

Fall 2017

Tuesday Seminar Series Schedule

Location: AGSCI 220

Faculty Advisor: Amy Schafer

Graduate Assistant: Gyu-Ho Shin

September 5, 2017

Speaker: Dr. Chris Davis (University of the Ryukyus, Okinawa)

Title: Pragmatic competition and evidentiality in Okinawan

Abstract: Okinawan exhibits a three-way evidential contrast with verbs describing past events, as illustrated by the examples in (1), adapted from data in Shinzato (1991):

(1) a. {wanne=e / 'yaa=ya / are=e} hanahichi=nu kusui nu-da-n

1s=top / 2s=top / 3s=top cold=gen medicine drink-pst-ind

“I took the medicine.”

b. {wanne=e / 'yaa=ya / are=e} hanahichi=nu kusui {num-u-ta-n / nu-dee-n}

1s=top / 2s=top / 3s=top cold=gen medicine drink-wit-pst-ind / drink-inf.pst-ind

“He/You took the medicine.” (I saw it happen / It seems)

The simple past (1a) contains no evidential morphology, and is generally restricted to rst-person subjects. The witnessed past and inferential past, by contrast, contain overt evidential morphemes, and are typically incompatible with rst-person subjects, as seen in (1b). I argue that the restriction against simple past tense with second and third person subjects (1a) follows from competition with the two competing evidential past tense forms (1b), which contribute evidential presuppositions (cf. Izvorski 1997, Matthewson et al. 2007, i.a.). With non- rst-person subjects, these two competing evidential-marked forms exhaust the space of sufficient evidential grounds for assertion, and the principle of Maximize Presupposition (Heim 1991, Sauerland et al. 2005) in combination with the Gricean Maxim of Quality requires that at least one of them be used. Sentences with rst-person subjects, following Garrett (2001), are typically grounded in ego evidentiality, which includes knowledge of one’s own actions, and does not depend on perception or inference. This licenses the simple past with rst-person subjects, and in combination with the Evidential Hierarchy (Willett) blocks rst-person subjects with evidentially marked forms.

September 12, 2017

Speaker: Dr. Alan King

Title: Kotik molmal! Discovering Lenca, a lost language of Central America

Abstract: Two related languages named Lenca were spoken in Honduras and El Salvador until the 20th century near the geographical border between two major cultural and linguistic areas. I will report on a current attempt to “reconstruct” these languages by supplementing standard linguistic analysis of data with clues from “indirect evidence” such as internal coherence, cognate languages, general typological profiling and locally shared areal features. The talk will include discussion of an inferred grammatical element, a topic marking mechanism, which was hypothesized to explain textual forms and may be echoed in an unrelated neighbouring language, Tol, to illustrate the full range of tools available and the importance of areal typology.

September 19, 2017

Speakers: A.L. Blake; Peter Schuelke

A.L. Blake

Title: Botanical knowledge of the Abui: a field report

Abstract: When language- and culture- shift is underway, ecological domains of knowledge are in particular danger of being lost (Si 2011). This talk reports on progress in documenting the botanical knowledge of the Abui people of Alor Island, Eastern Indonesia, encoded in the languages of Abui (a threatened non-Austronesian language of the Timor-Alor-Pantar language family), and Alor Malay (an underdescribed Malay-based creole). Topics discussed include interdisciplinary methods of documentation and analysis, nomenclature and ethnotaxonomies, and creation of a community resource.

Peter Schuelke

Title: Roviana fieldwork in the Solomon Islands

Abstract: Fieldwork in the Solomon Islands is important for both documentary and theoretical reasons. This talk will discuss Solomon Islands fieldwork and then briefly introduce some of its scientific findings. The Solomon Islands is a country with great linguistic diversity, but unfortunately there is very little active documentation of these languages. Documentation of Roviana is a first step. Some of the typological highlights of Roviana include a marked-absolute case-marking system, exclusive object agreement, symmetrical voice alternations without verbal voice morphology, and novel reflexive binding patterns. This fieldwork likely represents the first formal diagnostics for a Western Solomon language. Perhaps further fieldwork in the Solomon Islands would reveal that there are other languages with patterns similar to those of Roviana.

September 26, 2017

Speakers: Christian Mortensen; Andrew Pick

Christian Mortensen

Title: The Lun Bawang Language of Long Semadoh, Lawas, Sarawak

Abstract: Lun Bawang (also called Lun Dayeh or Lundayeh) is an Austronesian language belonging to the North Sarawak subgroup on Borneo, most closely related to Kelabit and Sa'ban, and spoken primarily in the north of Sarawak and Indonesian Kalimantan, with smaller numbers of speakers in Sabah and Brunei. This talk draws on two months of work on the dialect spoken in Long Semadoh, a string of seven villages located along the headwaters of the Trusan River in Sarawak and consists essentially in three parts: (1) an introduction to the location and its residents, (2) a cursory glance at the synchronic phonology of the Long Semadoh dialect, and (3) diachronically-oriented cross-dialectal phonological comparisons.

