Abstracts

Things your classics master never told you: a borrowing from Trans New Guinea languages into Latin

Roger Blench

The existence of a Trans New Guinea phylum seems to broadly accepted although its exact membership remains disputed. The dating and motivation for such a remarkable expansion remains difficult to determine. Informal arguments have been made as a relationship with the evolution of agriculture, in particular vegeculture and arboriculture. The paper explores whether the linguistic evidence really supports this idea, using data on the better-documented species, such as taro, Musa and sugar-cane. The banana represents a particularly intriguing story. Since the Renaissance, scholars have been diligent in tracing the etymologies of Latin words, but it is safe to say they have generally not looked to areas as remote as Melanesia. However, there is reason to think that at least one Latin root, musa, applied to the banana family, may have originated there, in the Papuan languages affiliated with the Trans New Guinea phylum. The paper presents evidence that the root #mugu, or something similar, is deeply embedded in the Trans New Guinea languages and was borrowed from there to Austronesian, and made its way into Dravidian via the commerce routes across the Bay of Bengal. The term became something like #mottai in Dravidian and was borrowed into Indo-Aryan, and thence into Persian, eventually showing up in Latin. Various forms are also attested in languages of Nepal, probably borrowed from Indo-Aryan. However, reflexes in the Tangkhulic languages of Myanmar, appear to be directly cognate with Dravidian. The Palaungic languages of Myanmar also have a cognate of the Indo-Aryan root. From India, the root travelled west, borrowed into Farsi, Arabic, late Greek and Latin. Via Arabic, it also made its way down the Red Sea, and to the Horn of Africa, where it occurs in Amharic and Somali. A Swahili attestation is probably a direct borrowing from Farsi.

Acquiring the phonology of Yélî Dnye (Rossel Island, PNG)

Marisa Casillas

I present data on the early phonological development of children acquiring Yélî Dnye (Rossel Island, Milne Bay Province, PNG). With 56 consonants and 34 vowels, Yélî Dnye has one of the largest recorded phonological inventories in the world (PHOIBLE-estimated range in number of segments: 15–158; only 12/2000 languages with 90+ segments). One might therefore expect the segments to be maximally acoustically or articulatorily distinctive. However, with only four places of articulation for stop consonants, no contrastive voicing, and no tonal contrasts, Yélî consonants are densely packed into a few pockets of similar acoustic/articulatory space. The Yélî sound system also features contrasts that are relatively rare among the world's languages (e.g., dental vs. post-alveolar stops), understudied in previous work (e.g., doubly-articulated consonants), or a unique combination of the two (e.g., doubly-articulated dental-vs.-post-alveolar stops; Yélî Dnye is the only attested language in the world with this contrast).

I am currently investigating how children on Rossel Island begin to acquire this sound system by using a combination of spontaneous speech, elicitation, and experiments with children between ages 6 months and 12 years. While our work is ongoing, preliminary results suggest that the ability to discriminate the typologically rare dental-vs.-post-alveolar place of articulation is marked in acquisition, an effect emerging in discrimination experiments with both infants (6–14 months; central fixation habituation) and older children (5–12 years; minimal pair discrimination). I present

these results in light of the frequency distributions of these and other segments in both adult- and child-directed speech and with respect to older children's performance on a non-word repetition task, in which they must both perceive and produce phonological forms. I discuss the extent to which these findings, across tasks, demonstrate markedness in their acquisition. I then formulate hypotheses to be explored in future work regarding the relationship between the typological frequency, daily use, perceptual discriminability, and acquisition of phonological segments. In so doing at this workshop, I hope to stimulate discussion on the larger question of why some sound patterns are more cross-linguistically common than others in the world's languages.

Multilingual language ecologies in Southern New Guinea: a comparison of two villages
Christian Döhler

In this paper, I describe the language ecologies of two villages in Southern New Guinea. The two villages are Rouku in the Morehead district, and Irukupi in the Binaturi district. The two villages differ in the kind of multilingualism that can be observed.

