

## Rutgers Colloquium on Indigenous Languages in/of New Jersey

Organizers (Department of Anthropology): Becky Schulthies, Kathleen Riley, Pilar Rau, and Ulla Berg

In honor of the UN's Year of Indigenous Languages, this colloquium highlights indigenous languages in and of NJ as well as Rutgers research related to indigenous languages. Rutgers sits on Lenni-Lenape land while their remaining tribal members struggle to be recognized and to revitalize their endangered or moribund languages: Unami, Munsee, and Nanticoke. In addition, New Brunswick is home to many Oaxacan indigenous language speakers, and NJ more broadly hosts many migrants and residents of minority mother tongues and native languages. Many of these face discrimination and anxiety about their languages and heritage, both in NJ and globally.

In order to raise awareness about these issues, we are showcasing Rutgers expertise and community commitments to indigenous languages in/of New Jersey by organizing a colloquium during Native American History month, which also fits with the 2020 theme for the American Studies NJ Folk Festival, highlighting the Oaxacan community of New Brunswick, and their linguistic/cultural diversity.

<b>Thursday 7:30-9:30PM</b>	<b>Indigenous Film Shorts and Panel Discussion</b>	<b>Venue:</b> AB2400, College Ave
<b>Friday Nov. 15 8AM-6PM</b>	<b>Indigenous Language Colloquium</b>	<b>Venue:</b> Alexander Library Teleconference/Lecture Hall Indigenous
<b>Presenter times</b>	<b>Region, language</b>	<b>Presentation Titles</b>
8:00 Opening by Lenape tribal member and Introduction by Becky Schulthies and Pilar Rau	Lenape	Indigenous Languages: What, Where, Why Now?
8:30 Peter Guarnaccia	Immigrants in NJ	The Balancing Act of Speaking Multiple Languages: The Intimate Connection of Language to Culture
9 Pius Akumbu (Introduction by Kenneth Safir)	Cameroon, Babanki	Challenges and opportunities of mother-tongue education in multilingual settings: The case of Babanki, Cameroon
<b>9:30 coffee break</b>		
10 Rocio Bersi Macedo Portillo and Janett Vengoa de Orós (Introduction by Sue Kalt and Liliana Sanchez)	Peru, Quechua	Living Quechua – Reclaiming love of the language for successful native language K-12 pedagogy
10:30 Gabriela Vargas Melgarejo	Bolivia, Quechua	Causes of Family Migration and Effects on Acquisition of Quechua
11:00 Christine Altinis–Kiraz and Arij Chamoun	Aramaic/Syriac	Title: Efforts to Preserve a Lost Language: Classical vs. Vernacular Syriac in New Jersey.
<b>11:30-1 LUNCH</b>		
1-1:30 PM Habib Borjian	Iran (in NYC), Judeo-Shirazi, Bukhari, Judeo-Tat	Mega Cities as Hybrid Sites for Language Documentation: Minority Vernaculars in the Big Apple
1:30-2 Livia Souza	Xinane	The Xinane Yura and Time: Documenting the Language of a Recently Contacted Amazonian Group
2-2:30 Christine Mladic	Quechua	
2:30-3 Karelle Hall	Lenape/Nanticoke	Lenape Diaspora Language Revitalization and Communicative Practices.
3-3:30 Mark Baker	Montreal, Mohawk	On Mohawk Language, Culture, and Community in the 1990s: Some reflections
<b>3:30 Coffee break + film</b>		
4:00 Wafa (Soubeika) Bahri	Tunisia/Tamazight	Maintaining <i>Intersubjectivity</i> in the Discourse of Tunisian Amazigh Identity Construction: Facebook Activism
4:30 GIRT student presentation		Indigenous Language Speakers at Rutgers
5 Kathleen C. Riley	French Polynesia, Enana/'Enata	Dictionaries and the Orthography Wars: Indexes of Contact and Discontent in the Marquesas, French Polynesia
5:30 Teresa Vivar	Oaxacan languages	

## **Titles, bios and abstracts:**

**Pius W. Akumbu** is a professor of Linguistics at the University of Bamenda, Cameroon and currently an Alexander von Humboldt researcher at the University of Hamburg, Germany. His main interests lie in the documentation and description of endangered Cameroonian languages as well as in language policy and planning in Africa.

*Title:* Challenges and opportunities of mother-tongue education in multilingual settings: The case of Babanki, Cameroon

**Wafa (Soubeika) Bahri** has graduated with PhD in Linguistics from The Graduate Center, CUNY in 2019. Her thesis offers a sociolinguistic analysis of the semiotic and discursive displays of the Tunisian Tamazight language and identity on Facebook. Her areas of interest include Language Revitalization, Discourse Analysis, and Bilingualism/Multilingualism.

