A number of new postdoctoral fellows will be starting in the Department from June 30 on Nick Evans’s Laureate Project, Wellsprings of Linguistic Diversity.

Dineke Schokkin recently graduated from James Cook University. Her PhD thesis is a grammar of the Oceanic language Paluai (PNG). Within the Wellsprings project, she will be focusing on the Idi language, and looking at contact-induced language variation and change in the region.

Mark Ellison did a PhD at UWA focusing on using machine learning to learn without supervision phonological rules from wordlist data. In Edinburgh, he worked on Declarative Phonology, and later focused on the computational models of Optimality Theory. He has spent the last few years using experiments to create models of the origins of communication systems and language within Psychology at UWA. At ANU, he will be working on historical linguistics doing computational modeling.

Ruth Singer’s main research focus is how language is used at Warruwi Community, a remnant site of small-scale multilingualism in western Arnhem Land. She has been a postdoctoral fellow with the Language and Cognition group at MPI for Psycholinguistics (Nijmegen) and has worked at La Trobe University. She is currently an ARC DECRA Postdoctoral Fellow at Melbourne University. She also has a Discovery project and a new media project funded by the Indigenous Languages Support program. At ANU, Ruth will be looking at variation in Mawng, a small language of 300-500 speakers that are still being used and being passed on to children at Warruwi Community.

Murray Garde is a linguistic anthropologist who worked for 25 years in Western Arnhem Land on the description and maintenance of Bininj Gunwok dialects. Since 1996 he has also worked on various dialects of the Sa language of Pentecost Island in Vanuatu. Murray is particularly interested in the integration of linguistic data with the social and cultural contexts of such data - genealogy, social organization, residence, mobility and ways of speaking across a variety of contexts.

The first project meeting will be held on July 23-26. It will be the first gathering of the whole Wellsprings project, including a visit by Miriam Meyerhoff (University of Victoria, Wellington). A couple of talks on studying sociolinguistic variation in small-scale societies are also scheduled.
Postgraduate induction

The postgraduate induction was held from March 14-15, and was attended by our new cohort of PhD students from across campus (CAP and CASS). This year we experimented with basing it in Canberra to enable wider participation. The induction program provided comprehensive information on the requirements of the PhD program and introduced various supports available to ANU students. The Saturday session was dedicated to information on fieldwork ethics, publishing and grant application writing. ‘I found it informative and it was a good opportunity to meet other postgrads and staff and to get a general feel for the department. I liked how all was carried out in a friendly, informal style, whilst still adhering to high professional standards. Needless to say, the food and the excursion to the Botanical gardens were a bonus’, reports Kate Naitoro.

News from the Center of Excellence

Nick Evans and his team are currently going through a rather busy set-up period, and have been receiving invaluable assistance from Joanna Salmond – thanks to her and to CHL for seconding a substantial amount of her time.

Geoff Sjollema has been appointed Chief Operations Officer (COO). Geoff comes from a background as COO in a rather similar organization to the Centre – the Australian Phenomics Facility – and will take up his appointment in mid-June.

The Centre has been allocated substantial new space inside the Coombs Building to house those members of the Centre based in Canberra, as well as a good number of visitors, and also a renovation budget for those corridors. The space runs from the ‘dungeons’ through the corridor and a half that have been occupied by RMAP. Providentially, the project has managed to hook this renovation on to plans to redevelop the adjoining inner court yard at the same time. Both the inside renovations and outside landscaping will be led in parallel. Regular meetings with the architects have been held, with the goal of being able to move into the new premises by late July.

The Center of Excellence is set to begin officially on June 30. It will be officially launched on August 1st and all will be welcome. The launch will feature some overall talks outlining the research program as well as a reception that afternoon. More details will follow.

Rachel Hendery’s new position

Following on from her time as a postdoc in our Linguistics Department, Rachel Hendery has been appointed as Senior Lecturer in Digital Humanities at the University of Western Sydney. She will be moving there in June. Congratulations Rachel! We will miss you here.
This trip was a great opportunity for Sébastien to go full circle with his PhD project and he’s now developing an online course for Melanesian Pidgin and gearing up to teach Melanesian Pidgin at the ANU in second semester.

