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| <u>Workshop ID :</u> | 26 |
| <u>Workshop Duration :</u> | Workshop - 1 Day |
| <u>Workshop Title :</u> | The colonial autobiography of linguistics |
| <u>Workshop Leader :</u> | Ana Deumert , University of Cape Town and Anne Storch , University of Cologne |

This panel is concerned with an introspection of linguistics and its early history as told - and indeed performed - by its own experts. The focus of the contributions to this workshop will be on disciplinary epistemologies and expert performances in the context of colonialism. The colonial period was central in shaping Linguistics as a discipline, especially what came to be known as language documentation. Colonialism permeates the very design of linguistics, and continues to shape the ways in which linguists produce (and disseminate) knowledge on the world's languages (Errington 2001, 2008, Deumert and Storchforthc.). Yet, with a growing interest in the critical history of linguistics, other knowledges and concepts of language - concepts that exist beneath and alongside academic linguistic ones –are beginning to receive more and more attention in the academy. In other words, Western linguistics, just like other academic disciplines, needs to be “provincialized”(see Chakrabarty 2000). The goal of the workshop is to create a platform for an open, and critical, discussion of experiences with colonial continuities on the one side and different language concepts, their dynamics and the diversities that surround them on the other. These exchanges will include linguists working in Northern as well as Southern settings, as well as language activists and non-academic specialists. In other words, a debate on the colonial autobiography of linguistics needs to address Northern, 'mainstream' perspectives on language as well as emerging Southern perspectives; it also needs to pay attention to non-academic perspectives and approaches (both in the North and the South), histories and concepts (Santos 2014). These diverse ways of seeing and studying language exist not independently of each other but always in the form of a relationship (Glissant 1997). The workshop will contribute to ongoing debates in Linguistics. Using the lens of biography, it will pay particular attention to the ontology of language, and to the epistemologies we have inherited. At the same time, it will not only look backwards, but also forwards, and begin to formulate new and diverse ways of looking at language, foregrounding, especially, postcolonial and decolonial epistemologies.

The workshop is intended as a one-day workshop, and the format will be a combination of academic panels, discussant commentaries as well as creative/poetic performances (keeping in line with the idea that disciplinary practice is not just learned, but also performed and performative). Thus, the very format of the workshop articulates the idea that diverse forms of knowledge are coeval (to use Fabian's, 2002, term), and exist in relationship to one another.

Selected References:

- Chakrabarty, D. 2000. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*. Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Deumert, A. and Storch, A. forthc. Colonial linguistics - then and now. In: *Colonial Linguistics*, ed. by A. Deumert, A. Storch and N. Shepherd. Oxford: OUP.

- Errington, J.J. 2008. *Linguistics in a Colonial World: A Story of Language, Meaning and Power*. New York: Blackwell.
- Fabian J. 2002. *Time and the Other. How Anthropology Makes its Object*. New York, Columbia University Press.
- Glissant, É. 1997. *The Poetics of Relation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Santos, D. de S. 2014. *Epistemologies of the South. Justice against Epistemicide*. London: Routledge/Paradigm Publishers.

