. I'll be teaching this course on Sustainability and Language Endangerment, and the Graduate School just awarded a small but significant grant to support travel for students in the class to work on community language projects in Oklahoma.

Student and alumni accomplishments are just as exciting. Heather Beal and Ken Zuercher were both inducted into the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, and Dr. Somsong Burusphat, who earned her PhD in 1986 (studying linguistics under the auspices of the Humanities program) was a Distinguished Alumni Award Honoree this October. Josh Jensen and alum

Dr. Wenhua Jin are both giving talks at the January meeting of the Linguistic Society of America in Baltimore (as are faculty Cindy Kilpatrick and Colleen Fitzgerald). Stephen George and Yujeong Choi both had abstracts accepted at the AAAL meeting. Dalal Al-mubayei had a paper accepted at the 31st Annual Southwest Texas Popular Culture Association conference, and first year student Vitaly Voinov is giving a talk at the UCLA Heritage Language Conference.

And the activity isn't just with people traveling to conferences, but we have had a full slate of activities this fall semester. We had three speakers in our departmental colloquium series. Dr. Min-Joo Kim from Texas Tech University spoke on English syntax, Dr. Anne Charity Hudley from The College of William and Mary spoke on service learning and African American English, and Dr. Christopher Stewart, of the Department of Modern Languages here at UT Arlington, presented on his recently finished dissertation work on Parisian sociophonetics. In November, we hosted the DFW Metroplex conference, a one-day conference where students and faculty from several area schools presented their research. And any day now, we should get the schedule for the UTASCILT conference that is in February.

Changes in curriculum seem to be going well. The MA TESOL portfolio exam was implemented successfully this semester, and we have high hopes for it adding a culminating experience in which our TESOL students can gain positive professionalization. We are starting a conversation club with the ELI, where our students can work with their students. As a way of making service requirements in 5301, 5302, and the practicum easier to set up before the semester starts, we held a Partner Match the first week of December, with six different organizations represented. Over the Fall 2009 semester, our students and faculty contributed more than 400 hours to local service organizations as volunteers. This is a wonderful way to have an impact on our surrounding community, and students will be earning more service hours in their spring

TESOL courses and my graduate course.

We're gearing up with our newest faculty searches in full swing, with a position in language documentation and syntax, and another one in second language acquisition. This year, we've added students to the search committee, so contact Josh Jensen (lang doc/syntax) and Yujeong Choi (SLA) with your feedback or questions once candidates are on campus in February. Looks like we have another busy February ahead of us, but all of that hard work will pay off, I am sure, with two more terrific faculty joining us in the Fall 2010 semester!

Keep your eyes open for the last round of upgrades to the Linguistics Lab. The remaining computers will be upgraded by the time school starts back. Travel safely, get rested and recharged for January classes. I wish everyone the warmest holiday season! And you know, I grew up in Florida, so I do hope for warmth every chance I can in the winter.

Warmest regards and holiday wishes,

Colleen



L-R: Cindy, Patrick Loc, Colleen, Dr. Vinya Sysamouth, Dr. Somsong Burusphat, Associate Vice President of Enrollment Services, Dr. Dale Wasson and Associate Dean, Dr. Kim Van Noort at the Distinguished Alumni Gala in October 2009.

Dr. Kilpatrick, Assistant Professor



What made you want to teach at UT Arlington?

The people! The faculty, staff, and students all impressed me with their friendliness and great attitudes. In addition, the position at UT Arlington seemed like a great fit for me in terms of combining my interests in teaching and linguistics.

How would you describe your teaching philosophy?

Because I believe that students learn best when they take an active role in their learning, I view my role as teacher to be one of guide and facilitator, providing students with ample

opportunities to learn by doing. I want students to be able to experience how cool and fun linguistics and TESOL are by getting involved in discussions, data description, analysis, and real-life applications, which in turn expands their knowledge of the subject area and leads them to a better understanding of the material.

What field of linguistics interest you and where are you on your research?