Early in April, Sébastien Lacrampe submitted his PhD on the grammar of Lelepa, an Oceanic language of Vanuatu. The following week he returned to Vanuatu and the Lelepa community for a final PhD fieldtrip, during which he distributed a book of stories collected while on field work. The book was published with the assistance of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre and funded by the Australian Government. About 250 copies of the book were printed, and each household of Lelepa speakers got a copy, while the two schools in the community got about 20 copies each. Copies were also deposited at the Vanuatu National Library and several schools in Port Vila. There are two versions of the book, a Lelepa-English and a Lelepa-French one, as there is a French-medium and an English-medium school in the Lelepa community.

The book results from several years of collaborative work between Sébastien and a team of Lelepa speakers. First, stories were chosen from a number of texts collected by Sébastien, then an orthography system was designed and finally, the transcriptions were edited over several fieldtrips to arrive at texts that the team judged satisfactory. The books were launched during a village meeting and the Lelepa people were delighted to see the books and read the stories in their own language. A number of stories appearing in the book were only known by a few elder speakers and many younger people told Sébastien how happy they were to be able to discover traditional stories that they had never heard.

Sébastien Lacrampe and the Headmistress of the Lelepa school with books of Lelepa stories.

Since the early 1990s these have been an annual fixture in the calendar of researchers on Australian languages, usually hosted by one university for a three-year period. In March this year ANU began its three year hosting term with a workshop in Kioloa from March 7-9, organised by Nick Evans and Jane Simpson with outstanding organisational support from Susan Ford. The workshop itself was preceded by a special session on ‘Aboriginal Languages Since Contact’ organised by Felicity Meakins and Carmel O’Shannassy, and a launch of the ‘Living Archive of Aboriginal Languages’ by The Honorable Sharman Stone (Member for Murray). The launch was followed by a public lecture entitled Aboriginal languages, literatures and technologies in the Northern Territory since the 1970s by Prof. Michael Christie. A number of ANU linguists presented at the Workshop, including Nick Evans, Harold Koch, John Mansfield, Piers Kelly, Luise Hercus, and Doug Marmion. Next year’s workshop will be held from March 13-15.
Recent and Forthcoming Fieldwork

Chris Weedall came back at the beginning of April from a 3.5 month field trip to Arunachal Pradesh, NE India. During the trip, he was able to attend the 8th International Conference of the NEILS (Northeast Indian Linguistics Society) in Guwahati. He presented a paper on Sajolang (Miji) syllable structure. When returning to the village, Chris was waylaid by an unexpected and violent dispute between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh which saw the closure of roads between both states. March brought an inside perspective on the modern politics of the area with Member of Parliament (MP) and Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) elections announced. Since his return, Chris has been working on phonological analysis of the data for his midterm review.

Following a brief visit to Canberra in March, Maïa Ponsonnet spent 3 weeks in the Northern Territory, working with Barunga Kriol speakers on the language of emotions. After studying a severely endangered language, Dalabon, for many years, documenting a language that people actually speak was a bit of a shock - but enjoyable overall. Nevertheless, during this field trip Maia also did some preliminary work with speakers of Rembarrnga, which is nearly as endangered as Dalabon. Back in Lyon, Maia is (among other things) polishing her PhD thesis for publication, as it has been accepted by John Benjamins.

After the 14th Congress of the International Society of Ethnobiology held in Lamai Gompa (Bhutan) from June 1-7, Karma Tshering will head to Gongdük in southeastern Bhutan to do his scoping trip for his PhD research project focusing on the documentation of flora and fauna. Gwen Hyslop will go to the Phobjikha Valley to set up a new field site for her ARC grant.

News from Europe

Wayan Arka is away from April to July, mainly at the University of Cologne Germany for his Georg-Forster Humboldt Fellowship. While in Europe he will be visiting Oxford University for collaborative research with Prof. Mary Dalrymple. Wayan is also invited to give a talk at ZAS (Zentrum für Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft, or Centre for General Linguistics) in Berlin, and the University of Frankfurt.

Matthew Carroll is currently in the UK. He visited the Surrey Morphology Group where he was able to present his research on Ngkolmpu and has had a great time discussing lots of issues to do with his work.

Wayan and Matt are presenting at the 7th APLL (Austronesian and Papuan Languages and Linguistics) conference held at SOAS, University of London, on May 16-17.

