



Research Centre for Linguistic Typology

Institute for Advanced Study



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Newsletter — February 2001

Our first year as a part of the Institute for Advanced Study at La Trobe University in Melbourne has been a marked success — in terms of the excellence of our Research Fellows, Visiting Fellows and Doctoral Students, in terms of the success of the International Workshop in August, in terms of both quality and quantity of publications, and in terms of the fellowships and grants gained.

Who'll be at RCLT in 2001

Besides **Professor R. M. W. (Bob) Dixon** (Director), **Professor Alexandra Y. (Sasha) Aikhenvald** (Associate Director), **Ms Abby Chin** (Executive Officer) and **Dr Anya Woods** (Publications/Research Assistant), we'll have the following scholars with us this year:

Research Fellows

—**Dr Knut Olawsky**, on an RCLT three-year Research Fellowship, has summarised the results of his first exploratory fieldtrip to Peru and returned in mid-January for a lengthy second visit to study Urarina, a language isolate spoken on the Rio Chambira.

—**Dr Andrew Ingram** commenced a three-year Research Fellowship in January to work on a Papuan language from New Guinea. He will undertake an exploratory fieldtrip in March, to the Madang Province, Ukarumpa and east New Britain.

—**Dr Janet Sharp** will commence a three-year Research Fellowship in July, undertaking an extensive study of Karatjarri, from the north-west of Western Australia. Dr Sharp was awarded a mark of distinction by UWA for her PhD thesis on the Njangumarta language.

—**Dr Tonya Stebbins** has been awarded a La Trobe University Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, to work in RCLT; this will commence in July. She plans to undertake intensive fieldwork on a language from the Gazelle Peninsula region of New Britain, Papua New Guinea.

—**Dr Timothy Jowan (Tim) Curnow** will be in the second year of his ARC Postdoctoral fellowship. In 2001 he plans to undertake some research overseas and will focus his attention on evidentiality (presenting a paper at the Evidentiality Workshop in August).

—We expect to make one further Research Fellow appointment in the near future.

Visiting Fellows

—**Dr Regina Pustet**, of the University of Munich, will be a Visiting Fellow from 18 February until 18 August. She has published on Algonquian and Siouan languages and while at RCLT will work on the typology of lexical categorisation.

—**Professor Bh. Krishnamurti**, who will be a Visiting Fellow from 1 May until 1 November, is the most eminent Indian linguist. He has been Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hyderabad and during the past two years was a member of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, and of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. While at RCLT he will complete a monograph, *The Dravidian Languages*, for Cambridge University Press.

—**Professor Lars Johanson**, who is Professor of Turkology at the University of Mainz, will be a Visiting Fellow from 30 June until 30 November. He comes to us after a Fellowship at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study. Besides taking part in the International Workshop on Evidentiality, he will work on grammatical problems in Turkic and Iranian linguistics.

—**Professor Brian Joseph**, of the University of Ohio (and editor of the journal *Diachronica*), will be Visiting Fellow from 16 July until 26 August. He will give the concluding address at the International Workshop on Evidentiality and work on topics in the phonology and grammar of Modern Greek and other Balkan languages.

—**Professor Anvita Abbi** (University of Delhi) will spend 14 May - 15 August with us as a Special IAS Visiting Fellow. She will investigate sociolinguistic problems concerning the languages of India, and undertake a reappraisal of India as a linguistic area.

—**Professor Ago Künnap** (University of Tartu, Estonia) will be at RCLT during August, sponsored by the Australian Academy of the Humanities. Besides taking part in the Evidentiality Workshop, he will be working on grammatical problems in Uralic languages and contact phenomena.

—**Dr David Beck** (University of Alberta) will spend six weeks at RCLT in the middle of the year, working with Professor Aikhenvald on the typology of areal diffusion in the Pacific north-west of North America.

Honorary Visiting Fellows

—**Dr Eva Csató**, of the University of Uppsala, will be an Honorary Visiting Fellow from 30 June until 30 December. She will be working on topics in Turkic linguistics with particular reference to Karaim, an endangered language.

