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THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH SCHOOL OF PACIFIC STUDIES
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ACADEMIC STAFF

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INTRODUCTION

The Department of Linguistics is predominantly concerned with the full study of the linguistic situation in the New Guinea area, the Southwestern Pacific, and Australia. This field of study entails extensive linguistic survey work, descriptive, comparative and classificatory studies of individual languages and language groups, and an increasing attention is paid to the results of sister-disciplines, in particular pre-history, in the interpretation of the results of linguistic activities with a view to establishing the nature of linguistic pre-history of these parts of the world, and the pre-history of language migrations into and within these areas. In the New Guinea area, the main concern has been with the so-called Papuan languages which are spoken by the original inhabitants of the New Guinea area, but increasing attention has been paid to the immigrant Austronesian languages as well. In addition to these activities, studies have been carried out in linguistic problems of Southeast Asian languages, especially those of Burmese type which are scattered over a wide area in Southeast Asia.

The linguistic study of the New Guinea area has been carried out by the Department of Linguistics as a long term project extending over many years, and while the results during previous years, especially during 1970, have been quite spectacular and leading up to a completely new appraisal of the linguistic situation in the New Guinea area, 1971 has been even more productive and the most recent results arrived at are quite spectacular, and have very considerable bearing on our understanding of the linguistic pre-history of the New Guinea area, and of much of the Southwestern Pacific area as

a whole. In particular, it has been possible to establish, as a result of studies carried out by Dr Voorhoeve, Dr Dutton and Professor Wurm, that about 380 of the approximately 690 Papuan languages identified to date, belong to a single large group which extends over approximately three-quarters of the New Guinea mainland and that its members are very much closely interrelated than has been believed to be the case as recently as twelve months ago. At the same time, it has also become evident, mainly through Dr Laycock's work, that about 130 of the remaining languages belong to a second large group in northern New Guinea in an area, where, until about a year or so ago, the languages were believed to belong to a very considerable number of distinct groups which seem to show little or no relationship with each other. It was also found that many of the remaining languages of the New Guinea area could be combined into a comparatively quite small number of groups whose possible interrelationship, if any, remains a subject for further study.

Work leading to these results has at the same time produced a very considerable clarification of the problem of pre-history linguistic migrations into and within the New Guinea area, and for the first time in the history of linguistics, the question of linguistic contacts and influences between Australian and Papuan languages has been made a subject of serious study mainly by Professor Wurm, with interesting results.

In the course of the activities referred to in the last two paragraphs, the last remaining unknown languages of Australian New Guinea were discovered, identified and classified so that all of the Australian New Guinea area can now be regarded as linguistically known, at least superficially. The only remaining linguistically unknown areas in the New Guinea area are in northern West Irian.

A similar long-term project concerned with the survey and study of the language situation and individual languages of the Southwestern Pacific Austronesian areas where very many of the poorly known or almost unknown Austronesian languages are located, was initiated in 1969. Extensive work in this project was carried out during 1970 in relation to the New Hebrides, and while very interesting results were achieved during that year, 1971 has again been a year of more spectacular results. Completely at variance with views about the nature of the linguistic situation in the New Hebrides which have been extant for a number of years, it could be demonstrated that all the languages of the New Hebrides were in fact quite closely interrelated and constitute a single language family, while it could at the same time be shown that the languages of the New Hebrides belonged to two distinct types within this family. Both these discoveries are of tremendous importance for our understanding of the language situation in the Pacific area, and exercise a profound influence upon notions about the development of the linguistic picture in this part of the world. As a result of these studies and discoveries, a much clearer understanding of the

linguistic migrations into and within the Southwestern Pacific in pre-historic time is emerging.

Most of the work in the New Hebrides was carried out by and under the direction of Dr Tryon. Most unfortunately, our spectacular work in the Southwestern Pacific Austronesian language world will come to an abrupt end early in 1972 through the resignation of Dr Tryon who has been offered a senior lectureship in the University of Townsville. Tentative plans for a gradual study of the entire Southwestern Pacific Austronesian world had been drawn up earlier this year, and it is sincerely hoped that it may be possible to continue this important work at a later date on a permanent basis which is particularly important because of the rapid disappearance of some of the key languages which are likely to become extinct in the course of a few years from now.

