LING3430 – Language and culture in the Pacific
Course Outline
Semester 2, 2009

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Consultation hours: TBA

Course Overview
Semester 2 - 2009
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Methods: Lecture

Brief Course Description

Who are the people of the Pacific and what kind of languages do they speak? What do their languages tell us about how these various peoples are related to each other, about their cultures, and about the prehistory of human migration in the Pacific? This course looks at these topics.

The course focuses on the Austronesian languages of island Pacific, the Papuan languages of New Guinea, and the Aboriginal languages of Australia. We will examine in detail the structure of several different languages. We look at how we can tell whether languages are related, and how closely. We discuss what the study of these languages tells us about the prehistoric migrations and culture of the Pacific islanders’ distant ancestors, and we look at Pacific languages as a reflection of their speakers’ cultures and world view. Finally we examine what the future holds for the indigenous languages of this region.

Contact Hours

Lecture for 2 Hours per week for the full semester.

Callaghan Campus Timetable
Lecture Wednesday 11:00 - 13:00 [MCLG44]

Ourimbah Campus Timetable
Lecture Thursday 11:00 - 13:00 [CN2102]
Course text

Lynch, John (1998) *Pacific languages. An introduction.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. In some weeks other core readings will apply. Further readings will be recommended during the semester for each topic.

Course Content

The course investigates indigenous and vernacular languages and culture in the Pacific, particularly those of the southwest Pacific, with emphasis on the following areas:

1. The distribution of indigenous languages of the region, and relationships between them.
2. The distribution of and relationships between the region’s pidgins and creoles.
3. The basic structural characteristics of the languages of the region.
4. The basic structural characteristics of the region’s pidgins and creoles.
5. The relationship between language and culture in the region, focusing on the linguistic expression of aspects of indigenous cultures and conceptualizations that include kinship, colour, traditional technology, and the relationship between people and their physical spatial environment.
6. The role of indigenous languages in understanding the region’s prehistory, including the prehistory of its cultures and technology, along with ancient migration patterns and the spread of human populations in the region.
7. The cause of language endangerment and language death in the region.
8. The status of indigenous languages in the countries of the region.

Course Outline

**Week 1: Languages and speakers in the Pacific**

Topic 1A: Who lives in the Pacific, what languages do they speak, and why are there so many languages?
Topic 1B: How languages family trees are reconstructing and how that helps us understand the relationships between Pacific peoples.

*Reading:* Lynch Ch.1 (especially Section 1.3 pp9-19), & Ch.2

**Week 2: Austronesian languages**

Topic 2A: The Austronesian language family; the place and internal structure of the Oceanic branch.
Topic 2B: A typological overview of Oceanic languages.

*Reading:* Lynch Ch.3 Sections 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3 (pp45-58), Ch.5 Section 5.1 (pages 75-87) & Ch.6.

**Week 3: Austronesian languages continued**

Topic 3: The structure of Fijian, the national language of Fiji.


**Week 4: Papuan languages**

Topic 4A: The Papuan languages, language families, and their relationships to each other.
Topic 4B: A typological overview of Papuan languages.

*Reading:* Lynch Ch.4 Section 4.1 (pp60-67), Ch.5 Section 5.2 (pp87-91) & Ch.7

**Week 5: Papuan languages continued**

Topic 5: The structure of Yimas, the language of 250 people in Papuan New Guinea’s Sepik region.

Week 6: Aboriginal languages

Topic 6A: The Aboriginal languages and their relationships. Possible relationships between Aboriginal and Papuan languages and what this may tell us about human prehistory in the region.
Topic 6B: A typological overview of Aboriginal languages.

Reading: Lynch Ch.4 Sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 (pp68-72), Ch.5 Section 5.3 (pp91-94) & Ch. 8.

Week 7: Aboriginal languages continued

Topic 7: The structure of Dyirbal, a recently extinct language of Queensland.


Week 8: Language and culture

Topic 8A: Kinship systems.
Topic 8B: Counting systems.
Topic 8C: Spatial reference.

Reading: Lynch: Ch.11 Sections 11.1 to 11.4.2 (pp237-260); Palmer (2002) in Bennardo (ed.)) Representing space in Oceania. Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.

Week 9: Project presentations

Week 10: Reconstructing the past through language

Topic 10: What can modern languages tell us about the culture and technology of prehistoric Pacific peoples?


Week 11: Melanesian Creole and Fiji Hindi

Topic 11A: Pidgins and creoles in the Pacific; the varieties of Melanesian Pidgin/Creole and how they developed; Fiji Hindi.
Topic 11B: The structure of Bislama, the national language of Vanuatu.

