



## 24. Afrikanistentag - Call for Papers –



We at the Institute for African Studies, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, are delighted to host the 24. Afrikanistentag on **14-16th May 2020**. To showcase recent research in our discipline, our provisional program includes three keynote speakers, a general session, three panel sessions, and a poster presentation session.

**The extended deadline for submitting abstracts is 9 February 2020.** Please find all relevant information below or visit the conference website: [https://www.uni-frankfurt.de/82151345/24\\_Afrikanistentag](https://www.uni-frankfurt.de/82151345/24_Afrikanistentag)

We look forward to seeing you soon in Frankfurt!

### General session

We warmly welcome researchers and PhD students working on any field of African languages and linguistics to submit abstracts for paper presentation to the general session. Presentations may cover but are by no means restricted to the following topics:

- Description of African languages (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics)
- African linguistics and linguistic typology
- Historical linguistics
- Language classification
- Comparative and areal linguistics
- Anthropological linguistics
- Cognitive linguistics
- Sociolinguistics
- Teaching African languages
- Literatures in African languages

### Panel sessions

In addition, we are excited to host three special panel sessions. We welcome you to read the panel proposals provided in appendix to this text.

- 1) Commands, blessings and warnings: Grammatical and ethnolinguistic aspects of directives in African languages  
Panel organisers: Ronny Meyer & Yvonne Treis (CNRS/INALCO, LLACAN)
- 2) Linguistic Biographies  
Panel organisers: Andrea Hollington (Uni. zu Köln) & Nico Nassenstein (JGU Mainz)
- 3) Tabu in der Afrikanistik – Afrikanistik und Tabu  
Panel organisers: Cassandra Gerber, Anne Storch & Sara Zavaree (Uni. zu Köln)

### Poster session

We would also like to invite MA students, PhD students and researchers to submit abstracts to present their research in the form of a poster.

## Submission Guidelines

Presentations should last for 20-25 minutes with 5-10 minutes for discussion (max. 30 minutes total). The conference languages are German and English.

Please submit your abstract using the Easychair platform. The following link will forward you to the AFRA2020 Easychair website: <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=afra2020>. You will be prompted by Easychair to create an account if you do not already have one in order to submit your abstract. Abstracts should be kept to a maximum of max. 300 words.

Please notify in your abstract if you wish to be considered for the general session or for one of the panel sessions (specifying your choice).

## Important dates

Deadline for abstracts: ~~15th January 2020~~ **9 February 2020**.

Notification of acceptance will be made by **28 February 2020**.

For further information please check our [conference website](#) or get in touch by email: [afra2020@easychair.org](mailto:afra2020@easychair.org)

## **Commands, blessings and warnings: Grammatical and ethnolinguistic aspects of directives in African languages**

Organisers:

Ronny Meyer & Yvonne Treis (CNRS/INALCO, LLACAN)

Our workshop would like to bring together researchers working on the description and documentation of African languages to discuss grammatical and ethnolinguistic aspects of directives and related speech acts. Apart from descriptions of the grammar and use of commands ('VERB!') and prohibitions ('Don't VERB!'), we are **especially** interested in analyses of the morphology, syntax, lexicon and/or usage contexts of blessings and curses ('May you VERB!'), congratulations ('Congratulations for having VERBED!'), warnings of imminent dangers ('Take care not to VERB!') and threats ('Don't dare to VERB!') – which are to date still little or not at all studied in African languages. In the following we provide an (incomplete) list of aspects that we believe merit closer attention.

### **Commands and prohibitions**

- Morphology of imperative verbs (in comparison to indicative verbs)
- Negation of imperatives (prohibitives): morphological (a)symmetries (see e.g. Miestamo 2007)
- (High-frequency) imperative-only verbs (see e.g. Cohen 1984)
- Commands in reported speech
- Expression of commands to 1st and 3rd-persons, e.g. dedicated hortative and jussive forms
- Non-command meanings of imperatives
- Expression of commands and prohibitions beyond imperatives: "command strategies" (Aikhenvald 2017), "veiled commands" (Henry 2017) and "whimperatives" (Wierzbicka 1991) such as *Would you open the door?*
- Directive (conative) interjections (Ameka 1991) and other verbless directives, see e.g. interjectional German *psst* 'Be quiet!' and Kambaata animal-directed commands, e.g. *sú* 'Catch!' (directed to a dog)