—**Dr Graham McKay**, Head of the School of Language and Literature at Edith Cowan University in Perth, will spend his sabbatical at RCLT during the second half of the year. He plans to revise for publication his grammar of Rembarnga (from Central Arnhem Land).

—**Associate Professor Kate Burridge**, of the La Trobe Linguistics Department, is a Visiting Fellow at RCLT during the first three months of the year. She is working on infinitive constructions in Pennsylvania German, as a step towards a comprehensive grammar of that language.

—**Dr Hilary Chappell**, also of the La Trobe Linguistics Department, will be a Visiting Fellow in RCLT from July; she will mainly be writing up work on the typology of Sinitic languages.

—**Dr Bernhard Schebeck** is an Honorary Visiting Fellow with RCLT, working up his extensive materials on Australian languages spoken in central South Australia and in eastern Arnhem Land.

—**Professor Masayuki Onishi** (Meio University, Okinawa, Japan) will be at RCLT in February and March, continuing his comparative study of the Papuan and Austronesian languages of Bougainville.

—**Dr John Hajek**, Head of the Department of French and Italian Studies at the University of Melbourne, will continue as a part-time Visiting Fellow, working on phonological typology and on the languages of East Timor.

—**Professor Roger Wales**, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at La Trobe University, has RCLT as an occasional 'research retreat'. He is working on the role of prosody in discourse structure in Australian English, and on categorising spatial perspectives in discourse contexts.

PhD students

—**Antoine Guillaume** (PhD student at RCLT) departed in early February for Bolivia, for further fieldwork on Cavineña, an endangered language belonging to the Takana family, for which he plans to provide a comprehensive description.

—**Eva Lindström** (PhD student from the University of Stockholm) will be completing her dissertation on Kuot, a Papuan language spoken on New Ireland, PNG.

—**Marilia Ferreira** (PhD student from the State University of Campinas, Brazil) will complete her 'sandwich year' with us, working on a grammar of Parkatêje-Timbira, a Macro-Jê language.

—**Rosmarie Moser** (PhD student in the La Trobe Department of Linguistics) is continuing work on a grammar of Kabba, a Nilo-Saharan language spoken in the Central African Republic.

—**Alec Coupe** (PhD student in the La Trobe Department of Linguistics) expects to have completed the first draft of his dissertation by March, when he returns to Nagaland (India) for a final field-trip on Ao, a Tibeto-Burman language.

Everyone at RCLT has written (or is 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-orientated scholars (from Australia or from overseas) who would like to consider spending a sabbatical at RCLT. We can provide room and computer, plus an intellectual ambience of the highest order.

Typology Workshop — on Demonstratives

A local Workshop on Demonstratives will meet fortnightly, on Tuesdays from 4.30 - 6.00 p.m., commencing on February 27th. At the first meeting, Bob Dixon will present a position paper on the parameters of variation for demonstratives across the world's languages — their types, forms, functions, and varieties of referential systems. At subsequent meetings, members of the Workshop will each give 30-minute presentations on demonstratives in a language on which they have specialised knowledge. At the end, members of the Workshop will attempt to put forward appropriate generalisations. All linguists from the Melbourne area (or from elsewhere) are warmly invited to take part.

During the first semester, Professor Aikhenvald will teach an advanced seminar course, **Areal linguistics**, in the Linguistics Department of La Trobe University (classes W 3-5 p.m., Th 4-5 p.m.). She will deal with the notion of linguistic area, and various kinds of linguistic diffusion, with global exemplification. She will also discuss, among other topics, problems of code-switching and language mixing in varying socio-cultural situations.

Both Aikhenvald and Dixon will be presenting courses during the first three weeks (June 25 - July 13) of the **2001 Linguistic Institute of the Linguistic Society of America**, at the University of California, Santa Barbara:

—Aikhenvald's course, *Typology of classifiers*, will meet 4-5.50 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays (except 4 July). She will discuss methodological foundations, and focus on multiple-classifier languages and new classifier types (such as locative and deictic classifiers), and problematic issues (such as the classificatory status of positional verbs).

