

MURATHO

December 2012



In this issue: SATI Prizes awarded at Triennial Conference

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be recognised as a distinct group on the grounds of their geographic proximity to one another or of a common interest that is acceptable to the Institute'. Chapters are formal structures of the Institute and operate in terms of a set of regulations approved by the members of the Institute. The intention of chapters is to offer members opportunities for networking and professional advancement, which can often be more readily achieved at a local rather than a national level.

Members who wish to re-establish the Gauteng, Kwa-Zulu-Natal or Interpreters Chapters should contact the SATI office. The same applies to anyone wishing to start a new chapter

The SATI constitution makes provision for members to form chapters if they wish 'to



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<http://www.translators.org.za>
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Journal of the South
African Translators'
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Jenale ya Institute ya
Bafetoledi ya
Afrika-Borwa

IPhephandaba
LeNhlango
YabaHumushi
BaseNingizimu Afrika

Muratho is the Venda term for 'a bridge', the symbol of the communicative activity facilitated by language workers

Muratho ke lentšu la SeVenda le le hlalošago 'leporogo', gomme le swantšha kgokagano ye e hloiwago ke bašomi ba polelo

Elithi 'Muratho' yigama lesiVenda elisho 'ibhuloho', okuwuphawu lomsebenzi wokuxhumana owenziwa yizisebenzi zezolimi

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Muratho accepts articles in all the South African official languages, provided they are accompanied by an English summary.

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Cover photos from the SATI Triennial Conference and Prizes Function by Jan Potgieter
Other photos in this issue: Jan Potgieter, Centre for Text Technology, Marion Boers



Editor's Notes

SATI's inaugural **Triennial Conference** was an exciting event. Translators in South Africa are not used to having events organised around them, and judging by the reaction and the buzz on the day they enjoyed the profession being the focus of attention.

Since becoming president of the International Federation of Translators (FIT) a little over four years ago, I have attended a number of international conferences and find them extremely stimulating. As a non-academic language practitioner, I was before that not exposed to such events at all, and I find that a great pity. Meeting your peers – whether from a different part of the country or of the world – is a tremendously enriching experience. Whether the meetings serve merely to confirm that you are still at the top of your game or bring a realisation that you need to clean up your act and perhaps work with a mentor for while, whether they result in new contacts and new clients or allow you to catch up with old colleagues, whether the subject matter is directly related to your line of work or not is almost beside the point: the energy created by so many enthusiastic practitioners coming together, the spirit of sharing and learning and the opportunity to hear experts will leave you refreshed and revived and raring to go long after the last tea break or plenary session.

We need more events like this in South Africa. We need language practitioners to realise that conferences are not the domain of academics only. They should be an integral part every translator, terminologist, interpreter and editor's professional life. We need them to keep fresh and up-to-date, to stay in touch with what is happening in our profession, to share our own expertise and put something back into the profession that has nurtured us.

We don't yet have a **continuing professional development** component in the translation profession in South Africa, but we will in due course. In the same way that doctors, accountants and lawyers are expected to prove they are keeping up with new techniques and technologies and continuously honing their skills, we language experts also need to take the new CAT tools

and machine translation on board (see the article about Autshumato on page 21!) before we find we are being left behind, we need to know about the latest theories and dictionaries and handbooks, we need to learn the software tricks to make us more efficient.

The world is becoming a harder place to work in. Translation rates have dropped sharply over the past five years, and we all need to learn how to work smarter in order to keep afloat. Let's do that together, and support one another in our efforts.

The 2012 SATI **Prizes for Outstanding Translation and Dictionaries** were awarded at the Triennial Conference and it was pleasing to see entries of such high standing this year. Awards like this help to highlight our profession. Most of us are not fortunate enough to work on literary translation, and it would be nice to see more entries in the service translation category of the competition. This is where the heart of the profession beats and the importance of what we do in the daily lives of so many becomes apparent. Please remember the SATI Prizes when you are working on that special job and enter it for the next round!

FIT also awards prizes for outstanding translation and it would be extremely satisfying to have another winner at the next FIT Congress in 2014, like we did last year. The difficulty is that we can only nominate SATI members, and so many of our literary translators are not members of SATI. I hope that we will have a rash of new members in the next six months, so that when we call for nominations for the FIT prizes at the end of 2013, we will have the cream of the crop to select from!

Until next time

Marion

New tradition established

SATI's inaugural Triennial Conference on 29 September 2012 saw over 120 language practitioners, academics, researchers and linguists gather at the University of Johannesburg for a day of consideration, discussion and exchange. On opening the proceedings, SATI chairperson Prof. Anne-Marie Beukes called on UJ Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Human Resources, Operations and Information & Communication Systems, Prof. Derek van der Merwe, to say a few words. He welcomed the delegates warmly, emphasising the importance of language to the university and wishing everyone a fruitful day.

The theme of the conference was *The Role of Translation and Interpreting in Language Development*. The morning was devoted to the keynote and plenary speeches, and in the afternoon three parallel sessions accommodated 14 presentations on a range of topics. While the language of the conference was English, two speakers elected to use another language – one Afrikaans and one Zulu – and whispered interpreting was provided. The Zulu presentation was a real innovation, and delegates congratulated the presenter, Manzo Khulu, and the interpreter, Michael Thibakhoana, on their achievement.

Keynote speaker **Prof. Justus Roux**, who is director of the Research Unit for Language and Literature in the South African context at North-West University, spoke on 'The Role of Language Technologies in Language Development and Communication'. He reflected on the nature of language development within the South African context, focusing on the official African languages, then gave an overview of the domain of

SATI's inaugural Triennial Conference was a great success and heralds a new tradition for the Institute



Delegates agreed that the day was stimulating and useful

language technologies and the status of their implementation in South Africa, and concluded by considering the potential impact of language technologies on language development and vice versa. The delegates greatly appreciated Prof. Roux's ideas and the information he shared on the range of exciting developments currently being explored in the language technology field. Prof. Roux closed with a call for real commitment on the part of the institutions involved in this work and those officially tasked to develop language resources and standardisation, so that the potential of language technologies to raise the status and functionality of the indigenous languages to

FLTR: Derek van der Merwe, Justus Roux and Nomsa Mollo





Mtholeni Ngcobo
(top) and Brian
Mossop

SATI conference a worthwhile experience

The day dawned quite chilly on Saturday 29 September. As spring was well and truly underway, I dismissed thoughts of putting on boots and long-sleeved shirts, thinking that it would warm up later. Although this didn't happen (and I missed my boots and long sleeves dreadfully), my spirits weren't dampened as I headed off to the SATI Triennial Conference. And my spirits didn't fail me throughout the day!

I thoroughly enjoyed learning about government's strategies on language development, hearing what is being done about revising translations in other countries and discussing the role of quality in translations.

However, what I most enjoyed about the conference was the opportunity I had to network with other delegates. Being quite involved in the daily workings of my business, and wrapped up in the finances and marketing, I have very little time to concentrate on language. At the conference, I really enjoyed having a day to immerse myself in language again, to hear what other language practitioners have to say and how they are finding the marketplace at the moment. I look forward to the next conference!

Lia Marus

[Lia works at ITWeb, as the editor of their HR website, HR Pulse, which she finds challenging but rewarding. She previously worked in print publishing. Lia also presented a paper on plain English at the conference.]

the benefit of the users of the languages can be reached.

The plenary presentation on the role of government language offices in language development by **Landela Nyangintsimbi** of the Tshwane Metro Language Division was delivered by her colleague, Ms **Nomsa Mollo**. The Tshwane Metro language policy aims not only to facilitate access to municipal services and information, but also to protect linguistic diversity and promote African languages as a means to redress past imbalances. The way in which the language policy is implemented helps raise the level of the languages in question. The Metro uses simultaneous interpreting as a regular means of ensuring effective communication. Clients have the option of communicating with the Metro in various languages and documents for public consumption are made available in all the Metro's official languages. The Metro runs a Language Awareness Campaign and their work in developing relevant terminology and translating important documents like bylaws and policies into the official languages is particularly valuable in the development of these languages. They are to be congratulated on their initiatives.

Prof. **Mtholeni Ngcobo** of Unisa's Depart-

ment of Linguistics was the next to address the plenary session on the subject of 'The Importance of Bottom-up Initiatives and Practices in Language Development'. He pointed out that the general goals of language planning are standardisation, maintenance and renovation. Six forces contributed to the development of written language in South Africa: missionaries, the first linguists in the country, the government, the second-generation linguists in South Africa, Afrikaner nationalism and English self-awareness. This development generally followed a top-down approach, but Prof. Ngcobo advocated a shift to bottom-up action in order to speed up the development of our indigenous languages. He illustrated his ideas through examples of gatherings in KwaZulu-Natal, where the large local attendance combined with international interest forced the use of both Zulu and English. The exposure itself was valuable, but even more useful was the fact that speeches had to be translated and made available in both languages, thereby contributing to language development. The more local communities demand to be served in their mother tongues, the quicker will be the pace of development of these languages – individuals and local communities thus become active agents in dialogue and interaction, facilitating

Those who were unable to attend the conference have the opportunity to buy a copy of the proceedings on CD for the price of R85,00. Please contact the SATI office to place your order (office@translat.org.za).

the ultimate functioning of previously disadvantaged languages in most or even all socio-economic communicative domains in South Africa

The final speaker in the plenary session, renowned expert on revision **Brian Mossop** from Canada, changed the perspective completely, looking at the role of the translator as an editor and how this is changing translators' work as it becomes more prevalent. Globalisation and technological development have altered the traditional role of the translator, who may now spend more time revising machine translation output or editing translation memory segments than producing original text. Not all translators are happy with these developments.

After an opportunity to network and socialise as well as visit the exhibitors' stands during lunch, delegates could follow their particular interests in the afternoon's parallel sessions, before coming together again for the closing and the awarding of the SATI Prizes for Outstanding Translation and Dictionaries (see page 6.) The general feedback from delegates was that the day had been stimulating and useful and they looked forward to the next conference. 🌐

What did you like best about the Triennial Conference?

Content of the presentations, meeting old friends, discovering Autshumato.

Keynote speech which was broad, informative, well-researched and covered most areas in language practice.

The books being sold.

I liked the freedom given to speakers to use their languages in their presentations. Especially Manzo Khulu's speech being presented in isiZulu; this was a first and I think it will go a long way in terms of encouraging other African language speakers to do the same. This will help in the promoting usage of African languages at such gatherings.

The chance to meet other language practitioners and to learn more about what other people in unrelated fields are doing

Networking

Meeting and greeting – the knowledge base is also great, there is a lot one can learn just by talking to the right people.

Presentations were very good and the speakers were well prepared and articulate. The conference presented a good opportunity for networking.

The choice grade selection of topics pertinent to the language profession and the top-class quality of their presentations.

Exhibitors offered delegates the opportunity to learn more about Autshumato and SDL Trados, and also to buy books on editing





Translators and dictionary-makers honoured

A total of 25 entries were received for the five categories of literary translation, translation of non-fiction work, translation of children's literature, service translation and dictionaries.

As part of its International Translation Day celebrations SATI also awarded its 2012 Prizes for Outstanding Translation and Dictionaries, recognising excellence in published translations and dictionaries in South Africa's official languages.

This was the fifth time the prizes were awarded, having been initiated in the year 2000 to encourage the publication of translations of original works in the indigenous languages of the country. Associated objectives are to improve the quality of such translations, to promote multilingualism and in particular the use and development of the indigenous languages, to promote cross-cultural understanding and to raise awareness of the role of translators in uniting the people of South Africa. The competition is held every three years and the winners announced around International Translation Day (30 September).

