-Papers for ICSNL 50-

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Preface

This volume includes many of the papers submitted to the 50th International Conference on Salish and Neighbouring Languages, co-hosted by the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University and held on the University of British Columbia Vancouver campus on August 5–7, 2015. Several speakers also gave more informal presentations and did not therefore include a paper in this volume. Additionally, this volume includes a paper by Amy Rose Deal that was presented at the 49th ICSNL conference, held in 2014, and a paper by Nancy Mattina that was not presented at any ICSNL conference but offers a valuable contribution in the spirit of the conference.

Erin Guntly
on behalf of the UBCWPL Editors

Introduction for the 50th year

This conference marks the 50th anniversary of the International Conference of Salish and Neighbouring languages, and it is my pleasure to introduce this volume of proceedings of the conference. As those who have previously chronicled the history of what started out as the Salish Conference have noted, it began with a small group of linguists dedicated to the study of Salish languages gathering at the Seattle home of Laurence and Terry Thompson in 1965, and by the early 1980s had expanded to include "neighbouring" language families and isolates, including Wakashan, Chimakuan, Tsimshianic, Athapaskan, Chinookan, Penutian and Sahaptin languages, as well as the Chinook jargon and linguistic isolates of the area, including Haida, Kootenai and Tlingit (see icsnl.org). Throughout the decades, the conference became a "clearing house" and sharing forum for linguists who were carrying out long-term sustained work on languages of Northwest North America, along with past and present graduate students who were able to present work in progress, and the odd linguistic anthropologist who shared cross-over work into discourse and social theory. The annual papers, initially collected by the organizers of the year's venue, were distributed, and since 2000 have been published through UBC Working Papers in Linguistics, now available as the On-Line Archive of ICS(N)L Papers. As Henry Davis noted, "…the *Papers* as a whole provide a unique perspective on the trajectory of linguistic investigation in the Northwest over the last half century, and as such form an important part of linguistic history in North America" (Introduction to the Kinkade Collection: The On-Line Archive of ICS(N)L Papers, icsnl.org).

With this introduction, I would like to honour the long-term sustained work of the founding members and early generation of linguists who convened the ICSNL, and for years shared their work through this venue. My colleague Henry Davis will speak to the invaluable and important contribution of M. Dale Kinkade, and to the legacy of linguistic research and linguistic training that he left. Several other linguists were regular and productive contributors to the conference: The Thompsons, Bill Elmendorf, Wayne Suttles, Dell Hymes, Aert Kuipers, Tom Hess, Brent Galloway, to name a few – sadly, along with Dale Kinkade, many of them have left us. As a student and speaker of Secwepemctsin (Shuswap), I would like to express my gratitude for Aert's long and invaluable research with speakers of Secwepemctsin – although he also carried out important work with Squamish speakers. Like the work of many of the other linguists who contributed to the ICSNL, Aert's work not only resulted in his 1974 publication *The Shuswap Language*, and a 1989 collection of transcribed texts, *A Report on Shuswap*, but in collaboration with speakers of Secwepemctsin, he co-produced a series of

practical works that include a Dictionary, still the foundation of the current Secwepemc language dictionary, as well as a practical language course, and a word list. Reviewing his 1967 version of *A Course on Shuswap*, I cannot help but think that at a time when Secwepemc communities still had a large number of speakers but, like other First Nations communities, were facing the brunt of the cultural genocide and linguicide imposed by residential schools, Aert Kuipers anticipated the decline of the language and advocated language documentation work to include stories, place-names, personal names, cultural practices and traditions, and registers of speech that connect to them.

As the ICSNL persisted, new generations of researchers have honoured this legacy, and next to the descriptive and theoretical work on languages, many of the linguists and graduate students who have contributed to the conference have continued to carry out collaborative work with speakers to document languages. Some have collaborated with speakers and learners in First Nations speech communities to create pedagogical and applied materials, and to teach or co-teach the language to the next generation. Along with the ICSNL, other conferences, including the *Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Symposium* and the *International Conference of Language Documentation and Conservation*, have grown in the past decade or so, and have promoted and show-cased language revitalization in method, practice and theory. It is important to remind ourselves that the ICSNL, as involving collaborations among linguists and speakers of indigenous languages, has existed in this spirit from the onset. Importantly, in addition to the linguistic working paper presentations, since at least the 1990s, the ICSNL has included applied sessions on grass-roots language teaching and learning, and language revitalization. Unfortunately, since these are for the most part oral presentations, we do not have a written record of this important part of the Salish Conference.

In marking the 50th anniversary of the conference, and to celebrate the spirit and practice of collaboration among linguists and speakers of our languages, this year we "de-segregated" the more technical linguistic papers and the applied and collaborative presentations. Instead, we named our Friday session Collaborations, Indigenous Voices and Stories, featuring a number of papers presented or co-presented by First Nations elders, linguists and First Nations linguists, including last but not least a paper by Jan van Eijk, "The barrier breached: Ongoing cooperations between native speakers and linguists" that addresses this very topic. In addition, several of the papers presented in the sessions on Phonetics and Phonology, Syntax and Semantics, and on neighbouring language families Tsimshian and Wakashan feature collaborations and indigenous linguists.

As indigenous language communities are seeing their languages hanging by a thread and are facing the loss of the last first language speakers, we may ask, what can linguistics do, and what role do linguists have in indigenous language revitalization? For one thing, as we face the urgency and the challenge of producing fully proficient second language speakers of our languages, collaborations between linguists, and the training of indigenous linguists are

important tasks that will not only help academics understand and analyse the complex and difficult phonologies and grammatical structures of First Nations Languages, but will also help First Nations language learners develop practical and pedagogical materials. The 50th ICSNL will continue such collaborations and will continue to celebrate our languages, and will continue the dialogue of linguistic research and collaboration.

Marianne Ignace

July, 2015
Vancouver, British Columbia