—Dixon's course, *Basic linguistic theory*, will meet 12-1.50 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays (except 4 July). He will cover: (1) Methodology; (2) Grammatical relations and copula clauses; (3) Adjective classes; (4) Causatives and other valency-changing derivations; and (5) Demonstratives and related items.

Dixon and Aikhenvald will be two of the keynote speakers at the **15th International Conference on Historical Linguistics**, organised by Barry Blake and Kate Burridge of the La Trobe Linguistics Department and held at the Ibis Hotel, Melbourne, from Monday 13 till Friday 17 August. (Information <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/linguistics/conferences.html>.)

International Workshop in August 2001

Following on from our successful workshops at the ANU in 1997 and 1998 and at La Trobe in 2000, we shall be holding a **Workshop on Evidentiality** from Monday 6th until Saturday 12th August 2001. Auditors are welcome, at no fee (but note that we are unable to organise accommodation for auditors). The position paper for the Workshop can be accessed on our website, <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/www/rcit>. The provisional program is:

Monday 6 August 2001

at La Trobe City Campus (215, Franklin Street, corner of Queen St)

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| 9.00 | Opening of Workshop by Professor Michael Osborne, Vice-Chancellor and President of La Trobe University |
| 9.10 | Alexandra Aikhenvald (RCLT): <i>Tariana</i> (Arawak family, Brazil) |
| 10.40 | coffee |
| 11.10 | Victor Golla (Univ. of California, Arcata): <i>Hupa</i> (Athapaskan, family, North America) |
| 12.40 | lunch |
| 2.00 | Wilhem De Reuse (Univ. of North Texas): <i>Western Apache</i> (Athapaskan family, North America) |
| 3.30 | coffee |
| 4.00 | Sally McLendon (Hunter College, New York): <i>Eastern Pomo</i> (Pomoan family, North America) |
| 5.30 | finish |

Tuesday 7 August 2001

at La Trobe City Campus (215, Franklin Street, corner of Queen St)

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| 9.00 | Victor Friedman (University of Chicago): <i>The Balkans</i> |
| 10.30 | coffee |
| 11.00 | Vjacheslav Chirikba (University of Leiden): <i>Abkhaz</i> (North-West Caucasian family) |
| 12.30 | lunch |
| 2.00 | Michael Fortescue (University of Copenhagen): <i>West Greenlandic</i> (Eskimo-Aleut family) |

- 3.30 coffee
 4.00 Elena Maslova (St Petersburg European University): *Yukaghir*
 (isolate, Siberia)
 5.30 finish

Wednesday 8 August 2001 – free day

Thursday 9 August 2001

at RCLT at La Trobe main campus in Bundoora

- 9.00 R.M.W. Dixon (RCLT): *Jarawara* (Arawá family, Brazil)
 10.30 coffee
 11.00 Pilar Valenzuela (Max-Planck Institute for Evolutionary
 Anthropology, Leipzig): *Shipibo-Conibo* (Pano family, Peru)
 12.30 lunch
 2.00 Randy LaPolla (City University of Hong Kong): *Qiang* (Tibeto-
 Burman family, China)
 3.30 coffee
 4.00 Connie Dickinson (University of Oregon, Eugene): *Tsafiki*
 (Barbacoan family, Ecuador)
 5.30 finish

Friday 10 August 2001

at La Trobe City Campus (215, Franklin Street, corner of Queen St)

- 9.00 Lars Johanson (RCLT/University of Mainz): *Turkic languages*
 10.30 coffee
 11.00 Ago Künnap (University of Tartu, Estonia): *Enets* (Uralic family)
 12.30 lunch
 2.00 Timothy J. Curnow (RCLT): *Evidentiality and person*
 3.30 coffee
 4.00 *Group discussion*
 5.00 finish

Saturday 11 August 2001

at La Trobe City Campus (215, Franklin Street, corner of Queen St)

- 9.30 Brian Joseph (RCLT/Ohio State University): *Conclusions*
 11.00 coffee
 11.30 *Group discussion and publication plans*
 1.00 finish

Book Collection

We have a useful and growing collection of monographs, predominantly grammars of languages and works on typology, language contact, etc. In addition, we take some journals, notably *Chicago Linguistics Society Papers*, *Berkeley Linguistic Society Papers*, *Oceanic Linguistics*, *Linguistics of the Tibeto-Burman area*, and *Aboriginal History*. In all, we now have about 1,000 volumes.