A total of 25 entries were received for the five categories of literary translation (three entries), translation of non-fiction work (one entry), translation of children's literature (11 entries), service translation (one entry) and dictionaries (eight entries). Each winner received a prize of R10 000 and a certificate. No awards were made this year in the Service Translation or the Non-Fiction Translation categories.



The winners together with SATI chairperson Prof. Anne-Marie Beukes (third from left)

The three 2012 winners announced at the awards ceremony are:

- SATI Prize for Outstanding Literary Translation: **Linda Rode** for *Bitter*

Heuning, the translation into Afrikaans of Hermione Suttner's novel *Bitter Honey* [Publisher: Kwela]

- SATI Prize for Outstanding Translation of Children's Literature: **Elsa Silke** for *In the Never-Ever Wood*, the English translation of Linda Rode's *In die Nimmer-Immer-Bos* [Publisher: Tafelberg]
- SATI Prize for Outstanding Translation Dictionaries: The editorial team for the **Oxford Bilingual School Dictionary: isiZulu and English** (Editor-in-Chief: Gilles-Maurice de Schryver; Chief compiler: Nomusa Sibiyi; Linguist: Arnett Wilkes; Publishing manager: Megan Hall; Project manager and senior editor: Fred Pfeiffer)

Judging entries for prizes such as these is no easy task and the Institute is indebted to the experts who volunteered their time and knowledge in assessing the entries. They are:

- Literary translation: Prof. Alet Kruger (convenor), Prof. Annette Combrink, Prof. Leon de Kock
- Non-fiction translation: Mrs Ilze Brüggemann (convenor), Ms Gretha Aalbers, Prof. Annette Combrink
- Translation of children's literature: Prof. Thomas van der Walt (convenor), Prof. Franci Greyling, Mr François Bloemhof
- Service translation: Mr Manzo Khulu (convenor), Mr Simon Kemisho, Mr Peter Mekgwe, Ms Magadi Mohasoa
- Dictionaries: Dr Mariëtta Alberts (convenor), Prof. Piet Swanepoel, Mr Manzo Khulu

The Institute also salutes South Africa's publishers, which are publishing more and more translations in an effort to make books available to readers in their language of choice. In addition to helping develop the indigenous languages and improve educational standards, this promotes cultural exchange and assists in nation-building.

The judges' comments on the winners are given overleaf. Further details on the judges and the full list of entries in this year's SATI Prizes for Outstanding Translation and Dictionaries are available on the SATI website (<http://translators.org.za> > SATI Prizes 2012)



Comments from the judges

Linda Rode – *Bitter Heuning*

Die SAVI-prys vir Voortreflike Literêre Vertaling in 2012 word aan Linda Rode toegeken vir haar uitmuntende vertaling van Hermione Suttner se *Bitter Honey* as *Bitter Heuning*. Die vooraanstaande vertaalkundige André Lefevere se term 'herskrywing' (*rewriting*), wat verwys na die manier waarop 'n vertaler 'n bronteks sosio-kultureel, ideologies en literêr vir 'n ander kultuurgroep verwerk, is uiters vanpas om hierdie nuwe juweel in die Afrikaanse literatuurskat te beskryf. Die vernuftige wyse waarop Linda Rode die bronteks taalkundig, idiomaties en stilisties herskryf, verryk die vertaalde teks tot so 'n mate dat die gehalte daarvan beter is as die oorspronklike manuskrip. Die teks boei van die eerste oomblik dat dit in die leser se hande beland en vir geen oomblik is mens bewus daarvan dat dit eintlik 'n vertaling is nie. Die eiesoortige Sandveld-afrikaans wat gebesig word val heerlik op die oog, die oor en die tong – die oopskryf en



Linda Rode (regs) saam met die sameroeper van die beoordelaars, Prof. Alet Kruger

opteken daarvan in die vertaling gaan hopelik sorg dat hierdie streeksdialek as kultuurgoed behoue sal bly. Die interessante verband tussen die bronteks en Rhode se kreatiewe herskrywing daarvan belowe om 'n stewige bydrae tot hierdie boeiende navorsingsonderwerp in die vertaalkunde te lewer.

Elsa Silke – *In the Never-Ever-Land*

The translation of folk tales has been described as a 'complex process that cuts across semiotic boundaries', a process whereby the folktale, normally transmitted in oral performance, is rendered into the medium of print – and where the first recording already meant a compromise. With folk tales there are so many aspects involved: watching, listening, gestures, pauses, the performance – and then the recording. The recorder and re-teller of the folk tales has to walk a tightrope between these aspects, and afterwards the translator has to deal with whatever they came up with.

Silke managed admirably to produce a fluent and entertaining text that lost very little in translation. She is praised by the adjudicators for the playful dealing with word and sound and for the way in which she succeeds in retaining the modality of the original text in her innovative translation. See for instance her portrayal of the relationship between Jackal and Wolf in 'Jackal the trickster':

The Afrikaans 'Wolfie-Kedolfie,' sê Jakals en sy stem word sag en glibberig is translated as 'Wolf, my brother,' said Jackal, and his voice grew slick and slimy.



Elsa Silke with one of the judges, François Bloemhof

Her choices of names for the characters are creative and in some cases even more striking than the originals. One example: 'Miserman' and 'Very Miserly Man' for the Afrikaans 'suinige man' ('Sweet little reed').

The translator is lauded for the accessible and idiomatic text. Her free translation of songs and rhymes is particularly effective, as well as the retention of language, cultural and set-



Silke managed admirably to produce a fluent and entertaining text that lost very little in translation

ting-specific words that contribute to the atmosphere in the stories. Silke has created stories with their own voice. This is very difficult in the case of folk tales and, once again, especially difficult with translations of folk tales, because there are so many voices involved: the 'primal orator', the storytellers afterwards, the scribe, and then the translator. Her translations reverberate the implied rhythm of the original text and she succeeds, seemingly without difficulty, in retaining the playful and folkloric elements, very often combined with humour.

The translation of the original Afrikaans text into English makes it theoretically possible for an international audience now to appreciate

this exquisite collection of folktales. *In the Never-Ever-Land* is a beautiful book, and the publisher and the illustrator, Fiona Moodie, are to be congratulated, together with the re-teller of these stories in Afrikaans, Linda Rode.

This is Elsa Silke's third SATI Prize for Outstanding Translation. She previously received the award for adult fiction for her translation of Karel Schoeman's *Hierdie Lewe* in 2006 and she also won the award for non-fiction for her translation of *Ek leef my droom* by Chris Karsten in 2009.

Oxford English/isiZulu School Dictionary

The well-researched material in this dictionary fills (even if not perfectly) a huge void that has existed for decades and hampered the natural evolution of Zulu as a literary language. At this juncture Zulu is this country's biggest spoken/understood language by far – both natively and as a second language but remains challenged as a medium of learning instruction due to, among other things, a dire general shortage of effective lexical instruments like this dictionary. It is not surprising that many younger folks are migrating *en masse* to English as the medium already best suited for all-round communication.

vention like the other non-Nguni indigenous languages would maximally reduce the problem.

The lexicographical principles and procedures followed by the compilers of the dictionary indicate that they are professionals in the trade and are also language practitioners proficient in the source and target languages.

Other worthy characteristics of the dictionary are:

- The study section in the middle of the dictionary gives assistance with various dictionary activities and with formal and informal letters and e-mail and electronic messages. It also supplies information on dictionary usage procedures. This is followed by a short guide on isiZulu pronunciation and assistance with irregular verb forms in English, English pronunciation and English spelling. The back matter contains a reference section with illustrations of various objects (animals, fruit and vegetables, the human body, sport, etc.) named in both languages. It also contains useful information such as a map of South Africa; the names of the South African languages; phases of education; numbers; weights and measurements and the answers to the dictionary activities.
- The dictionary is a significant source to assist the target language communities since it caters for the needs of learners in both languages. It is a bridging dictionary between isiZulu and English
- The dictionary succeeds in transcending linguistic, cultural and even scientific and technical barriers since it contains curricula-related terms.



Dictionary Prize judge Manzo Khulu (second on left) together with OUP representative Charles Sibiya and members of the dictionary team Nomusa Sibiya and Prof. Arnett Wilkes

The compilers have gone the sorely needed extra mile to present the text in the most user-friendly way possible, given the current constraints of the conjunctive orthography of the Zulu language. This is particularly helpful to people learning Zulu as a second language – even though one of the adjudicators (a mother-tongue speaker of isiZulu) maintains that transferring to a disjunctive writing con-



Voël, perd en bul: Vertaling en die Afrikaanse digkuns

Vooraf

Voordat ek by die eintlike onderwerp van my praatjie kom, eers 'n kort woordjie vooraf.

Die graad van kulturele sofistikasie wat 'n taal bereik het, word dikwels gemeet aan die vertalings van klassieke tekste uit die wêreld-letterkunde. In die Christelik-Westerse konteks word dan heel eerste gedink aan die Bybel. Dit was inderdaad ook van die heel begin af 'n belangrike prioriteit van die mense – soos Arnoldus Pannevis en SJ du Toit – wat Afrikaans as 'n standaardtaal wou vestig. Met die verskyning van die volledige Bybel in 1933 is die belangrikste hoeksteen van Standaardafrikaans gelê. Maar ook die Oosterse kulturele en linguistiese bande van Afrikaans het formeel beslag gekry met die volledige oorsetting uit Arabies van *Die heilige Qur'an* deur imam MA Baker in 1961.

Vertalings van klassieke tekste het Afrikaans se posisie as volwaardige, kultuurtaal verstewig. Die lang epiese gedigte die *Ilias* en die *Odusseia* van Homeros uit die negende eeu voor Christus word beskou as die begin van die Griekse, en daarom ook van die Europese, letterkunde. Hierdie twee werke het onderskeidelik in 1954 en 1963 in 'n Afrikaanse prosavertaling deur JPJ van Rensburg verskyn. Van Rensburg was 'n professor in Grieks aan die Universiteit van Stellenbosch en hy het ook dramas van Sophokles, Euripides en Aristophanes in Afrikaans vertaal.

NA Blanckenberg het klassieke tekste uit die Latynse letterkunde vir Afrikaanse lesers toeganklik gemaak met sy vertalings van Vergilius wat in 1975 en 1980 die Suid-Afrikaanse sonlig gesien het. In 2002 verskyn nog 'n Latynse teks, die *Encomium Moriae* van die sestiende-eeuse Nederlandse teoloog Desiderius Erasmus, in Afrikaans as *Tot lof van Dwaasheid*. Erasmus se klassieke Latyn is deur JL de Villiers in klinkende Afrikaans omgesit.

Dante Alighieri se *La Divina Commedia* uit die dertiende eeu is waarskynlik die belangrikste digwerk in die Christelike wêreld. Delamaine du Toit het *Die Goddelike Komedie* volledig in Afrikaans vertaal as *Die Hel* (1990), *Purgatorium* (1998) en *Die Paradys* (2002). Vir elkeen van hierdie vertalings, met uitgebreide aantekeninge en

Die bekende digter, skrywer en vertaler, uitgewersredakteur en radio-omroeper, Daniel Hugo, was die gasspreker by die bekroningsgeleentheid van die 2012 SAVI-pryse vir Voortreflike Vertaling en Woordeboeke. Ons publiseer met groot genoë sy hoogs interessante en prikkelende rede.

kommentaar, is Du Toit deur die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie bekroon. Dante se ingewikkelde rymskema, die sogenaamde *terza rima* met sy 'kettingryme' *aba bcb cdc ...*, het die meeste rymende vertalings in die wêreldletterkunde onleesbaar en onbetroubaar gemaak. Du Toit het hierdie stilistiese slagkat vermy deur 'n letterlike prosavertaling te maak. Die beroemde openingsreëls van Dante se *Inferno* klink nou só in Afrikaans: 'Halfpad deur die reis van ons lewe / het ek my in 'n donker woud bevind / daar ek die reguit pad byster geraak het.'

