



MIRIMA DAWANG  
WOORLAB-GERRING  
LANGUAGE AND  
CULTURE CENTRE

# Mirima Linguistic Forum

## Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Mirima Dawang Woortlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre (MDWg) would like to announce its 32<sup>nd</sup> Linguistic Forum to take place on Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> of August 2024, starting at 3:30pm (AWST - Western Australia). The forum will be held at Mirima Language Centre, Kununurra with the possibility of joining online.

If you are planning to join, we would love to hear from you via e-mail to [ceo@mirima.org.au](mailto:ceo@mirima.org.au).

This meeting will host the following presentation:

## **Zooming onto Bimodal Bilinguals in Remote Indigenous Communities**

Prof. Dany Adone  
University of Cologne

### **About the presenter:**

Dany Adone is Professor and Chair of Applied English Linguistics and Co-Director of the Centre for Australian Studies at the University of Cologne, Germany. In Australia, she is also an Adjunct Professor at the College of Indigenous Futures, Arts & Society at CDU, a Visiting Professor at AIATSIS, a Visiting Scholar at the Language and Culture Centre in Kununurra, and Associate Professor at the University of Sydney. She has spent many years in Arnhem Land/NT, Australia. Her current research projects focus on Decolonising Linguistics, Environmental Justice, Yolŋu Ethnoecology and Indigenous Sign Languages of Australia. Recent publications include 'Indigenous Australia in the Anthropocene', a Special Issue of the Australian Studies Journal (2024), 'Acquisition of Pronouns in Creole Languages' (2023), 'Decolonizing Research Methodologies: Insights from Research on Indigenous Sign Languages of Australia' (2020) and 'Fire, Water and Land in Indigenous Australia' (2019).

*The Mirima Linguistic Forum is an initiative by MDWg to bring together people with an academic interest in Indigenous studies. While our focus is on language and culture, ideally with a reference to local Indigenous matters, we welcome contributions on related topics. Presentations occur in an informal and relaxed atmosphere and we leave plenty of time for discussion and exchange. The forum is open to all; if you happen to be in the Kununurra area and would like to present on a topic of interest - please let us know: [ceo@mirima.org.au](mailto:ceo@mirima.org.au).*

*We tend not to put a time limit on our Forum. Most presentations may go for about 60 minutes, followed by 30 minutes of questions and discussion time - but we are very open to having longer or shorter presentations.*

# **ABSTRACT**

## **Zooming onto Bimodal Bilinguals in Remote Indigenous Communities**

Dany Adone  
University of Cologne

One of the central questions in research on human language is the nature of the mental architecture. Bimodal bilingualism (henceforth BB, Emmorey et al. (2008)) refers to the use of a sign language and a spoken language. Scholars studying bilingualism have contributed to this discussion by exploring BB as it exists in societies with hearing and Deaf people such as is the case with English and American Sign Language (ASL). In this paper I analyse a case study on bimodal bilingualism from remote areas in Australia. Here BB exists as a well-established cultural practice in the communities in communication between hearing and Deaf people as well as between hearing people. I argue that the existence of BB in these contexts is explained by circumspection. In the first part of the paper, I look at who counts as a bimodal bilingual in these remote areas. I then take a closer look at the linguistic behaviour of the bimodal bilinguals with special focus on code-blending. In the third part I discuss the ethnolinguistic and anthropological factors that have to be taken into account, in order to understand this bimodal bilingualism found in remote Indigenous communities of Australia. This type of bimodal bilingualism is different from most cases referred to in the field (see Lillo-Martin et al. 2016).