

**REPORT ON THE 46TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SINO-
TIBETAN LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS (ICSTLL)
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, HANOVER, NH, USA,
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Hosted by Dartmouth's Program in Linguistics and Cognitive Science, this year's ICSTLL conference took place in beautiful New Hampshire. Fantastic organization behind the scenes was paired with a warmly welcoming atmosphere that for those taking the bus included personal greetings at the bus stop and escort to the accommodations: ideal preconditions for a productive exchange of knowledge, data, and ideas.

The main conference was highlighted by three workshops: the 'Workshop on issues in Kuki-Chin linguistics', the 'Tai-Kadai Workshop', and the 'STEDT Workshop'. Keynote speakers for ICSTLL46 were James A. Matisoff (UC Berkeley), James Stanford (Dartmouth), and Scott DeLancey (U Oregon).

The entire first day, August 7th, was dedicated to the 'Workshop on issues in Kuki-Chin linguistics'. Two consecutive morning sessions dealt with the 'bigger picture' and discussed the present state of Kuki-Chin (K-C) studies, K-C phonology, lexicon, case marking, and verb agreement. The afternoon sessions closely examined particular issues and featured deictics, K-C verb stem alternations, verb concatenations, valence-changing prefixes, and incorporations. The workshop concluded with a terminological debate about alternatives for the name "(Old) Kuki", which is considered pejorative by the majority of language communities categorized as such. Scott DeLancey suggested geography-based labels for linguistic-genetic groups in the area, e.g., after the Patkai mountain range, and specifically relabeling 'Old Kuki' as the Northwestern group. A consensus was not reached, but the discussion raised an awareness of the problematic nature of ethnic labels in linguistic groups, which easily become pejorative over time.

The second day, August 8th, started out with three parallel sessions discussing K-C morphosyntax, historical linguistics, and prosody and word structure, followed by the keynote lecture by James A. Matisoff entitled 'Phonosemantic Variation and the STEDTische Dämmerung'. In this talk, Matisoff looked back on 27 years of the Sino-Tibetan Etymological Dictionary and Thesaurus (STEDT) project, which is scheduled to end in 2014. He connected and correlated recurrent forms and related functions under the notion of phonosemantic variation that he assumed must have existed in Proto-Tibeto-Burman just as it exists in currently spoken languages that can be studied directly.

The afternoon was dedicated to the Tai-Kadai workshop. It began with a quasi-keynote lecture by Jerold Edmondson on using phylogenetic estimation to test Tai subgrouping hypotheses. This was followed by two more talks on historical/genetic linguistics, and two talks on phonology.

Rounding out day two of the conference was a lovely reception at the Dartmouth Outing Club House featuring delicious food and drink. Located amidst lush greenery in a quaint lakeside setting, this beautiful place was just a short walk from the dormitory where most of the conference participants were staying.

The third day, August 9th, again started out with three parallel sessions, this time featuring field reports, topics in syntax and semantics, and Chinese studies. The subsequent keynote lecture by James Stanford titled ‘Variationist approaches to tone in Sino-Tibetan area linguistics’ took the audience into the novel field of sociotonetics. This emerging field introduces tone variation to the study of sociophonetics, obviously constituting a tremendously important expansion of sociophonetics for Sino-Tibetan languages.

In the afternoon, conference participants had the opportunity to learn about the STEDT project. The workshop gave participants an idea of the extraordinary dimensions of the STEDT database and the great accomplishment that it represents. The workshop facilitators emphasized the STEDT team’s efforts to make the database accessible for use by the greater scholarly public. Thus workshop participants were shown how to search for language data and proposed reconstructions on their own, and how to give input into the listed forms and reconstructions. The STEDT project will officially come to an end in 2014 after 27 years, but the hope is that an international consortium will be formed to continue this highly valuable work.

Day three concluded with a conference banquet. Here, it was announced that the next ICSTLL conference will take place at Yunnan Normal University in Kunming, China. A video clip highlighted the exciting opportunities for Sino-Tibetan linguistics at Yunnan Normal University, which no doubt will host a successful conference next year. The banquet also upheld the welcome and longstanding tradition of enthusiastic musical performances by conference participants.

The last day of the conference again had three parallel sessions in the morning, discussing topics in phonology, endangerment and documentation, and grammaticalization. After a coffee break, Scott DeLancey gave his keynote lecture titled ‘Second person verb forms in Tibeto-Burman’, in which he presented new data to offer a solution to the problem of two reconstructable second person markers: an often noted stop prefix in addition to the more familiar nasal suffix. Finally, the afternoon featured two final parallel sessions on language contact and historical linguistics.

In total, 41 talks were given during the main sessions of ICSTLL46. In addition, there were three keynote lectures, ten talks given as part of the Kuki-Chin workshop, and six talks as part of the Tai-Kadai workshop; the STEDT workshop was divided up into three interactive sessions. The 41 talks of the main

session covered a wide range of topics: 12 talks focused on morphology and syntax, 9 talks on historical/comparative issues and issues of genetic classification, 9 talks on phonology (among them 3 on tone), 4 field reports, 4 talks on language contact, and 3 talks on sociolinguistics, language endangerment, and language maintenance.

The success of the conference owes much to the lead organizer, David Peterson, who was helped by Dartmouth locals and conference participants James Stanford and Kenneth Baclawski. Expectations are high for the next ICSTLL conference in Kunming, China in 2014.