Saam met Homeros en Dante word Shakespeare altyd genoem as een van die grootste skrywers van alle tye. Die literator FIJ van Rensburg noem Shakespeare 'een van die groot vertaaltoetsstene' vir enige taal. En hy gaan voort: 'Elke literatuur probeer hom aan Shakespeare meet ... Dit is vir sommige selfs 'n prestige-saak hoeveel *Hamlet*-vertalings 'n bepaalde literatuur besit.' Daar bestaan verskillende vertalings van Shakespeare se dramas in Afrikaans, maar die bestes is ongetwyfeld dié van Uys Krige. Hy is deur die Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie bekroon vir *Twaalfde nag* en *Koning Lear*.

En nou kom ek by die drie diere van my praatjie se opskrif.

Voël

Die Afrikaanse digkuns is byna 900 jaar oud en het begin met 'n vertaling uit Latyn. Die oudste stukkie opgetekende Nederlandse poësie kom uit die tweede helfte van die twaalfde eeu. Dit klink só:

Hebban olla vogala
nestas hagnann
hinase hic enda thu.
Wat unbidan we nu?

Dit wil sê: 'Al die voëls het neste begin, behalwe ek en jy. Waarvoor wag ons nou?'

Die Afrikaanse digkuns is byna 900 jaar oud en het begin met 'n vertaling uit Latyn.

Hierdie reëls staan agterin 'n Angelsaksiese preekbundel wat behoort het aan die klooster van St Andrews by Rochester in Kent.



Tydens die Anglo-Boere-oorlog was Reitz die Boere se enigste aktiewe digter-te-velde. In 1910 verskyn sy Oorlogs- en andere gedichten wat verse in Afrikaans, Nederlands en Engels bevat.

Hierdie reëls staan agterin 'n Angelsaksiese preekbundel wat behoort het aan die klooster van St Andrews by Rochester in Kent. 'n Monnik het klaarblyklik sy nuwe gansveerpen op die skoon agterblad van die manuskrip uitgetoets. Hierdie sjarmante gediggie staan reg onder die Latynse reëls waarvan dit die direkte vertaling is. Dit is omstreeks 1150 neergekrabbel en het verlore gegaan, totdat die Engelse taalkundige Kenneth Sisam dit in 1932 in die universiteitsbiblioteek van Oxford (die Bodleian) ontdek het. Hy het dit dadelik geïdentifiseer as Oudnederlands. Die krabbelende en moontlik verliefde monnik was waarskynlik afkomstig uit Vlaandere.

Omdat Afrikaans regstreeks uit sewentiende eeuse Nederlandse dialekte ontstaan het, is die Middelnederlandse letterkunde en ook hierdie Oudnederlandse reëls deel van ons literêre erfenis. Afrikaans het nie op 14 Augustus 1875 uit die blou Paarlse lug in ds. SJ du Toit, die stigter van die Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners, se skoot neergedraal nie. Afrikaans stam uit Nederlands en daarom begin ons digkuns ook met hierdie liefdesgediggie.

Die Afrikaanse digters het van die ontdekking in die Bodleian kennis geneem en kort voor lank die reëls toegeëien. Die eerste digter wat bewustelik daarop gereageer het, was DJ Opperman. In 1947 verskyn sy *Negester oor Ninevé* en die bundel open met die gedig 'Ná 'n besoek aan die dieretuin':

Twee kraaie het hul nes gemaak
van stukkie draad;
en in staalkoue
ver van riete en riviere afgesluit
broei rooivinke en wildepoes
nog hul eiers uit;
in ysterhokke
ver van rantjies en langgras
werp ape en die waterbokke
nog hul kleintjies af;
net in 'n enkelkamer ek en jy
van hulle vreugde afgeskei.

In die bloemlesing uit sy werk *Astrak* van 1960, voeg Opperman die woorde 'Hebban olla vogala ...' as 'n motto by die gedig. Sedertdien het talle Afrikaanse digters laat blyk dat hulle deur dié Oudnederlandse reëls geïnspireer is – te veel om nou 'n inventaris daarvan te gee. Digters is dikwels tradisiebewuster as ander taalgebruikers. Hulle is die argivarisse én die nuutskeppers van 'n taal.

Perd

Maar nie net die Nederlandse letterkunde beïnvloed Afrikaanse digters nie. Sedert die Britse besetting van die Kaap in 1806 sou ook die Engelse letterkunde sy invloed laat geld. En dit het al gebeur vóór die stigting van die Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners in 1875. FW Reitz was die eerste werklike digter in Afrikaans. Sy vroegste digpoging was 'Klaas Geswind en syn perd' wat in 1870 in *Het Volksblad* verskyn het. Dit is 'n vertaling en verwerking van Robert Burns se vermaaklike gedig 'Tam o' Shanter' van 1791.

FW Reitz, wat later president van die Oranje-Vrystaat geword het, het ook gedigte van Walter Scott en William Cowper in Afrikaans verwerk. Verder was hy in 1888 die eerste bloemleser van Afrikaanse gedigte wat in tydskrifte en koerante verskyn het. Tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog was Reitz die Boere se enigste aktiewe digter-te-velde. In 1910 verskyn sy *Oorlogs- en andere gedichten* wat verse in Afrikaans, Nederlands en Engels bevat.

Robert Burns se 'Tam o' Shanter' is in Skots en Engels geskryf. Reitz verplaas die gebeure na die sendingdorpie Suurbraak naby Swellendam in Suid-Afrika. Hy doen dit in sprankelende Afrikaans in 'n tyd toe Afrikaanssprekendes nog hul bes probeer het om Hoog-Hollands te skryf.

Ek haal uit Burns se gedig aan:

But pleasure are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white – then melts for ever.

Reitz maak daarvan:

Plesier is nes 'n jong komkommer:
As jy hom pluk, verlep hy sommer;
Of nes 'n skilpad in sy dop in:
Soos jy hom vat, dan trek hy kop in.

Burns se Tam ry op 'n vaal merrieperd genaamd Meg. Sy red hom van 'n klomp spoke en die duiwel self wat Tam agternasit toe hy een nag in 'n beskonke toestand by 'n begraaftplaas verbyry. In Reitz se gedig word van Klaas se perd gesê:





'n Flukse merrie was ou Kol,
Al was haar rug 'n bietjie hol.

Tam en Klaas word gered deurdat hul perde
oor 'n riviértjie spring, want:

'n Spook is nes 'n bokkapater,
Hy loop nie somer in die water.

Hierdie gedig van FW Reitz staan vandag nog in die standaardbloemlesings uit die Afrikaanse poësie. 'Klaas Geswind en syn perd' kan beskou word as die tweede begin van die Afrikaanse digkuns, en net soos in die geval van die eerste begin met 'Hebban olla vogala' is dit 'n vertaalde teks.

Bul

Die digter Uys Krige is waarskynlik die beste poësievertaler in Afrikaans. Hy het ons digkuns veral verryk met vertalings uit Spaans. Krige het natuurlik ook roem verwerf as vertaler van Shakespeare. In sy studie *Digters van Dertig* beweer die digter en akademikus DJ Opperman selfs: 'Uys Krige se vertalings neig tot oorspronklike werk, sy oorspronklike werk tot vertalings!' Krige se beste versvertaling is waarskynlik dié van Federico Garcia Lorca se 'Klaaglied van Ignacio Sanchez Mejias'. Dit het in 1950 verskyn in die bundel *Vir die luit en kitaar* wat sy vertalings uit die Franse en Spaanse digkuns bevat.

In sy opstel oor Lorca sê Krige dat dié grootse gedig in vier afdelings 'n treursang is ter ere van 'n vriend, die groot stiervegter Sanchez Mejias, wat in 1934 in die arena deur 'n bul gedood is. Ek haal Krige woordeliks aan: 'Dis geensins 'n loflied op die stiergeveg nie. In sy wese het dit maar min met die stiergeveg te doen. Dis 'n treursang op die dood van 'n vriend, 'n vriend wat kragtig en dapper gelewe en gesterwe het en wie se lewe 'n eenheid was. Maar dis van so 'n geweldige poëtiese siening, van so 'n visioenêre krag, dat dit Lorca se eie klaaglied word, die klaaglied vir miljoene mense wat ná Lorca in die Burgeroorlog en daaropvolgende Wêreldoorlog sou sterwe, 'n klaaglied vir almal wat moedig lewe en sterwe hier op aarde.' Tot sover Uys Krige.

Lorca het natuurlik self 'n slagoffer van die Spaanse Burgeroorlog geword toe hy in 1936 deur aanhangers van generaal Franco doodgeskiet is.

Uys Krige vertel in 'n naskrif by *Vir die luit en kitaar* hoe sy vertaling tot stand gekom het. Dit bevat een van die merkwaardigste bekenenisse deur 'n vertaler wat ek al ooit teëgekome het. Krige sê: 'Lorca se *Klaaglied* het ek in 1937 – tydens die Burgeroorlog en ná Lorca se dood – vertaal. Ek het nie die minste moeite daarmee gehad nie. Dit was asof

iemand anders vir my die eerste, tweede en vierde gedigte geskrywe het. Binne 'n halfuur was alreeds kant en klaar. Dit was ook die enigste skryfwerk wat ek nog ooit gedoen het terwyl ek onder die invloed van drank was ...' Dit wil dus voorkom of daardie 'iemand anders' wat die vertaalwerk namens Uys Krige gedoen het, niemand anders as die god Bacchus was nie!

Maar alle grappies op 'n stokkie: Krige se vertaling is waarlik meesterlik en word inderdaad beskou as 'n wesenlike bydrae tot die Afrikaanse poëtieskat. Met reg is dit sedert 2000 opgeneem in die *Groot verseboek* – daardie Bybel van die Afrikaanse digkuns.

Om u 'n idee te gee van Krige se vertaalvermoë lees ek die vierde gedig in die reeks, 'Die afwesige siel'. En daarmee sluit ek af.

Die bul sal jou nie ken nie nog die vyeboom,
nog die perde nog die miere van jou eie huis.
Die kind sal jou nie ken nie nog die
agtermiddag
want jy is dood vir altyd.

Die plat kant van die leiklip sal jou nie ken nie,
nog die swart mantel waarop jy verdelf is.
Selfs jou eie stomme herinnering sal jou nie
ken nie
want jy is dood vir altyd.

Die herfs sal kom met al sy slakkies,
trosse van mis en saamgehurkte heuwels,
maar niemand sal jou in jou oë wil kyk nie
want jy is dood vir altyd.

Want jy is dood vir altyd,
dood soos al die dooies van die aarde,
soos al die dooies wat vergeet word
soos 'n klomp dooie brakke in 'n hoep.

Niemand sal jou ken nie. Nee. Maar ek besing
jou.

Ek besing vir later jou gestalte en jou grasia.
Die verhewe volwassenheid van jou begrip.
Jou honger na die dood en die smaak van sy
mond.
En die treurigheid ten grondslag van jou
manhaftige vreugde.

