



Orpheus Krewe float from the 2004 Lundi Gras parade.

past a quiet zone, and minutes later a smaller scale set of festivities greet me on the way back to our tranquil oasis.

It is all so public—nothing hidden, little left to the imagination. Every stripe of identity is here to meet, to wine and dine if interest merits. How can there be such an unabashed public expression of identity in a place that has so frequently chided the margins of “normal” sexuality? “Borders,” I think. “Anyone here can transgress boundaries, ‘cross over’ at will and then go back. Here, borders are suspended.” I am at once a “professional” and an individual, studying “sideways” while being the person I am. Surely, this place at this moment in time cannot somehow be collectively exempt from the expectations and definitions of “normal.”

The borders we study and live within are not, of course, always that of nation. We exist from moment to moment as a self—whether professional anthropologist or sexed being—and function within the confines of the borders established by the accretion of law, custom and tradition we all are born(e) into. The constraints of our identities are a given, automatically assumed and lived whether we are queer or straight, left or right; they just “are.” Borders, as Carnival reminds us, are never cast in stone. Tempting as it is to imagine Bakhtin’s medieval as simply being older, it is far from that. But how do borders change? Within our own cultural venues powerful political and institutional forces exist. For Rabelais, the Church commanded; for today’s revelers, government steps in. Seemingly, this power should have the ability to exert change, to redefine those borders to suit, and this often happens. Simultaneously, the moral legionnaires of our time bend political power to enforce an agenda—they are not absent on this Lundi Gras either, bearing crosses and signs as they stand resolutely in the sea of chaos. Their parent organizations (assuming they have such affiliations) are loud, powerful voices, ensuring that their version of moral and cultural law is heard and, increasingly, enacted. Borders shift, slowly, carefully. No one here seems concerned: “They’ll never take Mardi Gras away” one native South Louisiana resident assures me as we wait for the Orpheus Krewe on parade. But will he stand up and be counted if they try? His answer seems vague.

Borders often act to define the social constituency. Strength of numbers matters, especially on election day. Individuals may concede in win-or-lose voting, and often concede their selves in day-to-day living. Outside carnival, stepping past those borders takes courage that many of us lack. Our imagined

communities have borders defined for us—we accede depending on comfort level or need. The moment we reach past our comfort zone, stand up and say who we really are, borders may be changed. The nation of separates in which we seem to be living demands more than a *heteroglossia* of laws enacted by a small number of loud voices. The individual in each of us—personal and professional—can act to counter the collision of “centripetal and centrifugal forces” that push so many of us under, not just inside, the borders.

Please send any comments, suggestions, ideas for new columns or other material to David Houston at dlrh+an@uvm.edu.

Society for Linguistic Anthropology

JAMES STANLAW AND MARK PETERSON,
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Language and the Internet: Is it Always English?

By James Stanlaw

If you ask most people what the “language of the Internet” is, they most likely would say without a

second thought, English. The question sounds like a no-brainer to anyone who has crawled the web in the last five minutes and, to be sure, English appears to be the default language of almost any site you hit. Even though operating systems now come in all sorts of linguistic flavors, many people still use an English version of Windows or a Mac OS, just because interfacing with a larger English-using computer community is easier that way.

And as is well known, for better or for worse, English is the closest thing to a lingua franca the world has. Even when people thought WWW meant nothing more than World Wide Wrestling, everything from air traffic control to science conferences has been conducted in English. And English dominance has been a boom to business; it is probably impossible to underestimate the economic impact on world trade of having to use only a single language. Thus, as the Internet has now become commercialized, no one should be surprised at how much English we find there.

The amount of statistical information that can be gleaned from the web is truly amazing. For example, Nielsen//NetRatings, a professional tracking and marketing service that gathers data for business clients (www.Nielsen-netratings.com), can tell us the most picayune details of the

Languages on the Internet (all figures in percentages)

