Introduction to the festschrift

Papers in this volume form a captivating compilation that weaves together diverse works spanning phonetics and phonology, morphology, sociolinguistics, syntax, language and technology, and Khoisan studies. This volume serves as a testament to the expansive academic passions of Andy Chebanne, showcasing his profound interests that transcend traditional boundaries.

They present a delightful and compelling intellectual landscape crafted by contributors from various corners of the globe – the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Asia, Africa, and Europe. Each article not only reflects the depth of expertise offered by these scholars but also mirrors the vast network of friendships and collaborations Andy has nurtured throughout his illustrious career. This volume is therefore a fresh convergence of minds from around the world, a harmonious symphony of knowledge and camaraderie that has been brought together to celebrate one of Botswana's finest linguists.

Larry M. Hyman and Mwaambi G. Mbûûi posit a distinctive linguistic phenomenon within the Bantu language Tiania, a variant of Kimeru spoken in Kenya. They highlight an intriguing absence in the expression of the passive voice, specifically within the anterior tenses featuring an /-eet-ɛ/ inflectional ending. Notably, the otherwise general -w passive suffix (*-eet-w-ɛ) cannot be employed in this context. Instead, a novel configuration emerges, where the inflectional final vowel /-i/ serves as an anterior-passive "portmanteau." Hyman and Mbûûi meticulously illustrate and provide examples of this unique gap in the verb system. In their exploration, they conjecture that the *-i element may have originated as a stative marker. Over time, this marker underwent extension through a "rule of referral," ultimately assuming the passive function observed with transitive verbs in the language. This linguistic nuance adds depth to our understanding of Tiania's verb system and hints at the historical evolution of its grammatical features.

Timothy K Mathes and Alex de Voogt examine Tsua, a language facing critical endangerment within the Eastern Kalahari Khoe languages, that experiences notable historical processes of click replacement and click loss. In delving into an acoustic examination of Tsua's remaining alveolar and palatal click consonants unaffected by click loss, intriguing patterns emerge. Across three statistical spectral moments—the centre of gravity, skew, and kurtosis—the bursts of Tsua's alveolar and palatal clicks exhibit no significant dissimilarity. T-tests further underscore the lack of statistical significance in these differences, extending to click burst duration and intensity. In contrast, an examination of alveolar and palatal clicks in Juǀ'hoan, a language devoid of click loss, reveals significant distinctions across all acoustic measures. These compelling findings offer valuable insights into the diachronic process of click loss in Tsua. By unraveling the acoustic nuances of click consonants in both Tsua and Juǀ'hoan, this analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of the linguistic evolution and challenges faced by the critically endangered Tsua language.

Boikanyego Sebina and Thapelo J. Otlogetswe challenge the traditional belief in the arbitrariness of language, asserting that the association between a word and its meaning is not always arbitrary. Recent research has illuminated the presence of features in certain phonemes that naturally align with the meanings they convey, supporting the concept of iconicity. This investigation delves into sound symbolism within Setswana personal names, with a specific emphasis on vowels, examining a corpus of 958 names. The findings reveal a statistically significant preference for front vowels, lax vowels, and an overall higher incidence of vowels in female names. Conversely, male names exhibit a preference for tense vowels, with no significant association observed for back vowels. Cross-linguistically, female names commonly feature more front vowels, while male names

lean towards back vowels. Although the study indicates sex-biased size dimorphism in vowel patterns, the lack of significance for back vowels in male names challenges the notion of universal sex-biased size dimorphism in vowels. The study emphasizes that vowel sound symbolism in gendered names is not universal; its manifestation depends on the phonological characteristics of the language and the naming culture of the society. These results open a promising avenue for further research, particularly in languages where lax and tense vowels have not been extensively explored.