Ons sal lank moet wag vir die geboorte, as hy
ooit gebore word,
van 'n Andalusier so helder, so ryk aan
avonture.
Ek besing jou swier en jou kordaatheid met
woorde wat kreun
en ek herinner my 'n droewe wind deur die
olywe.

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Die digter Uys Krige is waarskynlik die beste poësievertaler in Afrikaans. Hy het ons digkuns veral verryk met vertalings uit Spaans. Krige het natuurlik ook roem verwerf as vertaler van Shakespeare.

Bird, horse and bull: Translation and Afrikaans poetry

In the talk he gave as the guest speaker at the presentation of the 2012 SATI Prizes for Outstanding Translation and Dictionaries on 29 September, Daniel Hugo used three animals – a bird, a horse and a bull – to illustrate the influence of translation on Afrikaans poetry.

The talk was given in and was about Afrikaans, but in view of its general appeal an English version is reproduced here for the enjoyment of those who do not understand Afrikaans. Ed

Prologue

Before I come to the actual subject of my talk, a short prologue.

The level of cultural sophistication a language has achieved is often measured on the basis of translations of classical texts from world literature. In the Christian-Western context the first book that comes to mind is the Bible. This was thus also an important priority from the outset for those – like Arnoldus Pannevis and SJ du Toit – who wanted to establish Afrikaans as a standard language. With the appearance of the complete Bible in 1933 this most important cornerstone of Standard Afrikaans was laid. But Afrikaans's ties to Eastern culture and linguistics were also formally expressed in Imam MA Baker's complete transfer of *The Holy Qur'an* from Arabic to Afrikaans in 1961.

Translations of classical texts strengthened Afrikaans's position as a fully-fledged language of culture. The long epic poems *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* by Homer from the ninth century BC are regarded as the beginning of Greek, and thus also European, literature. These two works appeared in an Afrikaans prose translation by JPJ van Rensburg in 1954 and 1963 respectively. Van Rensburg was a professor of Greek at the University of Stellenbosch and he also translated plays by Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes into Afrikaans.

NA Blanckenberg made classical texts from Latin literature accessible to Afrikaans readers through his translations of Virgil, which saw the South African sunlight in 1975 and 1980. In 2002 another Latin text, the *Encomium Moriae* by the 16th century Dutch theologian Desiderius Erasmus, appeared in Afrikaans as *Tot lof van Dwaasheid*. Erasmus's classical Latin was put into musical Afrikaans by JL de Villiers.



Daniel Hugo is well known as a poet, writer and translator, publishing editor and radio announcer.

Dante Alighieri's *La Divina Commedia* from the 13th century is probably the most important piece of poetry in Christendom. Delamaine du Toit translated the whole thing into Afrikaans as *Die Hel* (1990), *Purgatorium* (1998) and *Die Paradys* (2002). Du Toit was honoured by the South African *Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns* for each of these translations, which include extensive notes and comments. Dante's complicated rhyming, known as *terza rima* and using the scheme *aba bcb cdc ...*, have made most of the rhyming translations in world literature unreadable and unreliable. Du Toit avoided this stylistic pitfall by producing a literal prose translation. The well-known opening lines of Dante's *Inferno* now sound like this in Afrikaans: 'Halfpad deur die reis van ons lewe / het ek my in 'n donker woud bevind / daar ek die reguit pad byster geraak het.'

Together with Homer and Dante, Shakespeare is regarded as another of the greatest writers of all time. The literary expert FIJ van Rensburg called Shakespeare 'one of the great translation tests' for any language. He continued: 'Every literature tries to measure itself against Shakespeare ... For some it is even a matter of prestige to see how many translations of *Hamlet* exist in a particular literature.' Various Afrikaans translations of Shakespeare's plays exist, but the best are undoubtedly those by Uys Krige. He received awards from the South African *Akademie* for his translations of *Twelfth Night* and *King Lear*.

And now to the three animals in the title of my talk.

Bird

Afrikaans poetry is almost 900 years old and began with a translation from Latin. The oldest piece of recorded Dutch poetry comes from the second half of the 12th century. It sounds like this:

Hebban olla vogala
nestas haggunnan
hinase hic enda thu.
Wat unbidan we nu?

That is: 'All the birds have started making nests, except for you and me. What are we waiting for?'



These lines are found in the back of an Anglo-Saxon book of sermons that belonged to St Andrews Monastery at Rochester in Kent. A monk was probably trying out his new quill pen on the clean back page of the manuscript. This charming little verse appears directly beneath the Latin of which they are a direct translation. It was scribbled down in about 1150 and was then lost until the English linguist Kenneth Sisam discovered it in the university library of Oxford (the Bodleian) in 1932. He immediately identified it as Old Dutch. The scribbling and possibly lovelorn monk probably came from Flanders.

Because Afrikaans developed directly from 17th century Dutch dialects, Middle Dutch literature and also these lines of Old Dutch form part of our literary heritage. Afrikaans did not fall from the blue sky above Paarl into the lap of Rev. SJ du Toit, the founder of the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners*, on 14 August 1875. Afrikaans comes from Dutch and our poetry this also starts with this love poem.

The Afrikaans poets took note of the discovery in the Bodleian and before long laid claim to the lines. The first poet consciously to react to it was DJ Opperman. In 1947 his *Negester oor Ninevé* appeared, opening with the poem 'Ná 'n besoek aan die dieretuin' [about birds and animals producing young ones]:

Twee kraaie het hul nes gemaak
van stukies draad;

en in staalkoue
ver van riete en riviere afgesluit
broei rooivinke en wildepoue
nog hul eiers uit;

in ysterhokke
ver van rantjies en langgras
werp ape en die waterbokke
nog hul kleintjies af;

net in 'n enkelkamer ek en jy
van hulls vreugde afgeskei.

In the anthology from his 1960 work *Astrak* Opperman added the words 'Hebban olla vogala ...' as a motto to the poem. Since then numerous Afrikaans poets have indicated that they were inspired by these lines of Old Dutch – too many to list here. Poets are often more conscious of tradition than other language users. They are both the archivists and the innovators of a language.

Horse

However, not only Dutch literature has influenced Afrikaans poets. Since the British occupation of the Cape in 1806 English literature has also left its mark. And this

happened even before the establishment of the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* (Society of True Afrikaners) in 1875. FW Reitz was the first true poet in Afrikaans. His earliest poetic effort was 'Klaas Geswind en syn perd' (Klaas Geswind and his horse), which appeared in *Het Volksblad* in 1870. It is a translation and reworking of Robert Burns' entertaining 1791 poem 'Tam o' Shanter'.

FW Reitz, who later became president of the Orange Free State, also reworked poems by Walter Scott and William Cowper in Afrikaans. In addition, he was the first compiler, in 1888, of an anthology of Afrikaans poems that had appeared in magazines and newspapers. During the Anglo-Boer War Reitz was the Boers' only active poet-in-the-field. In 1910 his *Oorlogs- en andere gedichten* (War and other poems) appeared, containing works in Afrikaans, Dutch and English.

Robert Burns' 'Tam o' Shanter' was written in Scottish and English. Reitz moved the happenings to the mission station of Suurbraak near Swellendam in South Africa. He did this in sparkling Afrikaans at a time when Afrikaans-speakers were still doing their best to write High Dutch.

Quoting from Burns' poem:

But pleasure are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow falls in the river,
A moment white – then melts for ever.

Reitz turns this into:

Plesier is nes 'n jong komkommer:
As jy hom pluk, verlep hy sommer;
Of nes 'n skilpad in sy dop in:
Soos jy hom vat, dan trek hy kop in.

(Pleasure is like a young cucumber: pluck it and it simply withers; or just like a tortoise in its shell: as soon as you touch it, it pulls its head in.)

Burns' Tam rides a pale mare named Meg. She rescues him from a number of ghosts and from the devil himself, who goes after Tam when he passes a graveyard in a drunken state one night. Reitz's poem says of Klaas's horse:

'n Flukse merrie was ou Kol,
Al was haar rug 'n bietjie hol.

(A sprightly mare was old Kol, even though her back was rather hollow.)

Tam and Klaas are rescued as a result of their horses jumping a stream, as:

'n Spook is nes 'n bokkapater,
Hy loop nie sommer in die water.

(A ghost is like a gelded goat, and won't easily get his feet wet.)

This poem of FW Reitz's is even today still included in the standard anthologies of Afri-

Afrikaans did not fall from the blue sky above Paarl into the lap of Rev. SJ du Toit, the founder of the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners, on 14 August 1875. Afrikaans comes from Dutch and our poetry this also starts with this love poem.

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However, not only Dutch literature has influenced Afrikaans poets. Since the British occupation of the Cape in 1806 English literature has also left its mark.

kaans poetry. 'Klaas Geswind en syn perd' can be regarded as the second beginning of Afrikaans poetry, and just as in the case of the first beginning with 'Hebba olla vogala' it is a translated text.

Bull

The poet Uys Krige is probably the best translator of into Afrikaans. He enriched our poetry with translations from Spanish in particular. Krige of course also gained renown as a translator of Shakespeare. In his study *Digters van Dertig* the poet and academic DJ Opperman even claims: 'Uys Krige's translations tend towards original works, his original works towards translations!' Krige's best translation in verse is probably that of Federico Garcia Lorca's 'Klaaglied van Ignacio Sanchez Mejias' (Lament for Ignacio Sanchez Mejias). It appeared in 1950 in the collection *Vir die luit en kitaar*, which contained his translation from French and Spanish verse.

In his essay on Lorca, Krige says that this great poem in four sections is an elegy in honour of a friend, the great bullfighter Sanchez Mejias, who was killed in the ring by a bull in 1934. To quote Krige: 'It is in no way a song of praise to bullfighting. In its essence it has very little to do with bullfighting. It is an elegy on the death of a friend, a friend who lived and died forcefully and bravely and whose life was whole. But it is of such powerful poetic vision, of such visionary power, that it becomes Lorca's own elegy, the elegy for millions who would die after Lorca in the Civil War and the subsequent World War, a lament for everyone who lives and dies bravely here on earth.' So says Uys Krige.

Lorca naturally became a victim of the Spanish Civil War himself when he was shot and killed by supporters of General Franco in 1936.

Uys Krige tells in a postscript to *Vir die luit en kitaar* how his translation emerged. It contains one of the most remarkable admissions by a translator that I have ever come across. Krige says: 'I translated Lorca's *Klaaglied* in 1937 – during the Civil War and after Lorca's death. I did not experience the slightest difficulty. It was as if someone else wrote the first, second and fourth poems for me. All three were done and dusted within half an hour. This was also the only writing I ever did while under the influence of alcohol ...' It would thus appear that this 'someone else' who did the translation on behalf of Uys Krige was none other than the god Bacchus!

But jokes aside, Krige's translation is a true masterpiece and is regarded as a significant contribution to the treasure chest of Afrikaans poetry. It has justifiably been included in the Bible of Afrikaans poetry – the *Groot verseboek* – since 2000.

To give you an idea of Krige's translation ability I will close with the fourth poem in the series, 'Die afwesige siel' (The absent soul).

Die bul sal jou nie ken nie nog die vyeboom,
nog die perde nog die miere van jou eie huis.
Die kind sal jou nie ken nie nog die
agtermiddag
want jy is dood vir altyd.

Die plat kant van die leiklip sal jou nie ken nie,
nog die swart mantel waarop jy verdolg is.
Selfs jou eie stomme herinnering sal jou nie
ken nie
want jy is dood vir altyd.

