



27th International Conference of the African Association for Lexicography
26-29 September 2023, Bloemfontein, South Africa

FIRST CIRCULAR

30-05-2023

Dear AFRILEX member/friend

You are cordially invited to the 27th **International Conference of the African Association for Lexicography** (AFRILEX 2023) to be held in Bloemfontein, South Africa. Please note that the conference is run concurrently with the 7th International Symposium on Place Names ([ISPN 2023](#)).

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1. CONFERENCE DETAILS

Date: 26 – 29 September 2023

Host: University of the Free State

Venue: Equitas, Bloemfontein campus, University of the Free State

205 Nelson Mandela Drive, Bloemfontein (building 44 on [this UFS campus map](#))

Cost: Early bird (before 1 August 2023): R2 500 (members); R2 800 (non-members)

Late registration (after 1 August 2023): R2 900 (members); R3 100 (non-members)

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

2. KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

International speaker: Prof Myriam Vermeerbergen, Linguistics Research Unit, KU Leuven



Topic: Sign Language Lexicography - Challenges and/as Opportunities

Short biography:

Myriam Vermeerbergen is Professor of (Sign) Linguistics at KU Leuven (Belgium), where she and her deaf colleagues have established a unique academic teaching programme in Flemish Sign Language (VGT) and VGT interpreting.

In the early 1990s, Myriam pioneered sign language research in Flanders, Belgium, and in 1996 she obtained a PhD with a thesis on morpho-syntactic aspects of VGT. As a post-doctoral researcher, she continued her work on the grammar of VGT and also studied the similarities between the grammars of different sign languages (including South African Sign Language) and between sign languages and other forms of gestural communication. She spent several months in South Africa, researching “homesigning”, the gestural form of communication used by deaf people who have not acquire or learnt a full-fledged spoken or signed language.

As one of the few sign language experts in Flanders, Myriam has been involved in a wide range of studies on different aspects of sign languages and Deaf communities, including research on sign language teaching, sign language interpreting and sociolinguistic and lexicographical research (resulting in the first digital bilingual dictionary of Flemish Sign Language (<https://woordenboek.vlaamsegebarentaal.be>)). Currently, Myriam is also a PI in the European Horizon2020 project SignON (<https://signon-project.eu>).

Myriam is co-founder and former chairperson of the Flemish Sign Language Centre, recognised by the Flemish Government as a “knowledge and coordination centre for Flemish Sign Language” (www.vgtc.be) and the current vice-chair of the Advisory Committee on Flemish Sign Language.

Africa speaker: Prof. Thapelo Otlogetswe, Professor of Linguistics and Lexicography, University of Botswana



Topic: Making African dictionaries African

Short biography:

Thapelo J Otlogetswe is a professor of Linguistics and Lexicography and a recipient of the Presidential Order of Honour (PH) being an honour awarded for efficient and devoted service to the Republic of Botswana. Between 2019-2020 he was a Fulbright visiting professor in the Linguistics Department of the University of California, Davis.

His principal areas of interest are corpus linguistics and lexicography. Much of his research is in lexical computing, corpus lexicography, onomastics, rhyming patterns, genre and text type analysis. He has been involved in the development of Setswana spellcheckers and the compilation of a multi-million token Setswana corpus.

He has also compiled a number of dictionaries including *Tlhalosi ya Medi ya Setswana*, *English-Setswana Dictionary*, *Oxford English Setswana Setswana English School Dictionary* and *Poeletso-medumo ya Setswana: a Setswana Rhyming dictionary*. He has led the breakthrough translation work on the Setswana Google Search, OpenOffice and Firefox Setswana Spell-checkers. He is a member of the African Association of Lexicography and of the African Academy of Languages - which is a languages arm of the African Union. He also sits on the editorial boards of multiple academic journals.

3. PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

Date: Tuesday, 26 September 2023, 13:00 – 15:30. Please note that the [ISPN workshop](#) takes place from 16:00 to 18:00 and is also open to Afrilex delegates.

Venue: Virtual event (Microsoft Teams). Delegates are welcome to attend the virtual event at the conference venue.

Cost: *Conference participants:* Free

Workshop-only participants: R500.00 per person (including tea)

Topic: Creating a bilingual Sign Language/English video glossary: The process at the National Institute for the Deaf (South Africa)

Working with a sign language is very different to working with spoken languages, more so than just the medium. This workshop will go into detail on the process followed by the National Institute for the Deaf to create a bilingual South African Sign Language-English video glossary.

