I. Books, Monographs, and Special Issues of Learned Journals

In preparation


With a focus on South Africa, the scope of this book ranges from macro-sociolinguistic questions pertaining to language policies and their (non-) implementation to micro-sociolinguistic observations of actual language-use in verbal interaction, mainly in multilingual contexts of Higher Education. It brings together various interlinked disciplines such as Sociolinguistics and Applied Language Studies, Media Studies and Journalism, History and Education, Social and Natural Sciences, Law, Human Language Technology, Music, Intercultural Communication and Literary Studies.

There is a gradual move for the study of language and culture to be taught in the context of (professional) disciplines in which they would be used, for example, Journalism and African languages, Education and African languages, etc. The book caters for this growing market. Because of its multilingual nature, it caters to English and Afrikaans language speakers, as well as the Sotho and Nguni language groups – the largest languages in South Africa and also increasingly used in the context of South African Higher Education.

The book brings to light a set of under-researched issues in the teaching of additional languages, and their use in formal education, in particular at tertiary level. Since the foundations of any ‘additional language’ competence are laid in the primary and secondary cycles of education, the book also looks at additional language acquisition in early childhood and in school. It opens a wide and interdisciplinary view on the resourcefulness of additional languages in multilingual educational environments. A number of different themes and languages are addressed, mostly from within South Africa, but also from Zimbabwe and Ethiopia, by 22 experts from the fields of African linguistics and sociolinguistics, language policy and planning, educational science and curriculum planning, as well as teacher training practice.

The book is dedicated to the memory of Neville Alexander (1936-2012).


Development is essentially based on communication through language. With more than 2,000 languages being used in Africa, language becomes a highly relevant factor in all sectors of political, social, cultural and economic life. This important sociolinguistic dimension hitherto remains widely underrated and under-researched in Western mainstream development studies. The book discusses the resourcefulness of languages, both local and global, in view of the ongoing transformation of African societies as much as for economic development. It starts off by unearthing received ideologies, prejudice and cliché in Western perceptions of Africa and her languages, which are distorted by Eurocentrism and Orientalism. From a novel Applied African Sociolinguistics perspective, it analyses the continuing effects of linguistic imperialism on post-colonial African societies, in particular regarding the educational sector, through imposed hegemonic languages such as Arabic and the ex-colonial languages of European provenance. It offers a broad interdisciplinary scientific approach to the linguistic dimensions of sociocultural modernisation and economic development in Africa, written for both the non-linguistically trained reader and the linguistically trained researcher and language practitioner.

These two volumes bring an almost life-long documentation project of an endangered Central Chadic language in North-Eastern Nigeria to a close, which began with the author’s first linguistic fieldwork in the Gwoza Emirate in 1968/69.


The first volume introduces, in section 1, the Lamang Language Documentation Project, discusses language nomenclature and classification within Central Chadic (A), and deals with issues of transcription and practical orthography. Section 2 contains A Revised Grammar of Lamang (to replace the 1983 out-of-stock grammar by the author) with new and fully interlinearized examples, reflecting new insights into the structure of the language in the light of more recent advances in Chadic linguistics. Sections 3 and 4 discuss elements of Lamang-Hdi Comparative Phonology, Grammar, and Lexicon, which establish the nature of the relationship between Lamang and its closest sister language Hdi, which is spoken across the international border in Cameroon, and with which it forms the ‘Lamang Group’.


The second volume contains a concordance-based Lamang-English Dictionary extracted from a corpus of recorded natural speech of about 40,000 words, complemented by an English-Lamang Reference List. Head entries (about 2,000 lemmata) are fully vocalized lexical roots and grammatical morphemes, which are illustrated by (a) all occurring morphological forms (both derivational and inflectional), and (b) all phonologically variant forms (including contrastive tone and non-contrastive pitch accent, as well as morphophonologically conditioned vowel length, stress, and umlaut) as they were transcribed in natural narrative discourse contexts and for pieces of oral verbal art, amounting to up to 15,000 different “words” of this language.
2013


The book presents a collection of papers in English, French, and German, which touch on a wide variety of cultural, political, and educational ramifications of multilingualism in Africa. Apart from the general introduction by H. E. Wolff, all contributions stem from African scholars representing their inside perspective on matters. The contributions refer to the sociolinguistic situations most of all in Benin, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, and Togo. They deal with aspects of language contact and language change, language empowerment and protection of linguistic diversity, linguistic landscape and language legitimation, regional integration, HIV/AIDS communication, and language issues in education from primary to tertiary level. A special sub-focus is on the teaching of foreign languages such as German in Africa.

2013


Emerging some 130 years ago during Imperial Germany’s short period of active colonialism, German-speaking African Linguistics (*Afrikanistik*) has since developed a unique transdisciplinary model approach to the study of African languages, cultures, and societies. Taking Africa’s linguistic plurality and diversity as a starting point, the book introduces the new research paradigm *language as resource* within the framework of “Applied African Sociolinguistics”. The traditional linguistic approach is exemplified by a lucid treatment of Hausa (West Africa) in a chapter provided by Ari Awagana. The literary science approach is illustrated by a close look at political lyrics in Kiswahili (East Africa) in a chapter written by Marion Feuerstein.
2006