In Irukupi, the dominant language is Bine. Children grow up speaking Bine and become fluent in other languages only when they attend school or when they spent time in the regional capital. The languages involved are English and Tok Pisin. The acquisition of other local languages like Kiwai, Gizrra or Gidra is a rare exception. In Rouku, every child grows up with a language repertoire of two up to five languages. The languages involved are local languages, English only plays a role through high school education, and Tok Pisin is spoken. The main difference between the two places lies in the presence (Rouku) versus absence (Irukupi) of what has been called "small-scale multilingualism" (Lüpke, 2016) or "egalitarian multilingualism" (François, 2012). The more commonly known type of multilingualism, where languages are in a hierarchical relationship and tied to specific domains, is more pronounced in Irukupi.

In the paper, I will describe the differences in social structure that have led to these types of multilingualism and the methods by which I have collected information on the topic. I will address the impact of neocolonialism, urbanization and westernization on the two villages. Moreover, I will describe the challenges these language ecologies pose for a language documentation project.

Variationist studies in southern New Guinea
Eri Kashima, Kate L Lindsey, Dineke Schokkin, Katherine Anne Strong

There is a growing body of variationist research taking place in the southern region of Western Province, Papua New Guinea. Stemming from the ARC Laureate project 'The Wellsprings of Linguistic Diversity,' multiple linguists have integrated sociolinguistic analysis of inter- and intraspeaker variation into their documentary research in the underdocumented language communities of the South Fly. This talk highlights several variation projects that have arisen in this region: initial-/h/-elision in Nmbo (Kashima, 2019), final-/n/-elision in Idi and Ende (Schokkin and Lindsey, 2018) and retroflex affrication in Ende (Strong, Lindsey, & Drager, 2019).

Understanding and analyzing new types of sociolinguistic variation in this region presents a unique set of benefits and challenges. We will discuss how we developed successful methodologies for collecting data, how we problematized some traditional aspects of sociolinguistic analysis to better fit the social context of southern New Guinea and the intriguing results we found that suggest that sociolinguistic research "off the beaten track" may both challenge established views in sociolinguistics (Mansfield & Stanford, 2018) and widen the scope of a typical documentation corpus.

Specifically, we will discuss Kashima's analysis of word-initial /h/-drop in Nmbo, which shows a rapid change in progress throughout multiple villages and suggests that the most multilingual village is the origin of this innovation. Schokkin's analysis of the variable realization of word-final /n/ in Idi reveals a significant correlation of /n/-elision with linguistic factors (such as tense and phonological context) and social factors (such as age), ultimately suggesting that older Idi speakers are the innovators and agents of change for this variable. Lindsey's parallel work on word-final /n/-elision in Ende produced similar findings: tense and phonological context correlate with /n/-elision, but most significantly Ende practitioners of kawa, a prestigious type of public oration, are the most likely to retain the standard /n/-full variant. Strong's work on Ende retroflex affrication supports Lindsey's findings, showing that orators are more likely to realize the variable as a stop than as an affricate compared with speakers who are not orators. Interestingly, among the orators, older speakers and women tend to produce stops at higher rates than younger speakers and men. This pattern is consistent with an interpretation of the stop variants as prestige forms and suggests that their use in Ende is linked with the speaker's societal position: orators, who hold positions of high status in the community, use language to assert symbolic power.

This integration of sociolinguistic and documentary analysis represents a growing trend in popularity, pioneered by Gillian Sankoff (1980), highlighted in Language Documentation & Conservation's 2018 special issue (Hildebrandt, Jany, & Silva, 2018) and resulting in this important work being conducted all over the world (Jones & Meakins, 2013; Kasstan, 2017; Meyerhoff 2015, 2016; Nagy 1996, 2009; Stanford 2008, 2009, 2016; Stanford & Preston, 2009, and others). Through this talk, we hope to start conversations with others working on Papuan languages, who may be interested in or may already be incorporating variationist methods into their work.