The article by Alex de Voogt and Timothy K. Mathes focuses on the ǀXaeǀxae dialect of Juǀʼhoan as spoken in western Botswana, characterized by a series of nasal clicks and glottalized clicks combined with a syllabic velar nasal into a single morphological unit. Through an acoustic analysis of these clicks, the study suggests the absence of the vowel [a] in the ǀXaeǀxae variants, leaving only a syllabic velar nasal. This observation holds true for all four click types, with discernible minimal pairs for high and low tones, as well as for glottalized clicks and non-glottalized nasal clicks. Despite the seemingly straightforward phonetic features, the article delves into the phonological and orthographic representations of these clicks, considering their broader implications.

In the realm of microvariation within the Bantu language group, Nancy C. Kula and Lutz Marten conducted a comprehensive examination of three linguistic processes in Setswana: object marking, inversion constructions, and diminutive marking. The morpho-syntactic structures in Setswana exhibit distinctive features that set it apart from Eastern Bantu languages, yet also display similarities with patterns more commonly found in Eastern rather than Southern Bantu languages. Employing a comparative-parametric approach, the study reveals that Setswana aligns with Southern Bantu in its default agreement and diminutive marking patterns. Simultaneously, its notable flexibility in permitting multiple object markers with free ordering bears a closer resemblance to Eastern Bantu, suggesting intricate historical patterns of linguistic contact. This nuanced exploration sheds light on the complex linguistic landscape of Setswana within the broader context of Bantu microvariation.

Kemmonye C. Monaka and Ntebogang Kalasi-Dintle posit that Shekgalagari is situated within the Sotho-Tswana language phylum, specifically falling under the classification of western Sotho-Tswana (Bantu Zone S). It stands as a distinct entity from Setswana, its sister language. Geographically, Shekgalagari extends across the borders of Botswana and Namibia, with a majority of its speakers concentrated in Botswana, where it holds widespread usage. Approximately eight sub-groups embrace Shekgalagari as their mother tongue, and aside from two exceptions, the dialects spoken by these sub-groups exhibit distinctive characteristics that set them apart. Their article delves into the description of these features, encompassing both phonological and lexical peculiarities within Shekgalagari dialects. The primary focus is to illuminate these variations and, where applicable, to present sociolinguistic factors that have influenced and continue to influence such linguistic nuances. By shedding light on the intricacies of Shekgalagari's linguistic landscape, the article aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the diverse linguistic elements within the Sotho-Tswana language phylum.

Hessel Visser conducts an examination of multiple homophones featuring the element -a in Naro. This paper endeavours to elucidate the distinct functional properties of -a and the stand-alone "a." It systematically presents various uses of -a, providing illustrative examples for each. A crucial differentiation is established between instances where -a carries syntactic meaning and occurrences where no identifiable syntactic meaning can be attributed to -a. The disparities between the -a suffixes and standalone "a" words are delineated, accompanied by statistical insights. Furthermore, to contextualize the morphemes, a transcribed Naro text is included, offering a glimpse into the

linguistic environments where these elements manifest. This comprehensive exploration aims to enhance our understanding of the multifaceted roles and nuances of -a in Naro.

Hilde Gunnink's exploration delves into Yeyi (Bantu, R41), an endangered language spoken in the northwestern regions of Botswana and northeastern Namibia. Yeyi presents two distinctive processes of regressive vowel harmony. The first process involves transforming a high front vowel /i/ into a back vowel /u/ when followed by a syllable containing a back vowel /u/ (as seen in example (1)), or /o/ (as in example (2)), or the glide /w/ (as illustrated in example (3)). Drawing from a diverse array of published sources on various Yeyi regiolects, this paper meticulously analyzes these two vowel harmony processes in Yeyi. The exploration reveals regional variations in the application of vowel harmony within Yeyi, with specific varieties employing it in different phonological contexts. The paper also delves into the diachronic aspects of vowel harmony, comparing instances involving affixes to those involving only lexical roots. Taking a broader perspective, the study offers a comparative analysis, highlighting the rarity of regressive vowel harmony in the Bantu languages of Southern Africa. Intriguingly, sporadic occurrences of this phenomenon are noted in Khoe languages, suggesting that regressive vowel harmony in Botswana may be an areal phenomenon. This comprehensive examination enriches our understanding of the unique linguistic features embedded within the endangered Yeyi language.