Reading: Lynch Ch.10
  William A. (1986) The Papuan languages of New Guinea. Cambridge: CUP. Ch.2 sections 2.3, 2.4 & 2.5 (pp29-41)

Week 12: Pacific languages in the 21st century

Topic 12: Language survival and language death. What does the future hold for the languages of the Pacific? What pressures endanger many of them, and what forces maintain them?

Reading: Lynch: Ch.11 Sections 11.4.3, 11.5 & 11.6; Conclusion (pp260-277)
Assessment Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment 1 (500 words)</th>
<th>15%</th>
<th>Monday 31 August</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project proposal (1000 words) with class presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Wed 23 September/Thurs 24 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2 (500 words)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Monday 12 October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research project (3000 words)</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Monday 23 November</td>
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You will be assessed on two assignments and one individual research project of about 3000 words. In addition to the full written research project, you will be required to prepare a written project proposal and present an in-class summary and lead an informal workshop discussion on the topic you have chosen for your project. You will need to discuss your topic, why you have chosen it, what your preliminary research findings are, and why these findings are interesting. This is not meant to be a scary process, just a general discussion about the topic you are doing your project on. Your workshop session is an opportunity to get some feedback on the directions you are going in that will help you produce a first-rate final piece of work, as well as an opportunity to stimulate some thought provoking discussion.

You are free to pick a research project topic of your choice relating to any of the issues discussed in the course, but you need to get approval from me for the topic you choose. You should speak to me early in the semester to discuss what you would be interested in doing your project on. Topic choice is quite open, but possible topics could include things like the following:

- **Examine in detail the grammar of one Austronesian, Papuan or Aboriginal language.** Review a number of areas of particular typological interest in the language, and discuss the extent to which the language does or does not conform to the general typology of that language group.
- **Examine either the Nadrogā or Boumaa variety of Fijian.** Discuss how this communalect differs from Standard Fijian, and the extent to which the two can be regarded as varieties of a single language.
- **Examine in detail the system of spatial reference, kinship terminology, or counting in a specific Pacific language.** How does the system compare with other such systems in other languages, and what do these linguistic systems tell us about the speakers’ culture or relationship with their environment?
- **Survey in detail the linguistic evidence supporting Proto Oceanic reconstruction, and discuss its implications for our understanding of the culture, technology and homeland of the Proto Oceanic community.** To what extent is this supported by archaeological and other non-linguistic evidence?
- **What does linguistic evidence suggest about migration patterns of Australian Aboriginals and the ancestral homeland of today’s Aboriginal languages?**
- **To what extent is it possible to argue that Papuan and Aboriginal languages ultimately derive from a common source and are therefore distantly related?**
- **Compare the three dialects of Melanesian Pidgin/Creole.** In what ways do they differ grammatically? How have these differences arisen?
- **Compare the social and political status of the three varieties of Melanesian Pidgin/Creole.** To what extent do their statuses differ in their respective countries? Why do these differences exist?
- **Examine the extent to which Fiji Hindi differs from standard Hindi.** Why do these differences exist, and to what extent can we say that the language is a koine?
- **What forces help maintain endangered languages in the Pacific, and to what extent are strategies designed to assist in language maintenance or revitalisation successful?**

Newcastle University library resources to support projects in this course are limited, so your topic choice must take into consideration access to source material. Some useful material is available on the internet. Some books may be available on inter-library loan. And I have quite a lot of relevant books and articles I can make available to you. This is one of the reasons why it is important you select your topic early in the semester and in consultation with me.
IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity, honesty, and a respect for knowledge, truth and ethical practices are fundamental to the business of the University. These principles are at the core of all academic endeavour in teaching, learning and research. Dishonest practices contravene academic values, compromise the integrity of research and devalue the quality of learning. To preserve the quality of learning for the individual and others, the University may impose severe sanctions on activities that undermine academic integrity. There are two major categories of academic dishonesty:

Academic fraud is a form of academic dishonesty that involves making a false representation to gain an unjust advantage. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it can include:

a) falsification of data;
b) using a substitute person to undertake, in full or part, an examination or other assessment item;
c) reusing one’s own work, or part thereof, that has been submitted previously and counted towards another course (without permission);
d) making contact or colluding with another person, contrary to instructions, during an examination or other assessment item;
e) bringing material or device(s) into an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item; and
f) making use of computer software or other material and device(s) during an examination or other assessment item other than such as may be specified for that assessment item.
g) contract cheating or having another writer compete for tender to produce an essay or assignment and then submitting the work as one’s own.