Die herfs sal kom met al sy slakkies,
trosse van mis en saamgehurkte heuwels,
maar niemand sal jou in jou oë wil kyk nie
want jy is dood vir altyd.

Want jy is dood vir altyd,
dood soos al die dooies van die aarde,
soos al die dooies wat vergeet word
soos 'n klomp dooie brakke in 'n hoop.

Niemand sal jou ken nie. Nee. Maar ek besing
jou.

Ek besing vir later jou gestalte en jou grasia.
Die verhewe volwassenheid van jou begrip.
Jou honger na die dood en die smaak van sy
mond.

En die treurigheid ten grondslag van jou
manhaftige vreugde.

Ons sal lank moet wag vir die geboorte, as hy
ooit gebore word,
van 'n Andalusier so helder, so ryk aan
avonture.

Ek besing jou swier en jou kordaatheid met
woorde wat kreun
en ek herinner my 'n droewe wind deur die
olywe.

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Van stories luister tot vertaling



My durende liefde vir woorde (meer spesifiek: stories) het kleintyd op 'n plaas in die Klein-Karoo begin waar ons nog saans by kers- of lamplig geles het, waar my pa my Jakkals-en-Wolfstories vertel het voor die ou Welcome Dover-stoof op winteraande, en waar ek as enkelkind kuierende omgeluister het na die grootmense se Karoo-vertellings. Alles baie bevorderlik vir 'n belangstelling in oorvertellings, veral van folklore – iets wat later 'n stokperdjie sou word en aanleiding gegee het tot die saamstel van bundels soos *Goue lint, my storie begint*, en die oorvertellings in *Stories vir die vaak* en *In die Nimmer-Immer-Bos*.

Verdere bydraende faktore tot 'n bemoeienis met stories was die ses meisiekinders van my pa se regterhand op die plaas: Nankies, Soen, Toesie, Klein-Toet, Sielja en Mietjie. Saam het ons kambro's gegrawe in die rantjies, noem-noembessies geoes, gorêns gegrou in die Brandrivier, die name van die vetplante uitgepluis. Ons het mekaar met raaisels uitgedaag, rympies opgesê, en oustories vertel soos dié van die watervrou wat in die poel tussen die riete wag, of dié van die kokkewiet wat snytjies tussen jou tone maak terwyl jy slaap, of prettige volksgelofies aangehaal soos dat jy 'n haas kan vang deur sout op sy stert te gooi, of so hard as jy kan op jou eie knie te kap met 'n klip! Daardie magiese ervarings gewortel in die natuur was die begin van 'n lewenslange belangstelling in stories.

Daar was ook 'n ander belangrike stimulus: die plaasskool se 'biblioteek' – 'n regop tweedeurkassie. Daarin was boeke met 'n uitgesproke Victoriaanse aangesig: *Jessica's first prayer*, byvoorbeeld, en klassieke reekse soos die *What Katy did*-boeke en *Little House on the Prairie*, *Black Beauty*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Ook natuurlik boeke deur ons vroeë Afrikaanse skrywers soos Langenhoven, Sangiro (ag, die wonder van *Uit oerwoud en vlakte*), MER en ander. En dan – tot my allerverwondering – was daar Afrikaanse vertalings van seleksies uit Grimm, Andersen, die Griekse en Germaanse mites, Uilspieël se trieksterstreke, die spekskietstories van Baron von Münchhausen, en verhale oor daardie versinnebeelding van fantasie en illusie: Don Quichot. Eksotiese, anderlandse stories, maar toeganklik vertaal in Afrikaans. Vertaling was dus byna soos in die ou raaisel: *Ek kap 'n blok in hierdie land; sy spaanders spat in anderland* . . .

Die wenner van die 2012 SAVI-prys vir Voortreflike Literêre Vertaling, Linda Rode, praat oor haar liefde vir stories en die uitdaging om Bitter Heuning te vertaal.

Nog 'n deurslaggewende merker op die boekepad was die fassinerende reeks Amerikaanse boeke – The Home University Bookshelf-reeks – wat my ma, 'n plaasskool-onderwyseres, vir haar uit Amerika bestel het. Bande met titels soos *Folklore, Fables and Fairy Tales, Golden Stories, Famous Stories and Verse* . . . Nodeloos om te sê: hulle het my finaal weggevoer na 'the pleasant land of counterpane' (Robert Louis Stevenson). Ongelukkig sou ek ons eie skat van Afrika-folklore eers jare later te lees kry.

Ná 'n klompie skoolhoujare met hoofsaaklik Afrikaans en Duits as vakke, het 'n lang vryskutverbintenis met die uitgewerswese begin. Redigering, saamstel van bundels, keuring van manuskripte, proeflees en – soos vars asemteue tussendeur – vertalings, hoofsaaklik van kinder- en jeugboeke; ook van *Dans met armmansdogter (Dance with a poor man's daughter)* van Pamela Jooste, 2008.

Toe kom Kwela se versoek in 2010 om Hermione Suttner se manuskrip *Bitter Honey* in Afrikaans te vertaal. Ek het die manuskrip reeds leer ken gedurende die keurproses. Daar was eenstemmigheid dat hierdie storie oor arm Sandvelders uit vervloë tye nie 'n groot genoeg teikenmark onder Engels-sprekendes sou vind nie. Maar Nêlleke de Jager, destydse hoof van Kwela-Uitgewers, het bevind: in Afrikáans kan dit werk, want Afrikaans is die hartstaal van daardie kontreie. Ek was vol trepidasie. Standaardengels na Sandveldafrikaans! Of op die minste, outydse, landelike Afrikaans getrou aan die milieu? Sou dit kan?

Saam het ons kambro's gegrawe in die rantjies, noem-noembessies geoes, gorêns gegrou in die Brandrivier, die name van die vetplante uitgepluis. Ons het mekaar met raaisels uitgedaag, rympies opgesê, en oustories vertel. Daardie magiese ervarings gewortel in die natuur was die begin van 'n lewenslange belangstelling in stories.

In this article **Linda Rode** talks about how she developed her love for stories during her childhood in the Little Karoo through winter evenings of story-telling around the fire, exposure to literature at school and at home, but also through time spent in imaginative play in the veld with friends. She then turns to the challenge of translating standard English into the dialectical Afrikaans of the Sandveld area of the West Coast and the resources and forgotten memories she dredged up to ensure an authentic voice in the book. It is not often that a translation is published without the source text being in print, and this allowed Linda a freedom that a translator does not often have, and the challenge turned into a very rewarding experience.



lets wat op frappante wyse na vore gekom het tydens die vertaling en die indompeling in 'n vervloë tyd is dat halfvergete woorde en uitdrukkings opgeroep is, baie daarvan uit my kleintyd op die plaas. Spontaan uit die onbewuste taalgeheue.



Verrukend

Uiteindelik was die proses van vertaling (eintlik transponering) 'n wonderlik verrukende een. Op 'n vreemd-toevallige manier het dinge bymekaargekom. Jare lank versamel ek boeke, rubrieke en woordelyste van juis die Weskus-Sandveldgebiede en Namakwaland, die Boesmanland en daardie omtes omdat dit so 'n ryke bakermat van aardse Afrikaanse uitdrukkings is. Daardie bronne is almal gefynkam, daaronder veral E Kotze se boeke, geurend van bokkoms en soutbries. Tony Links se *So praat ons Namakwalanders* het gehelp om die Namakarakters se dialoog so outentiek moontlik te kry. Twee Velddriewers, een 'n kenner van ou Weskustradisies, die ander 'n fynboskenner, moes oproep na oproep beantwoord. Gedurende die proses van vertaling het ek geen ander Afrikaanse fiksie as die bogenoemde gelees nie sodat die deursypeling van gewestetaal nie onderbreek word nie.

Vanselfsprekend was daar baie e-posse tussen my en Hermione Suttner, die wellewende, tegemoetkomende skrywer van *Bitter Honey*. Ons het een hele dag saam deurgebring en dinge uitgeklaar en selfs stukke hardop gelees. Ons het o.m. besluit dat daar enkele Yiddisje woorde moet bykom ter wille van groter outentisiteit rondom die twee Joodse smouse. Hermione (van Joodse oorsprong) kon nog onthou dat haar ma van knippel gepraat het: geldjie afknyp, opsyt. En natuurlik was daar algemeen bekende woorde soos *borsjt* en *kosjer*. Maar ons had meer nodig. Toe kom die skrywer se suster ons te hulp met 'n gehawende eksemplaar van *The joys of Yiddish* van Leo Rosten.

Die vertaalproses was gevarieerd: die uitgewer het die vertaler die reg en opdrag gegee om tydens die vertaling ook te redigeer, afgesien van die finale redigering deur Suzette Kotze-Myburgh. So 'n prosedure verlangsaam die vertaalproses, maar dit beteken dat die vertaalteks probleme en foute in die oorspronklike kan uitskakel en selfs toevoegings kan bewerk, soos in die dialoog van die Namakarakters. (Ek stem nie saam met Umberto Eco dat 'n vertaler nie moet probeer 'verbeter' op die oorspronklike nie. Solank dit met piëteit gedoen word, by die oorspronklike toonaard hou en die teks toegankliker maak vir die doeltaalleser.)

Iets wat op frappante wyse na vore gekom het tydens die vertaling en die indompeling in 'n vervloë tyd is dat halfvergete woorde en uitdrukkings opgeroep is, baie daarvan uit my kleintyd op die plaas. Spontaan uit die onbewuste taalgeheue. Woorde soos *perkate* (manewales), *minteneer* (bestuur; behartig – sekerlik saam met die Fr. Hugenote gekom: *maintenir*?) en *liemaak* (lus maak; jaloers maak). 'n Woord soos *moerak* (verrinneweer; rof behandel; seermaak) het ek in 1960 in Calvinia die eerste keer gehoor; dit weer in *Annerlike Afrikaans* van Anton E Prinsloo teengekom; toe tot my vreugde in E Kotze se werk raakgeloop, wat dit sonder meer laat kwalifiseer het vir die Sandveldstorie. Ander woorde soos *roltoetjie* (duisendpoot), *dreunlyf* (morrig; omgekrap), *kooiurou* (vrou in die bed met nuwe baba), *pelielie* (keer; eenkant toe werk – in die roman pelielie iemand 'n slang by 'n deur uit), *roeirieme* (roeispane – tipies Weskus) is maar enkele voorbeelde van die ryk gewestetaal van die streke wat in *Bitter heuning* ter sprake kom.

Die bonus by die vertaling van 'n teks in standaardtaal na 'n gewestelike doeltaal is sekerlik die gepaardgaande dokumentering en dus bewaring van streekstaal.

The online database of *Publishing, Books & Reading in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Critical Bibliography* contains almost 2 800 records. Constantly updated and expanded, and covering books, articles, studies, reports, theses and Internet documents, it is the most comprehensive documentation and ongoing analysis of the book sector in Africa.

Select blog postings, video recordings and radio/TV broadcasts are now also included. The searchable database covers all aspects of book publishing and the 'book chain' in Africa. There are also citations on specialist areas, as well as a rapidly growing section on digital media and electronic publishing in Africa.

Access to the database is available on a subscription basis. Details: www.hanszell.co.uk/pbrssa/index.shtml.



Fun and games in the Never-Ever Wood

Translating Linda Rode's *In die Nimmer-Immer-Bos* into English

My adventures in the *Never-Ever Wood* began when I was approached in 2008 by the award-winning author (and 2012 SATI award-winning translator) Linda Rode and publisher Michelle Cooper of Tafelberg to translate Linda's collection of folk and fairy tales into English.

