

## GREETING ADDRESS

Honored guests, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Grigory Kazakov for organizing this symposium and to the Moscow University for the Humanities for providing the necessary support for it to take place.

As current president of the American Society of Geolinguistics, I would like to discuss briefly the meaning of geolinguistics and its sister science, geolinguistic ethnography. Geolinguistics has currently become divided into two branches which I like to refer to as the map-making tradition and the census-taking tradition. The map-making tradition is far more common, whereas the census-taking tradition is older.

The map-making tradition, logically enough, sees geolinguistics as a modern form of dialectology and focuses on the number of distinctions that can be made with the expression of language in the context of a particular geographic region. It, typically, does not concern itself with density of use or its representativeness. And, of course, its most important aim is to map languages and dialects. Furthermore, this approach, in terms of dictionary definitions world-wide has a near monopoly on the definitions commonly appearing in most languages, including English, German, Spanish, Italian, German, Russian, Chinese and Japanese.

The oldest tradition, however, is that of the *Amici Linguarum* and the American Society of Geolinguistics, whose respective founders were friends of each other and whose thought regarding language was influenced by each other. The originator of the term was an American military man who was a student of Mario Pei, a linguist working for the American government during World War II and reflecting the environment of the times. Mario Pei refined the concept, describing geolinguistics as being concerned with the problems of language use and how they might be dealt with. For him, density of use had more meaning than the spread of a usage and this is implied by the term which I prefer to use, census taking. Geolinguistics in this tradition, thus, focuses on particular times and places and concerns itself with finding solutions to real life issues dealing with some aspect or other of language.

Geolinguistic ethnography, a sister science of geolinguistics, may be thought of in a similar manner, but with a different emphasis. In the case of geolinguistic ethnography, the focus is on some aspect or other of culture with respect to a particular time and place, seen in its own terms (and not theoretically), when influenced by some aspect of a language or languages. The aim, in both cases, is to identify language related problems and to seek appropriate solutions to those problems.

I would like to end my short greeting with an invitation, actually, with invitations in the plural. I would like to invite everyone to attend our September 6 and 7 conference in New York<sup>1</sup>. Also, I would like to invite you to stay in contact with me concerning an international symposium which we will be sponsoring on December 1 this year in Japan<sup>2</sup>. Then, there is a big conference to be held on March 15 and 16 of 2019 in Kathmandu<sup>3</sup> and yet another in Tokyo to be held on April 20<sup>4</sup>. I invite you with open arms to any or all of these conferences.

Lastly, I wish this symposium every success and hope that it is the first of many more to come in Russia.

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President of the American Society of Geolinguistics*

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<sup>1</sup> Language and Language Varieties, New York, September 6–7, 2018 (*editor's note*).

<sup>2</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> International Symposium on Geolinguistic Ethnography, Tokyo, December 1, 2018 (*editor's note*).

<sup>3</sup> Multilingual Perspectives in Geolinguistics, II, Kathmandu, March 15–16, 2019 (*editor's note*).

<sup>4</sup> Aspects of Language Contact and Conflict, III, Tokyo, April 20, 2019 (*editor's note*).