I'm an experimental phonologist/second language acquisitionist, so my interests mainly lie in how peo-

ple learn the sound systems of different languages. Much of my work revolves around Spanish and English, and the learning of one or the other. That makes the DFW metroplex a good place for my research, but I've also established a network of contacts in Guatemala where I've done some data collection.

What song always makes you happy when you hear it?

I generally don't need to hear a song to be happy, but I have great memories of anything by Shania Twain, Elvis Crespo, or Jimmy Buffett.

Dr. Sabbagh, Assistant Professor

What made you want to teach at UT Arlington?

When I visited for my job interview, I was excited to hear about all the changes and new directions the department was taking, and I was eager to be involved in a positive way in the department's future.

How would you describe your teaching philosophy?

I try to use a Socratic method of teaching, in which students are pushed to make discoveries for

themselves rather than simply being given the solution to every problem.

What field of linguistics interest you and where are you on your research?

Theoretical syntax is my main focus, though I am interested in the other subfields of linguistics as well, especially morphology and semantics. For the past 6 years or so, I've been devoting most of my research time on studying Tagalog. I've been lucky to live in places where there are many speakers of this language, but I'm also hoping to

take my first trip to the Philippines very soon.

What song always makes you happy when you hear it?

There are so many, but for some reason "Mama Tried" by Merle Haggard always puts me in a good mood.

What favorite food puts you in a great mood?

Spanikopida (...or anything with spinach and cheese, for that matter).



Drew's Advising Corner



For those of you who don't know me, I am a member of the office staff, and you probably recognize my name from the emails that you receive about departmental news. One of my jobs here with the department is to advise undergraduate students who are linguistics minors, or interested in linguistics. I also help Dr. Stvan with advising duties for the graduate students.

I would like to remind students of

a few **new** course opportunities that we have in the spring semester. For undergraduates, **LING 2371: Language in a Multicultural USA** will be offered from 9:30-10:50am on Tuesdays and Thursdays. This course will examine the relationship of language in America to race, ethnicity, class, religion and gender. Another opportunity for both undergraduates and graduate students is **LING 4395/5395: Internship in Linguistics** and

If you have any questions about linguistics courses, are interested in becoming a linguistics minor (ugrads), or have any other advising related questions, please feel free to contact me at ling.advisor@uta.edu or call me at 817-272-3133.

If you are interested in receiving departmental news, and not already on our email list, please let me know as well.

Josh Jensen, Ph.D. in Linguistics

As the Department of Linguistics and TESOL has looked for ways in the last year to improve services to students, one area that came under review was the Linguistics Lab in Trimble Hall 014. We have made some significant upgrades and improvements to the lab in the past year, and we have more planned for the next year or two.

As part of an incremental hardware upgrade plan, the lab added 2 new Dell Optiplex 760's with 22" widescreen monitors and 4 new 20" iMacs last fall. Additionally, the lab purchased a 24"

iMac that is dedicated to video editing (with Final Cut Pro) and audio editing (with Soundbooth).

Our lab has standardized the login method so that it matches the other labs on campus: now a NetID and password are required for logging onto the computers, and no data is saved from a session once a computer is restarted. This setup increases security for students, who might login to email or a bank account and accidentally save the password in the browser. Additionally, the computers themselves are safer from viruses and mali-

cious changes. (Any work on lab computers can be saved to students' J-drive, MavSpace, or personal storage device.)

In addition to these major changes, the lab has also rearranged, adding more shelf space in the back and opening up some space near the door for the new workstation. Computers are now set up for easy IPA Unicode input, and the Dells have the Windows Language Bar pre-loaded with keyboard layouts such as Arabic, Korean, and Mandarin. (Similar capabilities are available on the Macs.)

Many of the recent lab changes are prompted by student feedback and requests. If there's anything in the lab that you think could be improved to better serve students in the department, please pass those suggestions along to Dr. Laurel Stvan.



