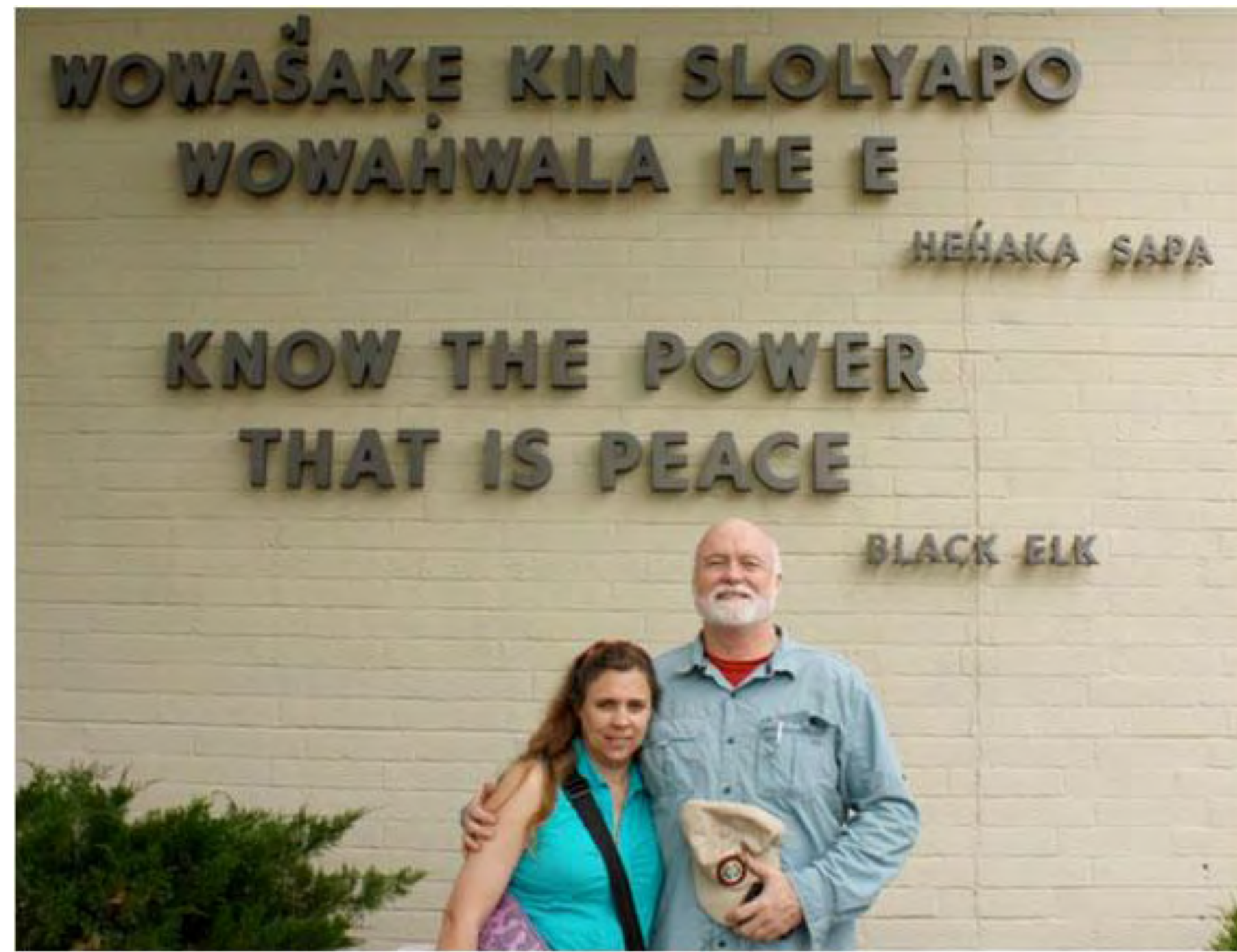


# Plains Indian Sign Language: Fieldwork And Digital Archive Project

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*What is PISL?*  
**Plains Indian Sign Language** once served as a *signed lingua franca* among American Indian nations of the Great Plains

*Who uses PISL today?*  
 PISL is still being learned and used by some Native groups in traditional storytelling, rituals, various types of discourse, and conversational narratives



*Indian Nations using PISL today:*

- Northern Cheyenne
- Gros Ventre
- Assiniboine
- Blackfeet
- Crow



*Why study PISL?*

- PISL has been long overlooked, understudied, and considered by many a primitive, emblematic, or dying language.
- Researchers who have studied it have focused on the alternative (ad-hoc) role of signing among male hearing community members only.
- Our research focuses on both alternative and primary acquisition patterns among deaf and hearing community members.