Andrew Pick

Title: Classifying the Croisilles languages

Abstract: The linguistic ecology of Papua New Guinea, characterized by prevalent multilingualism and an extremely high density of languages in long-standing close contact, has resulted in a situation where languages freely borrow features that have been said to be resistant to borrowing, such as basic vocabulary and pronouns (Foley 2000). Distinguishing between directly inherited and borrowed material can be especially challenging, presenting an interesting test case for the application of the comparative method.

This talk concerns a group of around fifty languages in Madang province that Ross (2005) terms the Croisilles linkage. Using primary data from my own fieldwork, as well as previously published wordlists and dictionaries, I propose a new internal structure for the group based off of shared phonological innovations, and compare this to previous classifications arrived at by other methods.

Foley, W. A. (2000). The Languages of New Guinea. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 29, 357-404.

Ross, M. (2005). Pronouns as a preliminary diagnostic for grouping Papuan languages. *Papuan pasts: Cultural, linguistic and biological histories of Papuan-speaking peoples*, 15-65.

October 3, 2017 – NO SEMINAR

October 10, 2017

Speakers: Leah Pappas; Katherine Strong; Thomas Kettig

Leah Pappas

Title: New Caledonia Preliminary Fieldwork

Abstract: New Caledonia is a French Overseas Territory and home to 28 Austronesian languages. Although many of these languages are dying as a result of French influence, the Kanak culture is still strong. This talk outlines the steps that must be taken by an outsider to be able to work with the Kanak people. It discusses the cultural and linguistic programs that exist in the province and the cultural practices that one must adhere to while making connections. Furthermore, this talk will share preliminary data on topological relations in four New Caledonian languages: Drehu, Cèmuhî, Paicî, and Nyelâyu.

Katherine Strong

Title: Serau Tet Kanowit: Language Documentation in Kampung Bedil

Abstract: This presentation reports on the preliminary stage of the Serau Tet Kanowit Documentation Project. Serau Kanowit, or the Kanowit language, is an endangered and under-described language spoken in Central Sarawak, Malaysia, on the island of Borneo. I will introduce the primary partners involved in the project, provide language and geographical background, and discuss concrete goals, outcomes, and next steps for the project. Further discussion will center around sociolinguistics and the multi-glossic environment in which serau Kanowit is spoken. To conclude, I will briefly share my experience with mental health while in the field, in an effort to shed light on the challenges many field linguists face.

Thomas Kettig

Title: The social evaluation of TRAP-backing in Montreal

Abstract: The backness of TRAP has been demonstrated to vary by speaker age and gender in many parts of the United States and Canada, including California (Kennedy & Grama 2012), Montreal (Kettig & Winter 2017), and Hawai'i (Drager et al. 2013). In each of these places, younger people and women lead in the ongoing retraction of TRAP from [æ] toward [a] (reduced F2). While work in California has indicated that TRAP-backing may be indexed with casual 'Valley Girl' and formal professional personae (D'Onofrio 2015), its social meanings in other locales remain little-investigated.

In this matched-guise experiment, L1 English speaking young adults from Montreal, Hawai'i, and California (1M, 1F per region) were recorded reading a sentence; vowel resynthesis in the word map produced a retracted and an unretracted guise from the same recording from each speaker, differing by 200 Hz in F2. Forty-six young adult L1 English participants in Montreal (11 male) completed a task rating speakers' perceived physical and social attributes.

Bayesian linear hierarchical modeling indicates that female listeners judge retracted stimuli as more authoritative in women's voices, while men judge male speakers' unretracted guises as more authoritative. Overall, female unretracted and male retracted guises are rated

as friendlier. Female listeners identify retracted male, but not female, guises as younger-sounding.

Though we are still in the initial stages of data analysis, we can identify some tentative initial results. While men's shiftedness may be judged as reliably indicating age, women seem to associate TRAP-backing with authoritative, less-friendly characteristics in other women. In the course of a female-led sound shift, speakers – especially women – may be more attuned to women's style shifting, and may diverge from men in their social evaluations.

D'Onofrio, A. 2015. Perceiving personae: Effects of social information on perceptions of TRAP-backing. *UPenn Working Papers in Linguistics* 21(2):31–39.

Drager, K, M. J. Kirtley, J. Grama & S. Simpson. 2013. Language variation and change in Hawai'i English: KIT, DRESS, and TRAP. *UPenn Working Papers in Linguistics* 19(2):41–50.

