



Applied Linguistics and Literacy
in Africa and the Diaspora

An AILA Research Network
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Editor's comment

Dear ReN Africa members,

This edition of the newsletter presents three upcoming conferences in Africa (Nigeria, Botswana, and Morocco) and two in the United Kingdom. There are also several funding opportunities for students, ranging from undergraduate degrees through Master's and PhD programs to a post-doctoral research position. You can also read a report on the BAAL/ Cambridge University Press Seminar on *Minority languages in new media*, as well as CODE's symposium on the initiative *Context Matters* at the Pan African Reading for All Conference in Abuja.

The newsletter concludes with a call for Swahili speakers to join the team of volunteers at the Oxford Swahili online dictionary and a call for researchers who wish to join a newly established network for research on the use of minority languages in new media.

With best regards,

Yours,



Medadi Ssentanda,
Editor





Upcoming conferences and events

The Linguistic Association of Nigeria Annual Conference, Port Harcourt, December 2017

The 30th annual conference of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria will take place in Ignatius Ajuru University of Education in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, this December. The theme of the conference is *Language, literature, culture & conflict resolution*. The keynote speakers are Dr Jubril and Prof. Abubakar Rasheed.

Venue: Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt

Dates: December 4–8, 2017

Website: [here](#)

Global Approaches to Multilingualism and Standardisation, Cambridge, April 2018

Global approaches to multilingualism and standardisation is a conference taking place at the University of Cambridge. The conference aims to provide a comprehensive and comparative investigation into standardization, norms and standard languages, covering a broad range of linguistic contexts and research perspectives.

Venue: University of Cambridge, UK

Dates: April 16–18, 2018

Deadline: November 30

Website: [here](#)

Language Policy Forum, Sheffield, May/June 2018

The *Language Policy Forum 2018* invites scholars, practitioners and other stakeholders to take stock of what language policy means in times of growing diversity. We are especially interested in presentations that discuss *dilemmas* (language-related problems in the world) and *hopes* (possible solutions, perhaps as a result of applying research findings). Plenary speakers: Prof. Marilyn Martin-Jones (University of Birmingham), Prof. Tony Liddicoat (University of Warwick).

Venue: Sheffield Hallam University, UK

Dates: May 31–June 1, 2018

Website: [here](#)





International Gender and Language Association Biennial Conference, Gaborone, June 2018

International Gender and Language Association (IGALA) is an international interdisciplinary organization that is committed to the promotion and support of research on language, gender, and sexuality. At the next conference, IGALA 10, keynote speakers include Lilian Atanga, Rodrigo and Bonnie McElhinny.

Venue: University of Botswana

Dates: June 20–22, 2018

Deadline: November 30, 2017

Website: [here](#)

Pre-WOCAL9 Training in Theory and Methods of Language Documentation, August, 2018

The ten-day training workshop on language documentation to share and transfer knowledge and skills about the methods and practices of language documentation will be held at The Netherlands Institute in Morocco (NIMAR), Rabat, Morocco, prior to the 9th World Congress of African Linguistics (WOCAL9) to be held at Mohamed V University, Rabat (25–28 August, 2018). The training is intended for graduate students, early career researchers and linguistic faculty in Africa. The workshop is Sponsored by [The Endangered Languages Documentation Programme \(ELDP\)](#), SOAS University of London.

Venue: Leiden University, Rabat, Morocco

Dates: August 11–20, 2018

Deadline: November 30, 2017

Website: [here](#)

Funding, work, and study opportunities

PhD opportunities, University of Surrey, UK

The University of Surrey is committed to recruiting and supporting talented doctoral researchers, and our Doctoral College is pleased to be awarding up to 12 fully funded studentships to outstanding PhD candidates across a range of disciplines. The application deadline is November 13, 2017. [More information.](#)

PhD in Applied Linguistics, Northern Arizona University, US

Northern Arizona University (NAU) would like to announce the 2018–19 Presidential Fellowship Program, available in the Applied Linguistics PhD program in the Department of English, which will offer generous support packages of \$27,000 per academic year to highly qualified incoming PhD students beginning in fall 2018. The nomination process opens on November 1. [More information.](#)





Postdoctoral Researcher in African Linguistics, Ghent University, Belgium

Applications are invited for a one-year postdoctoral research position, starting in January 2018 and renewable twice with another year, to carry out historical-comparative linguistic research within the ERC-funded BantuFirst project led by Prof. Dr. Koen Bostoen at the Department of Languages and Cultures of Ghent University. The application deadline is November 27. [More information.](#)

University of Edinburgh MasterCard Foundation Scholarships for African Students, Scotland