*Futhermore...*  
 PISL offers insights about signed and spoken language contact; multilingualism and code-switching; the conveyance of human language in signed and spoken modalities; the interrelatedness and distinctiveness of speech, sign, and gesture; and also informs theories of language acquisition, contact, and change.



*Eudico Linguistic Annotator (ELAN)*

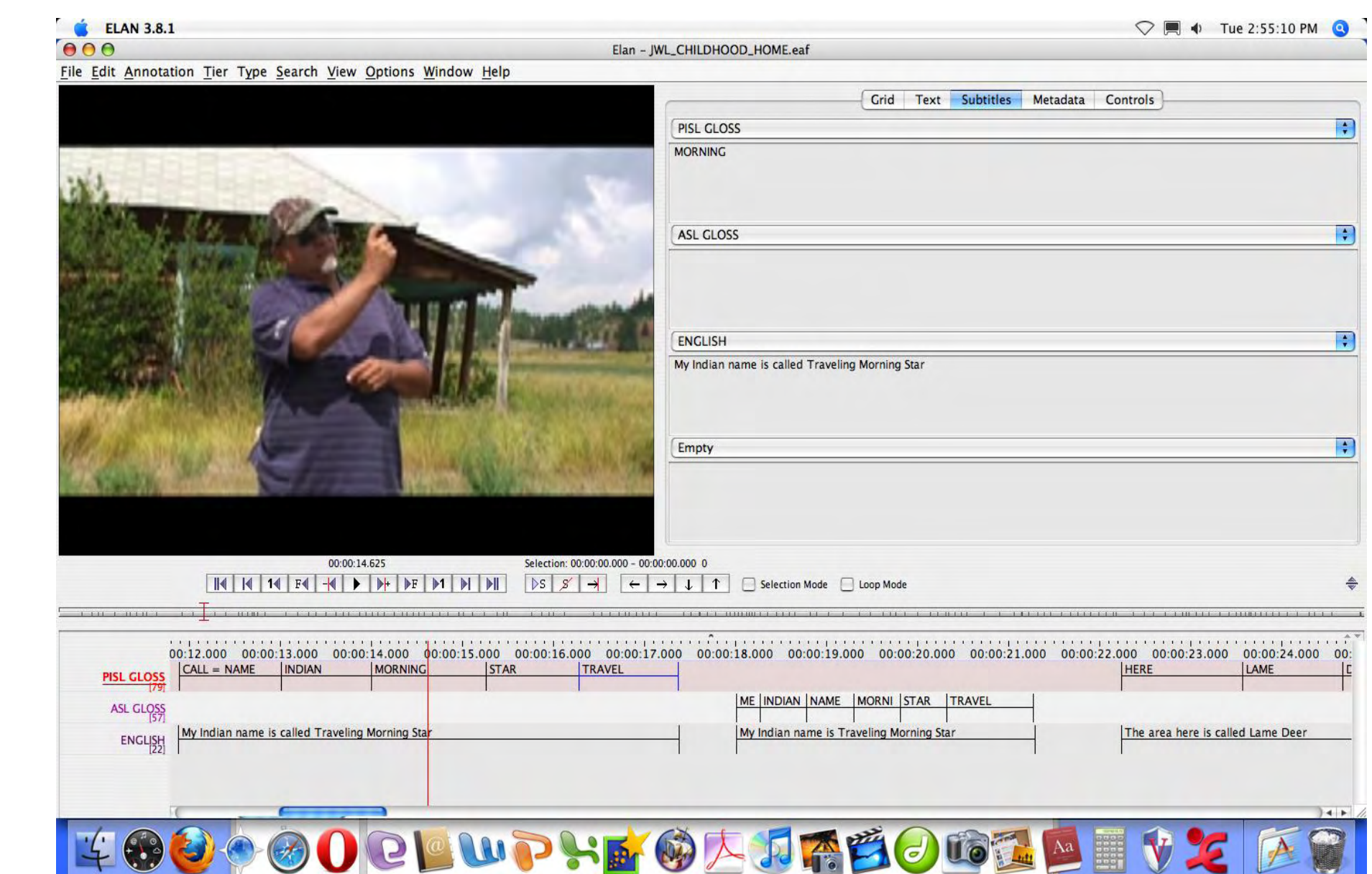
ELAN is a tool for the creation of complex annotations on video/audio resources using captions, voice-over, slow motion, and annotations.

*Objective:* to train Deaf and American Indian students and linguistics students to use ELAN for the transcription, translation, and annotation of signed and spoken languages.

➤ ELAN enables linguists to conduct syntactic analyses and identify lexical-grammatical categories

➤ Our use of ELAN is contributing to the compilation of a PISL dictionary and grammar

➤ The use of ELAN and collaboration with PISL community members are central to revitalization and the development of curricular materials



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