Laureate Project Launch

Nick Evans’ Laureate Project *The Wellsprings of Linguistic Diversity* began on June 30th. We welcome Bianca Hennessy, who will work as a half-time project officer for the 5 years of the project; Bianca has a background in anthropology and Pacific Studies. The project kicked off with a week-long meeting at the end of July. In addition to focussed project meetings, there were three open talks: an initial seminar setting out the project’s overall goals by Nick Evans, a seminar by new postdoc Mark Ellison on *Useability trumps learnability*, reporting recent work on simulating the evolution of symbol systems though intergenerational replication by experimental subjects, and a talk by project participant Miriam Meyerhoff (Victoria University Wellington) entitled *The fox’s wedding or a marriage made in heaven: Sociolinguistics and language documentation*.

Centre of Excellence News

The new ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language has nearly completed its set-up preparations, including the appointment of most of its key administrative staff: we welcome Chief Operating Officer Geoff Sjollema, who brings experience running an outfit of similar complexity (the Australian Phenomics Facility), Finance Officer Corn Murphy, Administrative Officer Joanne Allen. To the role of Publicity and Outreach Officer we are pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Piers Kelly (see below on his recent Wurm Prize), who has long had an interest in making linguistics more visible to the general public, most notably through his founding of the blog Fully (sic) on Crikey (*link*).

Wurm Prize Recipient

Piers Kelly, who obtained his PhD last year with a thesis entitled *The word made flesh: an ethnographic history of Eskayan, a utopian language and script of the southern Philippines*, has won the 2013 Stephen and Helen Wurm Prize for the best doctoral dissertation on a language of the Pacific region submitted in the Department. Jury members lauded it as ‘a brilliant and highly original thesis, … unusual in combining historical, ethnographical and linguistic insights, and an extraordinary range of reading’, ‘brilliant, nuanced and engagingly written’. Congratulations Piers!
“As one of very few semi-nomadic groups in Melanesia, they [the Meakambut] are key for understanding the (socio)linguistic situation which would have prevailed before agriculture.”

ELDP Postdoc Awarded
Darja Hoenigman has been awarded a two-year ELDP postdoctoral position, which will officially begin in December 2014. Darja will be studying the semi-nomadic Meakambut of the East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea. The Meakambut are hunter-gatherers who number about 45, moving between rock shelters around their mountainous terrain. As one of very few semi-nomadic groups in Melanesia, they are key for understanding the (socio)linguistic situation which would have prevailed before agriculture. Apart from basic word lists there has been no prior research on this Arafuni language. Using observational filming to supplement basic linguistic documentation, this project will provide audio-visual documentation and analysis of a variety of their speech practices, embedded in rich ethnographic data. Darja plans her first field-trip for March 2016.

Grants for Language Documentation
Beth Evans has received an ELDP small grant to document Nagovisi knowledge and stories of clan and kin. Nagovisi is a small language spoken in the mountains of southern Bougainville. In Beth’s own words: “I am hoping that not all of my future trips to the area will involve repairing our car with umbrella parts.”

Recently started PhD student Kate Naitoro has made a successful application to the Firebird Foundation. The application was made jointly with the ‘Are’are community of the Solomon Islands. This grant, which amounts to about $AU 10 000, will make it possible to take the first steps towards documenting oral literature of the ‘Are’are speaking people.

Staff Study Travels
Malcolm Ross spent twelve days of July at Academia Sinica, Taipei, attending a meeting of the Institute of Linguistics Board, then teaching at a summer school on historical linguistics. He is now at the Max Planck Institute in Leipzig for three months, returning to Canberra early in November.

Paul Sidwell spent several weeks in Zurich, working with Mathias Jenny (University of Zurich), editing contributions for the Handbook of Austroasiatic Languages, to be published by Brill at the end of 2014. Paul is also contributing several sketch grammars and some introductory chapters in classification and historical reconstruction. The full manuscript runs to over 300,000 words and will be the first handbook of its type to cover the breadth of the Austroasiatic phylum.
Mark Donohue taught a short intensive course titled *Language history and the Pacific World*, discussing methodologies in historical linguistics, language and people movements and expansions in Asia. This was done as part of the 2014 HKU Summer School for Linguistic Research: Linguistic Diversity in Asia, Theories and Methods, held at Hong Kong University, July 7 - 14. Link.