In their paper, Naledi Kgolo-Lotshwao and Thapelo J. Otlogetswe assess the representativeness of Setswana corpus data, employing measures independent of corpora. The evaluation involves two frequency measures: one derived from a subjective frequency rating survey and another sourced from a Setswana corpus. The robust correlation observed ($r = .75$; $p < .001$) between survey ratings and corpus frequencies indicates a congruence with native speaker intuitions, suggesting that the corpus effectively captures linguistic patterns. Furthermore, the study explores frequency effects through an unprimed visual lexical decision task, where participants discern whether a presented letter string is a valid word or a fabricated non-word. In analyzing reaction times, both survey ratings and corpus frequencies exhibit similar correlations, albeit with survey ratings providing a more accurate fit. This methodological contribution underscores the viability of participant intuitions in linguistic research when established corpus databases are unavailable. This aligns with prior research on European languages, emphasizing the reliability of native speakers in estimating word frequencies. The study thus not only enhances our understanding of Setswana corpus data but also offers valuable insights into methodological approaches for linguistic research in the absence of comprehensive corpus databases.

In Anne-Maria Fehn's analysis, the focus is on the endangered language Ts'ixa (Kalahari Khoe), situated on the eastern fringe of Botswana's Okavango Delta, traditionally categorized as part of the Shua dialect cluster. This paper challenges this classification by closely examining the interconnected domains of nominal gender and the marking of grammatical relations within Ts'ixa. Drawing on data from doculects, compiled from both published and unpublished sources, the study delves into the formal and functional aspects of Shua pronominal paradigms, and a set of associated clitics commonly referred to as Person-Gender-Number (PGN) markers. While Ts'ixa and Shua both represent nominal referents with corresponding pronouns, they diverge in the optional marking of grammatical gender on [-animate] nouns. Approximately 70% of noun phrases in Ts'ixa are marked for gender and number, whereas in Shua, grammatical gender marking is generally absent with [-animate] nouns. Both languages exhibit a subset of pronouns and PGNs with two paradigms associated with different grammatical roles. Shua displays a two-case opposition between subject/object and clausal dependents, while Ts'ixa pronouns and PGN clitics exhibit accusative alignment, distinguishing between subject/clausal dependents and objects. In both Ts'ixa and Shua,

the object of the clause can be further marked by a postposition (ʔ)à, a feature found across Kalahari Khoe languages and likely grammaticalized from a copula. Additionally, the Deti dialect of Shua employs an exclusive strategy: indexing pronominal objects on the verb. Overall, the shared characteristics between Ts'ixa and Shua largely adhere to cross-Khoe patterns, while differing alignment patterns support a clear genealogical split. Further comparison with Khwe, a Kalahari Khoe language north and west of Shua-speaking territory, reveals a closer link between Khwe and Shua than previously assumed, with Ts'ixa remaining distinctly differentiated from both.

Rose Letsholo-Tafila explores the intricacies of the infinitive, a topic that has sparked considerable debate in recent discussions within Bantu linguistics. The prevailing view among Bantuists is that the infinitive possesses dual characteristics. This study delves into the categorial status of infinitives in Ikalanga, aiming to elucidate their syntactic properties. Employing generative syntax and various linguistic tests, the paper concludes that Ikalanga exhibits both clausal and nominal infinitives, aligning with the patterns observed in other Bantu languages. Furthermore, the study reveals a distinctive feature in Ikalanga compared to certain Bantu languages, such as Xhosa. Unlike Xhosa, Ikalanga lacks lexical class 15 nouns. Through tests drawn from existing literature, the paper establishes that Ikalanga infinitives demonstrate a combination of both verbal and nominal properties, consistent with the characteristics proposed for infinitives in other Bantu languages. This investigation contributes valuable insights to the ongoing discourse surrounding infinitives in Bantu linguistics, shedding light on the specific syntactic nuances present in Ikalanga.