The CD Music of Vanuatu: Celebrations and Mysteries, published in late 2013 by Alex François (CNRS–LACITO, ANU) and his ethnomusicologist colleague Monika Stern (CNRS–CREDO), was awarded the ‘Coup de cœur’ prize by the prestigious Académie Charles Cros. It was ranked one of the best published albums of the year in the category ‘World music and ethnomusicology’, for its valuable recordings representing various genres and social occasions. The album’s 128-page liner notes, richly illustrated and in open access, present the results of several years of multidisciplinary research on music and poetry in Vanuatu.

‘Coup de Coeur’ for Music of Vanuatu
Southern New Guinea Project Meeting at ANU

From 13-15 February at ANU, the Southern New Guinea project team held a meeting attended by most project members. Particular foci of this meeting were Nen and Nambu phonetics (Julia Miller), the status of adjectives (papers by Jeff Siegel on Nama and Christian Döhler on Kómnzo), case systems (papers by Nick Evans on Nen, Jeff Siegel on Nama, Philip Tama on Taeme, and Emil Mittag on Arambah), relative clauses (Wayan Arka for Marori), multilingual repertoires (Christian Döhler), mapping projects (Julia Miller and Kay Dancey of ANU Cartography), the unveiling of a purpose-built anthropological database for the region developed by Susan Ford in collaboration with Nick Evans, and information on new fieldwork projects by Emil Mittag and new ANU PhD Eri Kashima, who will be working on dimensions of variation in the Nambu language.

Volker Gast (University of Jena) presented fresh-from-the-field materials on Idi phonology and verb morphology. Kyla Quinn, who is working on Warta Thundai for her Honours project, presented a paper on problems of representing syncretisms, which she has followed up more recently with her Honours Thesis presentation on May 9.

Vibrant Wave in Wellington

The Linguistics department sent a team to the recent NWAV-AP3 (New Wave of Variation, Asia and the Pacific) conference in Wellington (New Zealand). John Mansfield talked on Phonetic variation corresponding to age and ethnolinguistic group in Murrinh Patha. Julia Miller gave a talk on Exogamy Multilingualism and Microvariation: Language Ecology in Bi-madbn Village, PNG. Simon Greenhill presented an attempt at Quantifying the variation in rates of language diversification. Though her research project for her PhD is on the phonetics and phonology of the Papuan language Mbañam, Fanny Cottet got interested into the multiple articulatory and acoustic charms of prestopped nasals of the Aboriginal language Kaytetye (somewhat related to the late nasal release of voiceless stops in Mbañam). She presented a paper entitled Lecatal Variation in the Pronunciation of Prestopped Nasal Phonemes in Kaytetye, co-written with My Turpin from the University of Queensland.

All talks were well received, and the team enjoyed their time in Wellington. Julia’s highlight was a visit to the Weta digital workshops.

The ANU team at NWAV-AP3.

Pintyandi. Nick especially thanks the Volkswagen Foundation, through its DoBeS program, for funding the translation and Rob Mailhammer for his resourceful adaptations in cases where the original English examples made no sense as a point of departure and quite different German ones needed to be found.

Tim Hassall has just had an article accepted for publication in Journal of Pragmatics. It is in the field of second language pragmatics, and is titled Knowledge or Control? A comment on Lundell and Erman (2012).

SNG project meeting in Armidale

From April 12-15, the second Southern New Guinea project meeting of 2014 was held in the very congenial setting of the University of New England in Armidale for the first time, where there are three researchers working in the Southern New Guinea area – Jeff Siegel (Nama), Philip Tama (Taeme) and Emil Mittag (Arammba). The workshop featured a number of in-progress papers, such as one by Christian Döhler and Matt Carroll making the first stab at reconstructing the complex verb morphology of the Tonda branch and relating it to the rather different structure of the Nambu branch languages, an analysis of Kömndo demonstratives arising by Christian Döhler, an initial analysis of quantification in Nen by Nick Evans, a sketch of the previously unknown Ndre language by Emil Mittag (based on the last surviving speaker, in his 90s), and a an overview by Julia Miller of the language ecology of Bimadbn, in particular the links between multilingualism and exogamy.

One of the highlights from the meeting was the launching of YamFinder, a newly functional online database program which Matt Carroll has been developing over the last 18 months. This will go live shortly and will include word lists, cognate sets and sound files for (initially) over a dozen languages of Southern New Guinea.