The University of Edinburgh MasterCard Foundation Scholars Programme will provide 80 undergraduate and 120 postgraduate African students with full scholarships over the next seven years. Students will receive comprehensive support to remove barriers to study in Edinburgh and they will benefit from extracurricular course elements including summer schools and internships to build their abilities and make a difference to their home countries and communities on their return. The application deadline is November 30. [More information.](#)

Reports from conferences and seminars

The BAAL/Cambridge University Press Seminar Series 2017 Report

The British Association for Applied Linguistics/Cambridge University Press seminar on *Minority languages in new media: Towards language revitalisation in Europe and Africa* was organised at Aston University in Birmingham on 27–28 April 2017. The seminar identified and discussed emerging trends in the study of minority languages in new media and technology. The seminar focused on emerging trends in the use of minority languages in new media within the European and African contexts. The European and African contexts differ in many aspects such as degree of linguistic diversity, socioeconomic development, political engagement in linguistic issues, and education systems and quality. However, they are being affected increasingly by similar pressures resulting from globalisation, such as the use of new media and technology and the dominance of global or majority languages to the threat of minority languages. The seminar drew out the similarities in these contexts, which are often perceived to be divergent, and highlighted and strengthened the ways in which minority language issues can be studied and addressed across Europe and Africa. Over the course of two days, 18 participants based in 10 countries met to discuss the use of over 10 European and African minority languages in new media.

Elvis Yevudey and Colin Reilly (seminar organisers)

Pan African Reading for All Conference, Abuja, August 2017: CODE's research seminar

The initiative *Context Matters* is being established by CODE to lessen the reliance of practitioners in Africa on external evidence by supporting research which is clearly situated in local contexts and recognizes the multifarious and complex relationships between the local and global in education. As an initial step in developing an appropriate research agenda, CODE commissioned two landscape literature reviews and one policy analysis from Jennifer Thompson, Espen Stranger-Johannessen, and Kapil Dev Regmi, with peer input from faculty at numerous African





universities. The literature reviews examine existing research on current literacy and language education in Africa as it relates to Girls' Empowerment through Language and Literacy, and Africa Language and Literacy with a focus on '21st century skills'. The papers go on to identify promising and intriguing areas requiring attention including Gender, literacy, and the policy environment; The literacy practices of girls and boys in school and beyond; Sexual health literacies; Early childhood education related to African realities and practices; Mother tongue-based multilingual education; and Development and use of openly licensed learning materials. These reports were presented at the Pan African Reading for All Conference in Abuja, Nigeria.

The conference brought together 230 experts (214 from Africa) mainly from higher education, including teacher colleges, representing a total of 20 nations, 12 of which were African. To stimulate wider discussion and generate feedback related to priorities for future literacy research, the reviews were presented at the CODE Research Symposium, "Developing a Literacy Education Research Agenda in Africa." The panelists addressed issues of language policy, teacher preparedness, and the how cultural practices impact literacy and learning. The feedback from the symposium addressed similar issues, including parents' role in education, gender empowerment, language of instruction, and research methodologies. [More information.](#)

Miscellaneous

Seeking Swahili-speaking volunteers for the Oxford Swahili online dictionary

The Oxford Swahili online dictionary is looking for graduate students and others to volunteer for tasks such as production of content, social media, and discussions forum. [More information.](#)

Minority languages in new media

Following the success of our 2017 BAAL/Cambridge University Press Seminar on Minority Languages in New Media, a network of researchers is being established. If you research the use of minority languages in new media we would love to hear from you! [More information.](#)

List of journals for applied linguistics in Africa

To address the question of where to publish articles on applied linguistics in the African context, we have compiled a list of journals that in our experience have an international audience and are interested in publishing on African themes.

Journals originating in Africa

- [Perspectives in Education](#)
- [Reading and Writing](#)
- [Journal of Education and Development in Africa](#)
- [Per Linguam: a Journal of language learning](#)
- [Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics](#)





Other journals

- Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development
- Compare: A Journal of Comparative Education
- TESOL Quarterly
- Language and Education
- Journal of Language, Identity, and Education
- Anthropology and Education Quarterly
- Modern Language Journal
- International Journal of Educational Development
- Language, Culture and Curriculum
- International Multilingual Research Journal
- International Journal of bilingualism education and bilingualism

These lists are far from exhaustive, and we encourage our readers to add to the list, and perhaps even add a short comment on this [Google spreadsheet](#).

Tell us about your research!

Send us a short profile (one paragraph) of the research you are undertaking on language or literacy education in Africa by March 31, 2018, for inclusion in our next issue.