	1 web pages 1997	2 web pages 2001	3 web pages 2002	4 PDF pages 2002	5 Google June 2001	6 Google Jan 2002	7 Google May 2004	8 Internet penetration 2005
English	82.3	68.4	56.4	38.2	64	57	54	59
German	4.0	5.8	7.7	10.6	9	12	8	72
French	1.5	3.0	5.6	8.8	4	5	5	68
Japanese	1.6	5.9	4.9	7.4	8	7	4	53
Spanish	1.1	2.4	3.0	5.8	5	6	8	24
Chinese	<.1	3.9	2.4	2.2	1	3	5	25
Italian	0.8	1.6	2.0	3.6	2	2	na	74
Dutch	0.4	<.1	1.9	2.2	na	na	2.5	73
Russia	0.1	1.9	1.7	0.8	na	na	na	4
Korean	<.1	1.3	1.5	0.4	na	na	na	63
Portuguese	0.7	1.4	1.5	2.0	na	na	na	22
Swedish	0.6	<.1	0.7	3.6	na	na	na	74
Polish	<.1	<.1	0.7	0.7	na	na	na	23
Danish	0.3	<.1	0.6	1.5	na	na	na	62
Czech	0.3	<.1	0.6	1.8	na	na	na	26
Turkish	<.1	<.1	0.2	2.2	na	na	na	7
Hungarian	<.1	<.1	0.2	3.5	na	na	na	24
Greek	<.1	<.1	0.1	1.7	na	na	na	15
Other	6.7	4.6	8.3	2.9	4	8	13.5	—

Total 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% 100% —

Sources and Comments

Column 1: www.alis.isoc.org/palmares.en.html
Column 2: www.global-reach.biz/globstats/refs.php3; www.emarketer.com/analysis/edemographics/20010227_demo.html
Columns 3 and 4: raw data based on www.netz-tipp.de/sprachen.html
Column 5: www.google.com/press/zeitgeist/zeitgist-june01.html
Column 6: www.google.com/press/zeitgeist/zeitgist-jan02.html
Column 7: www.google.com/press/zeitgeist/zeitgist-may04.html
Note: Periodically, Google posted figures on the top seven languages used to access the internet through its search engine (e.g., Columns 5 and 6 above). In May 2002 it no longer posted actual figures, but only graphs. Data in this column is extrapolated from the May 2004 graph.
Column 8: <http://global-reach.biz/globstats/evol/html>; www.internetworldstats.com

average net user in almost any country. The average Japanese person in November 2004 spent almost 16 hours a month on the web, at over 25 sessions, visiting 76 different domains. The average American spent longer—30 hours that month—but surfed less (hitting only 57 domains). But what languages were they viewing? Or using? Here things become a bit more muddled, and oddly, not so easily tracked. What is usually cited is the number of Internet users in a given country, but that does not mean these users always use—or only use—their country's native language(s).

The first four columns in the upper table on the facing page give some information on language usage on the Internet by looking at actual samples of things found on the web. Data in column one is based on a sample of 3,239 home pages of the 1,007,000 web servers extant in 1997. Column 2 is based on a sample of 313 million web pages in 2001, column 3 on over two billion web pages sampled in 2002, and column 4 on 125 million PDF pages.

The table reveals some interesting trends. The noted linguist David Crystal in his book *Language and the Internet* (2001) wondered if the English-dominated Internet would contribute to the demise of other languages, at least on the web. Perhaps he was being pessimistic. It appears that the use of English has gone down significantly, from 82% in 1997 (column 1) to less than 57% in 2002 (column 2). German, French and Japanese each now make up between five and eight percent of all web pages. If we look at PDF pages, these differences are even more pronounced. Chinese, Korean, Russian and Dutch all went from almost nothing in 1997 to a noticeable presence in 2002. A similar trend appears if we look at the languages used to access the Google search engine (columns 5 through 7 in the table). English went down 10% from June 2001 to May 2004 (and Japanese appears to have dropped a little as well).

However, to predict the passing of English as the dominant language on the web may still be a bit premature. A closer look at the available statistical data suggests that the drop of English is leveling off. For example, language access on Google from September 2003 to May 2004 remained essentially the same for all languages (www.google.com/press/zeitgeist/zeitgeist-may04.html). Also, if we look at the "penetration" levels in the last column in the table—the percentage of the speakers of a given language that have access to the web—we see that a great majority of speakers of many European languages (like German, French and Dutch) already use the Internet, so the number of these speakers going online might not be expected to grow very much. In contrast, only 59% of English speakers use the web, so these numbers could increase.

The big question seems to be in the "other" category. Chinese and Arabic (which is just beginning to establish a noticeable web presence) stand to be future competitors of English on the Internet. It is now almost as easy to send email or word process in Sino-Japanese characters or non-Roman alphabets as it is to write in English.

Ultimately, then, the choice of language for use on the Internet may mimic that of real-time speech—becoming a personal, political or nationalist decision.

Please send your comments, contributions, news and announcements to SLA contributing editors Jim Stanlaw at stanlaw@ilstu.edu or Mark Peterson at petersm2@muohio.edu.