Learning the algebra of kinship on Rossel Island, PNG
Stephen C. Levinson, Marisa Casillas

We present data on children's development of kinship reckoning on Rossel Island, PNG (language: Yélî Dnye). Tribal societies, and indeed most of the traditional cultures of the undeveloped world, are organized on kinship lines. Yet there has been relatively little study of how children learn the kinship systems they are born into. Kin terms in any language might pose special learning problems for children; they are deictic, relational, and form sets of abstract relations, which afford a recursive calculus. In addition to these conceptual hurdles, the kinship term system of Rossel Island offers multiple sources of extra complexity. Overtly matrilineal, the kin term system has culturally evolved to track both matriline and patriline, with implications for how and when children learn about kin of different types. The Rossel system also uses alternating generations (e.g., mother's brother is an 'uncle', but mother's mother's brother is a 'brother'). There are over 40 kin terms in the Rossel inventory, not counting collective kin terms such as chimi 'with his nephews', which are rare in the languages of the world and confined more or less to Australia and PNG. Finally, the kin reckoning depends on the sex of the speaker and the sex of linking relatives (e.g., mî u mbwó means 'father's brother' (FB), pye u mbwó means 'mother's sister' (MZ)).

In the current study we explored multiple aspects of Rossel children's budding knowledge of kinship using a variety of elicitation tasks with children age 5–17: (1) a variation on the indigenous tii kalakala ancestry game to assess depth of known relations, (2) testing the understanding of the kin calculus in two tasks (2a: inferring the kinship category from a kin-type string e.g. 'what category of relation is your mother's sister's daughter?'; 2b: relational triangulation - e.g. 'if your father calls that person uncle, what do you call him?' - invoking ego's relation to father, father's relation to referent, allowing inference of ego's relation to referent), (3) checking their understanding about rights and duties for

different kin types using two tasks (joking rights, 3a: 'can you joke with your mother's sister?'; and marriage rights, 3b: 'can you marry your mother's sister?', and (4) we checked their understanding of collective kin terms that require kin calculation (e.g., 'Hey look, there goes Kwéli chimi!' who is Kwéli going with?).

We predicted that Rossel children continue to improve in their knowledge of their extended family relations and kinship terminology throughout later childhood, and that their ancestry knowledge would be stronger on their father's side than their mother's side, given that inheritance of land (and therefore village organization) is patrilineal. We also expected performance on kinship terms to vary with naturalistic use since some (e.g., mbwó 'same-sex siblings') are used on a daily basis while others, particularly the collective ones (e.g., chimi 'with his nephews') may be heard only sporadically. Our findings largely support the predictions, with some exceptions, which we discuss with respect to our ongoing follow-up work.

Demonstratives in topic-related functions

Anna Margetts

In Both Oceanic and Papuan languages demonstratives are attested to take on functions related to topicality, including anaphoric reference, topic marking and clause backgrounding (cf. Reesink 1987, de Vries 1995, François 2001, Dawuda 2006). There is evidence that this phenomenon is be less restricted than the sparse discussion in the typological literature suggests (cf. Diessel 1999:154). Example (1) from Gapapaiwa (Oceanic, PNG) shows an anaphoric suffix which is historically derived from the near-addressee demonstrative *nani* (McGuckin 2002:299).

(1)   *Tomowi-**na***
    man-ANAPHORIQUE
    'the man' (McGuckin 2002:301)

The same demonstrative source morpheme has also developed into a post-nominal topic marker, as in (2):

(2)   *Ita*   *bagibagi*   ***na***   *tiga*   *peto-na.*
    our   work   TOPIC   border   cut-3SG
    'Our work is cutting the grass at the edges (of the village).' (McGuckin 2002:321)

When this topic marker has scope over an entire predication, it backgrounds the clause and marks it as presupposed information, which can have a subordination-like effect (here translated as *when*-clause):

(3)   *Mara-na=iyai*   *i-kavara-=i*   ***na***   *mape-na*   *gabura-na=iyai*   *i-tere-gavu=i.*
    'time-3SG=LOC   3-carry=TR   TOPIC   wings-3SG   under-3SG=LOC   3-put-hide=TR
    'When he brought them, he hid them under his wings.' (McGuckin 2002:321)

There are clear parallels in the use and grammaticalization of demonstratives in the Oceanic and Papuan languages discussed in this presentation. Each of the languages show a particular demonstrative (a) in anaphoric use, (b) as a marker and tracker of certain types of topics, and (c) when they have scope over whole clauses, as a device of marking presuppositions for the following predications. In some of the languages the same demonstrative can also mark other types of information that is deemed to be important or surprising, such as the dramatic peak of a narrative. This means they can act as evaluation devices (Labov 1973).

