Weaving Across Nations
Voices from yesterday, today & tomorrow
Stories from the Bilum

Anne-Marie Wanamp,
University of Goroka

Steven Bird,
University of Melbourne

19 August, 2011

Papua New Guinea
The University of Goroka

Serving students from across the Pacific
The Goals:

Preserve, educate and maintain linguistic and cultural uniqueness as a society.
Create awareness of the value of languages and cultures and to create a sense of ownership and identity, a sense of pride.
Encourage more comprehensive research and documentation in all languages.

Papua New Guinea

Record, film and document as much Oral Literature as possible before it dies out.
Cultural Documentation:

Traditional Arts
Culinary Arts
Oral Literary Arts
Performing Arts
Visual Arts
Traditional Architecture
Traditional Healing Arts
Traditional Transportation
Traditional Recreation

Departmental Aims for Language Documentation:

• Students recording oral literature as part of course requirements. This enables documentation, revitalization and preservation of our languages.
• Enhancement of students engagement; encouraging self-directed learning, building self-esteem and confidence (awakening their identity).
• Foster an awareness, knowledge and appreciation of local people, languages and cultures.
• From documented material; develop dictionaries, books and other educational materials for use domestically and abroad.
Basic Oral Language Documentation (BOLD) Project PNG

Dr Steven Bird at UOG

BOLD
Basic Oral Language Documentation

Language worker controls playback, monitors other speaker, sometimes prompts or corrects

Language worker listens to source text; when it is paused, provides careful speech version or translation

Recorder containing original text; thumb alternates between play and stop buttons

Recorder holding respoken text and oral translation; does not touch controls once recording begins

100 Staff and Students in 3 PNG universities, trained by Steven Bird
**BOLD: Training**

**BOLD: Transcription**
**BOLD: Metadata**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Identifier</th>
<th>Computer</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
<td>20/09/10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BOLD:PNG Summary**

- 100 staff and students trained
- so far, materials from 50 languages have been collected and archived (IPNGS archive)
- ongoing work at UoG, DWU, UPNG
- new activities:
  - mobile application
  - establishing the Alekano Wikipedia
Departmental Strands

1. Language/English
2. Linguistics
3. Literature
4. Languages Other than English
   4.1 Alekano (Goroka)
   4.2 Japanese
   4.3 French
   4.4 Tok Pisin
   4.5 Hiri Motu
   4.6 Mandarin (In-progress)
   4.7 Bhasa Indonesia (In-progress)

Current Courses Able to Integrate Documentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Year Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Introduction to Literature</td>
<td>• Literature of PNG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduction to Sociolinguistics</td>
<td>• Literature of South Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Styles of Writing in Literature</td>
<td>• Oral Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Art of Storytelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Children Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Performance Literature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Courses that will Integrate Documentation

Year Four
- Folklore
- Film as Literary Text
- Language, Literature and Culture
- Other courses in the Honors Program....

Year Three
- Creative Writing I
- Creative Writing II
- Performance Literature II
- Postcolonial Drama
- Postcolonial Literature

Annual UOG Events where we are able to Integrate Documentation

- International Mother Tongue Day (Feb 21)
- UOG Day (March 25)
- UOG – Students Cultural Show (July 31)
- International Indigenous Day, (August 9)
- National Literacy Week (Sept 5-9)
- National Independence Day (Sept 16/Goroka Show)
- Many other opportunities

Students in Bilum Wear
A sample of this approach used in an undergraduate course at UOG:

HLIT 336 – Oral Literature
Course Description:

• Examine the role of oral literature in the development of culture.
• Students will study oral narratives that have been collected from PNG and the Pacific-rim nations.
• They will also examine techniques in collecting oral stories and histories, as well as learn techniques in the art of telling oral narratives.
• Students will present an oral narrative from their own culture.

Expected Outcomes:

• This course aims to provide insight and appreciation of the rich heritage of oral literature in indigenous societies.
• This course will examine various genres under oral literature and ways in which these oral forms of literature can be preserved and maintained for future generations, with a particular focus of Papua New Guinean and Melanesian oral literature.
Language & Literature Students Celebrating International Mother Tongue Day

Oh arise all you sons of this land
Let us sing of our joy to be free
Praising God and rejoicing to be
Papua New Guinea

Now give thanks to the God Lord above
For His kindness, His wisdom and love
For this land of our fathers so free
Papua New Guinea

Shout our name from the mountains to seas
Papua New Guinea
Let us raise our voices and proclaim
Papua New Guinea

Students presentation of their items in their mother tongue
Advantages of implementing BOLD methodology at UOG

1. Student populations consist literally of hundreds of individual languages and cultures from around the Pacific region.
2. Documentation is incorporated in coursework and assessed. No additional costs for students to learn documentation skills.
3. Students use their existing social and cultural networks to gather required documentation and work independently.

Cultural occasions in society that the department has access to document:

• **Bride price ceremonies** (which differ significantly with different language groups)
• **Initiation ceremonies** (that differ significantly with different language groups)
• **Yam Festival** (preparation, planting and harvesting of yams – different language groups that grow yams have distinct ways)
• **Traditional marriages**
• **And many more...**
A sample of the Department’s documentation work

Bride Price Ceremony

Nambari Village, Yangoru, East Sepik Province

Food contribution
Communicating to the surrounding villages the date of the event

Preparing monies to contribute
Traditional Money: yua and cash used in bride price

Checking out the ‘yua’
Our Dreams for the Future

- To raise awareness of the importance of language documentation.
- Create opportunities for domestic and international research and documentation.
- To archive a central data bank of languages in the department.
- To integrate language documentation into as many courses as possible.

Our Dreams for the Future

- To go into filming, audio and video recording for better and more comprehensive documentation.
- To have basic linguistic training and methods of documentation for all students and staff in the Faculty.
- To assist staff and students to conduct research in their own languages and cultures for further studies.
- To build capacity for language documentation across Papua New Guinea.
As we continue weaving our bilum, we want to wish you the best with your weaving!

Tenk yu tru long tim bilong yu!

The Language & Literature Department