- Vocabulary
 - How to select appropriate elicitation materials?
- Data Collection and Participants
 - How to elicit signs without influencing the participant?
 - What should you look for in your participants?
- Data Analysis
 - How to analyse signs in a sign language?
 - What to do if there's no established list of phonemes?
- Studio Recordings
 - How to position the model to get the best clarity.
- Practical experience
 - How to prepare participants.
 - Studio set-up to accurately reproduce signs.

Presenter: Dirkie Ebersohn, Content Development Manager at the National Institute for the Deaf Sign Language Centre



Presenter's bio:

Dirkie Ebersohn was born Deaf and embraces his native language, South African Sign Language (SASL), and culture. As a learner, he attended the De la Bat School in Worcester, where he completed his matric.

Beginning his career as an artist, he migrated to digital media and applied his skills to increasing access for Deaf people through specially adapted graphical media.

He is currently employed as Content Development Manager at the National Institute for the Deaf's Sign Language Centre in Worcester, South Africa. In this capacity, he is primarily responsible for the development of our South African Sign Language Video Dictionary. Thousands of SASL videos are available in this resource, based on scientific data collection. Deaf himself, he aims to improve SASL resources from a linguistic perspective.

Currently he is also studying at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg - Arts Occasional Undergraduate Studies, which includes modules such as Introductory Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, and Poetry & Storytelling, all in SASL.

Cocktail: 18:30

Venue: To be confirmed

R300 per person for guests, i.e. partners of delegates

Sponsored by the University of the Free State

4. CONFERENCE DINNER

Conference delegates are invited to attend the conference dinner. Confirmation of attendance **before 20 August 2023**.

Date: Wednesday 27 September 2023, 18:30

Venue: **To be confirmed**

Cost: R450 per person

Menu: Three-course meal, limited drinks (two per attendant), cash bar available

5. CONFERENCE EXCURSION

Date: Friday, 29 September 2023, 08:00 (Meeting point to be announced)

Cost: R 820, **subject to a minimum of 20 people**

Note: The conference excursion is only available to participants who register and pay for the conference and excursion **before 20 August 2023**. *There is no late registration for the excursion.*

Details: Day trip in and around Bloemfontein (For further details, please see the [AFRILEX website](#))

1) **08:00** Collect group and drive to [Naval Hill](#).

Brief talk on the historical, geographical facts at the viewing platform at the Nelson Mandela statue. Take a drive around the Franklin Game Reserve to view the animals.

2) Head to *Batho* where we will see [Thomas Maphikela House](#) and Dirigateng (the place of curtains).

- 3) Visit the National Women's Memorial and [Anglo Boer War Museum](#).
- 4) Drive down historical St Georges and President Brand streets.
- 5) Lunch at restaurant (still to be determined).
- 6) Quick walk around the [Free State Botanical Gardens](#).
- 7) Visit the [Oliewenhuis Art Museum](#).

16:00 Tour concludes.

6. ACCOMMODATION

Conference participants are responsible for arranging their own accommodation. Please click [here](#) for accommodation in the vicinity of the campus.

7. TRANSPORT

The conference organisers can unfortunately not provide airport shuttles or local transport. The following shuttle services provide transport to and from the airport, and within Bloemfontein:

Executive Shuttle: cschieke@lantic.net

Phalima Shuttle Service: <https://phalimashuttle.co.za/>

Winona Shuttle Services: <https://www.winonashuttleservices.co.za/>

Bloem Taxi's: <https://bloemtaxi.co.za/>

Rooikat Taxi's: <https://www.rooikattaxi.com/>

GG Taxis: <https://www.ggtaxis.co.za/>

8. 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 participant. Travelers are responsible for ensuring that their documents are in order before they travel.

9. CURRENCY

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

10. REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

Delegates can register online by clicking [here](#) or by clicking on "Register Here" on the AFRILEX homepage: <https://www.afrilex.co.za/>. Proof of payment must please be e-mailed to the treasurer, 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.

11. CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

Please direct enquiries to the convenor of the local organising committee:

Dr Chrismi Loth

E-mail: kongresETFB@ufs.ac.za

For enquiries regarding payment, please contact the treasurer:

Prof Elsabé Taljard

E-mail: elsabe.taljard@up.ac.za

PRESENTERS PLEASE NOTE

It is compulsory for presenters of papers and special sessions to register **before 20 August 2023**.