A teacher of high-school English for most of my working life, I had enrolled for the newly established MPhil degree in translation at the University of Stellenbosch in 2001, where my path crossed with that of Prof. Ilse Feinauer, who heads up the translation programme in the Department of Afrikaans and Dutch. Under her (still ongoing) mentorship, I embarked on what in time became an exciting new career.

In the literary translation component of the course, I had the good fortune of having the renowned author and supreme wordsmith Prof. Marlene van Niekerk as my lecturer. From her I learned, among other things, to be particular about choosing the right word, to take note of the sound value of words, to be on the lookout for underlying patterns in the text, and to be sensitive to the role of rhythm in any literary genre. Under the supervision of Professors Van Niekerk and Feinauer I translated into English the first part of the Afrikaans novel *Hierdie lewe* by Karel Schoeman (for which he was awarded the prestigious Hertzog prize in 1995). I was subsequently commissioned by Human & Rousseau to complete the translation, and *This Life* was published in 2005. (My latest, and twentieth, published translation is Christiaan Bakkes's *Bushveld, Desert and Dogs: A Game Ranger's Life*. I was fortunate on this occasion once again to work with publisher Alida Potgieter of Human & Rousseau, with whom I have had a long and happy association.)

Back to the *Never-Ever Wood*, however. I had no previous experience of translating children's literature, but in Linda Rode I found a wonderful mentor. The feedback I received every time I presented her with a

completed story was a true master class in the translation of children's literature.

When on occasion I asked Linda to list a few characteristics of successful children's books, she mentioned aspects like repetition, rhythm, rhyme (both end and internal rhymes), alliteration and a sing-song quality, all requiring special skill from both author and translator. Innovation is key, especially with illustrated books where text and illustration coexist in a restricted space. Another notable feature is the intentionally quirky descriptive names often given to characters. While the words and expressions chosen by even a good translator can sometimes result in a shift in the targeted age group, even young readers like to be challenged by 'big', strange-sounding words.

Initially Linda and Michelle gave me a single story to translate to see whether I had what it would take to do the job. The story they chose was 'Uil en Kietsiekat gaan trou', based on Edward Lear's well-known verse 'The Owl and the Pussy-Cat'. Linda mentioned that they had chosen it because it contained many of the above-mentioned features that might present a translator with problems. The examples I quote below serve to illustrate some of the challenges I faced.

The sibilant sounds, assonance and alliteration in the very first paragraph required thought, and I had to find a suitable equivalent for the love song Owl sang to his Kitty-cat (I chose this name rather than the more traditional *Pussycat*, for its close resemblance to the Afrikaans *Kietsiekat*). Besides having suitable lyrics, I wanted the song to be a familiar one so that the grown-up bedtime reader would have no trouble breaking into song.

Children's stories appear deceptively simple. Winner of the 2012 SATI Prize for Outstanding Translation of Children's Literature Elsa Silke reveals some of the factors that have to be taken into account in this type of translation.

Characteristics of successful children's books ... aspects like repetition, rhythm, rhyme (both end and internal rhymes), alliteration and a sing-song quality, all requiring special skill from both author and translator. Innovation is key, especially with illustrated books where text and illustration coexist in a restricted space.



In conclusion I can only say that making the acquaintance of Linda Rode and her forestful of wonderful characters has been an enriching, fun-filled and highly enjoyable experience.

Een aand by die see – dit was somer en soel – klim 'n grootooguil en 'n wyfiekat in 'n bootjie vir twee en seil weg in die nag. Uil het 'n klein blink blikkitaar en daarop speel hy vir Kietsiekat: 'Jy is my liefling en ek i-i-i-s so bly ...' Kiets se oë glim groen in die maanlig.

The translation reads as follows:

On a sultry summer's evening at the seaside a large-eyed owl and a kittycat stepped into a little boat and sailed off into the sunset. On a tiny shiny tin guitar Owl serenaded his Kitty: 'You are my su-unshi-i-ine, my only su-unshi-i-ine, you make me ha-ap-py-y-y ...' Kitty's eyes glinted green in the moonlight.

The food the two lovers pack for their journey has a distinct African flavour, reads like an incantation and ends in a little rhyme:

... heuning in potjies, appelliefies, rosyntjies en dennepitte, ghwarriebessies en maroelas, meloentjies en pampoentjies.

Fortunately Fiona Moodie's enchanting illustration allowed for the liberties I took with the English menu:

... honey in jars, gooseberries, guarri berries, pine nuts and raisins, marulas, bananas and sultanas.

Later, at the wedding feast, the tables were laden with

muskadel vir die heildronk, mosselpastei en perlemoen, appelliefietert en braambessiesap

which turned into

muscadell for the toast, mussel pie and perlemoen, gooseberry mousse and mulberry juice.

Kittycat waxes lyrical when she addresses her beau:

'Uil,' sê Kiets, 'jou sal ek vir niks verruil nie. Jy's galant en sjarmant, jy is net die man vir my. Beter sal ek nêrens kry.'

'Owl,' said Kitty. 'I wouldn't change you for the world. You're gracious and audacious, you're just the man for me. A better man there could never be.'

So they set sail for *die Land van Nimmerkwaad aan die See van Nooitverlaat*, which, in translation, became *the Land of Everglad on the Sea of Neversad*.

The wedding was planned. Little Red Hen (who bakes bread in the very first story) made the wedding cake. The inclusion of *Selakant die predikant* in Fiona's illustration put a stop to my idea of having the wedding presided over by *Monkfish, the priest*, so *Reverend Coelacanth* ended up being summoned from



the deepest deep.

Their wedding reception included some vigorous dance moves.

Toe begin die groot rinkink: dis laag buk en hoog skop, dis riel dans en langarm, dis vastrap en wals, dis toi-toi en tiekiedraai tot hanekraai. Jakkals en Hiëna dans die Groot Seties. Skilpad en Hasie dans hand om die nek. Koning Leeu drink van almal die meeste muskadel. En Koeterwaal, die altyd-honger-kat [a character in another story] sit doodtevrede

Mainly for the sound quality, the dancing is a bit more suave in English, and even includes a touch of ballroom!

Soon the high jinks began: dipping low and kicking high, they danced the reel and the rumba, the hip-hop and the samba, the toyi-toyi and the tango till early-morning cock-crow. Jackal and Hyena stepped out in a foxtrot. Hare waltzed with his arm around Tortoise's neck. King Lion drank more muscadell than any other guest. And Gobbledegook, the humongously hungry cat, seemed quite content . . .

There are many examples I could quote from the rest of the stories. A suitable simile had to be found for Linda's *so waar as baobabblaar*, so I came up with *true as a turtle dove's coo* (in 'The big lion and the tiny mouse'). In 'Why Hyena limps', the English-speaking Jackal cries out *Oh salamanderslippersnake!* instead of *O klipsalmanderkoringkriek!*

A final word about names. Where there were existing English versions of the stories, we had to decide whether to go with the existing

names. In 'Master-of-Masters' ('Meneer-van-'n-Meneer'), for instance, the strange little man in the story insists on using odd names for everyday objects, such as *barnacle* for bed, *squibs and crackers* for trousers, *white-faced siminy* for cat, *hot cockalorum* for fire, and *pondalorum* for water. Linda devised such wonderful Afrikaans names with a local flavour that the existing English names were just not suitable. So Linda's bed, *Wit-soos-Melk-Volstruiseierdop*, became *Milky-White-Ostrich-Eggshell*; her trousers, *Potloodstreep-en-Fluitjiesriet*, became *Pinstripes-and-Bul-rushes*; the cat, *Witgesig-Snorbaard-Kniepootjies*, became *White-Faced-Whiskers-Kneady-Paws*; fire, *Sjoe-Sjoe-Snikheet-Hanekammetjie*, became *Ow-Ow-Red-Hot-Cockscomb* and water, *Wolkedruppels-wat-Poeletjies-Maak*, became *Drops-of-Cloud-Making-Puddles*. Easy if you just follow the lead of the expert!

In James Berry's version of Linda's story 'Skop-Skop Agterpootjies en Aap-ma', the main character, who swings around in trees, is known as Swing-Swing Janey. But Linda had different plans for her character, so a name change was called for:

Mevrou Hond het die oulikste kind gehad, haar naam was Skop-Skop Agterpootjies. Hierdie hondekind kon bollemakiesie slaan, rond-omtalie draai soos 'n bromtol, dan op haar voorpote gaan staan en met die agterpootjies in die lug kon sy groot, swaar kokosneute vang wat uit die bome val. Daarom was haar naam Skop-Skop Agterpootjies.

Mother Dog had the cutest child. Her name was Hippity-Hoppity-Hind-Legs. This puppy child could turn somersaults, spin like a top and balance on her forelegs. With her hind legs in the air, she could catch great big coconuts falling from trees. This was why she was known as Hippity-Hoppity-Hind-Legs.

The puppy's special talent sets Monkey Mother thinking, and the rhyme is an added bonus for the translator to play around with:

*Wiep-wap, wiep-wap, rats vang sy,
die regte een om te werk vir my.
Hout aandra en mango's pluk,
rek en strek en grond toe buk.*

*Swish! Swoosh! what's this I see?
Just the one to work for me.
Picking mangoes, hauling wood,
stretching, fetching monkey food.*

In conclusion I can only say that making the acquaintance of Linda Rode and her forestful of wonderful characters has been an enriching, fun-filled and highly enjoyable experience. 🍌

Clarity on spelling

***Diacs and Quirks in a Nutshell. Afrikaans spelling explained.* Nicky Grieshaber.**

2011, Second, revised edition. Nicky Grieshaber Publications. Pietermaritzburg. Soft cover, 138 pages. ISBN: 978-0-620-51726-3. e-ISBN: 978-0-620-51980-9. Available from the author at <http://www.nickygrieshaber.co.za> in print and electronic formats (PDF, MOBI for Kindle and EPUB).

First published in 2000 as *Afrikaans Spelling Explained* (Brevitas, Howick), this second edition is an asset to teachers, learners and anybody learning Afrikaans as a second or third language. Although not a hefty reference book, it offers a wealth of knowledge to apply in teaching, learning and writing Afrikaans. The various electronic formats in which the book is also available greatly enhance its practical usefulness.

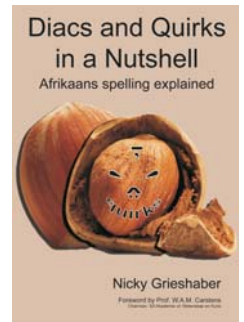
The author draws on his extensive experience as a language practitioner (translation and editing), lecturer and teacher to answer the most commonly asked questions about Afrikaans spelling. He uses the 2009 edition of the *Afrikaanse Woordelys en Spelreëls* (AWS) as a reference for his explanations, but it is not a discussion of the AWS.

The explanations and discussions are clear and to the point, keeping to the basic facts needed to understand the matter at hand. Further elaboration, definitions and explanations are found in the endnotes and annexures.

In Part II the explanation of the three underlying *principles of Afrikaans spelling* (tradition, Standaardafrikaans and similarity) lays a sound foundation for the rest of the book.

Part III deals with 'diacs', the author's abbreviation of *diacritics*. In addition to the 'true' diacritics, the hyphen and apostrophe are also discussed because of the important role they play in Afrikaans spelling. He uses the Afrikaans terms for the diacritics – *kappie* (circumflex), *deelteken* (diaeresis), *koppelteken* (hyphen), etc. – on the premise that even English-speakers are more familiar with the Afrikaans terms. The same convention is used in this review.