It may be pointed out that the results reviewed above and the efforts leading to them have sprung from a very well organised and close-knit teamwork and close cooperation amongst all members of the Department of Linguistics, who have been working as project teams for a number of years. In the light of this, it is particularly unfortunate that our well-established team will be broken up through the loss of one of its highly specialised members, and the work of the Department will undoubtedly suffer from this quite considerably.

The publication activity of the Department has continued as before, and nine numbers of its linguistics publication series appeared in 1971.

One student submitted a thesis for the degree of Ph.D. during 1971, and was awarded the degree. A second student who had submitted towards the end of 1970, was also awarded the degree of Ph.D. in 1971.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Professor Wurm carried out fieldtrips in the Pacific area in March and September-October, visiting the Solomon Islands and other Pacific islands as well as New Guinea in the process. From mid-June until early September, Professor Wurm went on a short study leave, visiting the United States, Great Britain, Scandinavia and Central Europe in the process to acquaint himself with the latest trends in linguistic developments in those countries and to have discussions in connection with the implementation of a large project concerned with the Description of the Languages of the World inaugurated in 1970 at the Wenner-Gren Foundation Conference of this title at the Foundation's European conference centre. Professor Wurm is a member of the Executive Committee charged with the first steps of the implementation of this project. During his study leave, he also spent a short period of time at the University of Hawaii.

Professor Wurm served as a member of the Council and of

the Executive Council of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

In December, Professor Wurm took part in the Torres Strait Symposium held under the auspices of several departments of the School of Pacific Studies and presented a paper on the Importance of Torres Strait in connection with Australian and Papuan Linguistic Pre-History.

Dr Laycock completed nine months' fieldwork in the Sepik area of New Guinea in May 1971. In January he returned briefly to Canberra to take part in the 11th Congress of Orientalists and to present a paper which constituted a preliminary account of linguistic classification in the Sepik.

In June, Dr Laycock undertook a brief period of study leave, visiting the universities of the South Pacific in Suva and the University of Hawaii where he gave talks on the work of the Australian National University on languages of the New Guinea area.

During Professor Wurm's absence on study leave, Dr Laycock was Acting Head of Department of Linguistics.

Dr Voorhoeve went on study leave in the Western District area of Papua-New Guinea from July to September. In October, Dr Voorhoeve left for overseas on one year's study leave, predominantly in Europe at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands.

Dr Tryon returned to Canberra in April after a ten months' fieldtrip in the New Hebrides. In September and October he re-visited the New Hebrides to fill in some important gaps in the results of his earlier long fieldwork.

In July, Dr Tryon was invited to give a two weeks' course of lectures to the Welfare Section, Northern Territory Administration on results of his research work in Northern Australian languages.

Dr Dutton paid a short visit to Papua-New Guinea in August to present a paper at the Annual Congress of the Linguistic Society of Papua New Guinea on Magori and its nature and relationship to other languages of southeast Papua. The Magori language constitutes a key problem in the classification of Papuan-Austronesian border languages.

Early in the year, Dr Dutton was invited to give a four weeks' lecture series at the Canberra College of Advanced Education on the basis of his overseas experience during 1970 as a visitor to the Linguistics Department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

During all three terms of 1971, Dr Dutton conducted the course in New Guinea Pidgin offered by the Centre of Continuing Education, A.N.U. which proved a remarkable success.

Two visitors were working at the Linguistics Department during 1971, i.e. Professor I. Dyen, Professor of Linguistics, Yale University, Visiting Professor from the beginning of September until the end of November, and Dr K. Franklin, Linguistics Field Officer, Summer Institute of Linguistics, New Guinea, Visiting Fellow during November-December 1971. After leaving Canberra, Professor Dyen carried out one months' fieldwork on behalf of the Department of Linguistics visiting New Guinea and Southwestern Pacific islands in connection with the long term project of this Department concerning the Austronesian languages of the Southwestern Pacific. Dr Franklin had carried out an extensive survey in the Gulf District of Papua-New Guinea as a joint venture between the Summer Institute of Linguistics who provided their helicopter for the survey, and the Australian National University. He came to Canberra to present and discuss the results of this survey and to assess, in cooperation with members of this Department, the implications of his results on the Papuan linguistic picture.