We are grateful to Professor Michael Osborne, Vice-Chancellor of La Trobe University, for a one-off grant to assist in establishing the book collection. Thanks are also due to scholars who donated books: Ken Hill, Fritz Serzisko, and Wally Thompson. We

welcome further donations of relevant volumes — for example, from scholars taking retirement, or just from people short of shelf space.

Anyone is welcome to make use of this collection, but note that volumes may not be taken out of the building.

Report on RCLT's activities during 2000

On Wednesday 16th February, Professor Graham McDowell, Acting Vice-Chancellor of La Trobe University, performed the **official opening** for the Research Centre for Linguistic Typology at La Trobe. Following this, Professor Roger Wales, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, launched *Changing valency: case studies in transitivity*, edited by Dixon and Aikhenvald (Cambridge University Press) and the *Handbook of Australian languages*, Volume 5, edited by Dixon and Barry J. Blake (Oxford University Press).

This opening ceremony was held in the 1910 Heritage Building (with 27 offices plus seminar room/library) which the University has fully refurbished and fitted out for the exclusive use of RCLT. It was attended by members of the University Council, by senior members of the academic and administrative staff of the University, and by many linguists from across the Melbourne region.

The linguists had, earlier in the day, attended a Workshop in celebration of RCLT's relocation, at which the following papers were presented:

- Professor Barry Blake (Linguistics, La Trobe): Problems for typology
- Professor Alexandra Aikhenvald: Evidentiality in Tariana: a typological perspective
- Professor Michael Clyne (Monash University): Convergence and switching facilitation: cross-linguistic comparisons
- Dr John Hajek (University of Melbourne): Universals of nasalisation
- Professor R M W Dixon: Semantic roles and syntactic functions: the semantic basis for a typology.

When La Trobe University was established, it was designated to be the Australian University with specialisation in Latin American Studies. This accords well with the research plan of RCLT which has earmarked Amazonia as one of its three areas of particular linguistic focus (the others being the Papuan languages of New Guinea and the Aboriginal languages of Australia). We have initiated propitious links with La Trobe's **Institute of Latin American Studies**, involving the exchange of seminars, ideas and information.

Professors Aikhenvald and Dixon were appointed associate members of the University's **Department of Linguistics**; besides playing a role in the teaching program, we assist in the supervision of postgraduate students.

The fruits of **Professor Alexandra Aikhenvald's** first term as an ARC Senior Research Fellow (1994-9) were published by Oxford University Press, in mid-2000, in the form of a 561-page monograph, *Classifier: a typology of noun categorization devices*. Her current Senior Research Fellowship (1999-2004) is to study language contact and areal diffusion within a typological perspective. She is currently engaged in writing a monograph, *Language contact in Amazonia*, dealing with the rampant multilingual situation in the Vaupes River Basin, which spans Brazil and Colombia.

Aikhenvald has, since 1991, been engaged in intensive study of Tariana, an Arawak language spoken in north-west Brazil. Her 350-page dictionary has been accepted by the Press of the Museu Goeldi in Belém and will be published during the year. She is putting the finishing touches to a 650-page grammar of Tariana, which will shortly be submitted for publication. She also published three papers on Tariana and presented a paper on clitics in Tariana at the Word Workshop. This language is spoken by only about 100 of the c3,000

people who identify as ethnic Tariana. In response to their request, Professor Aikhenvald conducted a three-week course in Tariana language and literacy, as part of her field-trip to Brazil in June and July. This was attended by over 300 people, including teachers and administrators, and even the local bishop.