Plagiarism is the presentation of the thoughts or works of another as one’s own. University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

a) copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
b) using another person’s ideas without due acknowledgment;
c) collusion or working with others without permission, and presenting the resulting work as though it were completed independently.

Turnitin is an electronic text matching system. During assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a text matching service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future checking);
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

RE-MARKS AND MODERATIONS

Students can access the University’s policy at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000769.html

MARKS AND GRADES RELEASED DURING TERM

All marks and grades released during term are indicative only until formally approved by the Head of School.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AFFECTING ASSESSMENT ITEMS

Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations items must be submitted by the due date in the Course Outline unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension. Unapproved late submissions will be penalised in line with the University policy specified in Late Penalty above.

Requests for Extensions of Time must be lodged no later than the due date of the item. This applies to students:

- applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or
- whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment.
Students must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, as outlined in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html

**Note:** different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks.

**Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:**

- Special Consideration Requests must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the due date of submission or examination.
- Rescheduling Exam requests must be received no later than 10 working days prior the first date of the examination period.

*Late applications may not be accepted.* Students who cannot meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak firstly to their Program Officer or their Program Executive if studying in Singapore.

**STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS**

University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness. If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au. As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester. For more information on confidentiality and documentation visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability.

**CHANGING YOUR ENROLMENT**

Students enrolled after the census dates listed below are liable for the full cost of their student contribution or fees for that term.

- Semester 1 courses: 31 March 2009
- Semester 2 courses: 31 August 2009
- Trimester 1 courses: 18 February 2009
- Trimester 2 courses: 9 June 2009
- Trimester 2 courses: 9 June 2009
- Trimester 3 courses: 22 September 2009
- Block 1: 16 January 2009
- Block 2: 13 March 2009
- Block 3: 15 May 2009
- Block 4: 10 July 2009
- Block 5: 11 September 2009
- Block 6: 16 November 2009

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of term. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of term will result in a fail grade. **Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of term,** except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of term must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs or with your Program Executive at PSB if you are a Singapore student.

To check or change your enrolment online go to myHub: https://myhub.newcastle.edu.au
STUDENT INFORMATION & CONTACTS

Various services are offered by the Student Support Unit:
www.newcastle.edu.au/service/studentsupport/

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students studying in Australia. Student Hubs are located at:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Callaghan Campus</th>
<th>Port Macquarie students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Building</td>
<td>contact your program officer or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunter Hub: Level 2, Student Services Centre</td>
<td><a href="mailto:EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au">EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Precinct</td>
<td>Phone 4921 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Hub &amp; Information Common, University House</td>
<td>Singapore students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Coast Campus (Ourimbah)</td>
<td>contact your PSB Program Executive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Hub: Opposite the Main Cafeteria</td>
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OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION

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<tr>
<th>Faculty Websites</th>
<th>General enquiries</th>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/business-law/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/business-law/</a></td>
<td>Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/</a></td>
<td>Phone: 02 4921 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/</a></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au">EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/</a></td>
<td>Ourimbah</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/">www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/</a></td>
<td>Phone: 02 4348 4030</td>
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<tr>
<th>Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards</th>
<th>The Dean of Students</th>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000311.html">www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000311.html</a></td>
<td>Resolution Precinct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards</td>
<td>Phone: 02 4921 5806;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000306.html">www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000306.html</a></td>
<td>Fax: 02 4921 7151</td>
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<tr>
<th>Rules Governing Professional Doctorate Awards</th>
<th>Deputy Dean of Students (Ourimbah)</th>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000580.html">www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000580.html</a></td>
<td>Phone: 02 4348 4123;</td>
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This course outline will not be altered after the second week of the term except under extenuating circumstances with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of the change.

Online Tutorial Registration:

Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system. Refer - http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm

NB: Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: Refer - www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.
Important Additional Information

Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site (where relevant). Refer to www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au

- Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
- Online copy submission to Turnitin
- Penalties for Late Assignments
- Special Circumstances
- No Assignment Re-submission
- Re-marks & Moderations
- Return of Assignments
- Preferred Referencing Style
- Student Representatives
- Student Communication
- Essential Online Information for Students

Assessment Schedule

Assignment 1 (Phonetics)  due Friday 3 April
Assignment 2 (Phonology) due Friday 1 May
Assignment 3 (Morphology) due Friday 15 May
Assignment 4 (Syntax) due Friday 29 May
Case Study due Friday 5 June

Final Exam:  during the formal exam period

All assignments and the case study are due at 2300 and are to be submitted electronically (instructions will be given).