All of the investigated languages show a three-way deictic split in the demonstrative system and throughout all of them it is the addressee-based form (in person-oriented systems) or the medial

form (in distance-based systems) which take on these functions. These findings point to a consistent pattern in terms of which member of the paradigm tends to grammaticalize into these functions. This is of particular interest as the Austronesian, Papuan, and general typological literature makes conflicting predictions about demonstrative choice in these contexts (cf. Greenberg 1978, Reesink 1987, Lehmann 1995, Frajzyngier 1996, Himmelmann 1996, Lynch, Ross and Crowley 2002). In this way the findings presented here contribute to the cross-linguistic study of demonstratives and their grammaticalization and, more generally, to the investigation of referential choice.

Coverb constructions in Papua – how much 'lexicon', how much 'grammar'?
Sonja Riesberg

Papuan languages are famous for exhibiting a "dearth of verb-stems" (Foley 1986: 115), with many languages only exhibiting relatively small verb inventories. But of course, these languages have other strategies to express the same variety of verbal concepts found in languages with larger, open class verb inventories. One of these strategies is the use of so called coverb constructions (CVC), i.e. complex predicates consisting of an inflected generic verb with rather general semantics, in combination with an uninflected non-verbal element that carries most parts of the lexical meaning. Consider the following two examples:

(1) a. *hata*   *no*   *anda*   *re*   *su*
         yesterday   1SG   house   eye   hold:PFV
         'yesterday I watched the house' (DUNA; San Roque 2008: 246)

     b. *aik*   *danggo*   *y-ag-as*
         3SG.POSS:tooth come.apart   speak-RLS-3SG.NPST
         'his tooth fell out' (NGGEM; Etherington 2002: 142)

Though CVCs are often mentioned in grammatical descriptions of single languages, there are no in depth studies (like, e.g. Eva Schultze-Berndt's (2000) on the Australian language Jaminjung), nor are there comprehensive cross-linguistic investigation (e.g. along the lines of Bill McGregor's (2002), also on languages of Australia) available for Papuan languages.

The first part of this paper will give a preliminary overview of CVCs in Papua, showing both more and less prototypical instances of CVCs and setting them off from other kinds of multi verb constructions and complex predicates. We will see that languages differ in the number of generic verbs, but also as to what elements they allow for in the non-inflected slots (e.g. adverbs, nouns (cf. (1a),) roots of independent verbs, or a particular class of 'coverbs' that can never occur outside the CVC, as in (1b)).

Following Lehmann (2012), it will be argued that CVCs can be considered to be a sub-set of the cross-linguistically more wide spread phenomenon of light verb constructions (LVCs) and that CVCs, like LVCs, may either be grammaticalized or lexicalized.

The second part of the paper will then take a detailed look at one particular language, the Trans-New Guinea language Yali, focusing on the question of grammaticalization and investigating whether the generic verbs in alternations like in (2) can be analysed as forming a paradigm, comparable to, e.g., voice auxiliaries.

(2) a. *an*   *Wol*   *ik=ma*   *kume*   *ihi*
         1SG   Wol   river=LOC   bathe   speak:1SG.IM.PST
         'I just took a bath at the river Wol'

b.	*an*	*Ila*	*Wol*	*ik=ma*	*kume*	*wat-ihi*
	1SG	Ila	Wol	river=LOC	bathe	hit-1SG.IM.PST

'I just gave Ila a bath at the river Wol'

Srenge ideophones
José Antonio Jódar Sánchez

In this talk, I will present an overview of Srenge ideophones. Srenge is an endangered language of Sandaun province, Papua New Guinea, spoken by around 600 people. I will first introduce the language and provide some examples from the inventory of 45 ideophones so far collected. Then, I will discuss their phonetic, morphosyntactic, and semantic features. Additionally, I will make a comparison of ideophones in Srenge with those in Yeri, another Torricelli language. Ideophones in Srenge do not form a word class by themselves. However, I characterize them through a prototype definition where five features are identified. The more features an ideophone complies with, the better an exemplar of the category it is. Finally, I will also discuss a few challenging examples and note some ideas for further research.

