Comparison of structural features and lexical data:
A case study in the classification of North American Indian languages

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How does the language tree generated with ASJP lexical data compare to a NeighborNet representation produced on the basis of phonological and morphological features? Our paper addresses this question using data from some 190 North American native languages, primarily from Sherzer (1976), consisting of 95 features for each language (32 morphological, 63 phonological). Results of the analysis, first presented in Krasnoukhova (2008 ms.), identified most major language families, with some subgroupings, and suggested the contours of various linguistic areas. Interestingly, the NeighborNet representation shows basic agreement with Sherzer's findings on the different patterns of correspondence between linguistic areas and culture areas.

For this presentation, we will compare the outcomes of the NeighborNet analysis for North American native languages to those in the ASJP World Language Tree of Lexical Similarity. Points of comparison include the recognition of genetic families and subgroups, the idenfification of possible linguistic areas, and the relationships of these units with previously defined culture areas.

A final aim of the paper is to underline the complementary roles of structural data and lexical data in answering questions of language prehistory.

Krasnoukhova, Olga (2008) NeighborNet: American Indian languages north of Mexico. Radboud University Nijmegen, ms.

Sherzer, Joel (1976) *An Areal-Typological Study of American Indian Languages North of Mexico.* North-Holland Linguistic Series 20, S.C. Dik and J.G. Kooij (eds). Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company.