### **Blessing and curses**

- Morphology of benedictive/maledictive verbs (compared to other verbs)
- Morphology and syntax of blessings/curses in comparison to speech formulas for greeting, thanking, apologizing and congratulating
- Lexicon and idiomatic expressions
- Dedicated (introductory) particles
- Usage context and cultural background

### **Congratulations**

- Morphology of verbs in congratulations (compared to other verbs), see e.g. the use of perfective verbs in Ethiopian languages

- Lexicon and idiomatic expressions
- Dedicated (introductory) particles
- Usage context and cultural background

### **Warnings and threats**

- Morphology of apprehensive verbs (Faller & Schultze-Berndt 2018, Vuillermet 2017), see e.g. the dedicated apprehensive paradigm in Kambaata (Treis 2018)
- Syntax of warnings and threats, see e.g. the dedicated apprehensive construction in Gban (Fedotov 2018) and the insubordinated apprehensives in Amharic *ind-a-t-räsa* (COMP-NEG-2SM-forget\IPFV) ‘Take care not to forget!’ (lit. ‘So that you don’t forget.’)

We invite contributions on individual languages (based on fieldwork data or written corpora) or comparative studies of languages of one genetic grouping or area, either from a synchronic or a diachronic perspective. Form-to-function approaches (exploring the array of functions of a certain morpheme, paradigm, particle, interjection etc.) and function-to-form approaches (exploring the different means of expressing commands, blessings, warnings etc.) are equally welcome. We accept abstracts in German, English and French.

It is planned to edit a joint publication after the workshop if there is enough interest.

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Yvonne Treis ([yvonne.treis@cnrs.fr](mailto:yvonne.treis@cnrs.fr))

### **Colleagues who have already expressed their interest to participate**

- Klaudia Dombrowsky-Hahn (U Bayreuth) on Bambara blessings (Mande)
- Anne-Maria Fehn (U Frankfurt) on Khwe and Ts’ixa (Khoe)
- Angelika Jakobi (U Köln) on Dongolawi or Tangle (Nubian)
- Raija Kramer (U Hamburg) on Fula (Atlantic)
- Alice Mitchell (U Köln) on Datooga imperatives and prohibitives (morphology, syntax, discourse patterns)
- Rebecca Voll (CNRS-LLACAN) on Mundabli (Bantoid) reported commands

### **References and selected readings**

- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2010. *Imperatives and commands*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (See especially: Imperatives and commands – how to know more: a checklist for fieldworkers, pp. 418-423).
- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. 2017. *Imperatives and commands: A cross-linguistic view*. In: Aikhenvald & Dixon 2017: 1-45.
- Aikhenvald, Alexandra Y. & R.M.W. Dixon 2017. *Commands: A crosslinguistic typology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ameka, Felix K. 1992. Interjections: The universal yet neglected part of speech. *Journal of Pragmatics* 18: 101-118.

- Cohen, David 1984. « Viens! », « Donne! », etc.: Impératifs déictiques. In: *Comptes rendus du Groupe Linguistique d'Études Chamito-Sémitiques (GLECS) XXIV-XXVIII*, 3 : 521-524.
- Faller, Martina & Eva Schultze-Berndt 2018. The semantics and pragmatics of apprehensive markers in a cross-linguistic perspective. Introduction to the workshop “The semantics and pragmatics of apprehensive markers in a cross-linguistic perspective” of the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the SLE, 29 August-1 September 2018, Tallinn.
- Fedotov, Maksim 2019. The apprehensive construction in Gban. Paper presented at workshop “The semantics and pragmatics of apprehensive markers in a cross-linguistic perspective” of the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the SLE, 29 August-1 September 2018, Tallinn.
- Henry, Rosita 2017. Veiled commands: Anthropological perspectives on directives. In Aikhenvald & Dixon 2017: 301-314.
- Lichtenberk, Frantisek 1995. Apprehensional epistemics. In: Bybee, Joan & Suzanne Fleischmann (eds.), *Modality in grammar and discourse*, pp. 293-328. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Miestamo, Matti 2007. Negation: An overview of typological research. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 1, 5: 552-570.
- Pakendorf, Brigitte & Ewa Schalley 2007. From possibility to prohibition: A rare grammaticalization pathway. *Linguistic Typology* 11: 515-540.
- Treis, Yvonne 2018. [The apprehensive paradigm of Kambaata](#). Paper presented at workshop “The semantics and pragmatics of apprehensive markers in a cross-linguistic perspective” of the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the SLE, 29 August-1 September 2018, Tallinn.
- Vuillermet, Marine 2017. [Questionnaire on apprehensional morphology](#). Laboratoire Dynamique Du Langage, Lyon, ms.
- Wierzbicka, Anna 1991. *Cross-cultural pragmatics. The semantics of human interaction*. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