Doug Leach, MA in TESOL

Doug Leach is currently the Refugee Resettlement Director at World Relief. The Fort Worth office resettles over 500 refugees per year from over 20 different countries. World Relief is a non-profit Christian organization that contracts with the government to provide basic services for the most vulnerable. Doug is also responsible for writing grant proposals for over 1M in contracts since 2002.

Doug is currently a MA TESOL student at UT Arlington and a Adjunct ESOL Instructor at Tarrant County College

If you are interested in volunteering at World Relief please contact Doug at dleach@wr.org. The organization is always looking for volunteers (and practicum students) to help teach the families English.

For more information on the organization please visit: <http://worldrelief.org>

"I love working with refugees who need a lot of help when they first arrive in the country."



Upcoming Student Presentations

Jensen, Joshua. (Paper Accepted). Hook-rhyme & binarity in Jarai folk verse. 84th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Baltimore, MD. 08 January 2010.

Almubayei, Dalal. (Paper Accepted). YouTube and New Media Unveils Stereotypes of Arabs. 31st Annual Southwest Texas Popular Culture Association Conference, Albuquerque, NM. 10-13 February 2010.

Voinov, Vitaly. (Paper Accepted). Words Should Be Fun: Promoting Heritage Language

Use Among Tuvan Speakers With a Mother Tongue Version of Scrabble. First International Heritage Language Conference, Los Angeles, CA. 18-21 February 2010.

Choi, Yujeong. (Paper Accepted). Negotiating interpersonal relationships in Korean telephone conversations: Balancing involvement and independence. American Association for Applied Linguistics 2010 Annual Conference (AAAL 2010), Atlanta, GA. 06-09 March 2010.

George, Stephen. (Paper Accepted). Indian English article omission in online discussion forums. American Association of Applied Linguistics 2010 Annual Conference (AAAL 2010), Atlanta, GA. 06-09 March 2010.



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Whether you have personally benefited from the Department of Linguistics & TESOL or simply have an interest in the work done here, please consider supporting the students and faculty with a financial gift. The Linguistics and TESOL Alumni Endowment was established by alumna Dr. Robin Lombard. Once fully funded, it will support graduate student research initiatives. For more information or to make a donation, please contact the Department at (817) 272-3133 or the UT Arlington Development Office at (817) 272-2584, making sure to reference the "Department of Linguistics and TESOL - Linguistics and TESOL Alumni Endowment" as the destination and account for your contribution.

For more information please contact us at linguistics@uta.edu

New Speech Sounds Lab

The Speech Sounds Lab, under the direction of Dr. Cindy Kilpatrick, is the newest addition to the Linguistics and TESOL facilities. The purpose of the Lab is to provide appropriate space for experimentation with the sounds of speech. One major component of the lab is a sound attenuated booth (in this case, a WhisperRoom), necessary for both production and perception experiments. The WhisperRoom blocks ambient noise in order to produce the clearest recordings possible, and creates a quiet area where participants in perception experiments will not be distracted by noises around them, thus better allowing them to concentrate on listening to the sounds of the experiments in which they are participating. In addition to the booth, the lab will host several computer workstations. At least one Mac and one Windows machine will be available for researchers to use for speech segmentation, transcription, and manipulation, as well as for statistical analysis, and a separate sound station will be dedicated to use with recordings and experiments in the booth.

Work in the Lab is well underway. The WhisperRoom has been constructed and installed, thanks mostly to Drew Burks, with the help of Cindy and the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs for Liberal Arts, Eric Bolsterli. Colleen Fitzgerald, Laurel Stvan, and Joey Sab-

bagh all contributed to the installation as well. With the WhisperRoom ready, current efforts are being concentrated on other equipment and furniture to finish out the space. Tables, chairs, bookcases, and filing cabinets are in place, and the computer workstations are coming soon.

The goal is to have the lab operational by the end of the Fall semester, so that experiments can begin full force in January. If you are interested in working with Dr. Kilpatrick on a collaborative experimental project, make sure to get in contact with her about the possibilities.