For the past four years, Aikhenvald has also been working on Manambu — a language from the Sepik Region of Papua New Guinea — in collaboration with Pauline Laki, journalist and native speaker. Laki visited RCLT during February, working with Aikhenvald on Manambu grammar, and continued throughout the year with the compilation of a dictionary of the language. Laki and Aikhenvald plan a field trip to Avatip village late in 2001.

Aikhenvald read a paper to the Annual Meeting of the Australian Linguistic Society in July, and also made a presentation on classifiers in spoken languages to an International Workshop on 'Classifiers in signed and spoken languages', held at La Jolla, California, in April.

In addition to receiving an ARC Large Grant for 'Language contact and the typology of borrowing: the case of Amazonia', Aikhenvald also received funding from the Australian Academy of the Humanities to sponsor a visit by Professor Ago Künnap from the University of Tartu, Estonia.

The major task of **Professor R. M. W. Dixon** during the year was completion of his extensive survey *Australian languages: their nature and development*, which he has been writing since July 1996. It is currently being circulated to a dozen colleagues for critical comment, with the revision due to be sent to Cambridge University Press in March. In view of this, Dixon has had to postpone revising his *Grammar of Jarawara from southern Amazonia* (written in collaboration with missionary linguist Alan Vogel); this will be a priority in 2001. Dixon did present a paper on Jarawara at the Word Workshop, and has had papers on this language published during the year in the *International Journal of American Linguistics* and in the *Journal of Linguistics*.

Dixon was awarded a third term as **Senior Research Fellow** (2002-7) and an associated Large Grant, by the Australian Research Council. This is to write the first comprehensive monograph on basic linguistic theory, dealing with methodology and modes of argumentation and analysis, and also profiling recurrent grammatical categories and construction types.

Dixon is co-editor (with Professor Keren Rice, of the University of Toronto) of the monograph series *Cambridge Grammatical Descriptions*, published by Cambridge University Press. Two high-quality grammars are now under contract — Motuna (a Papuan language) by Masayuki Onishi, and Kham (a Tibeto-Burman language) by David Watters. He is also editor for the series *Studies in Australian Languages*, published by Lincom Europa in Munich. One monograph was published in this series during the year, *The grammatical structure of the Worora language of north-western Australia*, the 1932 University of Adelaide MA thesis by Rev J. R. B. Love. Dixon accepted an invitation from Oxford University Press to be an advisory editor for the *Dictionary of World Languages*, edited by Alan Kaye. In addition, he continued on the editorial boards of the journals *Anthropological Linguistics*, *Studia Linguistica*, and *Australian Journal of Linguistics*, and of the *Typological Studies in Language* monograph series.

Dixon has, since the mid-seventies, been editing volumes of the *Handbook of Australian Languages*, in collaboration with Professor Barry J. Blake. Volume 5, published in February 2000, includes grammars of Bunuba by Alan Rumsey, Ndjébbana by Graham McKay, and Kugu Nganhcara by Ian Smith and Steve Johnson, together with an

introductory chapter 'Australian Aboriginal languages: their contemporary status and functions' by Mary Laughren.

Dixon's much-quoted paper 'Where have all the adjectives gone?' came out in Spanish translation during 2000 (and in good company, the other authors in the volume being Roman Jakobson, Zellig S. Harris and Charles F. Hockett).

He also continued working with the Dyirbal language community in North Queensland, on literacy issues, acting as consultant to Ernie Grant and Claire Reppel on a new series of language lessons.

Professor Robert Rankin, of the University of Kansas, was Visiting Fellow from 1 May until 1 November. He lectured and wrote on Siouan and Muskogean languages. Besides a paper presented at our Word Workshop, he also revised his seminal paper on deictic and locative classifiers in Siouan languages.

Professor Fritz Serzisko, of the University of Cologne, was with us from early April until late September, on an IREX Fellowship awarded by the ARC to Professor Aikhenvald. He led a Workshop on the Typology of Tense and Time, and drafted a monograph on this topic, in addition to producing a grammatical sketch of Ik, a Nilo-Saharan language from East Africa.