Menán du Plessis's paper builds upon Carl Meinhof's early identification of one or two Arabic loanwords in Nama (Khoekhoe, KHOE) and explores the prospect of additional borrowings, not only from Arabic but also from languages within the CUSHITIC family. The paper establishes a plausible context for these borrowings by presenting historical evidence that, for the first time, suggests a tangible connection between speakers of Khoekhoe languages and some of the early Shona states involved in the early Indian Ocean trade along the east coast of Africa. This trade network included foreign partners who spoke Arabic, Persian, Hindi, and Malay. The exploration then introduces and discusses two sets of additional borrowings identified, originating from both Arabic and CUSHITIC languages. The paper argues that distinct distribution patterns, particularly in borrowings shared with various NTU languages, imply multiple stages in the emergence of modern KHOE languages. Furthermore, a unique connection is identified for the first time with languages specifically found along the Mozambican and Madagascan coasts, distinct from the Swahili coast. This evidence suggests that the earliest interactions leading to these borrowings occurred during the older phase associated with the southerly hub of the Indian Ocean trade. This, in turn, leads to the proposition that the people later known as the 'Khoi' were shaped by the constantly evolving social and economic dynamics of a very early African—yet cosmopolitan—world.

Andy Chebanne contends that akin to many African languages, Setswana boasts a substantial word class category comprising onomatopoeic words, which originate from a diverse array of sounds in the speakers' environment. Onomatopoeic words, inherently imitating sounds, subsequently give rise to ideophones, representing the secondary function of these imitated sounds. Although Setswana grammars often provide limited information or none at all regarding onomatopoeia, ideophones receive due attention in linguistic analyses of the language. This preliminary exploration of onomatopoeic words underscores the necessity of studying this word category as a distinct element in Setswana. Given that onomatopoeic words serve as the primary source of ideophones, the paper asserts their significant linguistic value at the levels of phonology, morphology, and syntax. Neglecting these elements in the study of Setswana would be imprudent.

Therefore, the paper aims to initiate a discussion on onomatopoeic words, emphasizing their importance and exploring their relationships with other word categories within the language.

Amani Lusekelo delves into the conceptualization of time frames in African societies, specifically examining the perspective of speakers of Tanzanian Bantu languages. Traditionally, it has been assumed that these languages depict a complex and abstract past, intricately connected to ancestors, alongside a brief and narrow future tied to the present moment. The paper challenges this assertion, contending that both past and future concepts are intricate within Tanzanian Bantu languages. The argument is substantiated through an analysis of the names of sequences of days, which discretize actual events into eight time-frames—four on each side beyond the speech time. These lexical entries encompass a combination of retained Proto-Bantu forms, innovations influenced by cosmological bodies, predominantly stars, and the sun, and semantic extensions of existing lexical entries such as "night." The paper provides compelling evidence to support the claim that points C and D on both sides of the Reichenbach linear model involve both the retention and innovation of day names, elucidating the nuanced temporal perspectives embedded in Tanzanian Bantu languages.

Derived from his anthropological research conducted among the G|ui and G‖ana, Akira Takada's paper delves into the social contexts involved in the acquisition of their languages. This analysis extends beyond the mere recording of imitable grammar and vocabulary, emphasizing the significance of sustaining activities and designated spaces for utilizing linguistic resources. Takada contends that the reproduction of a speech community is intricately linked not only to the preservation of linguistic elements but also to the cultivation of environments where these resources can be effectively employed. Furthermore, the paper argues that the key to fostering the revitalization of a speech community lies in the activation of language practices. This activation, according to Takada, should extend beyond formal education, encompassing informal socialization and nonformal education as essential components in nurturing and sustaining linguistic vitality.