*Title:* Maintaining *intersubjectivity* in the discourse of Tunisian Amazigh identity construction: Facebook activism

*Abstract:* Drawing on insights from discourse-centered online ethnography (Androutsopoulos, 2008) and the tactics of *intrasubjectivity* proposed by Bucholtz and Hall (2005), the paper examines the discursive and semiotic practices that Tunisian *Imazighen* (sing. Amazigh) deploy during their Facebook interactions to construct and reconstruct their indigenous identity. Moving through three resources of knowledge ( Tamazight language knowledge, cultural knowledge, and orthographic knowledge), Tunisian *Imazighen* engage themselves in processes of authentication, legitimization, and authorization that turn into recursive ideological practices reconstructing new boundaries among the Amazigh community and in their relation to the rest of Tunisians. By enacting these tactics, the study reveals that Tunisian Imazighen do not only construct themselves as distinctive, but also reproduce language and identity ideologies similar to that in the hegemonic Arabo-Islamic discourse they have been subservient to for centuries. The paper concludes that all these online discursive practices are double-edged. On one side, they enhance the Amazigh element visibility in the public discourse. On the flip side, however, they may trigger actions against the emerging language revitalization project and create blockades to desired linguistic, political, and social outcomes.

Androutsopoulos, J. (2008). Potential and limitations of discourse-centered online ethnography. *Language@Internet*, Vol.5(8).

Bucholtz, M., & Hall, K. (2005). Identity and interaction: A sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*, 7, 585–614.

**Mark C. Baker** is Distinguished Professor of Linguistics and Cognitive Science at Rutgers University. He received his Ph.D. in Linguistics in 1985 from MIT. He taught at McGill University in Montreal for 12 years before moving to Rutgers in 1998. He specializes in the syntax and morphology of less-studied languages, particularly those of the Americas, Africa, and Asia, seeking to bring together generative-style theories, data collected from fieldwork, and typological comparison in an illuminating way. He has written five research monographs, numerous journal articles, and one book for a popular audience (*The Atoms of Language*(2001)). In addition to a six-year research project working with the Mohawks of Kahnawake, Quebec, he has done shorter term projects working with the Mapudungun of Chile, the Shipibo of Peru, and the Sakha people of Siberia.

*Title:* On Mohawk language, culture, and community in the 1990s: Some reflections

*Abstract:* The Mohawk people living on official Mohawk lands near Montreal, Quebec, have been in a special situation in several respects. To begin with, they were a relatively large community, while at the same time living quite close to a major city. With a speech community in the thousands, but rapidly aging, they had both resources and challenges in passing on their language and the cultural identity that went with it. They also faced special pressures as a linguistic minority living in a Province run by people who also considered themselves a

linguistic minority (French speakers), getting caught in the language politics of that area of Canada. While their language, cultural, and education programs were reasonably well-funded by Canadian government, they faced difficult choices about how exactly to use these funds to the best effect. I will review what this situation was like in the 1990s, some of the choices that key Mohawk people faced and made, and what their friends at the university were (and were not) able to do to support them in this.

**Ulla Berg** (Associate Professor in the Departments of Latino and Hispanic Caribbean Studies and Anthropology and director of the Center for Latin American Studies) organized a screening of recent documentaries on language revitalization.

**Habib Borjian** (Endangered Language Alliance, New York; Visiting Scholar, AMESALL, Rutgers)

*Title:* Mega Cities as Hybrid Sites for Language Documentation: Minority Vernaculars in the Big Apple

*Abstract:* Political, economic, and environmental forces have given rise to global migration that is increasingly displacing populations to urban centers internationally. While most of the world's languages were previously spoken only in the provenances of their speakers, one now finds large sub-populations of small linguistic communities in diaspora. This has clear consequences for language endangerment and documentation as collaboration with such populations presents unique challenges. The languages included in this talk are being documented by the Endangered Language Alliance (ELA)---an independent non-profit based in New York City and the only organization in the world focused on the immense linguistic diversity of urban areas. Many of the Metropolitan area's estimated 800 languages are highly endangered, and for many, New York is a major center. ELA documents and describes under-described and endangered languages, educating a larger public and collaborating with communities. In this presentation, I discuss ongoing work on three endangered Iranic languages in New York and New Jersey spoken by Jewish communities from Iran, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. These languages have not been documented sufficiently and are now predominantly spoken entirely outside of their home areas without being transmitted. Consequently, the last hope of documenting them adequately depends on working with speakers in diaspora. I focus here in particular on the following three languages, which represent three points on the spectrum of endangerment and present different challenges for collaboration: Judeo-Shirazi, Bukhari or Bukhori, and Judeo-Tat, also known as Juhuri.