STAFF AND STUDENTS RESEARCH PROGRAMME

STAFF

Professor Wurm's research interests divided between a number of topics. He continued his previous work on questions of the language situation and language classification in the Trans-Fly area of the Western District of Papua-New Guinea. In the course of this work, he could establish that all the languages of the area were quite closely interrelated and members of a single group. He produced a paper on the subject which has been published. In his work, he was also concerned with questions of linguistic contacts and influences between Papuan and Australian languages, and his findings showed that in pre-historic times, there has been Australian linguistic influences in southern New Guinea, to be followed by marked Papuan linguistic influences in northern Australia in the Cape York Peninsula area and beyond. He produced a paper on this subject which was presented at the Torres Strait Symposium in the School of Pacific Studies, and will be published. He was also concerned with questions of linguistic classification in the New Guinea area as a whole, and the establishment and chronological sequences of linguistic migrations in the New Guinea area. He could present comparative linguistic proof for the accuracy of the assumption arrived at during 1970 by members of the staff of the Department of Linguistics, especially Dr Voorhoeve in cooperation with Dr K. McElhanon, then a scholar in the Department, that the large group of interrelated languages occupying approximately three-quarters of the New Guinea mainland consisted of much more closely related members than had previously been assumed. He produced a paper on the subject which has been accepted for publication in the U.S.A. During 1971, Professor Wurm continued working on the manuscript of the book on Papuan languages of Oceania which is to be published in the Netherlands. Outside the New Guinea area, Professor Wurm continued his work on the problems of the interaction between

Austronesian and Papuan languages in the Santa Cruz area in the British Solomon Islands, and on a project of the compilation of a dictionary in one of the languages of that area involving the utilisation of computer techniques.

Dr Laycock's main research interests were concerned with the study and classification of the languages of the Sepik area of Australian New Guinea. In the course of this work, he made the revolutionary discovery that most of the languages of that area, with the exception of one fragmented group and a few minor groups, were members of one large group of interrelated languages comprising approximately 130 members. The results of this work have at the same time thrown very considerable additional light on the question of Papuan linguistic pre-history, and on the question of the migration into and within the New Guinea area as a whole. In the course of his work, Dr Laycock discovered, and was able to identify, several hitherto completely unknown languages of northern New Guinea, some of them located on the western side of the Australian-West Irian border.

Dr Laycock has been preparing several manuscripts on his findings for publication.

In addition to his work in the languages of the Sepik area, Dr Laycock continued working on his extensive dictionary of Buin, a language spoken on Bougainville Island.

Dr Voorhoeve's research interests were mainly focussed on the extension of our knowledge of the language situation, and the individual languages, of the northern half of the Western District of Papua-New Guinea, and on the further elaboration of his fundamental findings concerning the close interrelationship of the members of the very large group of interrelated languages on the New Guinea mainland which was mentioned above, and which he had named the Trans-New Guinea Phylum. He also prepared a paper on the results of his 1970 fieldwork in West Irian which was published.

Dr Tryon's research work was concerned mainly with the assessment of the very important results of his fieldtrips in the New Hebrides area which, as has been pointed out above, have led to a complete re-appraisal of the linguistic picture and the question of linguistic interrelationships in the New Hebrides, as well as offering important new insights into the question of pre-historic linguistic migration into that area.

In addition to this work, Dr Tryon was continuing his studies in languages of northern Australia, and several manuscripts by him on these languages were published during 1971.

Dr Dutton's research work was predominantly concerned with the assessment and writing up of his very extensive materials in languages of the south-eastern part of the New Guinea mainland as a result of which he could present a complete picture of the language situation in that area. In the course of this work, he directed his attention to the complex problem of interaction between Papuan and Austronesian

languages and produced a paper on the subject which has been accepted for publication. Another manuscript by him on languages of Southeast Papua has been published, and several more have been prepared for publication.

