

International Linguistic Association

Monthly Lecture Series

Saturday, November 5, 2022. 11 AM - 12 PM (EST)

Dr. Claire Bower

Yale University

15 Years of Chirila

Abstract

In this talk, I discuss the Chirila database of Australian languages, which was begun in 2007 (Bower 2016, 2021). I discuss the database goals, formation, and use to which it has been put over the last 15 years, as well as how evolving research and community circumstances have led to new decisions and revisions to the database and its contents. Chirila is a lexical database covering the more than 1300 varieties of Indigenous languages of Australia. While Chirila were designed as a research and revitalization tool, it now also has features of an "archive" (cf. Austin 2021, and others). As a research tool, Chirila has been used for linguistic reconstruction, typological work, language documentation, and phylogenetics. For revitalization, it has been used in two very different ways: as a source for materials for community language programs (e.g., for dictionaries, as described in Adams and Bower 2022), but also as a way for Indigenous individuals of the Stolen Generations -- and their descendents -- to reconnect with their languages, cultures, and communities. I explore some of the implications of this for the next phases of Chirila, as well as the issues it raises for dissemination and access.

Date & Time: November 5, 2022 at 11:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

ZOOM LINK: <https://bmcc-cuny.zoom.us/j/85346012625>

Dial by your location

Meeting ID: 853 4601 2625

Find your local number: <https://bmcc-cuny.zoom.us/u/kcqlhb7PhX>

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Dr. Claire Bower

Yale University



Claire Bower is a historical linguist whose research is centered around language change and language documentation in Indigenous Australia. While her work touches many areas, the overarching question is how to characterize the nature of language change. Language change involves a complex interplay of universal properties of language acquisition and production and community-specific social factors; her research program looks at how to study this so we understand both the micro change(es) in progress and the macro change that leads to language families. She works with speakers of endangered languages, with archival sound and print materials, and she uses computational and phylogenetic methods. She is currently the editor of the journal *Diachronica*. She also directs Yale's Women Faculty Forum, a gender equity group on campus. She is faculty co-director of the Native Northeast Portal and Chair of the CTL's faculty advisory committee. She also serves on the Social Science Tenure and Appointments Committee and has a secondary appointment in Anthropology and membership of the Executive Committee for Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

For more information about our speaker, click on the link below:

<https://campuspress.yale.edu/clairebowern/>

You can also follow her on **Twitter** @anggarrgoon