Professor Jane Hill, of the University of Arizona (past president of the American Anthropological Association, president-elect of the Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas, and current editor of the journal *Language in Society*), was Visiting Fellow from July until December. Among other projects, she worked on a grammatical description of Cupeño, an extinct Uto-Aztecan language of California, based on materials she collected 35 years ago.

Dr Ken Hill, of the University of Arizona, was an Honorary Visiting Fellow from July until December. *The Hopi dictionary*, for which he was chief compiler, was published while he was with us. This is a model of its kind — 900 large pages (in three columns), exhibiting scholarship of exemplary quality. While at RCLT, he began work on a grammar of Serrano, another extinct Uto-Aztecan language from California (but of a notably different profile from Cupeño).

Professor D. N. S. Bhat, of the Central Institute for Indian Languages, was with us from August until November as a Special IAS Visiting Fellow. He revised a paper on indefinites and interrogatives, and drafted two new papers, on 'Pronouns and pro-forms' and on 'Word as lexeme'.

Professor Walter Bisang, of the University of Mainz, spent a productive five weeks as Visiting Fellow with us during June and July. While here, he wrote a paper on precatogorality in Classical Chinese, and began planning a book on grammaticalisation in the languages of East and South-east Asia.

Dr Ulrike Zeshan completed her Research Fellowship with us at the end of the year. She continued her study of interrogatives and negatives across a global sample of 30 sign languages; this is the first-ever cross-linguistic typological project relating to sign languages. Besides giving a fine series of lectures on this topic at RCLT (attended by both hearing and deaf linguists) she presented papers at a conference on 'Classifiers in signed and

spoken languages', at La Jolla, California, in April, and at our Word Workshop in August. She organised a Workshop on Sign Language Typology at the conference on 'Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research' held in Amsterdam in July.

Dr Knut Olawsky did his doctoral dissertation at the University of Düsseldorf on Dagbani, a Gur language from West Africa, and then held a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the University of California, Berkeley. He joined us in July on a three-year Research Fellowship to produce a full description of a previously undescribed language from Peru. Knut made an exploratory field-trip in July and decided to work on Urarina, a language isolate which has about 2000 speakers.

Dr Timothy Jowan Curnow commenced his ARC Postdoctoral Fellowship, looking at conjunct systems, and the interaction of person and evidentiality. He presented the inaugural address at the Typology Club (of RCLT) and gave two presentations at the Annual Meeting of the Australian Linguistic Society. And he became editor of the *ALS Newsletter*.

Dr John Hajek (University of Melbourne) spent his sabbatical year with us, working on nasalisation and other topics in phonological typology. He continued with study of the languages of East Timor, undertaking a field-trip there in September. He delivered papers at the International Conference on Laboratory Phonology in Nijmegen, Netherlands and at the Conference of the Australian Applied Linguistics Association in Melbourne.

Dr Tonya Stebbins (Deakin University) was an Honorary Research Fellow with us for the latter part of the year. She continued work on Sm'algyax, a Tsimshian language from north-west British Columbia (completing a five-volume learner's dictionary) and undertook preliminary research into the languages of East New Britain, PNG, with a view to commencing fieldwork there in the near future.

Dr Marie-Odile Junker of Carleton University, Ottawa (an expert on Algonquian languages) visited the Research Centre for a week in October and gave a lunchtime lecture on 'Obviation and the person hierarchy in East Cree'.

Dr Claudia Gerstner-Link, from the University of Munich, spent a week at RCLT at the conclusion of fieldwork on the Kilmere language from Morroba Province, Papua New Guinea, and gave a lunchtime lecture on her results.

Antoine Guillaume (PhD student at RCLT) joined us as a PhD student in August. He has MA's from the University of Oregon, USA, and University of Lyon, France. As part of his MA programs, he did work on Cavineña; and will return to Bolivia to undertake further fieldwork on this endangered language in order to prepare a comprehensive grammar of it.

Eva Lindström is a PhD student from the University of Stockholm but the whole of her course has been spent with us, at the ANU and now at La Trobe. She returned in April from a final field-trip to New Ireland, PNG, and has completed the draft of her thesis on Kuot, a Papuan language.