Nominal Classification in Numeral Constructions in West Papua
Katherine Walker

This talk presents an analysis of the nominal classification systems attested in numeral constructions in the Papuan languages of the Bird's Head and the Bomberai Peninsula. Data from published literature and two partially annotated language corpora (for Mpur (isolate) and Iha (West Bomberai)) is available for 19 languages. Analysis of this data revealed that four have no classification systems in numeral constructions, ten have one system, and five have two co-occurring systems.

Investigating the properties of each system generally led to an unproblematic categorisation as either 'gender' or 'classifiers' (according to the 'traditional' typology in, e.g., Dixon 1982; Aikhenvald 2000). However, four systems attest properties associated with both types: such systems are here called 'intermediate'. Three of these are in languages with two co-occurring systems; the second system is a rather typical numeral classifier system. Two other languages with co-occurring systems have both typical numeral classifiers and a gender system. Languages in which gender and classifiers co-occur appear to be typologically rare, and examples are generally cited from South American languages and pockets of North America (Fedden & Corbett 2017).

As well as the typical properties associated with gender and numeral classifiers, the study also presents additional parameters that can be used to differentiate between systems. These include usage restrictions based on 'peripheral' classification systems such as alienability and animacy, as well as on number and syntactic context. Indeed, several languages in the region use inalienable nouns (with an agreement prefix) as classifiers: where there is a pronominal gender system, this leads to two classification systems being marked in a single construction, since the numeral classifier is gender-marked.

Finally, there is evidence of another typological rarity in the region: Iha has one inventory of markers used in two different constructions – preposed to the numeral in numeral constructions, or postposed to the noun in other constructions. This is sometimes called a 'multiple classifier system' (Aikhenvald 2000) and is associated with Amazonian languages (Seifart 2009). As such, this study reveals the presence in West Papua of two typologically rare classification phenomena typically associated with other parts of the world, and introduces a set of parameters that might be employed in the comparison of classification systems beyond a simple labelling as 'gender' or 'classifiers'.

Reapproaching evidentiality in the New Guinea Highlands from a diachronic perspective informed by evidence from Himalayan languages

Marius Zemp

Two of the world's largest hotbeds of evidentiality, the grammatical marking of how one obtained the information profiled in a sentence, are found in the New Guinea Highlands (NGHs) and around the Tibetan plateau. Over the last few years, we have learned a great deal about how evidentiality emerged, evolved and spread across language boundaries in the latter region (Zemp 2017, 2019, submitted; Widmer & Zemp 2017) to the effect that we were just granted a four-years project to see if we can similarly shed light on the evolution of evidentiality in the NGHs and provide more evidence for the plausible scenarios laid out by San Roque & Loughnane (2012).

Our project, for which we are currently recruiting two PhD-students, has the following goals:

- thoroughly document the verbal systems of three languages of the larger Engan family, which is where San Roque & Loughnane (2012) in accordance with other scholars posit the origin for evidentiality in the area;
- identify as many further correspondences as possible between evidential suffixes and grammatical or lexical morphemes in other languages – divergent uses of such cognates provide the main basis of the intended diachronic-functional account;
- hypothesize diachronic scenarios accounting for the identified functional divergences, retain the most plausible and economic ones.

At the colloquium, we would like to present what we know about the evolution of evidentiality in the Himalayas and what we observed on our first trip to the NGHs in the summer of 2020 – our hope is that scholars working on languages of the NGHs will draw our attention to data or even languages that might help us understand the genesis, evolution, and diffusion of evidentiality in the NGHs.