

## Modern Ways for Ancient Words

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Our organisation is based in Newcastle NSW, Australia. We are an Aboriginal not for profit organisation working in the field of Indigenous Language Maintenance, we have been helping to reclaim the Awabakal language of where we live and we also have developed specific computer software to aid us in this activity. Dianna Newman and myself (Daryn McKenny) have found it extremely difficult to find user friendly computer software that is specific to language work, everything that we have come across has been aimed at the academics so this is where we decided to develop our own, it's called Miromaa and you can read further about it at our main organisation website [www.arwarbukarl.com.au](http://www.arwarbukarl.com.au).

Miromaa in the Awabakal language means "Saved" and we thought it was appropriate to name this program that we have developed accordingly, we at ACRA feel that if you are using Miromaa for Aboriginal language work you have gone a long way to save your language. Miromaa empowers Aboriginal people themselves to be hands on using technology in the maintenance of their native language.

So what is it? Miromaa is a program which we have developed to aid in Aboriginal language work, it is a easy to use, user friendly database to help you gather, organise, analyse and produce outcomes for your language work.

The program enforces good archive practise and helps you gather any and all evidences of language including, text, audio, images and video. You can also use it to store your digitised documents for example: Pdf and Word documents, Excel spreadsheets plus more.

It has a secure environment which can only be accessed by username and password, it can help you work on multiple languages or dialects and it also has a learning area where you can begin learning immediately.

The program can run on either a stand-alone desktop or on a network and you are not just limited to using Miromaa only as the program has the ability to export its data in various forms including SIL Shoebox/Toolbox text file format, Lexique Pro text file format, Microsoft Word, tables and more.

Over the past years we have also found that there is no specific websites, training or support networks for Indigenous Language Workers in how we can better use Technology in our endeavours, and as such we are also doing whatever we can at National level to aid others in harnessing the power of technology to help.

We have made Miromaa available for other Language Centres to use, we hold Language/ Technology training classes around the country, so far we have held these in Queensland and Victoria. We also recently held the first ever Puliima National Indigenous Languages and Information Communication Technology Forum in April this year (2007) in Newcastle, we feel that this was a great success and hope it provides the drive needed for others to start adapting to technology and how it can place an ever increasing part in language maintenance. From what we have gathered everyone is switching on.