Marilia Ferreira, who is a PhD student at the University of Campinas (and on the faculty of the University of Pará) is spending a year at RCLT on a scholarship from the Brazilian Government. She is writing a grammar of Parkatêje-Timbira, a Macro-Jê language.

Alec Coupe (PhD student in the La Trobe Department of Linguistics) returned in March from extensive fieldwork in north-east India, and then settled down to analysing the material he had gathered on Ao, a Tibeto-Burman language. He has also been revising his MA thesis for publication.

Rosmarie Moser (PhD student in the La Trobe Department of Linguistics) was on fieldwork in the Central African Republic, August-October, collecting more data and checking grammatical hypotheses in Kabba, the Nilo-Saharan language on which she is writing her thesis.

Outside lectures.

All members of RCLT gave one or more seminar and/or workshop presentations in the Research Centre. In addition, Aikhenvald, Dixon, Hajek, Jane Hill, Ken Hill, Rankin, Serzisko and Zeshan gave a wide selection of lectures elsewhere — in the Departments of Linguistics at La Trobe, Melbourne, Monash, Sydney and the ANU.

Volumes from past International Workshops

A volume including revised versions of 10 of the 16 papers presented at our first International Workshop, held at the ANU in August 1997, was published by Cambridge University Press in February 2000, under the title *Changing valency: studies in transitivity*, edited by Dixon and Aikhenvald. Following the editors' Introduction and 'A typology of causatives: form, syntax and meaning' by Dixon, there are chapters on Central Alaskan Yup'ik by Marianne Mithun; on Motuna by Masayuki Onishi; on Tariana by Aikhenvald; on the Athapaskan family by Keren Rice; on K'iche' by Lyle Campbell; on Dulong/Rawang by Randy J. LaPolla; on Amharic by Mengistu Amberber; on Ngan'gityemmerri by Nicholas Reid; on Tsez by Bernard Comrie; and on Creek by Jack Martin.

The volume from our 1998 Workshop (also held at the ANU), *Areal Diffusion and Genetic Inheritance: Problems in Comparative Linguistics* edited by Aikhenvald and Dixon, is currently in press with Oxford University Press, and should appear mid-way through the year. Following the editors' Introduction there are the following chapters: Peter Bellwood, 'Archaeology and the historical determinants of punctuation in language family origins'; Calvert Watkins, 'An Indo-European linguistic area and its characteristics: ancient Anatolia — areal diffusion as a challenge to the comparative method?'; Dixon, 'The Australian linguistic area'; Alan Dench, 'Descent and diffusion: the complexity of the Pilbara situation, Western Australia'; Malcolm Ross, 'Contact-induced change in Oceanic languages in northwest Melanesia'; Aikhenvald, 'Areal diffusion, genetic inheritance and problems of subgrouping: a North Arawak case study'; Geoffrey Haig, 'Linguistic diffusion in present-day East Anatolia: from top to bottom'; Randy LaPolla, 'The role of migration and language contact in the development of the Sino-Tibetan language family'; Nicholas J. Enfield, 'On genetic and areal linguistics in mainland Southeast Asia: parallel polyfunctionality of "acquire"'; James A. Matisoff, 'Genetic versus contact relationship: prosodic diffusability in Southeast Asian languages'; Hilary Chappell, 'Language contact and areal diffusion in Sinitic languages'; Gerrit J. Dimmendaal, 'Areal diffusion versus genetic inheritance: an African perspective'; Bernd Heine and Tania Kuteva, 'Convergence and divergence in the development of African languages'; and Timothy J. Curnow, 'What language features can be "borrowed"?'.

Participants in our August 2000 Workshop (the first held at La Trobe), on **The status of "word": its phonological, grammatical, cultural and cognitive basis**, have sent in their papers. We are asking for revisions (some minor, some major) to be made to these before submitting the full sets of papers as a volume for publication.

