**Workshops for the Bantu 9 conference at Malawi University of Science and Technology**

**Conference dates: 7th – 9th June, 2022**

**Conference workshop date: 10th June, 2022**

Three thematic workshops are scheduled as part of the conference (Workshops will be conducted on 10th June 2022). Submissions to the workshops must follow the same guidelines as submissions for the general session. Please indicate which workshop you wish your talk to be considered for at the top of your abstract and file name (ie. Workshop 1, Workshop 2, Workshop 3). Abstracts for the workshops should also be submitted via the conference portal [www.conferences.must.ac.mw](http://www.conferences.must.ac.mw). All the abstracts submitted to the workshop will be reviewed individually by the Review committee and the workshop conveners. Below are the workshops.

**Workshop 1**: The voicing continuum in Bantu (Nancy C. Kula, Winfred Mkochi, Atikonda Mtenje-Mkochi, Maxwell Kadenge)

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Bantu languages vary with respect to whether they have contrastive voicing or not, and even when they do not have underlying voicing, show a vast range of phenomena that involve voicing. These processes include, but are not limited to, post-nasal voicing (Bemba M42, Yao P21), post-nasal aspiration and deaspiration (Chichewa N31, Malawian CiTonga N10), voicing dissimilation in e.g. Dhal’s Law (Nyamwezi F22, Kinyarwanda JD61) or as manifested in Meinhof’s Law (Luganda JE15, UMbundu R11) and depressor effects that involve voiced, breathy but also voiceless unaspirated sounds (Zulu S40, Tsonga S54, Ikalanga S16). Most voicing phenomena interact with or are in the context of nasals, which, as sonorants, involve spontaneous voicing and therefore do not themselves have true voicing. This workshop aims to understand the interaction and interrelations of these voicing processes across Bantu with a view to better understanding the phonological representation of voicing and in particular to shed light on whether voicing should be understood in discrete categories or not. The workshop will investigate the following themes and questions:

• What do voicing processes reveal about how phonological representations of voicing correlate to its phonetic categorisation in Bantu?

• Are voicing and laryngeal features different in Bantu languages with underlying voicing contrasts and those without?

• How do nasals feed into voicing and what features of nasals does this imply? Are such features/representations uniform across Bantu languages?

• Do languages with aspiration have different voicing patterns from those that do not and what does this reveal about the representation of voicing?

• Depressors show an interaction between different laryngeal specifications and tone. What does the pattern of depression across Bantu reveal about the interaction of tone and different voicing specifications?

• Given interactions between nasals and voicing in post-nasal voicing/aspiration and also between tone and voicing in depressors, are there also interactions between nasals and tone? What would such interactions add to our understandin g of the representation of voicing?

• What do historical data show about the development of voicing and other laryngeal specifications and what predictions can we make on the future development or loss of voicing based on current systems?

The workshop will welcome discussions that provide new insight from previously known data as well as those that offer new or lesser-known empirical findings in relation to voicing processes in Bantu. A focus on understanding entire phonological systems and the structure of voicing in them will be particularly welcome as a way of beginning to unravel the constraints that affect the patterning of voicing across the Bantu languages.

**Workshop 2**: Youth language practices and morphosyntactic variation (Hannah Gibson, Nico Nassenstein, Fridah Kanana, Sambulo Ndlovu, Andrea Hollington

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Youth language practices in Africa have received increased scholarly attention in the past 20-30 years with numerous studies concerning various linguistic phenomena. Building on these works, our workshop has two major purposes: While Bantu languages feature prominently in the published accounts on African youth languages (e.g. Sheng, Tsotsitaal, S’ncamtho/Iscamtho, Lingala ya Bayankee/Yanké/, Kindoubil, Luyaaye, Lugha ya mtaani, to name just a few) the latter are yet to become an established topic in Bantu linguistics. The objective of this workshop is to take a first step into that direction. Moreover, the study of (African) youth language practices has looked at various linguistic phenomena and domains including semantic processes, morphological and phonological changes, multilingual and contact phenomena such as codeswitching and the lexical domain in general. Another objective of our workshop is to shift the attention to morphosyntactic variation, which constitutes a major theme in Bantu linguistics but is still understudied in (African) youth languages. In the Bantu-speaking area, several youth language practices are connected and spoken in vast transnational areas. Based on this observation, it is likely that we can find morphosyntactic variation in those language practices, incusing phenomena such as noun class allocation, agreement and others. Another potential direction of the workshop also invites colleagues to look at closely related and seemingly “similar” youth language practices modeled onto the same base or matrix language, making use of approaches from within the field of morphosyntactic microvariation.

**Workshop 3**: The potential for increased use of Bantu languages at National and International levels (Bert van Pinxteren, Fridah Kanana Erastus, Gabriel Djomeni)

Bert van Pinxteren, Fridah Kanana Erastus and Gabriel Djomeni

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In Tanzania, Swahili is being used at the national level and has official status. Swahili is also used in several surrounding countries, including Kenya and DR Congo. However, Swahili is not being used as a medium of instruction in higher education; in general, it does not enjoy the same status English has.

In South Africa, nine Bantu languages have official status. In spite of this, English dominance is increasing in that country. In the DRC Kituba, Lingala and Tshiluba are used as lingua franca in addition to Swahili. However, French remains the official language. In Rwanda and Burundi, Rwanda-Rundi is spoken by just about the entire population, but English and French are the official languages.

The African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) has identified a number of Bantu languages as Vehicular Cross-border Languages, with the vision that these can be used to facilitate communication between countries.

For Botswana, Chebanne and Van Pinxteren (2021) have argued that a gradual transition to using a Bantu language in domains such as higher education in that country will become unavoidable, if only for economic reasons. They propose five key principles for making rational choices for working with certain Bantu languages (limited number of languages, ease of learning, inclusivity, using multilingualism, linguistic collaboration). The distinction between *discerned* and *designed* languages helps in understanding why such choices are defensible. They principles build on the ideas of authors such as Prah.

This workshop will explain and explore the theoretical framework used by Chebanne and Van Pinxteren. This should open up a new area of debate and discussion. The general method proposed by Chebanne and Van Pinxteren needs, by their own admittance, to be supplemented by more detailed linguistic knowledge as well as by an appreciation of what would be culturally appropriate and acceptable. Thus, participants will be challenged to reflect on what this approach would mean for the countries and languages they are familiar with and what perspectives they see for developing a discourse aimed at promoting the use of Bantu languages in more and more domains.