



The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center for Biographical Research
Brown Bag Biography

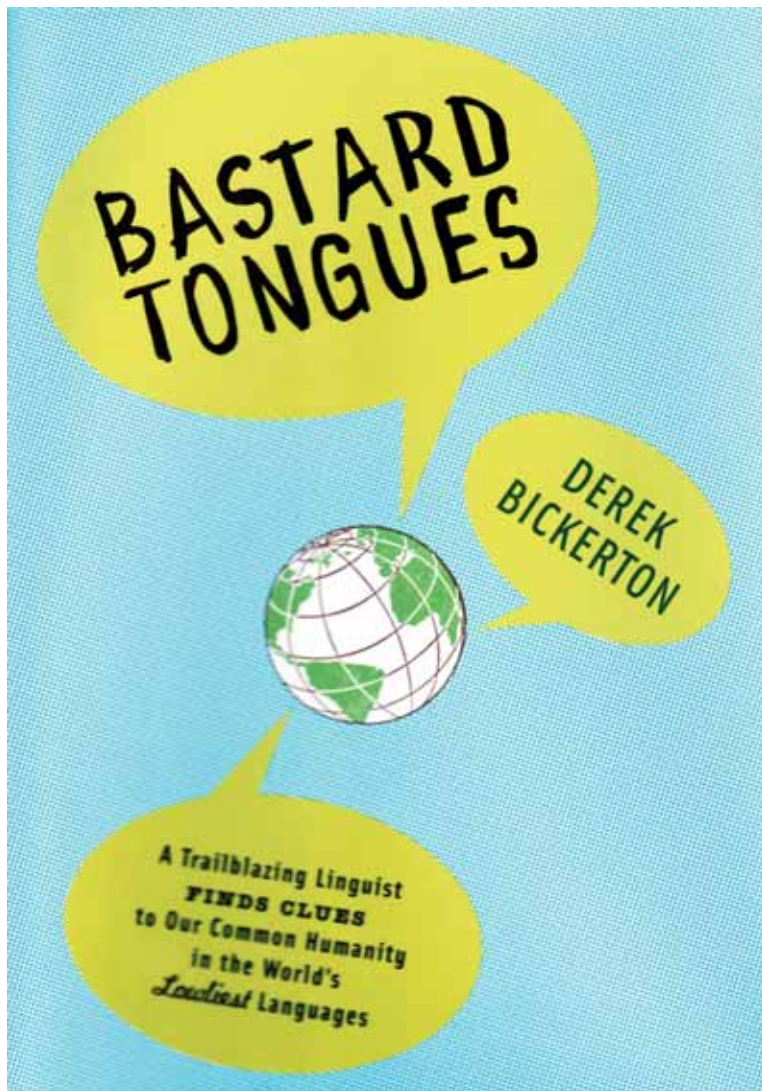
Thursday, October 2, 2008

12:00 noon to 1:15 p.m.

Henke Hall 325, 1800 East-West Road

Derek Bickerton

In Search of Bastard Tongues



I waded out of thigh-deep, pellucid water onto a beach of pure yellow sand. Behind, the twin outboards of the motorboat that had brought me churned trails of white foam that dwindled rapidly into the distance. Soon their sound shrank to a murmur, then ceased; the boat vanished in a dazzle of sunlight on the lagoon. I was alone on the island of Ngemelis, in the archipelago of Palau. . . . I was marooned on a genuine desert island. . . . Why on earth would a professor of linguistics have himself marooned on a desert island? Well, that's a long story.

Part memoir, part travelogue, part history, part linguistics primer, and all Derek Bickerton, *Bastard Tongues*, published this summer by Hill and Wang, is a firsthand exploration of the history and nature of language: what it is, how it works, how it passes from generation to generation. Professor Emeritus of Linguistics at the University of Hawai'i, **Derek Bickerton** is also the author of two books on Creole languages, three on the origin and evolution of language, and four novels.

Contact the Center for Biographical Research at 956-3774 or biograph@hawaii.edu for more information.