**GIRT Indigenous Language Project:**

*Student researchers:* Jusleen Basra, Regina Hall, Bing'en Lin, Devin Natishyn, Farhana Selamat

**Peter Guarnaccia** (Department of Human Ecology, Rutgers University):

*Title:* The Balancing Act of Speaking Multiple Languages: The Intimate Connection of Language to Culture

*Abstract:* Rutgers is home to a wide range of immigrant students from around the world. They are frequently bilingual and often multilingual, speaking the languages of their families, religions, regions, and countries. Immigrant families think a lot about how to pass family languages on to their children and have developed various strategies for helping children maintain family languages and learn English. At the same time, learning and maintaining family languages is a complex social and political process. Particularly in the U.S., there is considerable intolerance towards children maintaining family languages and children are often discriminated against and even punished for using family languages outside their home and community contexts. Families are well aware that their children need to learn English to succeed in the U.S. and want their children to excel academically. This is often a central rationale for family's immigration project. In this talk, I will review the findings about language learning and use from my study of immigrant students at Rutgers. I will highlight the range of family and community strategies for maintaining family languages. I will also examine the politics of language use in the U.S. and in other countries where students lived prior to migration to the U.S.

**Karelle Hall** (Department of Anthropology, Rutgers University)

*Title:* Lenape Diaspora Language Revitalization and Communicative Practices.

*Abstract:* I will discuss the multi-modality of language revitalization among dispersed Lenape communities. Indigenous language revival and revitalization go beyond the words themselves and these broader communicative practices work to create community across the diaspora.

**Gabriela Vargas Melgarejo, M.A.** (Sociolinguistics, Universidad Mayor de San Simón, Cochabamba, Bolivia)

*Title:* Causes of family migration and effects on acquisition of Quechua

*Abstract:* This fieldwork investigates causes of migration from countryside to city and consequences for Quechua language and culture in Tarabuco, Bolivia, a rural area currently undergoing radical changes. Speakers mentioned being introduced to new realities, economic necessity and climate change, ancestral wisdom being supplanted by modern technology, and search for quality education as motivators for their migration. Effects on the language included a transition from Quechua to Spanish dominance by the younger generation, absence of children in the rural community, and increased mixing of Quechua with Spanish. These effects are evident in the speech of participants recorded in a community meeting in 2016.

**Christine Mladic-Janney** is a filmmaker and PhD candidate in Anthropology at New York University. She has been involved with Quechua/Kichwa language outreach in the NYC area since 2009.

*Title:* Interdisciplinary, Transnational, and Intersectional: Strategies of Quichwa Language Activism in the US

*Abstract:* Quechua and Kichwa languages are frequently noted for their inclusion in UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in danger. While there have been some efforts made to support these languages by the governments of countries with large numbers of Quechua and Kichwa speakers, there has also been a steady increase in grassroots language activism and academic study and outreach in recent years. This talk traces interdisciplinary, transnational, and intersectional connections forged by some of the Quechua/Kichwa language initiatives coming out of the NYC/NJ area. It argues that even though language ideologies and specific histories can pose serious obstacles, these strategies offer promising pathways for strengthening the future of Quechua/Kichwa languages.

**Janett Vengoa de Orós** (independent education consultant, Cuzco, Peru) and **Rocio Bersi Macedo Portillo**, (Pedagogical Coordinator for TAREA, a non-profit education organization, Cuzco, Peru)

*Title:* Living Quechua – Reclaiming love of the language for successful native language K-12 pedagogy

*Abstract:* We will present a pedagogical proposal for the teaching of Quechua in urban contexts (initial and primary levels) implemented in collaboration with the Pukllasunchis center in Cuzco, Peru. This included parent awareness meetings to dispel negative attitudes towards Quechua, research with students of anthropology at UNSAAC on the agricultural festive calendar of Cuzco and the training of initial and primary teachers to develop methods focused on real situations. Outside of Cuzco we report on a second bilingual/bicultural education project to revitalize Quechua in the community and school among participants 5-11 and 12-18 years old. Selection of participants was determined by high number of heritage speakers in the region. We carried out a linguistic profile there and determined low mastery of Quechua despite exposure at homes and in the community. Negative assessment of the language was strong and disallowed successful acquisition. Therefore, we intentionally cultivated a lengthy "fondness" stage inspired by Andean elders' worldview "munakuyllawan uywakusun", (let's raise ourselves with love).