In cooperation with Professor Masayuki Onishi, Aikhenvald and Dixon are editors of *Non-canonical marking of subjects and objects*, which is in press with John Benjamins, Amsterdam. After an Introduction by Onishi, there are chapters on European Languages, by Martin Haspelmath; Icelandic, by Avery Andrews; Bengali, by Onishi; Imbabura Quechua, by Gabriella Hermon; Tariana, by Aikhenvald; Amele, by John Roberts; Finnish, by Lyle Campbell and Kristina Sands; and Japanese, by Masayoshi Shibatani.

The Amazonian languages, edited by R.M.W. Dixon and Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald (published by Cambridge University Press in November 1999), has been most well received. In a review for the *Journal of Linguistics*, Edward J. Vajda says: 'This beautifully written and brilliantly edited volume, with its intricate yet user-friendly grammatical descriptions, detailed but clear maps, and wealth of never-before published field data, will undoubtedly become the standard reference work to lowland South America for years to come.'

The rise and fall of languages by R. M. W. Dixon (published in December 1997) has been again reprinted by Cambridge University Press. In addition to the translation into Japanese (published by Iwanami Shoten in Tokyo) there is to be a translation into Mandarin Chinese, using complex characters (to be published by the OWL Publishing Company in Taiwan). The 2000 Newsletter included extracts from five laudatory reviews. A further review, by Brian Joseph in the *Journal of Linguistics*, ends: 'Undeniably ... this book makes me think, and perhaps that is the surest measure of a successful book, whether or not one is convinced by its content.'

Publications

This is a selected list of books, and of papers in good-quality, hard-copy books and journals (members of the Research Centre also put out a number of reviews and some electronic publications). We list publications during 2000 and also items accepted for publication which are 'in press'. The list covers publications by present and past members of RCLT, based on work done while they were at the Research Centre.

ALEXANDRA Y. AIKHENVALD

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Linguistic vignette

In his Preface to *The Menomini language*, by Leonard Bloomfield (Yale University Press, 1962), Charles F. Hockett recalled:

'Another episode in the winter of 1939 or the spring of 1940 should also be told of here. Bloomfield was speaking of the tremendous difficulty of obtaining a really adequate account of any language, and suggested, half humorously, that linguists dedicated to this task should not get married, nor teach: instead, they should take a vow of celibacy, spend as long a summer as feasible each year in the field, and spend the winters collating and filing the material. With this

degree of intensiveness, Bloomfield suggested, a linguist could perhaps produce good accounts of three languages in his lifetime.'

The Research Centre for Linguistic Typology

RCLT was established within the Australian National University, in Canberra, on 18th December 1996, and relocated to La Trobe University, in Melbourne, on 1st January 2000.

The Research Centre is concerned with the business of 'real linguistics' — our faculty and research students undertake intensive studies of previously undescribed (or barely described) languages, focussing in particular on the languages of Amazonia, the Papuan languages of New Guinea and nearby islands, and the Aboriginal languages of Australia. We eschew eclipsing-type formalisms (which are inherently transient), instead working in terms of basic linguistic theory, the cumulative model which is employed in most linguistic descriptions. All of the Research Centre's work has a sound empirical basis but also shows a firm theoretical orientation; it seeks for explanation hand-in-hand with description.

Building on reliable descriptive studies, the Research Centre also puts forward inductive generalisations about human language. For instance, it enquires whether all languages have classes of noun and verb. It investigates the interrelation between different grammatical categories — if gender choice depends upon number is it always the case that there are more genders in singular than plural? And it looks at how languages change — in what circumstances and from what sources do languages develop tones? And why and how do languages lose tones?

Another area of study concerns the ways in which languages influence each other. What kinds of words, or grammatical categories, or construction types, are likely to be borrowed between two contiguous languages, and under what social circumstances? Are some kinds of grammatical system particularly open to diffusion, so that they are likely to spread over all the languages in a geographical area, and are other kinds of system less likely to be diffused?

RCLT has a range of Research Fellows and PhD students (some financed from Centre funds, and some from outside sources). Each year it invites a number of leading international scholars to be Visiting Fellows. In addition, a range of scholars — who have appropriate interests and achievements — choose to spend their sabbatical in the vibrant intellectual atmosphere of the Research Centre.

More information is available at our website: <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/www/rclt>.