Kennedy, R & J. Grama. 2012. Chain shifting and centralization in California vowels: An acoustic analysis. *American Speech* 87(1):39–56.

Kettig, T. & B. Winter. 2017. Producing and perceiving the Canadian Vowel Shift: Evidence from a Montreal community. *Language Variation & Change* 29:79–100.

October 17, 2017

Speaker: Chien-Jer Charles Lin, (Associate Professor of Chinese Linguistics, East Asian Languages and Culture, Indiana University)

Title: Processing Prenominal Relative Clauses in Mandarin Chinese: Forms and Functions

Abstract:

The last 15 years of research on Chinese relative clause processing have indicated both promising directions as well as puzzles. This talk reviews the landscape of these findings and how this line of research sheds light on the processing of head-final structures. Among the many questions regarding the forms and functions of prenominal relative clauses in Mandarin, I will discuss the following three from a sentence processing perspective: 1) What is the discourse function of prenominal relative clauses in terms of restrictiveness and contrastiveness?, 2) What do comparisons between different types of relative clauses in Chinese illuminate?, and 3) What is the role of working memory in processing prenominal relative clauses?

October 24, 2017

Speakers: Christianne Ono, Bradley Rentz

Christianne Ono

Title: Preliminary Fieldwork in the Ikema-jima and Nishihara Ikema Miyakoan Communities

Abstract: Ikema is a variety of Miyako, which in turn is a “Definitely Endangered” Southern Ryukyuan language (UNESCO, 2010). It is spoken in three communities on three separate islands: the original Ikema-jima community on Ikema Island, the Nishihara community on Miyako Island, and the Sarahama community on Irabu Island. This talk presents the researcher’s experiences conducting fieldwork the Ikema-jima and Nishihara communities, reflecting particularly on the observed differences in relative linguistic vitality and community members’ attitudes towards the local Ikema variety. Additionally, some of the programs and events related to language and culture preservation and revitalization will be introduced. To conclude, this talk will consider areas for future research and possibilities for increased community involvement based on the results from this preliminary fieldwork.

Bradley Rentz

Title: Pohnpei sohte ehu: Quantitative methods for finding emergent heteroglossic patterns in language attitudes

Abstract: In this presentation, I present novel quantitative methods for analyzing language attitudes using data from 1.3% of the adult population on Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia. Previous methods for language attitudes analyses typically utilized pre-defined essentialized categories that are heavily influenced by non-localized contexts. To counter this method, I propose new quantitative analyses that allow groups and categories to emerge from the data. I present results both from analyses that utilize pre-defined categories and those that do not to demonstrate the benefits of the new analyses. The results show how the new analyses allow for voices in the data to be seen that would otherwise have been ignored.

October 31, 2017

Speaker: Dr. Nayoung Kwon (Department of English, Konkuk University)

Title: What makes Korean a discourse-oriented language?: Universal vs. Language-specific processing mechanisms

Abstract: One of the underlying assumptions in the studies of language processing is that cross-linguistic parsing mechanisms can be investigated. That is, given that language processing should be constrained by human's general cognitive processing, by examining the way that various languages are processed, we should be able to uncover universal parsing mechanisms. In this talk, I will also rely on this assumption, presenting experimental results from studies of Korean compatible to those of English. The focus of the talk, however, will be placed on variations across languages despite apparent cross-linguistic similarities.

In Part 1, I will present studies investigating *pro* (null argument) resolution in Korean. I will show that i) *pro* resolution elicits the LAN effect similarly to an overt pronoun resolution in English, and ii) *pro* is assigned an antecedent without any delay similarly to an overt pronoun in English. However, I will also show that *pro* in Korean is more sensitive to discourse cues than to morpho-syntactic cues unlike an overt pronoun in English.

In Part 2, I will present studies investigating subject-verb honorific agreement in Korean. I will show that i) subject-verb honorific agreement violation in Korean elicits the P600 effect similarly to number/person agreement violation in English and ii) subject-verb honorific agreement in Korean is prone to attraction effects similarly to number/person agreement in English. I will also show, however, that despite these similarities, subject-verb honorific agreement in Korean seems more prone to semantic interference effects than number/person agreement in English.

Based on these results, I argue that while similar parsing mechanisms might indeed underlie the processing of various languages, human language processing is also critically constrained by different grammatical features of individual languages. For example, in the case of Korean, Korean might in general place more emphasis on discourse context than English or Spanish with more obvious morpho-syntactic cues, and this could have led to slightly different processing patterns in these languages. Accordingly, in studies of language processing, it would be important to distinguish between universal vs. language-specific processing mechanisms, and this will be better achieved by cross-linguistic studies.