

Abstract Ruth Singer

**Multilingualism at Waruwi Community (Australia):
fragments of a dynamic system**

At Waruwi Community around ten Indigenous languages from five different language families are used among only 350 people. It is unclear why there are so many languages still spoken at Waruwi because elsewhere in Australia linguistic diversity has sharply declined. A range of methods and theoretical frameworks have been used to investigate this question over the past 5 years. These include linguistic biography interviews and multimodal tasks with children and adults; video-making with young people; recordings of naturalistic conversation, digital ethnography and participant observation. The research has involved collaboration with field-based researchers, musicologists, anthropologists and other linguists. This talk will look at which methods and ideas have helped to shed light on the broader picture of language use at Waruwi. At various stages in the research it has been necessary to modify or abandon established ideas from the fields of multilingualism and sociolinguistics. These decision points highlight how language use at Waruwi differs from other contexts where research on multilingualism is carried out.