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Panel 2

## **Linguistic Biographies**

Organisers:

Andrea Hollington (University of Cologne) & Nico Nassenstein (JGU Mainz)

The field of linguistic biographies has gained momentum in sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropology in the last years, since its emergence in the 1980s/1990s. Usually investigated through biographic in-depth interviews and the ethnography of communication, linguistic biographies focus on individual persons' practices, ideologies and metalinguistic knowledge and views and thus regard the people as protagonists in the creation, distribution and development of their repertoires and their (individual) linguistic performances (Matras 2009, Blommaert 2010). Following a repertoire-based approach (Lüpke & Storch 2013) enables us to examine the fine-graded nuances of individual language use and the ways in which people acquire, value and use linguistic resources which reflect and represent their life stories. Linguistic biographies, in this regard, are personal narratives that indexically link people to the world they live in through language. They are concerned with the linguistic experiences throughout life (Franceschini 2002).

While language biographies have often been investigated with regard to migration, language acquisition and learning in mostly European contexts, this panel seeks to shed light on language biographies that involve African languages and linguistic practices. Looking at African linguistic biographies promises to yield interesting results not at least through the fact that the majority of speakers of African languages is multilingual. This is not limited to the African continent (a rich source of multilingual and complex linguistic biographies) but also involves other parts of the world through migration and diaspora. We welcome contributions that shed light on various aspects of linguistic biographies and thus help to establish the field in African Studies and African Sociolinguistics.

Blommaert, Jan. 2010. *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Franceschini, Rita. 2002. Sprachbiographien: Erzählungen über Mehrsprachigkeit und deren Erkenntnisinteresse für die Spracherwerbsforschung und die Neurobiologie der Mehrsprachigkeit. *Bulletin VALS-ASLA* 76. 19-33.

Lüpke, Friederike and Anne Storch. 2013. *Repertoires and Choices in African Languages*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Matras, Yaron. 2009. *Language Contact*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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Panel 3

## **Tabu in der Afrikanistik – Afrikanistik und Tabu**

Organisers:

Cassandra Gerber, Anne Storch, Sara Zavaree (Universität zu Köln)

Das Heikle, Widerliche, Abscheuliche und Banale fügen sich nicht ohne Weiteres in die Zusammenhänge der Feldforschung und akademischen Textproduktion. Wenn überhaupt, tritt die Beschäftigung mit der Transgression und dem Tabu als Nebenprodukt, Zufallsfund und Kuriosum zutage, was häufig genug den Erfahrungen in den gelebten Kontexten der von Afrikanistinnen und Afrikanisten beforschten Sprachen und Praktiken widerspricht. Meidung und Tabu, der Ekel und das Ruinöse stehen nicht selten im Mittelpunkt metapragmatischer und metalinguistischer Konversationen; bei der Gestaltung kanonischen Wissens wird ihnen hingegen nur eine marginale Rolle zugesprochen. Die kommunikativen Praktiken, die in der Afrikanistik weitestgehend unbetrachtet bleiben oder den Status des Sonderlichen haben, stehen in diesem Panel im Mittelpunkt: Sprache und Abfall, Ekel und Verfall, Tabu und Sexualität, Intimität, Lärm und Krach.