



African Association for Lexicography

**30th International Conference of the African Association for
Lexicography**

1 – 4 July 2026, University of Venda, Thohoyandou, South Africa

FIRST CIRCULAR

Dear AFRILEX member/friend

You are cordially invited to the **30th International Conference of the African Association for Lexicography** (AFRILEX 2026) to be hosted by the Tshivenda National Lexicography Unit at the University of Venda in Thohoyandou, South Africa. Detailed information about the conference and the call for papers are contained below in this circular.

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1. CONFERENCE DETAILS

Date: 1 – 4 July 2026

Host: Tshivenda National Lexicography Unit, University of Venda

Venue: Lecture Halls E1 – E4

Campus of the University of Venda
(Please see the attached campus map)
University Road, Thohoyandou
Limpopo Province, South Africa

Cost: Early bird (before 31 May 2026): R3 700 (members); R4 100 (non-members)
Late registration (after 31 May 2026): R4 100 (members); R4 700 (non-members) The conference fee includes a conference bag and stationery, tea breaks, lunches, the welcoming cocktail and the conference gala dinner.

AFRILEX membership fee: R200 (individual), R800 (corporate)

Presenters of papers and special sessions must register before **31 May 2026**.

2. KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

International speaker: Prof Gilles-Maurice de Schryver, BantUGent (the UGent Centre for Bantu Studies), Ghent University, Belgium.



Topic: Afrilex at 30

Short Biography

Gilles-Maurice de Schryver is a research professor of African linguistics at [BantUGent](#) (the UGent Centre for Bantu Studies), as well as a computational linguist at [LT3](#) (the Language and Translation Technology Team), both at Ghent University, in Belgium. He is also an extraordinary professor in the Department of African Languages at the University of Pretoria, a job title he formerly held at the University of the Western Cape (2006 – 2012), both in South Africa. In 2002 he co-founded [TshwaneDJe HLT](#) to develop lexicographic software. He has a long-standing affiliation with Afrilex, having served two terms as the President of Afrilex (2009 – 2013), and prior to that serving in other capacities on the Executive board of Afrilex. He is the author or co-author of close to 400 books, book chapters, journal articles and conference papers, mainly on Bantu corpus linguistics and lexicography in general. His publications also include award-winning dictionaries for Northern Sotho, Zulu and Xhosa, published with Oxford University Press.

Africa speaker: Prof Langa Khumalo, South African Center for Digital Language Resources (SADiLaR), North-West University, South Africa



Topic: On AI and the future of African lexicography

Short Biography

Langa Khumalo is a Full Professor and Chief Director of the South African Center for Digital Language Resources (SADiLaR) at the North-West University. He is the former Director of Language Planning and Development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. He is a member of the Oxford Business Alumni Network. He is the current Chair and Coordinator of the Africa Union IsiZulu Language Commission. He served two terms as President of Afrilex (2021 – 2025). He is a member of the Scientific Board of the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (University of the Western Cape) and a member of the inaugural Executive Committee of the Digital Humanities in Southern Africa. In 2023 he received a Recognition Award from the University of the Free State for his Contribution to Multilingualism nationally and internationally. He has recently been appointed by the Department of Higher Education and Training as a Member of the Advisory Panel for Language Policy Implementation.

3. PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

Date: Wednesday 1 July 2026, time to be confirmed

Venue: Lecture Hall E1, campus of the University of Venda, Thohoyandou

Cost: Free

Theme: GenAI & Lexicography: From the insights of Patrick Hanks (1940 – 2024) to DeepSeek as the ultimate lexicographer

Presenter: Gilles-Maurice de Schryver

Extra: Attendees will receive a free copy of the Festschrift offered to Patrick Hanks on his 70th birthday.



4. WELCOMING COCKTAIL

Date: Wednesday 1 July 2026, 18:30

Venue: Foyer of Lecture Hall E1-E4
R300 per person for guests, i.e. partners of delegates

5. CONFERENCE DINNER

Conference delegates are invited to attend the conference dinner. Confirmation of attendance must be **before 31 May 2026**.

Date: Thursday 2 July 2026, 18:30
Venue: University Hall
R500 per person for guests, i.e. partners of delegates
Menu: Three-course meal, wine and juice.

6. CONFERENCE EXCURSION

Date: Saturday 4 July 2026, 05:00 – 18:00

Venue: Kruger National Park – The excursion will consist of a day trip to the Kruger National Park with scenic game drives and a visit to the Thulamela archaeological site. A packed lunch is included.

Cost: R950 per person

Note: The conference excursion is only available to participants who register and pay for the conference and excursion **before 31 May 2026**.

7. ACCOMMODATION

Conference delegates are responsible for arranging their own accommodation. Please refer to the [Accommodation](#) tab on the conference website for suggestions.

8. TRANSPORT & VENUE LOCATION

8.1. Airport transfers

There are three airports that could be considered, namely OR Tambo International Airport, Polokwane International Airport and Hoedspruit Eastgate Airport. Delegates can organise their own transport from the airport to the conference venue. All airports have car rental facilities. Reliable transport service providers have also been arranged by the local organiser. Please see below for details.

8.2. Transport between places of accommodation and the conference venue

Reliable transport service providers have been arranged by the local organiser. Minibus taxis are not recommended for foreign visitors.

For more information or assistance, please contact the conference organiser directly (contact details available on page 4).

8.3. Conference venue location

All the conference activities (cocktail reception, workshop, sessions, tea-breaks, lunch and dinner) will take place at the University of Venda Campus.

Please refer to the attached Univen Campus Map. Please take note of clearly marked parking areas close to the conference venue.

9. PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

Any person entering South Africa must hold a valid passport. Please consult your travel agent or local South African representative in good time regarding possible visa or entry permit requirements.

The local conference organisers will gladly provide an official conference invitation upon request to any participant who has registered and fully paid for the conference, for use to apply for a visa/permit as may be required. Unfortunately, no invitation can be issued to a prospective participant who has not registered and paid the full conference fees.

Please note that the local organisers are not in a position to apply for visas/permits on behalf of any conference participants. Travellers are responsible for ensuring that their documents are in order before they travel.

10. CURRENCY

South African currency is the South African Rand (ZAR, indicated by R).

11. REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

Delegates can register online by clicking [here](#) or on “Register” on the conference [homepage](#). Proof of payment must please be emailed to the treasurer, Prof Elsabé Taljard, elsabe.taljard@up.ac.za.

For all queries regarding overseas payments, delegates can also contact the treasurer.

Delegates who require an invoice should please fill in the online registration form and send the request to elsabe.taljard@up.ac.za. An invoice will be generated according to the information on the registration form.

12. WEATHER INFORMATION

Winters in Thohoyandou are usually mild with warm and sunny days, and cool nights.

13. CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

For enquiries regarding payment, please contact the AFRILEX treasurer:

Prof Elsabé Taljard; elsabe.taljard@up.ac.za

For administrative enquiries and any other enquiries, please contact the local organiser: Ms Mulalo Takalani; mulalo.takalani@univen.ac.za; (+27) 072 277 4533 or 064 540 6018

We look forward to welcoming you to Thohoyando!

14. MAP