Dr Dutton was also concerned with theoretical and practical problems of Pidgin in New Guinea, and has embarked on writing a practical textbook for instruction in the language.

VISITORS

Professor Dyen's research interests during his association with the Department of Linguistics of the School of Pacific Studies were essentially devoted to cooperation with members of this Department, in particular Dr Tryon, in the Southwestern Pacific Austronesian project as initiated under its auspices. Professor Dyen who is a world authority on the classification of Austronesian languages could offer much valuable advice in this work, and at the same time, his earlier views on the classification of the Southwestern Pacific Austronesian languages were very materially influenced by the result of the work carried out in this Department by Dr Tryon and under his supervision.

Dr Franklin's work during his connection with the Department of Linguistics of the School of Pacific Studies was devoted to the assessment of the extensive results of his Gulf District survey in the light of our general understanding of the linguistic situation in Papua-New Guinea, and the New Guinea area as a whole. His findings which documented a number of hitherto completely unknown languages for the first time, contributed materially to rounding off the Papuan linguistic picture.

STUDENTS

Mr C. Beaumont spent the first few months of 1971 preparing himself for his fieldwork in the New Ireland area of Australian New Guinea and left for the field in May. In the field, he has been concerned with depth studies of the Tigak language of northern New Ireland, and with carrying out linguistic survey work in the Austronesian languages of northern New Ireland.

Mr D. Birk joined the Department in February 1971 and after preparing himself briefly for his anticipated fieldwork in northern Australian languages, proceeded to the field in Arnhem Land in May. In the field, he has been engaged in the depth study of the Mullukmulluk language of eastern Arnhem Land, and has also carried out surveying and comparative work in several languages of the area.

Mr W. Glover proceeded to the field in Nepal in February to carry out depth studies in Gurung, a Burmese-type language of Nepal. In the course of this work, he discovered a hitherto completely unknown, highly aberrant dialect of the language,

and carried out comparative studies. Mr Glover prepared a paper on Gurung which has been published.

Mr J. Guy spent the first months of 1971 writing up his extensive materials in the language of north-west Santo, New Hebrides in which he had carried out fieldwork during 1970. In May 1971, he returned to the field to continue his studies of the language.

Mr E. Hope returned from the field in Thailand in January 1971 and spent most of the year writing up his extensive materials in Lisu, a Burmese-type language of Northern Thailand, a depth study of which is to constitute his thesis. His thesis is now complete and in the typing stage, and will be submitted early in 1972. In the course of his work, Mr Hope prepared an article on Lisu which has been published. Mr Hope also continued working on a very extensive dictionary of the Lisu language which he has been preparing for publication and prepared a second paper on Lisu for publication.

Miss C. Kilham joined the Department in February 1971 and after a few months preparation, proceeded to the field in Cape York Peninsula in August. She has been concerned with a depth study of the Wik-Munkan language of north-western Cape York Peninsula.

Mr R. Lang who had submitted his thesis late in 1970, was awarded the degree of Ph.D. in 1971. During a short period as a temporary Research Assistant in the Department, he worked on several aspects of Enga, a Papuan language of the Western Highlands District of Papua-New Guinea.

Mrs A. Lang finished the writing up of her thesis in the first half of 1971 and submitted in June. She was awarded the degree of Ph.D. during the second half of the year. She also continued working on an Enga-English and English-Enga dictionary which has been accepted for publication and is now in the press, and on the preparation of an article dealing with the application of computer techniques to linguistic research in New Guinea.

Mr C.D. Metcalfe returned from the field in northwestern Australia in February and spent most of the year writing up his thesis concerned with the Bardi language of that region. A paper prepared by him on an aspect of Bardi phonology was published during 1971.

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- 1971 A tentative Phonemic Statement of the Bardi Aboriginal Language. In: Papers on the Languages of the Australian Aborigines. Australian Aboriginal Studies, 38: 82-92.

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- 1971 The Murut Languages of Sabah. Pacific Linguistics, Series C.18.

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* Former member. Based on work done while a member of the Department.

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Z'GRAGGEN, J. A. *

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* Former member. Based on work done while a member of the Department.