In all cases detailed explanations are given of



Reviewed by
Antoinette van Rooyen.
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the rules on the use of the different diacritics and from the onset the reader realises the importance of pronunciation in determining the Afrikaans spelling conventions. This then also explains the particular attention given to phonetic signs in Annexure B. The use of the *deelteken* and *koppelteken* receives the most attention in this section. The author not only explains the rules on when and why the diacritics must be used, but also mentions exceptions (e.g. *linguis* without the *deelteken* as would be expected) and cases that might be perceived as contradictory (the *deelteken* in *spieël* compared with *finansieel* without a *deelteken*).

Interesting cases also receive attention, e.g. the surname *De Villiers* where the two different possible ways of pronunciation determine the use of the apostrophe when using the plural and diminutive forms (p. 51).

The 'quirky' aspects of Afrikaans spelling receive attention in Part IV: variants, when to double consonants, common errors concerning vowels, splitting words (*woordafbreking*), joining words (compounds), the use of capital letters and the punctuation of abbreviations. Of these, compounds receive the most attention. In the longest chapter in the book (15 pages) the author labels it as the most troublesome writing convention, even for mother-tongue speakers, although Afrikaans is more consistent in forming compounds than English, which mostly follows the opposite convention (retaining separate words). This adds to the confusion of the bilingual writer in South Africa (p. 73).

The author concentrates on the seven most frequently used types of compounds and where the influence of English causes the

most problems. The longest discussion is on the adjective + noun + noun combination as most problematic. Here, as elsewhere in the book, the AWS forms the basis of the discussion and explanations.

Three *self-tests* are included covering all the aspects discussed in the book. The answers are provided with explanations and references where required. They are useful to identify areas needing more attention and to test the reader's understanding of the rules and principles.

The *annexures* in Part VI cover Alt commands for diacritics, phonetic symbols with examples and notes, the 2009 AWS and a short list of commonly misspelt words that gives both the wrong and the correct spelling.

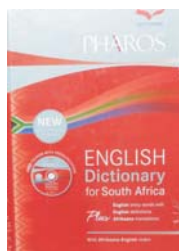
The longest annexure (Annexure B) pertains to phonetics and comprises explanations of the symbols as well as examples and notes. This is important, particularly for the non-Afrikaans reader, given the fact that so many of the rules for spelling and use of diacritics and other signs are governed by the pronunciation of the words.

Annexure C on the AWS provides a brief overview of the content and layout of the 2009 edition, paying special attention to the main word list (*Woordelys*) and how to use it. The author stresses that the changes to the conventions of this edition have effectively outdated '... all school and university textbooks, and all other Afrikaans spelling guidelines, written before the 2009 version appeared.'

The overall impression is that the examples and explanations clearly illustrate the rules, exceptions and anomalies of the aspect under discussion. Textboxes contain important information, tips (e.g. how to type diacritics) and interesting facts and examples.

Reference is made throughout the book to other related chapters, paragraphs, endnotes and applicable sections of the AWS. Changes in the 2009 AWS from previous versions are also indicated, for instance that adjacent *i*'s do not need a *deelteken*, the relaxation of the rules regarding the *afstandskoppelteken* (rule 12.24) and changes relating to compounds (where the prefixes *nie-*, *non-*, *oud-* and *eks-* are concerned).

In this work the author has succeeded in removing the 'quirks' of Afrikaans spelling, enabling the reader to understand and apply the do's and don'ts. He has done this using the clear communication he advocates as his motto on his website.



Reviewers needed

Would you like to write a review for Muratho?

We currently have two books available for review:

- English Dictionary for South Africa – a dictionary of English headwords and definitions with Afrikaans equivalents and an Afrikaans-English index
- Text Editing: A handbook for students and practitioners by Kris Van De Poel, Wannie Carstens and John Linnegar. [This is the English version of the Afrikaans text reviewed in the December 2011 issue of Muratho.]

Reviewers get to keep the books they review.

If you are interested in reviewing one of the books above, please contact Marion Boers at office@translators.org.za.

Introducing Autshumato

South Africa is rich in its diversity of cultures and boasts at least 11 official languages. The mammoth task of making information available in as many of these languages as possible falls to our brave translators. Enter *Autshumato*, an innovative, government-funded project that aims to contribute to the creation of documents in all of the official SA languages. Named after one of our very first interpreters, *Autshumato* provides easy-to-use open-source technologies that simplify the translation process by, among other things, shortening translation time and standardising terminology.

The *Autshumato* project was initiated and funded by the South African Department of Arts and Culture and developed by the Centre for Text Technology (CTeXT®) at the North-West University. The project has thus far created the products below, all of which are available free of charge.

Autshumato Integrated Translation Environment (ITE)

The *Autshumato* ITE is a custom solution to some of the greatest challenges that translators face. It is an open-source alternative to expensive proprietary computer-assisted translation suites and provides a single environment that facilitates the entire translation process.

The ITE system allows translation in easily editable segments, which streamlines and speeds up the translation process while retaining original formatting. The translation memory recalls previously translated work to minimise repetition and glossaries help with terminology standardisation. Both of these also aid in consistency when translating.

The software was developed in consultation with language practitioners from the National Language Service at the Department of Arts and Culture.

Autshumato Machine Translation

Autshumato offers (server-based) machine translation systems for three language pairs, namely English into Afrikaans, English into isiZulu and English into Sepedi.

Autshumato Terminology Management Solution

This central terminology repository is inten-

With electronic translation tools becoming the norm rather than a nice-to-have extra, it is encouraging to learn that the South African government is developing an open-source system. And best of all, it is available to language practitioners free of charge!

ded to further the standardisation of terminology in the South African context. A version is already in use by the National Language Service.

Corpora

The project has generated and continues to generate reusable monolingual and multilingual corpora (linguistic data/word lists). These are essential for developing technologies in South African languages, some of which are resource scarce.

Core technologies

Autshumato has also produced an alignment tool (particularly useful when processing the above-mentioned multilingual data), a data anonymiser (to ensure that no confidential information is revealed in the data banks) and a PDF text extractor (to allow the processing of documents in PDF format).

This open-source project adheres to the South African government's policy and strategy for open-source implementation. This policy stipulates that all new software developed for government must be based on open standards. Furthermore, government encourages and supports the use of open content and open standards in South Africa.

For more information about *Autshumato* or its developers, visit www.nwu.ac.za/ctext or contact Wildrich Fourie at Wildrich.Fourie@nwu.ac.za.



'In the beginning I was a bit afraid of starting to use this new Autshumato thing. Most of the time I work from Afrikaans and English to Setswana. But after using it for almost a year now I am really hooked! The longer you work with the translation program the more you want to work on it. Even if I receive small translations I always save the phrases or words as a Word document and do it in the ITE. The bigger the memory gets, the more the program helps with translated matches, and the more you put into the glossary, the less time you waste paging through dictionaries. I would like to say to all translators: if you are not already using Autshumato you are still wasting a lot of time. Start now and get it on your PC or laptop. It is free. verniet. MAHALA!' Johan Zerwick (Language Directorate, North-West University)

Giant technological leap for official SA languages

November 2012 saw the official launch of an RMA for text and speech resources, which will be of immense value to language practitioners and human language technology developers

South Africa now boasts its very own Resource Management Agency (RMA) for the management and distribution of reusable digital text and speech resources for all of the country's official languages. These resources are crucial for research and development in the domain of human language technologies (HLT) for application to local languages.

Worldwide, people are increasingly gaining access to electronic devices in a growing variety of languages. South Africans can already use ATMs and spelling checkers in their mother tongues. These types of applications are increasingly being used on mobile

- spelling and grammar checkers;
- machine translation systems that function in various South African languages.

The Department of Arts and Culture's National Centre for Human Language Technologies is therefore funding the establishment of the RMA, which is in line with similar global initiatives. The Centre for Text Technology (CTexT®) of the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus) has been appointed to set up the RMA over the next three years and to distribute reusable text and speech resources from this one central point.

For this reason, the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) has established the National Centre for HLT (Human Language Technology) to develop reusable text and speech resources, and the Resource Management Agency (RMA) to manage and distribute these from one central point. The Centre for Text Technology (CTexT®) at the North-West University has been appointed to set up the RMA over the next three years.

Researchers and developers will soon be able to obtain (and provide) data more easily, saving a great deal of valuable time. As many of the South African languages are deemed resource scarce, the RMA aspires to make data resources for these languages more readily available. Mother-tongue speakers of South African languages will benefit greatly, as they could soon see new breakthroughs in health-care communication, educational software or business tools – all because language technology data, which is the backbone of these developments, will be easier to obtain.

The RMA will be based at CTexT at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University. The Dutch TST-Centrale will be collaborating on the project.

Prof. Justus Roux of the North-West University commented as follows regarding the RMA: 'South Africa and India are the only countries in the world that have a specific strategy for developing language technologies intended to facilitate communication between language groups in their respective societies. The founding of the RMA is the realisation of a long-awaited ideal of academics, language practitioners and developers alike to empower local languages for use in modern communication systems.'



*Prof. Justus Roux, SATI chair
Anne-Marie Beukes,
Prof. Sonja Bosch of
Unisa and Dr Khalid
Choukri of the
European Language
Resources
Association (ELRA)
at the official launch
of the RMA on 28
November*

devices, giving South Africans unprecedented access to information and services in local languages. For developments like these, language technology data and resources (such as electronic texts and word lists) are needed. The more data there is, the smarter the tool or machine will be, facilitating human-machine interaction through a particular language.

Examples of HLT applications are –

- automated telephone information systems;
- GPS systems;

According to Ms Ulrike Janke, Director of Human Language Technologies at the department, 'The Department of Arts and Culture has invested significantly in HLT over the last decade in an effort to stimulate activity and promote advances that may benefit our marginalised languages. Without our implementation agencies, however, the return on investment would not have been so impressive. They are passionate about HLT and its potential and therefore continue to do their best to help us succeed in our strategy. We are thankful for productive partnerships such as this one with the North-West University.'

Broad categories of data relevant to the RMA include text, speech, language-related video, multimodal resources (such as sign language), as well as pathological and forensic language data. Visit www.rma.nwu.ac.za for more information.

CText

The Centre for Text Technology (CTexT®) is a research and development centre on the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University. CText does research on human language technology and develops language technology products for the South African languages.

Human language technology makes the interaction between people and computers easier by allowing people to communicate with computers in our normal languages such as isiZulu or Afrikaans. It also teaches computers to understand and produce human language (speech and text), so people can have access to new technologies in the language of their choice.

CTexT's four main activities are –

- research;
- development;
- commercialisation of products and services; and
- maintenance of products and support to end-users/clients.

CTexT's focus areas (in the field of human language technology in South Africa) are –

- resource-scarce languages (especially South African languages for which little data exists);
- development of applications and resources for easier interaction between people and computers (e.g. spelling and grammar checkers, machine translation systems and data development); and
- innovative approaches to processing natural languages.

<http://www.nwu.ac.za/ctext>

Preserving languages

At the beginning of June 2012 a conference with the title 'Tongues Under Threat: Preserving African Indigenous Languages' was held in Johannesburg. Among the impressive array of speakers was a SATI member, Šarka Coningsby, a freelance translator and interpreter between English and Czech. She spoke not from an academic perspective, but from her heart, giving delegates a glimpse of her passion for Africa and her belief in the use of translation to spread cultural knowledge and understanding. We reproduce extracts from Šarka's address at the conference, followed by another article on the subject.