Society for Medical Anthropology

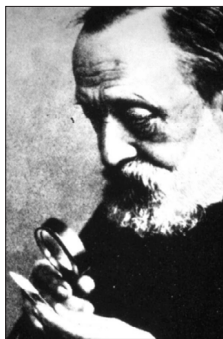
NANCY VUCKOVIC AND JANELLE TAYLOR,
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

2004 Virchow Awards Announced

By Athena McLean (U Central Michigan)

Congratulations to the 2004 Virchow award winners. Each year, awards go to the best-submitted papers in the area of professional, graduate student and undergraduate papers. This year's judges were Craig Janes, Barbara Rylko-Bauer, Merrill Singer, Brian McKenna, Linda Whiteford and Lynn Morgan. Winners of the 2004 Virchow Awards are:

Professional category: James Pfeiffer (Case Western U), "International NGOs and Primary Health Care in Mozambique: The Need for a New Model of Collaboration." *Social Science and Medicine* 56(2003): 725–738. Graduate Student category: Sarah Willen (Emory) "Birthing 'Invisible' Children: State Power, NGO Activism, and Reproductive Health among 'Illegal' Migrant Workers in Tel Aviv, Israel." Undergraduate Student category: Hanna Garth (Rice) (advised by Eugenia Georges, department of anthropology and Bridget Gorman, department of sociology) "African American View on Health Care: An Urban Study."



German physician Rudolf Virchow wrote about social medicine in the 1800s.

The annual Rudolf Virchow Awards are given by the Critical Anthropology of Health Caucus, a special interest group of SMA. Rudolf Virchow, a German physician writing during the 1800s, was a key founder of social medicine. The awards honor professional articles and student papers deemed by the judges to best reflect, extend or advance critical perspectives in medical anthropology.

Submissions and nominations for the professional award must be for articles published in 2004. The graduate and the undergraduate awards will be given to a paper that was written in 2004 or 2005. Please note that the deadline is earlier this year. Send three copies of articles or papers postmarked by June 1, 2005, to: Athena McLean, 549 Rampart Way #302, East Lansing, MI 48823.

Nominees Sought for SMA Paper Prize Competitions



By Elisa Sobo (VA Healthcare System)

The SMA announces the competition for the Rivers Undergraduate Student Paper Prize, the Charles Hughes Graduate Student Paper Prize and the Steven Polgar Paper Prize. SMA Board member Elisa (EJ) Sobo oversees the competition; contact her at elisa.sobo@med.va.gov with questions.

The Rivers and the Hughes competitions focus on student achievements. The Rivers Prize will be given for the outstanding paper in medical anthropology written by an undergraduate student; the Hughes Prize will be awarded for the best paper written by a graduate student. The names of the winners (and of their mentoring professors, if appropriate) will be announced at the 2005 SMA annual business meeting in Washington DC. Encourage your students to apply.

Papers must have been written while a student, in this or the preceding academic year only. Both prizes carry a \$250 cash award, and the journal *Medical Anthropology Quarterly* (MAQ) will have the right of first refusal on winning manuscripts. Winners serve on the judging committee in the following year's competition.

Five hard copies of entries for the Rivers and Hughes (student) prizes must be sent to the prize chair, postmarked by June 15, 2005. Papers should not exceed 20 double-spaced pages, not including bibliography. Details about the author should be included in a cover letter and no identifying information should be contained in the manuscript. Entries can be mailed to SMA Board member Elisa J. Sobo, who oversees the competition, at HIV QUERI, HSR&D; Veterans Affairs Healthcare System, 111N-1; 3350 La Jolla Village Drive; La Jolla, CA 92161. Contact Sobo at elisa.sobo@med.va.gov with any questions.

The Steven Polgar Prize is awarded to a professional medical anthropologist for the best paper published in the SMA's journal MAQ during the most recent complete volume year. The prize carries a \$500 cash award. No nominations are needed: articles published in MAQ by eligible recipients will automatically be considered for this prize.

Alcohol and Drug Study Group Listserv Links Researchers

By Gilbert Quintero (U New Mexico)

Interested in joining a network of scholars focusing on alcohol and drug research? The Alcohol and Drug Study Group (A&DSG) is an interest group of the SMA of the AAA. The purpose of the A&DSG is to provide a forum for communication and interaction between persons interested in the anthropological study of alcohol and drugs. Members of the A&DSG conduct research in a variety of academic, applied and governmental settings.

To join our listserv send a message to listserv@list.unm.edu; leave the subject field blank. In the body of message type (with no other text): subscribe ADSG-L Firstname Lastname (example: subscribe ADSG-L Jane Doe). Once the subscribe