Overseas forthcoming talks

Nick Evans will be travelling to Germany from May 17 for seven weeks as part of his Anneliese Maier Research Prize, primarily based at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig and at the Department of Linguistics, University of Cologne. His main goal is to work up 2-3 chapters of his book *The Grammar of Others: Social Cognition and Linguistic Diversity*, but he will also be giving a number of talks, including one at the University of Vienna as part of the annual Wurm Symposium (which shuttles between Canberra and Vienna in alternate years) and one at the University of Zurich as a plenary speaker at the Swiss Linguistics Society’s annual meeting on ‘Dynamics of Variation’. He will also be attending the Soutenance (Habilitation defence) of regular Departmental Visitor Alex François in Paris on June 23.

Mark Donohue will be in Taiwan as an invited speaker at the 14th International Symposium on Chinese Languages and Linguistics to be held at Academia Sinica in Taipei. This symposium will be held in conjunction with the 10th anniversary of the Institute of Linguistics, Academia Sinica, on June 4-6. The special theme for this gathering is Genetic Relationships among East Asian Languages, and Mark will be discussing 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. More details here.

From July 7-14, Mark will be teaching course on language and people movements and expansions in Asia at the 2014 HKU Summer School for Linguistic Research: Linguistic Diversity in Asia, Theories and Methods, to be held at Hong Kong University. He will also be the invited speaker at the HKU Summer Institute Postgraduate student conference on July 12, discussing the relationships between data and analytical methodology in linguistics.

Gwen Hyslop will be presenting at the 24th Annual Meeting of the SEALS (Southeast Asian Linguistics Society) in Yangon (Myanmar) on Dzongkha evidentiality and on the historical development of Kurtöp.
Social Cognition Workshop

An informal workshop on analysing materials from the Family Problems Picture Task (as developed by Nick Evans and Alan Rumsey’s Social Cognition project) was held on March 27-28. It focused on issues arising in analysing material from a semi-parallel corpus, and featured an overview talk by Nick, a general discussion of parallel corpora by Volker Gast (University of Jena), and discussions of individual language data by Christian Döhler (Kómnzo), Niko Kobepa (Mee), Sonja Gipper (Yurakare), Diana Forker (Sanzhi Dargwa), and Sonja Riesberg (Yali).

Kómnzo Dictionary

The latest version of Christian Döhler’s Kómnzo dictionary got a free ride to Rouku village (PNG). Jeff Siegel had offered to take ten copies of the dictionary to the neighbouring township of Morehead. After working hard on the typesetting and frontmatter of the dictionary, Christian is proud to announce that the number of lemmata has risen to 1700 over the last year. In addition to the documentary value of the dictionary, Christian sees it as honoring the promise he had made to the community of Kómnzo speakers on his arrival in Rouku. If you want to take a peek at the dictionary, follow this link.

Recent seminars in the Department

Phil Rose, Wencheng disyllabic lexical tone sandhi: some complexities of tonal realization in a right-dominant Wu dialect (21/02).

Greg Dickson, Marra and Kriol – the loss and maintenance of knowledge across a language shift boundary (14/03).

Wei-Chen Huang, A grammar of Puljetji Paiwan (21/03).

Rafael Nonato and Livia Camargo, A cross-linguistic study of case and switch-reference in unrelated languages (21/03).

Matt Carroll, A Grammar of the Ngkolmpu Language: Verbal Number and Aspect (24/03).

Sonja Gipper, Evidentiality and intersubjectivity in Yurakaré: Evidence from conversational data (28/03).

Diana Forker, From clefts to moveable person markers: Person agreement in Nakh-Daghestanian (28/03).

Xiaofei Tang, Learnability and Teachability: A Case for Textbook and Syllabus Development for ESL (31/03).

Myriam Bouveret, Frame semantics and verbal constructions: GIVE from a cross-linguistic perspective (04/04).

Sonja Riesberg, Linking Austronesian Symmetrical Voice Languages – two LFG Approaches (09/04).

Anna Wierzbicka, The idea of a ‘spoon’: semantics, prehistory, and cultural logic (02/05).

Nick Evans & Simon Greenhill, Pronominal syncretisms and phylogeny (09/05).
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.

Coming up...

**Seminar:** Meterological events and participant structure in West African languages - Felix F. Ameke (link)
July 18
3:30pm - 5:00pm
Seminar Room B (Ardt Room)
HC Coombs Building

**First Meeting** of the Laureate Project, Wellsprings of Linguistic Diversity
July 23-26
Time and room tba

**Launch of the Center of Excellence**
August 1
Time and place tba

Nick Evans and Julia Miller in Armidale. Photo: Sonja Riesberg.