WORD FORMATION IN SOUTH AMERICAN LANGUAGES
Institute of Linguistics, University of Leipzig, Germany

Date: Friday 24 June, 2011

Location: University of Leipzig
Institute for Ethnology
Schillerstraße 6
04109 Leipzig
Germany
Room: S102

Registration:
Participants do not need to register for the meeting. However, if you want to join the meeting without presenting a paper, please let us know by sending an e-mail to Femmy Admiraal (femmyadmiraal@gmail.com).

This is the upcoming meeting of the Americanist group, which is organized in Leipzig this time, by Femmy Admiraal, Swintha Danielsen, and Katja Hannß. The topic of this year’s Americanist Meeting is Word Formation in South American Languages. The presentations are planned to be 20 minutes plus 10 minutes of discussion. Abstract of the workshop can be found underneath the programme. The complete list of abstracts will be presented here soon as well.

Programme:

9:30
Welcome and introduction

9:45
Katja Hannß (University of Bonn/Radboud University Nijmegen): Reduplication in Kallawaya (mixed language, Bolivia)

10:15
Lucia Golluscio (UBA/CONICET Buenos Aires) & Swintha Danielsen (University of Leipzig): Word formation in Vilela (Argentinian Chaco)

10:45
Tea and coffee break

11:15
Carola Emkow (Free University of Berlin): Word formation in Araona (Tacanan)

11:45
Antoine Guillaume (University of Lyon2/CNRS, Laboratoire DDL): What’s in a Tacana verb? (Tacanan)
Topic – Abstract: Word formation in South American Languages

There are a number of general descriptive volumes focusing on the typology of South American languages (e.g. Adelaar with Muysken 2004, Derbyshire & Pullum 1986–1998, Dixon & Aikhenvald 1999, Payne 1990). Many, but by no means all languages are characterized as synthetic and agglutinating. In the language descriptions we find elaborate inflectional and derivational morphology, which is partly responsible for the synthetic character of the languages; in addition nominal classification, incorporation, and reduplication are recurring morphological processes. However, one process that does not seem to be very frequent in South American
languages is compounding. On the one hand, compounds are argued to be exceptional or infrequent for Quechuan (Adelaar with Muysken 2004), Yurakaré (van Gijn 2006), and Arawakan (Zamponi 2009). On the other hand, compounding is attested in the following language families: Mapudungun (Adelaar with Muysken 2004 on Mapuche), Makú (Martins & Martins 1999), and Arawakan (Duff-Tripp 1997 on Amuesha, Danielsen 2007 on Baure), and also mentioned in passing for Panoan (Loos 1999), Tupi-Guarani (Jensen 1999), Cuna, Harakmbut, and the Fuegian languages (Adelaar with Muysken 2004), among others. One reason why compounding is addressed so rarely among South American languages is probably the fact that similar processes are not categorized as composition, but rather as derivation (in the case of classifier attachment, cf. Seifart 2005), as syntactic constructions, e.g. for modification (cf. Guillaume 2008), as genitive constructions (Zamponi 2009), or as postpositions, instead of referring to spatial compounds (cf. Rybka 2009).

A number of South American languages make use of verbal compounding by joining two verbal roots, as well as incorporation of nominal roots into verbs. It may be claimed that verbal incorporation and nominal compounding are two parts of a general tendency of creating more complex units of (lexical) morphemes (cf. Adelaar with Muysken 2004, Mithun 1984). Due to the synthetic character of many languages we would also expect that “compound affixes”, i.e. “multi-[a]ffix chunks that are processed as a single unit” (compare Gildea 2000: 234) may be found, forming units of grammatical morphemes.

In this upcoming Americanist meeting we invite presentations on all sorts of word formation processes. Possible topics, among others, are: Are compounds really so rare in South American languages? What kinds of compounds does a particular language have, and for which types of semantic relations are they used? Of particular interest are comparisons between compounding and modifying constructions, classification, verbal incorporation, derivational processes, and serialization, and reflections on phrasal and clausal compounds, as well compounding of grammatical units.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of the organizers:

Femmy Admiraal: femmyadmiraal@gmail.com (University of Leipzig)
Swintha Danielsen: Swinha@hotmail.com (University of Leipzig)
Katja Hannß: Katja.Hanß@gmx.net (Universities of Bonn and Nijmegen)

References:


Suggested reading: