

Language and Culture Research Group

The Cairns Institute — James Cook University

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The **Language and Culture Research Group** (LCRG) is a unit within the newly-established **Cairns Institute** (Director, Professor Hurriyet Babacan), an international research centre for multidisciplinary studies in the social sciences and the humanities. Members of LCRG belong to the **Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences** (Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean, Professor Nola Alloway) within James Cook University.

Who'll be at LCRG in 2010

Professor Alexandra (Sasha) Aikhenvald is Research Leader, People and Societies of the Tropics within the Cairns Institute and Coordinator of LCRG. She is currently seeing through the press her monograph *Imperatives and Commands* and is writing *Languages of the Amazon* (both with Oxford University Press), besides continuing work on Arawak languages from Brazil, Ndu languages from Papua New Guinea and further topics in linguistic typology. She has recently been appointed Deputy Dean of Graduate Research Studies, Cairns Campus, JCU.

Professor R. M. W. (Bob) Dixon, Senior Fellow of the Cairns Institute, is Associate Coordinator of LCRG. He is currently writing the third volume of his magnum opus *Basic Linguistic Theory* (the first two volumes have just been published) for Oxford University Press. He is also working on a text collection and dictionary/thesaurus across ten dialects of Dyirbal, collaborating with tribal communities in North Queensland on language revitalisation, and continuing with long-term projects on Boumaa Fijian, Jarawara (from Brazil) and the grammar of English.

Brigitta Flick continues working as a Publication Assistant for the LCRG.

Postdoctoral Research Fellows

[Employed on ARC Discovery Projects: Aikhenvald/Dixon 'The world through the prism of language: a cross-linguistic view of genders, noun classes and classifiers', and Dixon/Aikhenvald 'Are some languages better than others?']

Dr Anne Schwarz has a PhD from the Humboldt University, Berlin, on 'Aspects of morphosyntax and tonology in Buli', based on extensive fieldwork on this Gur language from northern Ghana. She is now on fieldwork in Ecuador, studying Siona/Secoya, a West Tucanoan language.

Dr Tianqiao (Mike) Lu obtained his PhD from the University of Melbourne, for 'A grammar of Maonan' (published in 2008 by Universal Publishers, Florida). He is undertaking a comparative study of classifiers in Kam-Tai languages, with reference to other languages in East Asia.

Dr Mark Post joins us in March. His PhD, from La Trobe University, was 'A grammar of Galo'. He will work on a grammar of Upper Belt Minyong (Adi), in the comparative context of other languages from the Tani branch of Tibeto-Burman, based on immersion fieldwork in Arunachal Pradesh, North-east India.

Cairns Institute Distinguished Visiting Fellows

Professor Ken Sumbuk (January – March), Professor of Linguistics and Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of Papua New Guinea, is an expert on the indigenous languages and cultures of the Sepik region, an area of extreme diversity. He is currently revising for publication his PhD thesis (from Waikato University) 'The Sare language of East Sepik, Papua New Guinea' (a language for which he is a native speaker).

Professor Lourens de Vries (May to September), of the Free University Amsterdam, is a leading expert on the languages and cultures of New Guinea. He is writing an account of the dozen languages belonging to the Awyu-Dumut family of Papua, their ethnic backgrounds, contact patterns and grammatical structures, paying particular attention to correlations between language, environment and cultural patterns.

Associate Professor Catherine Travis (May-August), of the University of New Mexico, is an expert in discourse analysis, with emphasis on corpus development and variation. She will work on interaction between Romance languages spoken by minority immigrant groups in English-speaking countries, and English as the major language, focussing specifically on syntactic features such as the omission or retention of first person subject.

Mission statement of LCRG

The Linguistics and Culture Research Group promotes interdisciplinary research involving immersion fieldwork, leading to comprehensive documentation of indigenous languages and cultures. This feeds into inductive generalisations concerning human language capacity, and the interaction between parameters of linguistic and cultural behaviour. Our core members are anthropologically-orientated linguists and we maintain a dialogue with anthropologists, sociologists, archeologists, educationalists and other scholars in the humanities, social sciences and relevant natural sciences. LCRG's primary focus is on the autochthonous peoples of New Guinea, Australia, Amazonia, East Asia and South Asia.

We work in terms of basic linguistic theory, the cumulative framework which is employed in most linguistic description, providing anthropologically informed grammars and analyses of languages and language areas. Our work has a sound empirical basis but also shows a firm theoretical orientation, seeking for explanation hand-in-hand with description.

Building on reliable descriptive studies, the LCRG also puts forward inductive generalizations about human languages, cultural practices and cognition. We enquire how a language reflects the environment in which people live, their system of social organization, food production techniques, and the ways in which a community views the world. For instance, groups living in mountainous terrain often have to specify, for any object, whether it is uphill, downhill or at the same level as the speaker. And if there is a chiefly system, a special term of address may be required for speaking to a high chief, and a different term for a minor chief. Why are languages the way they are? We seek scientific explanation and motivation, combining the expertise of linguists, anthropologists and social scientists from other domains.

Another focus of study concerns the ways in which languages influence each other. What kind of words, and meanings, are likely to be borrowed between two languages spoken next to each other, and under what social circumstances? Are some kinds of systems particularly open to diffusion, so that they are likely to spread over all the languages in a geographical area, and are other kinds of systems less likely to be diffused?

LCRG organises International Workshops, regular roundtable meetings, and various events through the year. We reach out to the community, through advising and assisting concerning language renewal and revitalisation.

Dr Henry Y. Chang (July-October), of Academia Sinica, Taiwan, is an expert on indigenous languages and cultures of Taiwan, with a particular focus on Tsou. He plans a monograph on grammatical properties of verbs and their arguments across Formosan languages, exploring the ways in which different classes of verbs can be understood in the light of their cognitive underpinnings, also looking at categorization of noun arguments, and the issue of case marking.

Professor Anvita Abbi (October–January 2011), Professor of Linguistics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, is a leading expert on anthropological linguistics of South Asia, having worked on languages from five families. She plans to write a full account of the Great Andamanese language (and its cultural milieu), based on the copious (but uneven) early materials and her own fieldwork with the last eight semi-speakers.

PhD students

Chia-jung Pan relocated from La Trobe University to JCU in September 2009. His PhD is a grammatical study of Lha'alua (or Saaroa), a critically endangered Austronesian language of Taiwan.

Yankee Modi (from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi) will start her PhD course in February 2010 working on 'The cultural and environmental shaping of Milang language'.

Gerda (Dineke) Schokkin (from the University of Amsterdam) will start her PhD course in May 2010 working on a previously undocumented language of the Manus province.

Sihong Zhang (from Anhui University of Traditional Chinese Medicine) will start his PhD course in July 2010 working on a previously undocumented language of Papua New Guinea.

Associate Members of LCRG

- **Professor Ton Otto**, Research Leader, People and Societies of the Tropics within the Cairns Institute, is working on design anthropology, social change, notions of temporality, and agency, with reference to Papua New Guinea and particularly the peoples of Manus Island.
- **Associate Professor Rosita Henry**, from the Department of Anthropology, Archaeology and Sociology, and a Fellow of the Cairns Institute, is researching issues of gender politics in the Western Highlands of PNG, focusing on contradictions between customary land tenure and concepts of private property.
- **Dr Mike Wood**, Senior Lecturer in Department of Anthropology, Archaeology and Sociology, is a Fellow of the Cairns Institute. He is currently working on how the Kamula people from the Western Province of PNG translate the new carbon economy into their language and culture.

Activities for 2010

To celebrate the fortieth anniversary of James Cook University's foundation:

Workshop: History in the Making

Friday 21st May 2010

Room B1.031, Library, Cairns Campus

- 1.00 Opening
Professor Hurriyet Babacan, Director, The Cairns Institute
- 1.15 Professor Alexandra Y. (Sasha) Aikhenvald, Cairns Institute, JCU
The white man cometh: Indigenous image of the invader
- 1.45 Professor R. M. W. (Bob) Dixon, Cairns Institute, JCU
Origin legends: Reality and re-interpretation
- 2.15 Professor Ton Otto, Cairns Institute, JCU
History for the Future: Indigenous history and social change in Manus, PNG
- 2.45 Dr Ernie Grant, Elder of the Jirrbal tribe, Echo Creek Cultural Centre
The history of survival
- 3.30 Afternoon tea
- 4.00 Professor John Molony, Australian National University
James Cook: In search of the discoverer
- 5.30 Close

Possession and Ownership

The **Tenth International Workshop**

organised by Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald and R. M. W. Dixon

to be held at

The Cairns Institute, James Cook University, Cairns

27 September - 2 October 2010

Auditors are welcome, at no fee (but note that we are unable to arrange accommodation for auditors). A hard copy of the Position Paper can be supplied on request.

Monday, 27 September in building E2, room 113/113a

9.00 Opening of Workshop

9.10 Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald (CI, JCU) 'Possession and ownership: a cross-linguistic perspective'

10.40 Coffee

11.10 Anne Storch (University of Cologne) 'Possession in Jukun (Benue-Congo family)'

12.40 Lunch

2.00 Felix Ameka (University of Leiden) 'Possession in Likpe (Kwa family)'

3.30 Coffee

4.00 Christa Koenig (University of Cologne) 'Possession in !Xu (Khoisan)'

5.30 Finish

Tuesday, 28 September in building E2, room 113/113a

9.00 Isabelle Bril (CNRS, Paris) 'Possession and ownership in Nêlêmwa (Oceanic branch of Austronesian)'

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Gloria Gravelle (Free University, Amsterdam) 'Possession in Moskona (Papuan region)'

12.30 Lunch

2.00 Yongxian Luo (University of Melbourne) 'Possession in Chinese, with notes on Zhuang (Tai family)'

3.30 Coffee

4.00 Tianqiao (Mike) Lu (CI, JCU) 'Possession in Maonan (Tai-Kadai)'

5.30 Finish

Wednesday 29 September — free day

Thursday 30 September in Library, Room B1.031

9.00 Lev Michael (University of California, Berkeley) 'Possession in Nanti (Arawak family)'

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Anne Schwarz (CI, JCU) 'Possession in Buli (Gur family)'

12.30 Lunch

2.00 Rosita Henry (JCU) 'Being and belonging: exchange relations and land ownership in the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea'

3.30 Coffee

4.00 Michael Wood (JCU) 'Possessing the wind: Kamula property interests in the new carbon economy'

5.30 Finish

Friday 1 October in building E2, room 113/113a

9.00 Mark Post (CI, JCU) 'Possession in Galo (Tibeto-Burman)'

10.30 Coffee

11.00 Zygmunt Frajzyngier (University of Colorado at Boulder) 'Possession in Wandala (Chadic subgroup of Afro-asiatic)'

12.30 Lunch

2.00 Alan Dench (University of Western Australia) 'Possession and ownership in Martuthunira (Australian)'

3.30 Coffee

4.00 Group discussion

5.30 Finish

Saturday 2 October in building E2, room 113/113a **NOTE: 9.30 start**

9.30 R. M. W. Dixon (CI, JCU) 'What can we conclude?'

11.00 Coffee

11.30 Group discussion and publication plans

1.00 Finish

Honorary Doctorate for Ernie Grant

At the JCU Degree Ceremony
in the Convention Centre, Cairns at **10.30 a.m.** on **Saturday 17 April**
an **Honorary Doctor of Letters** degree will be bestowed on
Ernie Grant, Jirrbal Elder
and founder of the Echo Creek Cultural Centre
Everyone is welcome to attend; tickets not required

Since 1991 Ernie Grant has been Cultural Research Officer within the State Department of Education, based in Cairns. He has worked tirelessly to educate the people of North Queensland concerning Aboriginal cultural traditions and values. He has run Workshops right across the State (and indeed in every other State) on a Holistic Planning and Teaching Framework, with relates together Land, Language and Culture, conceptualised in terms of Time, Place and Relationships. He has worked on curriculum development, designed a Teaching and Learning Framework for teachers working with indigenous pupils, and given extensive support to School Support Centres.

Ernie Grant has also worked with the National Library in Canberra, with the Museum of South Australia and with the Tasmanian Education Department on matters of access and establishing cross-cultural perspectives.

All in all, he has made an immense contribution to the North Queensland — and indeed, the entire Australian — community.

Inaugural lectures

Professor Alexandra Aikhenvald will present her inaugural lecture in May.

Professor Ton Otto will present his inaugural lecture in September.

Professor Hurriyet Babacan will present her inaugural lecture in November.

Both will be at a venue in the centre of Cairns. Watch the JCU website for titles, dates and venues.

Round-table meetings of LCRG

Meetings of LCRG members, held each week throughout the year, are open to anyone interested in linguistic topics. We jointly pick a topic of general appeal, with a number of people making presentations with respect to a language of which they have first-hand knowledge.

The first round-table topics for 2010 are:

Reduplication

Lexical number words and counting systems

What took place at LCRG in 2009

The Language and Culture Research Group was established in January 2010 with the arrival at JCU of Professors Aikhenvald and Dixon. They were joined later in the year by the first two Postdoctoral Research Fellows (Dr Anne Schwarz and Dr Tianqiao (Mike) Lu) and the first PhD student (Chia-jung Pan). Cairns abounds with scholars interested in matters linguistic, so that we have fruitful collaboration with anthropologists, archaeologists, educationalists, and members of several local indigenous tribal groups.

- In February, **Professor Masayoshi Shibatani**, of Rice University (Houston Texas) and The University of Kobe (Japan), spent some days at LCRG.
- In March, **Professor Oscar E. Aguilera**, Researcher with Foundation FIDE XII, Punta Arenas, Chile, and his colleague **Dr José Tonko**, one of the seven remaining speakers of Kaweskar, spent a week at LCRG. They presented a joint talk 'Cultures and languages of Tierra del Fuego: salvaging what we can'.
- On 16-17 April LCRG held its **Inaugural Workshop**, entitled

Not to lose you, my language

After a hearty welcome by George Skeene, a Yirrkanyji elder representing traditional owners of the land, the workshop featured plenary presentations by

Ernie Grant, a Jirrbal Elder (Echo Creek Cultural Centre) jointly with Bob Dixon (JCU) 'Guygun ngaygu guwal: Poor fellow my language'

Rosita Henry (JCU) 'Language and performance: A case study on the Djabugay renaissance'

Mike Wood (JCU) 'Initiating God's Word into the Kamula's recent past'

Nicholas Evans (ANU) 'What we bury when last speakers die: the languages of the Wellesley Islands and what they can tell us'

Yongxian Luo (University of Melbourne) 'Government policies towards minority groups and their languages in China: views from within'

Yvonne Cadet-James and Valda Wallace (JCU) 'The Gugu-Badhun project'

Kate Burrridge (Monash University) 'Horses and buggies in the age of broadband - the survival of Pennsylvania German in the 21st century'

Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald 'The Magic of names: name ownership in Papua New Guinea'

The workshop was very well received by JCU and by the local community.

- On 24 April, and 1, 8 and 15 May, a series of four 2-hour language workshops

Nganyji nyanggaajina Yidiny Gunggay

(Let's speak the Yidiny-Gunggay language)

was conducted (at the JCU Cairns Campus) by

R. M. W. (Bob) Dixon [author of *A grammar of Yidiny* (Cambridge University Press, 1977) and *Words of our country: Stories, place names and vocabulary in Yidiny, the Aboriginal language of the Cairns-Yarrabah region* (University of Queensland Press, 1991)].

and **David Mundraby**, elder of the Yidinyji tribe

The workshop attracted unprecedented interest from many sections of the local community

- During June and early July, Professor Aikhenvald took up a prestigious **First Professorship at the University of Colorado in Boulder**. Among other duties she taught a joint graduate-undergraduate intensive course on 'Explorations in linguistic diversity: Amazonian languages and beyond', and consulted with colleagues on typological parameters in Siouan, Algonquian and other North American languages. If you are interested in the course materials, write to: Alexandra.Aikhenvald@jcu.edu.au.
- In July, Professors Dixon and Aikhenvald visited **Alaska** to familiarise themselves with the indigenous languages situation there, and learn about work on documentation and revitalisation.
- On 12 September, Flora Pondrilei launched, in Cairns, the charity organization **Advance Admiralties Inc** to promote languages and cultures of the Manus Province of PNG. This will involve extensive documentation of languages from the area.
- On 14 September, members of LCRG helped organise celebrations for the 34th anniversary of Papua New Guinea Independence's, including an art exhibition and a mini-conference '**Celebrating Thousand Voices**'. The mini-conference covered broad issues relevant to Papua New Guinea, from public health to language and culture maintenance; it was jointly presented in Cairns and (by video link) in Townsville, and was attended by Prof Ken Sumbuk (PVC) and Dr L. Matainaho (Director of Research) from the University of Papua New Guinea.
- On 1-3 October, at the invitation of the Malluruch/Alngit Council, Professors Aikhenvald and Dixon undertook a brief exploratory trip to the **Aboriginal community at Weipa** in western Cape York. They met with members of the community and worked with four speakers. They then provided a report to the Council on the language situation at Weipa.

- On 15 October, as a part of the **Celebrating Research Month at JCU series of events**, LCRG conducted a Day of Linguistics. This consisted of
 - Public lecture by Professor Alexandra (Sasha) Aikhenvald *'The Joy of language'*
 - Interactive talk-back session *'Language we live by'* conducted by the Panel consisting of Aikhenvald (chair), Dixon, Dr Anne Schwarz, and Dr Tianquiao Lu.

- On 3 November, three of the members of LCRG took part in the conference **Tropics of the Imagination**, organized by Dr Stephen Torre of the School of Arts and Social Sciences:
 - R. M. W. Dixon. 'The metrical patterns of Dyirbal song poetry'
 - Anne Schwarz. 'The thetic-categorical dichotomy: insights into discourse principles and grammatical features'
 - Mike Tianqiao Lu. 'Little Red Cap in South China — the linguistic cause of folktale variation'

- On 30 November, at the JCU Townsville Campus, Professor Nola Alloway, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Arts, Education and Social Sciences, organised that new publications by members of the Faculty should be officially launched by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sandra Harding, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Chris Cocklin. These included
 - The Semantics of clause-linking: a cross-linguistic typology*, edited by R. M. W. Dixon and Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald. Oxford: Oxford University Press. xviii, 410 pp.
 - Basic Linguistic Theory*, by R. M. W. Dixon. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Vol 1: *Methodology*, xvi, 381 pp. Vol 2: *Grammatical topics*, xvii, 489 pp.
 - Modern Hebrew (Sovremennyy Ivrit)*, by Alexandra Aikhenvald (2nd edition) published by the URSS Publishing House (Moscow). [20,000 copies.] 146 pp.
 It was also noted that Dixon's classic monograph, **The Dyirbal language of North Queensland** had just been reissued in paperback, 37 years after its first publication in 1972.

During the year:

Kazuhiro Imanishi assisted Chia-jung Pan with translating early materials on Saaroa from Japanese.

Stefan Dienst undertook a salvage expedition to collect information on Kaishana, a moribund North Arawak language, within the framework of the ARC project 'The world through the prism of language: a cross-linguistic study of genders, noun classes and classifiers'.

Activities of LCRG members during 2009

Besides the activities listed on pages 9-11 above, **Professor Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald** presented a plenary address 'Areal features and linguistic areas: contact-induced change and geographical typology' at The International Conference on Geographical Typology of African Languages jointly with an International Workshop on Khoisan Linguistics, organized by Global COE Program — Tokyo University of Foreign Studies (12-14 May). She also gave the summary address and vote of thanks at the conclusion of the Conference.

Her major achievement this year was the completion of a monograph *Imperatives and commands*, which will be published by Oxford University Press in mid-year. This is a comprehensive, and sometimes entertaining account of how imperatives can be formed and used, and how some imperatives do not command, and some commands are not imperatives.

Professor Aikhenvald's next monograph (already contracted to Oxford UP) is *The languages of the Amazon*, an accessible survey of salient features of languages spoken in the Amazon basin (expanding on the course taught as part of her First Professorship at the University of Colorado).

She has continued her work on Tariana dialects and language contact in Amazonia, maintaining the Tariana language site, continuously liaising with members of the Tariana group Wamiarikune and providing consultative support for the Tariana school in Iauaretê, Amazonas. She has also continued liaising with the Manambu speaking communities in the East Sepik province, PNG.

During the year, she also published and prepared for publication papers on areal diffusion, language endangerment, multilingualism, grammaticalization of evidentials, and multiverb constructions. She is co-editing a volume *Multi-verb constructions: a view from the Americas*, jointly with Pieter Muysken (forthcoming with Brill). She continues as a consulting editor, *Studies in Language*, a leading journal in typology, and as a member of the editorial boards for journals *Studia Linguistica*, *Journal of Linguistic Diversity*, *Language Documentation and Conservation*, and *Language Compass*, and for monograph series *Explorations in Linguistic Typology* (Oxford University Press) and book series *Structural and Functional Linguistics* (John Benjamins).

As the cumulation of a lifetime's experience in grammar-writing, grammar-reading and supervision of a great deal of high-quality work on grammatical description, **Professor R. M. W. Dixon's** major project at the present time is a comprehensive monograph, *Basic linguistic theory*. Published during 2009 were Volume 1, *Methodology* (with nine chapters: Basics; Principles to follow; Grammar overview; Analysis, argumentation and explanation; Terminology; Doing typology; Phonology; Lexicon; and Field linguistics) and Volume 2, *Grammatical topics* (also with nine chapters: Grammatical word and

phonological word; Distinguishing noun and verb; The adjective class; Transitivity; Copula clauses and verbless clauses; Pronouns and demonstratives; Possession; Relative clause constructions; and Complement clauses and complementation strategies). In addition to seeing these two volumes through the press, and constructing an index for them, Dixon began drafting chapters for the third and final volume. He has completed Non-spatial systems; Number systems; and Negation, and is part-way through Reflexive and Reciprocal constructions.

Work continued on the project 'Are some languages better than others?', financed by an ARC Discovery Grant (2007-2010), involving the development of a matrix of metrics for comparative evaluation of the worth of languages for a number of defined purposes. Dixon also continued work on languages from his three field sites — Dyirbal, Yidiñ, Fijian and Jarawara. Work is well advanced on a volume of texts in Dyirbal, plus a comprehensive dictionary/thesaurus of that language.

He continued on editorial boards for the journal *Anthropological Linguistics* and *Italian Journal of Linguistics*, and the monograph series *Explorations in Linguistic Typology*.

Dr Anne Schwarz commenced her Post-doctoral Research Fellowship on 2 September. During 2009, she completed her contributions towards a comparative volume on the noun class systems in Oti-Volta languages, edited by Prof Brigitte Reineke and Dr Manfred von Roncador. Her revision of the alleged "indefinite/definite" distinction of nouns in the Gur languages Buli and Konni in favour of a referentiality distinction leads to several new insights in the grammar of these and related languages. She started working on a follow-up paper also considering other Niger-Congo languages. Together with her colleague Dr Ines Fiedler from Humboldt University, Berlin, she is editing *The Expression of Information Structure. A documentation of its diversity across Africa*, forthcoming with John Benjamins in March 2010. And she prepared for her fieldwork on Siona/Secoya in Ecuador, starting in February.

Dr Mike Tianqiao Lu began his Post-doctoral Research Fellowship in October to work on the project of 'Classifiers of Kam-Tai languages: a cognitive and cultural perspective', which involves the comparative study of about thirty languages in southern China and Southeast Asia. He has just published an article on the 'Army Language' spoken in language islands in the ethnic minority areas in Guangxi province of China in *Study of Ethnics in Guangxi*, one of the core journals in China. This has laid a solid foundation for further research on the subject. Other current projects include two papers on Kam-Tai linguistics, one of them on the focus marking */ka/ found in Kam-Tai languages. The cognate of this word, which has been regarded as elusive by many scholars in this field, can also be found in Mandarin Chinese and some Chinese dialects in southern China. The other paper is on typological features of Maonan.

New book series launched

In February, Dr Liesbeth Kanis, Commissioning Editor for Brill, one of the oldest and most prestigious publishing houses in Europe, travelled to Cairns to meet with Professors Aikhenvald and Dixon in order to discuss future publishing projects. Out of that meeting evolved the plan for a new book series.

Brill's Studies in Language, Cognition and Culture **edited by Alexandra Aikhenvald, R. M. W. Dixon and N. J. Enfield**

This peer-reviewed book series offers an international forum for high-quality original studies in languages and cultures. It focusses on the interaction between linguistic categories (and their conceptualization), cultural values, and human cognition. The publications in this series will include interdisciplinary studies on language, its meanings and forms, and possible interactions with cognitive and communicational patterns. The series spans cultural and social anthropology, cognitive science and linguistics. The emphasis is on inductive based cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies, with special attention to poorly known areas, such as Lowland Amazonia and the Pacific. The series is international in its scope. Authors are encouraged to write in English, to maximize readership. We envisage producing 3-4 new volumes per annum.

Members of the editorial board are:

WILLEM F. ADELAAR, Professor of South American studies at the University of Leiden, a leading expert in linguistics, anthropology and cultural studies in South America.

CAROL GENETTI, University of California at Santa Barbara, a leading expert on Tibeto-Burman languages and cultures, and patterns of cognition as reflected in human interaction.

BERND HEINE, Emeritus Professor, University of Cologne, one of the world's leading experts in African languages, general and cognitive linguistics, language contact and grammaticalization.

ROSITA HENRY, James Cook University, a leading expert in cultural anthropology, performing arts and social development with a focus on the Australian area and the Pacific in general.

LEV MICHAEL, University of California (Berkeley), a leading expert in the languages and cultures of Peru, language and communication, ethnolinguistics, and cognitive patterns in human interaction.

JOHN LUCY, University of Chicago, a leading expert on cognitive linguistics, and language and cognition, with a focus on Mayan languages.

TON OTTO, Aarhus University and James Cook University, a leading expert in cultural and social anthropology with a special focus on the Pacific, and the interaction between language and culture.

BAMBI B. SCHIEFFELIN, Professor of Anthropology, New York University, a leading expert on ethnolinguistics, cultural anthropology and interactions between language, culture and cognition, with a specific focus on the Pacific area.

MASAYOSHI SHIBATANI, Professor, Rice University and Kobe University, a leading expert in the languages of Japan, Austronesian languages and general linguistics, and in a wide variety of issues of ethnolinguistics and cognitive linguistics, with a focus on Asia and the Pacific.

ANNE STORCH, Professor of Africanistics at the University of Cologne, a leading expert in African languages and cultures, with a broad view of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural issues world-wide, and a focus on cognitive issues.

PETER TRUDGILL, Université de Fribourg (Switzerland) and the University of East Anglia, one of the world's major experts on language contact, areal diffusion and varieties of English.

ANTHONY WOODBURY, University of Texas (Austin), a leading expert on Yupik Eskimo, and languages and cultures of North America, with a particular focus on the cognitive aspects of language and culture interaction.

Any scholar with a proposal for the series (or just an idea which might be pursued) is invited to contact any of the editors – Aikhenvald, Dixon or Enfield.

Announcement

Most members of the Language and Culture Research Group have written (or are writing) a grammar of a language, and many of us are working on typological universals, by inductive generalisations from a well-chosen sample of grammars. We welcome enquiries from similarly oriented scholars (from Australia or from overseas) who would like to consider spending a sabbatical with us. We can provide basic facilities, plus an intellectual ambience of the highest order.

Comments on recent publications

The first two volumes of R. M. W. Dixon's *Basic Linguistic theory* were published by Oxford University Press on 1st October 2009 (although dated '2010' as a sales ploy). The publisher's description of these volumes concludes with:

Basic Linguistic Theory is the triumphant outcome of a lifetime's thinking about every manifestation of language and immersion in linguistic fieldwork. It is a one-stop text for undergraduate and graduate students of linguistics, as well as for those in neighbouring disciplines such as psychology and anthropology.

Publishers' reviewers opined:

- 'Destined to be a modern classic.' **N. J. Enfield**, Max Plank Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen.
- 'A monumental achievement. Virtually without precedent in the field of linguistics'. **Martin Haspelmath**, Max Plank Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig.
- 'A refreshingly common-sense approach to linguistic analysis.' **Lise M. Dobrin**, University of Virginia.

Volumes from our International Workshops continue to receive the most laudatory reviews

Concerning *Serial verb constructions: a cross-linguistic typology* [papers from 2003 International Workshop, published Jan 2006, paperback reissue 2007]:

- 'In sum, the book is a feast for thought. Anyone with an interest in SVCs and complex predicates must read it, for the crash course it provides, for the insights it offers, and for its valuable orientation towards a host of remaining issues to be explored.' *Language* 44:5-50, 2009.
- 'Provides the reader with rich and fascinating data and sound analyses of Serial Verb constructions and contributes decisively to the slowly but gradually growing literature towards the cross linguistic typology of Serial Verb Constructions'. *Linguistics* 45: 833-40, 2007.
- 'This generally very coherent and homogeneous volume . . . can be recommended to all those interested in typology and language contact.' *Studia Linguistica* 42: 453-61, 2008.

Concerning *Grammars in Contact: a cross-linguistic typology* [papers from 2005 International Workshop, published Dec 2006, paperback reissue 2008].

- 'In sum, this book is an excellent contribution of top quality work . . . The book deserves special attention from those who want the latest first-hand empirical news on language contact and its effects.' *Studies in Language* 33: 241-4, 2009.

- This edited collection of papers is an important reference for scholars working in language contact and desirous of data detailing linguistic diffusion in some geographically remote areas.' *Linguist List*, 17 November 2009.

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Our heritage

The Language and Culture Research Group continues the intellectual ambience from the Research Centre for Linguistic Typology which was created by Professors Dixon and Aikhenvald and directed by them at the ANU and then at La Trobe University until 2008. Much fine linguistic work was achieved, by a wide variety of good scholars, under this umbrella.

The **Association for Linguistic Typology** recently bestowed the **Georg von der Gabelentz Award** for the best reference grammar written between 2004 and 2008. Four out of the five grammars in the final short-list had been written, in whole or in part, at the Research Centre for Linguistic Typology under the aegis of Dixon and Aikhenvald.

As the winner of the award, **Carol Genetti**, notes in the acknowledgements of her grammar (p. vi),

This book would never have been completed without the priceless opportunity to be in residence at the Research Centre for Linguistic Typology in Melbourne, Australia, where the majority of the manuscript was written and revised. In the entire world, there is not a better place to write a grammar than in that centre, surrounded by others with the same pursuit. Special thanks to R. M. W. Dixon and Alexandra Aikhenvald for inviting me to partake in the vibrant intellectual atmosphere of RCLT and for all their ideas, comments, advice and encouragement.

A diminishing unit, still called RCLT, continues at La Trobe University. It issued a newsletter in July 2009 which purported to include information about the activities and publications of Dixon and Aikhenvald during 2008. However, Dixon and Aikhenvald were neither asked to provide this information nor invited to check what someone else had written; there were many errors and omissions. When this was pointed out to the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, he instructed RCLT to issue an apology. A list of 'Clarifications and Addenda' was then circulated, detailing items which had 'been unintentionally (sic) left out'.

Publications by members of LCRG — 2009 and forthcoming

Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald

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- 2009. 'Language contact along the Sepik River'. *Anthropological Linguistics* 50: 1-66 (dated 2008, published 2009).
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- Forthcoming. (2011). *Languages of the Amazon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
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