He was also the invited speaker at the HKU Summer Institute Postgraduate student conference (July 12), discussing the relationships between data and analytical methodology in linguistics.

In early July, Eri Kashima attended the *Summer School on Documentary Bamberg* in Germany. The two week workshop comprised a series of lectures in the morning, and workshops in the afternoon. The morning lectures covered introductions to the theory and methods of sociolinguistic variationism, as well as guest lectures on contemporary dialectology, conducting fieldwork, and new technologies such as forced alignment. The workshops were mini-studies that applied the variationist method to small corpora from different languages. Eri participated in the language of Anatolia workshop run by Geoffrey Haig (University of Bamberg), trialing whether the variationist method could be applied usefully to studying language contact.

Wayan Arka was invited by the RRI (Radio Republik Indonesia, The National Radio of the Republic of Indonesia) Jakarta on Saturday 26 July 2014 to have a live phone-in program on Kiprah Anak Bangsa ‘Indonesians on the world stage’ (Lit. ‘the dance of the son of the nation’). This is a radio program, providing an opportunity for prominent Indonesian academics with international reputation to talk to the public and answer questions on topics relevant to their expertise. Wayan talked about linguistics and language-related issues in Indonesia for Indonesian listeners across the archipelago. It is surprising that people across the country, from Sumatra to Maluku, still tune in to the national radio. They had interesting and surprising questions regarding their language-related issues in Indonesia such as the internationalisation of Bahasa Indonesia as a language of wider communication, the emergence of prokem/bahasa gaul ‘Indonesian slangs’ and why and how the Indonesian language is different from Malay spoken in Malaysia.
Southeast Asian Linguistics Society

Paul Sidwell and Gwen Hyslop attended the 24th SEALS (Southeast Asian Linguistics Society) meeting in Yangon (Myanmar) at the end of May-beginning of June. The meeting, organised this year by Justin Watkins (SOAS) was a great success. The 2015 SEALS meeting will be held at Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand, in the last week of May. Also there were ex-ANU colleagues Aung Si and John Bowden. Paul would like to encourage a strong ANU presence, with special emphasis on building relations with the Linguistics Institute at Payap. The LI is strategically located in a region of high linguistic diversity, affording great opportunity for field research with good facilities and close professional support, and is keen to develop opportunities for cooperation with ANU staff and students.

From left to right: John Bowden, Paul Sidwell, Aung Si, and Gwen Hyslop at the 24th SEALS meeting.

Himalayan Language Symposium

Attending the 20th Himalayan Languages Symposium (HLS) at Nanyang Technical University (NTU) in Singapore from 16-18 July 2014 were Kwang-Ju Cho, Christopher Weedall, Gwendolyn Hyslop, and Sarah Plane. On the first day, Gwen presented a report of the language of the Phobjikha Valley in Bhutan drawing on data collected during her recent field trip and chaired the final session of the day - Morphosyntax. The next day, Chris presented evidence for the phoneme inventory of Sajolang (Miji) using minimal pairs. On the final day, Kwang-Ju illustrated how separate immigration events and contact with other groups accounted for variation patterns in Bantawa honorifics. The conference helped generate new ideas and several promising collaborative projects.

From left to right: Kwang-Ju Cho, Christopher Weedall, Gwen Hyslop, and Sarah Plane at the 20th HLS.

Chinese Languages and Linguistics

Mark Donohue was in Taiwan as an invited speaker at The 14th International Symposium on Chinese Languages and Linguistics (中央研究院語言學研究所-第十四屆中國境內語言暨語言學國際研討會-十週年所慶), at Academia Sinica in Taipei. This symposium was held in conjunction with the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Institute of Linguistics, Academia Sinica, on June 4-6, 2014. The special theme for this gathering was Genetic Relationships among East-Asian Languages, were Mark discussed the role that advances in our understanding of the historical linguistics of the Austronesian world plays in our understanding of East Asia’s human past. (link)
Publication News

Wayan Arka's paper on double control was accepted for the annual international LFG conference (LFG2014) at Ann Arbor, Michigan, July 17-20, 2014. However, he was only able to present his talk remotely via Skype from Cologne University, Germany, where he was on his final days for his fellowship there.

Wayan has also published his paper titled "Locatives and the argument-adjunct distinction in Balinese" in the journal Linguistic Discovery no. 12 (2):56-84.

The Routledge Handbook of Historical Linguistics, which Beth Evans co-edited with Claire Bowern, has been published. The volume includes chapters by a number of ANU linguists, including Simon Greenhill, Harold Koch, Paul Sidwell and Jane Simpson. There will be a lunchtime launch of the volume on Wednesday 20th August in the Coombs Tea Room.

Changes in the Department

Julia Miller's postdoctoral term has come to an end. Julia is part of the Southern New Guinea project team, and PARADESIC representative of ANU. Thank you for your contributions to the Department, and we look forward to your future endeavours.

Christian Döhler has returned to Germany to concentrate on writing up his PhD thesis, a grammar of the Kómnzo language of Papua New Guinea. Thank you, and best wishes.

Elsewhere in the Department

Siva Kalyan has been analysing data from a range of language families (Oceanic, Indo-European, Skou) using Historical Glottometry, a computational method (developed in collaboration with Alex François) which allows one to detect overlapping subgroups in language families that have evolved by dialect differentiation. If you are having trouble subgrouping your language family, he may be able to help!

With the departure of Julia Miller, and Owen Edwards on fieldwork, recording equipment can be found with Kwang-Ju Cho. If you require departmental recording equipment, please get in contact with Kwang-Ju.

The incoming student representative for linguistics CHL is Matthew Carroll, taking the reigns from Christian Döhler.

Newsletter responsibilities have been handed over from Fanny Cottet to Eri Kashima. Thank you Fanny for your hard work! All newsletter related enquiries should be sent to eri.kashima@anu.edu.au
Upcoming Fieldwork

Chris Weedall is heading back to Arunachal Pradesh, NE India, for his second major field trip on August 25, 2014. He will work with speakers of Sajolang (aka Miji) to collect more spoken data of various forms and translate everything. He will return mid-February 2015 to focus on his thesis writing.

Owen Edwards is in the field from the 11th of August. He will be continuing his work on Amarasi, and will be in Timor for the next three months. A large group of ANU linguists, and other researchers of the Southern New Guinea project team, will be going to the region for the months of September and October. The ANU contingency consist of Nick Evans, Dineke Shokkin, Eri Kashima, and Darja Hoenigman.

Message from the Field

"Buder Nik, weiwei kitong prap mene bende ama kr tm. Bm ogiabas kitong taprte tbende zi ingbate. Tbende gbres ärybende weiwei kitong bepapt."

Wasang Baiio is a geographer at the University of Goroka. He is a speaker of Idi, but also speaks his mother’s language of Nen. Wasang has sent this message, in Nen, to Nick as a condolence message concerning the passing of his mother.
The Asia-Pacific is the most complex and varied linguistic landscape in the world, with three thousand of the world's 7,000 languages. Many are endangered and in coming decades the region is confronting an epochal narrowing of the human knowledge base through language loss.

Linguistics in the College of Asia and the Pacific promotes the study of this linguistic diversity in its fullest sense, including documentation and description - producing grammars, dictionaries and collections of textual materials, usually from on-site fieldwork – work that is equally important for small speech communities themselves.

Minority languages researched in the department cover sites ranging from Vanuatu, New Caledonia, PNG, Australia, Indonesia, Timor Leste, the Philippines, Taiwan, India and Japan. Other research focuses on national languages of the region, such as Japanese and Indonesian.

Our postgraduate training aims to produce descriptive linguists of the highest quality. We teach into all levels, including undergraduate courses in Japanese, Indonesian, Linguistics and Pacific Studies, Master's Courses in Linguistics and Applied Japanese Linguistics, and advanced doctoral training. We co-host Paradisec, a digital archive dedicated to recordings of languages and cultures of the Pacific. We also publish the monograph series Pacific Linguistics, which has produced over 600 publications.