



2012 PUBLIC SEMINAR SERIES

"English because we aim at assimilation, Nunggubuyu because they understand"; language negotiations at Arnhem Land missions 1939-1973"

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This paper looks at the way languages were used at Christian missions in Arnhem Land under the assimilationist policies of the mid-twentieth century. It discusses how language functioned at the missions as a boundary marker between people, activities and spheres of life. Aborigines' English skills were frequently reported by missionaries as was missionaries' language proficiency (or lack thereof); language determined people's place at the missions. I will also consider the various spheres ascribed to languages and linguistic work by both missionaries and Aborigines. This includes analysis of the debates surrounding the introduction of bilingual education, how by the end of this period, Aboriginal languages emerged from the private and spiritual spheres into the classroom.

Wednesday, 30 May 12.15pm

The Seminar Room, NARU, 23 Ellengowan Drive, Brinkin
This seminar is free and open to the public.

The views expressed in this lecture are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the view of ANU.

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