Bert van Pinxteren follows Vansina's analysis, examining colonization as an effort to undermine and replace Africa's autonomous cultural systems. The study highlights that in Botswana, this endeavour has achieved only partial success, thanks to adept forms of resistance that have allowed the preservation of some autonomy. This resilience contributes to explaining the relative success experienced by the country. However, within the educational domain, Botswana now grapples with the inherent limitations of the colonial education system, emerging as one of the early nations to confront these challenges. The paper contends that a gradual shift towards using indigenous languages as a medium of instruction is not only practical but will become inevitable if the country aims to achieve its set objectives. This transition is emphasized as crucial, with special attention needed for speakers of Khoisan languages.

Budzani Mogara contends that the G|ui and G‖ana speech communities are part of the Khoe-Kwadi family of Khoisan languages, which, unlike other languages in Southern Africa, have not undergone substantial development, with potential exceptions in Namibia such as Nama and Ju|'hoan. With the implementation of the Languages in Education Policy by the Botswana Government, there arose a necessity to assess the vitality of all local languages, especially those not previously utilized as mediums of instruction in primary schools. Drawing on historical sources and qualitative analyses of vitality surveys, the paper explores the challenges encountered in developing orthographies for Khoisan languages in general, with a specific focus on G|ui and G‖ana. The argument presented suggests that G|ui and G‖ana should adopt a shared orthographic convention, emphasizing the need for harmonization to address the challenges identified. This proposition stems

from the broader context of language development and the specific circumstances surrounding these Khoisan languages in Botswana.

Mompoloki Mmangaka Bagwasi's article scrutinizes the act of borrowing from a sociolinguistic and translanguaging standpoint, framing it as a terrain for linguistic contestation, struggle, and power dynamics where some languages gain advantages while others face setbacks. The paper introduces a nuanced perspective on the borrowing process, portraying it as both empowering and disempowering. Empowerment is perceived when borrowing is approached as a translanguaging strategy, where loanwords symbolize creativity, dynamism, and the unrestricted flow of linguistic elements across language boundaries. On the other hand, disempowerment arises from linguistic prestige, resulting in limitations on the movement of linguistic elements, language erosion, inadequate documentation, and insufficient etymologization. These factors collectively contribute to a failure to recognize the contributions and existence of minority languages in shaping and enriching dominant languages.

Jacob Sello advocates for the utilization of Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) technology to enhance accessibility to government communications broadcasted on television and radio in the English language for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) in Botswana. To explore the potential benefits of ASR in improving information accessibility for people who are DHH, this paper assesses the accuracy of an open-source ASR technology, measured in terms of Word Error Rate (WER). The evaluation involves comparing transcriptions generated by the ASR software with those generated and edited by the researcher. The study findings reveal that all transcribed audio-visual documents achieved a WER of less than 15%, indicating a very high quality of transcriptions. Notably, some documents even attained an impressive WER of less than 5%, signifying that the transcriptions generated could be comprehended without requiring human intervention. The study concludes that freely available ASR technology is well-suited for enhancing and diversifying accessibility methods for televised and radio broadcast government communications in the English language for individuals who are DHH in Botswana.

Emmanuel Chabata highlights the significance of linguistic corpora as primary research tools in contemporary linguistics. The importance of corpora lies in the belief that data derived from them is more accurate, observable, objective, reliable, and verifiable. However, there has been a notable gap in developing corpora for understudied languages. This is particularly crucial for these languages as researchers often face limitations in physical access, given that many are situated in remote areas. This article scrutinizes aspects of corpus design, compilation, and querying, emphasizing the urgent need for corpora development in Zimbabwe's understudied languages. Drawing insights from challenges encountered in developing Shona and Ndebele language corpora, the article sheds light on considerations essential for corpus development in these languages. These considerations revolve around factors such as the languages' developmental stage, the scarcity of written and electronic materials, and the sociolinguistic context in which they exist. The article contends that developing corpora in these languages is crucial, establishing a foundational platform upon which the development of other linguistic resources can be built.