Over the years I have developed a strong passion for the literature written by African authors, particularly the 'new SA authors', writers who only got a chance to be published with the advent of the new South Africa. I am, however, constantly amazed at how little people on other continents know about beautiful Africa – every time I travel back to Europe I come across people who act as if I live amongst the lions and elephants. There is a need to let the world know much more.

My idea is to connect Africa and my motherland through language – I have decided to dedicate my life to translations of African literature into Czech. I have called my 'little' project 'Building the bridge from Africa to Central Europe'. Of course this will require a great deal of learning and researching, and will not be easy. People keep telling me, 'You are a small fish in the sea, a chicken, a bird that cannot fly.'

I refuse to be a chicken. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu says in the foreword to the book *Fly, Eagle, Fly*, 'How frequently we have thought that we are mere chickens destined to spend our lives in an earthly existence with limited horizons, whereas we are made for something far more noble. We are made for the sublime, the transcendent. We are not mere chickens, but eagles destined to soar the sublime heights. We should be straining to become what we have it in us to become; to gaze at the rising sun and lift off and soar.' This is what I wish to do!

This particular book is innovative adaptation of an African tale attributed to a Ghanaian, James Kwegyir Aggrey – also known as Aggrey of Africa. He was born in Ghana in

'My people of Africa, we were created in the image of God, but men made us think we are chickens, and we still think we are; but we are eagles. Don't be content with the food of chickens! Stretch forth your wings and fly!'

The children are our future. Children all around the world want to know what the children in other countries are up to.

1875, spending the latter part of his life in the USA, from where he participated in a number of educational commissions visiting Africa. Aggrey was particularly active in the field of race relations. He is remembered for the quotation: 'You can play a tune of sorts on the white keys, and you can play a tune of sorts on the black keys, but for the harmony you must use both the black and the white.' When Aggrey told the story about the eagle, he used to end by saying, 'My people of Africa, we were created in the image of God, but men made us think we are chickens, and we still think we are; but we are eagles. Don't be content with the food of chickens! Stretch forth your wings and fly!'

When I read this, I had the feeling that this is what all children around the world should hear. In their native language. The world is globalising, but we still have to preserve our own identities. I would like to plead with the sons and daughters of Africa to stand up and be counted in terms of the stories only they can tell to the world, thereby helping preserve the linguistic diversity of the continent.

I wonder what Sol Plaatje would say on this topic if he were still alive. Sol Plaatje was the first African to translate Shakespeare into an African language. He was the first black South African to write a novel in English. His passion for Shakespeare resulted in Setswana translations of five plays. Translation was for Plaatje a way to show the quality of the Setswana language.

In scientific and anthropological usage, the notion of culture encompasses all that is the result of human fabrication. It includes both tangible objects and intangible creations of the human genius like religion, language, customary usages and everyday practices. It is the sum total of these time-tested habits, attitudes, tastes, manners, shared values, traditions, norms, customs, arts, history, institutions and beliefs of a group of people that define for them their general behaviour and way of life. Humans make culture on a continuous basis, adapting it, shedding parts, adopting new features. This is done both consciously and unconsciously. We are creatures of culture and to some extent are delimited in our behaviour by the culture in which we are formed. If culture is the main determinant of our attitudes, language is the central feature of culture. It is in language that culture is transmitted, interpreted and configured. Language is also a register of culture. Language is the most important means of human intercourse.

Language and cultural rights are therefore central to all considerations of human rights

in the contemporary world. The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity affirms that culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or social group. We should respect diversity of cultures, tolerance, dialogue and cooperation, in a climate of mutual trust and understanding. We should aspire towards greater solidarity through the recognition of cultural diversity and development of intercultural exchanges.

A colleague of mine, Manzo Khulu, is passionate about the preservation and development of his heritage, of his native Zulu language – he calls it an obsession. I would like to share one of his opinions with you. Manzo says: 'Many African people, especially the so-called elite, appear to espouse adopting everything that their colonisers brought with them, to the point of forgoing their own heritage – culture and language.'

I find this very sad indeed, and even though that I am not an African I have not been able to stop thinking about the possibility of helping to preserve what is so important – the indigenous languages in Africa. This is the 21st century. We have different possibilities from those people had some hundred years ago: computers, recording devices ... why is it so difficult to start saving indigenous languages? Where is the real problem? I was wondering the other day why university students who are studying languages are not sent to different places in Africa as part of a project to record the indigenous languages? Would that be such a silly idea?

The children are our future. Children all around the world want to know what the children in other countries are up to. As a mother of two children who are bookworms, I know how appealing African fables are. Let us therefore use translation as a means of preserving and spreading culture by sharing the beautiful African fables of writers like Marguerite Poland (The Wood-Ash Star, The Mantis and the Moon) Gcina Mhlophe (Our Story Magic), Diana Pitcher (The Calabash Child) and Sindiwe Magona (The Best Meal Ever). I am dedicating myself to translating the stories into Czech, so that children in Central Europe become aware of the beauty of the different cultures in Africa. And I would like to introduce fables from my country to be translated into indigenous languages – that way the language would be preserved for future generations too. It is a work of my heart, and I believe that together with my friends, linguists and publishers, we will build the bridge. 🌉

The missing ingredient

Over the years Africa has known nothing but subjugation by her continental neighbours. Through the length and breadth of the continent modern human enlightenment and advancement, like everywhere else in the world, are measured in terms of non-African, mainly Eurocentric colonial standards and values.

The African indigene receives education in a colonial language, conducts trade and commerce at virtually all levels in a foreign language. If he has any talent for writing and storytelling and sees himself as truly enlightened, he does it in English, French and Portuguese or occasionally in Arabic. He gets virtually all information about what is going on in the world through foreign-language media. Even for leisure he reads in a foreign tongue.

Predicament

The saddest and most perplexing thing is that the African seems happy not just to learn from his neighbour in order to advance his own, but rather to mimic everything the erstwhile colonial master does. It is unthinkable for a French child to grow up in France but not live all facets of his life through French, or for an English native not to know the English language. The same can be said of a Spanish child in Spain or Mexico or a Portuguese person in Portugal or Brazil. Yet it has become the norm for an African child born and bred in Africa – in the country of his forefathers and which he has no prospect of leaving – to take pride in embracing a colonial language as his OWN and ONLY medium of communication.

What is the missing link?

To escape from gross oppression, Africans by and large relied not on the mercy of the colonisers, but rather fought to the bitter end until the political shackles were broken. Unarmed but through decisive and goal-directed collective action, the African in SA did find the formula to unseat a seemingly unshakeable, vicious political administration. Is this not telling evidence that the African has the resilience to emerge victorious against incredible odds if he sets his mind and heart to a cause? And can there ever be a nobler cause than fully reclaiming one's identity?

But now the African seems to have lost the political will to retain his age-old identity in

In this edited version of an address prepared for the conference on preserving languages referred to on page 23, we hear Manzo Khulu's impassioned plea to speakers of African languages to work together to conserve, develop and promote the indigenous languages in South Africa

his own native land. Can he really happily remain a perpetual fake Westerner in his own fatherland?

What can and must be done?

- Let us develop a love for our own identity – by expressing a clear will to live all facets of our lives, both private and professional, through the medium of our linguistic heritage, a language that goes beyond the cognitive domain of the head to the deepest emotions of the heart.
- Let us join forces and take up a new kind of struggle – to shake off psychological bonds that make us believe that no African language is suitable for elite and decent living in the modern world.
- Like the Afrikaner, let Africans, through word and deed, fight for real development of their indigenous tongues – ever willing to grow and promote them, at least those we have already constitutionally declared official. Let isiZulu be to the Zulu what English is to a native-born English person and let Setswana be what Afrikaans is to an Afrikaner, and so forth for every other indigenous official language.
- Let the African hold his elected government fully accountable for visibly walking the talk of 11 official languages. What is the meaning of a country with 11 allegedly official languages where only one – the only exclusively non-African one – is functionally official?
- Let the people claim their constitutional right to be served in their home language at such public institutions as their municipalities or local government.
- Let us get our national government to make higher learning accessible in all official languages – even if the material benefits will emerge only in the long run.

Points to ponder

- Why must being educated be synonymous for an African in Africa with adopting everything Western – good or bad?
- If not the African himself, who will ever tell the many stories of Africa – past and

Article by **Manzo Khulu**. Manzo is a Zulu-speaking language practitioner with decades of cross-cultural and industrial communication experience in both South African and international corporate entities. He is a passionate activist for the preservation and development of Africa's linguistic heritage. He is also a member of the SATI Council.

present – through the colourful idiom of the languages aboriginal to this beautiful continent, and ensure that they are preserved for generations to come?

- Is it because he has nothing of his own to be proud of that the African has come to the point of willingly renouncing even his very identity as a natural African speaking an African language?
- Is every single African language really so rigidly unadaptable that it can never be developed and adapted for all forms of intelligent discourse in the modern world?
- What legacy are we going to leave if we, who know and love the languages of the land of our forefathers, sit back and complacently look on as the colonial element erodes the very fabric of everything African – and that on African soil?
- If the African cannot showcase and walk tall about his Africanness in Africa, where can he hope to do so?

Towards a tangible course of action

Join a band of passionate language practitioners, under the auspices of the South African Translators' Institute, whose will it is

to leave no stone unturned until visible change is observed in this sensitive arena of not only keeping our indigenous tongues alive but growing them to become fully-fledged mediums of all levels of communication in the modern world.

Indeed, Rome was built not in a day, but over many generations. We take full cognisance of the fact that a task of this magnitude and complexity will likewise require many generations' unwavering inspiration and focused perspiration to crystallise. But if nobody lays the direly needed solid foundation to build on, the fate of all African languages on planet Earth is certain – the doldrums – and that will occur sooner than many realise.

Plea and outcry

This is the heart-felt plea of an African to fellow Africans, of a South African to fellow South Africans – yes, of a humble Zulu man to fellow Zulu people: Let us stand up, claim what is rightfully ours – our **identity**, our **heritage**, our **languages** – and write our own history for all to see and acknowledge! We've been talking for two decades – NOW is the time for ACTION! 🙏

Institute publications

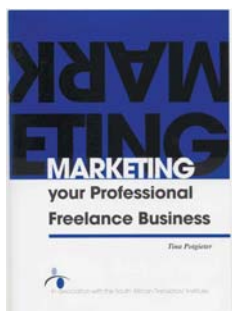
Sworn translation manual

This comprehensive manual arose as a result of a lack of clear guidelines on exactly how sworn translators should be going about their business. Many conventions and requirements had arisen over the years, but they were not put together in a single source. Newcomers to the profession had difficulty finding out what they were supposed to do.

The manual covers all aspects of sworn translation, from the requirements to qualify as a sworn translator to details of the various conventions, in addition to containing samples of documentation commonly used in South Africa.

The manual is in A4 format, soft-covered and with 100 pages. It costs R120 per copy for Institute members and R180 for non-members.

To purchase a copy of the manual, contact Marion Boers on 011 803 2681 or publications@translators.org.za.



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Marketing your Professional Freelance Business is a self-help guide that teaches users to –

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Other publications

Remember *Veeltalige Vertaalterminologie* and *Teksredaksie*, both produced by SATI members. You can order the former through kalahari.net or On the Dot (direct. sales@onthedot.co.za; 0861 668 368) and the editing book through African Sun Media (021 808 2401; sun-e-shop.co.za).