**Pilar Rau** (PhD, U New York University, 2013; Assistant Teaching Professor at Rutgers since 2014) is a cultural anthropologist with a background in visual arts, media studies, and sociolinguistics, now specializing in the anthropology of religion, anthropology of art and aesthetics, visual anthropology, and economic anthropology, with a regional focus on Latin America. Dr. Rau has professional expertise in qualitative research

design and assessment in academic and non-profit contexts. She has served as PI on several student research projects.

**Kathleen C. Riley** has conducted ethnographic research on language, culture, and society in the Marquesas (French Polynesia), France, Montreal, and New York City. She presently teaches cultural and linguistic anthropology at Rutgers.

*Title:* Dictionaries as indexes of contact and discontent in the Marquesas, French Polynesia

*Abstract:* The language spoken in the Marquesas, an archipelago of French Polynesia, known to the residents as *te 'eo 'enana*, was first written down by explorers, missionaries, and whalers in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and more recently by linguists, teachers, and cultural revivalists. The goals of these textualizing efforts have been diverse: to facilitate economic exchanges, to save souls, to contribute to scientific knowledge (linguistic and ethnographic), and to maintain an endangered channel of cultural transmission and symbol of identity. The resulting documents have been equally various and filled with traces of the interactive contexts out of which they emerged. This paper engages in close discursive analysis of several wordlists and dictionaries (Crook, Robarts, Dordillon, Zewen, LeCleac'h, Mutu, Tetahiotupa, and Donaldson), paying special attention to struggles over the written systems employed and the semantic domains articulated. Not only are the sources of their production examined, but also their potential for regimenting future discourses in and about the languages they purport to represent.

**Liliana Sanchez**, Ph.D., Rutgers University and **Susan Kalt**, Ph.D. Roxbury Community College, ACLS Mellon Fellow and NEH Documenting Endangered Languages Fellow

*Title:* Documentation and revitalization of Bolivian and Peruvian Quechua through an activist educator network

*Abstract:* Our Cuzco-Collao Quechua documentation and revitalization project engages rural highlands communities in paying close attention to their language as spoken today by children and adults. Documentation includes recording interviews using elicited stories and picture-based conversations; next is transcription, translation, morphemic analysis and archiving at the Archive of the Indigenous Languages of Latin America and/or local archives. This ensures electronic accessibility for future generations and allows current research. We have completed over 120 interviews in Chuquisaca, Bolivia and Cusco, Peru. Revitalization activities are spearheaded by Andean educators and community leaders residing/working at the interview sites; some are presenting here.

**Becky L. Schulthies** (Ph.D. University of Arizona; Assistant Professor Rutgers, School of Arts and Sciences) is a linguistic and cultural anthropologist who has conducted field research in Morocco (2003-2019) and Lebanon (2004-5). My research projects explore the intersection of language and media in urban Arab families, and plant-human communicative ideologies using participant observation, interviews, and video ethnography. Although I do not conduct research in the U.S., I am currently supervising a graduate student project on indigenous language revitalization among the Nanticoke and Lenni-Lenape native communities in New Jersey and Delaware. I am also supervising three other graduate student research projects and meet with them regularly to discuss issues that arise throughout their research. Since my appointment at Rutgers in 2012, I have worked with four undergraduate honors theses students who conducted interviews and ethnographic fieldwork on Chinese religion and immigrants in NJ, the social meanings of African American rap lyric pronunciations, the educational trajectories of post-incarcerated individuals in NJ, and the commodification processes of club youth soccer in NJ. In each of these undergraduate research projects, I have worked with students to design their research projects, prepare and submit IRB protocols, conduct their research, and analyze the collected data. In addition, in 2019 I led a four week summer undergraduate ethnographic field school in Morocco, in which students learned to conduct research through various techniques.

**Livia Camargo Souza** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Rutgers Linguistics Department. Her dissertation work focuses on the syntax-semantics of switch-reference constructions in Panoan languages, especially Yawanawa. She has been working with Language Documentation in the Brazilian Amazon for nearly a decade, having

coordinated documentation and revitalization projects on the languages of the Yawanawa and Xinane Yura people. The latter is a recently-contacted group whose population is completely monolingual and therefore requires special -- and often experimental -- fieldwork methodology. The focus of Livia's talk will be on the process of documenting the language of this recently-contacted group: methodologies, strategies, and challenges.

*Title:* The Xinane Yura and time: documenting the language of a recently-contacted Amazonian group

**Teresa Vivar**