A modified version was published in 2011 as


2004


This Special Issue of JWAL contains selected presentations from the International Symposium on Areal Typology of West African Languages which was jointly organized by Bernard Comrie and H. Ekkehard Wolff in Leipzig in the year 2000, coinciding with the centenary of the Chair of African Linguistics at the University of Leipzig. The contributors of worldwide renown are Felix K. Ameka on culturally entrenched triadic communication in West Africa, G. Tucker Childs on Atlantic and Mande groups, Bernard Comrie on logophorics and reference-tracking, Zygmunt Frajzyngier on tense and aspect as coding information structure, Larry M. Hyman on Kwa verbs, Robert Nicolai on l’espace sahélo-saharien, Valentin Vydrine on West Mande and South Mande phonology, and the late Kay Williamson on vowel systems in West African Niger-Congo languages.
2004


This first issue of a new topical series contains contributions by Ari Awagana on pluralité en buduma, Roger M. Blench on reconstructing Ron, Véronique de Colombel on dix langues du groupe tschadique-central, Amadeo De Dominicis on tone or pitch-accent in Masa, Dymitr Ibriszmow and Victor Porkhomovsky on Afroasiatic kinship terms and systems, Mohammed M. Munkaila on Hausa morphology and syntax, Henry Tourneux on le système consonantique des langues dites «kotoko», and H. Ekkehard Wolff on predication focus in Chadic.

2003


This book contains papers and documents from the panel on “Language Policy in Africa” at the 17th Biennial Conference of the German African Studies Association (VAD) held at the University of Leipzig, March 30 – April 1, 2000. Contributions are by the late Neville Alexander, Ayo Bamgbose, Vic Webb, and H. Ekkehard Wolff. The book contains, in the appendices, a first sketch of the sociolinguistic profiles of all African states (compiled by Inken Sürig), and a selection of important documents on the African Renaissance and language empowerment.
2002


On the occasion of the 65th birthday of Paul Newman, leading scholar in the fields of Chadic and Hausa linguistics, international friends and colleagues selected 14 of his published articles and added their very personal commentaries on these: Mustapha Ahmad, Bernard Caron, Zygmunt Frajzyngier, Graham Furniss, Larry M. Hyman, Philip J. Jaggar, William R. Leben, Roxana Ma Newman, Nina Pawlak, Victor Porkhomovsky, Russel G. Schuh, Henry Tourneux, H. Ekkehard Wolff, Petr Zima. 22 more colleagues added short personal tributes to celebrate the man and the occasion.

2000


The volume contains the four Keynote Addresses plus 42 selected and carefully edited papers which were presented to the 2nd World Congress of African Linguistics which was held in Leipzig in 1997. The Keynote Speakers were Mohammed H. Abdulaziz, Ayo Bamgbose, Paul Newman, and the late Kay Williamson. The presentations from the topical sessions are here grouped under

I. Language in Culture and Society (5 papers), II. Language in Time and Space (7 papers), III. Phonetics and Phonology (8 papers), IV. Grammar and Lexicon (22 papers).

1994

14. **Our People’s Own (Ina Laman).** Traditions and specimens of oral literature from a dying culture in the southern Lake Chad Basin in Central Africa. (AFRIKANISTISCHE FORSCHUNGEN 11.) Hamburg: Research and Progress Verlag. 403pp. (In cooperation with Abdullahi Ndaghra [postum] and E. Adwiraah.)

This book contains a rich corpus of commented and annotated translations of texts pertaining to cultural traditions, ethnohistory, folk tales and songs which were recorded from native speakers of Lamang, a Central Chadic (A) language in North-Eastern Nigeria. The appendices offer the original Lamang texts, notes on informants and text collecting, a glossary of Lamang cultural terms, list of ethnonyms, clans and lineages, a sketch and glossary of kinship system and terms, and a Lamang-centric schematic perception model of the ethnic world around them.
1993


This is the first modern reference grammar of Hausa. It compiles received knowledge and identifies still controversial issues on the structure of Hausa, and systematically provides data on dialectal variation where available. In many instances, synchronic irregularities are tentatively linked to diachronic hypotheses on older stages of the linguistic history of Hausa in order make apparent “exceptions” to synchronic rules plausible. All of the richly provided Hausa examples are given with tonal marking and indication of vowel length.

1992


This is the first book ever written and published in this Central Chadic language, using a tentative semi-standardised orthography. It contains texts from oral traditions and verbal art, which were collected from speakers of this language during two extended fieldwork periods in 1968-69 and 1973-74. The book was produced for non-commercial distribution (assisted by the German Foreign Office) in the Lamang speaking area for reading pleasure. It is hoped to serve as incentive and reference book for final orthographic standardisation, and in order to initiate mother-tongue literacy.

1992


This is a selection – in the Hausa language – of six stories as they are contained in both the world-famous collection of the brothers Grimm in German and Abubakar Imam’s book *Magana Jari Ce* in Hausa. The book was produced (assisted by the German Foreign Office) for non-commercial distribution and use as post-literacy material in schools and village libraries in the Hausa speaking areas in Nigeria and Niger, with illustrations provided by the Sudanese artist Abdel Lateef Satti (Maiduguri).
1991


1991


This collection of papers reflects the proceedings of a joint symposium organized by the Hamburg University Doctoral School on Multilingualism and Language Contact and the Hamburg-based UNESCO-Institute for Education. It contains contributions by Adama Ouane (on experience from Mali), Joseph A. McIntyre (on Hausa), Ekkehard Wolff (on Hausa), Rodolfo Cerrón-Palomino (on Andean languages), Wolfgang Wölck (on Quechua), Thomas C. Büttner (on Ashaninka), Xavier Lamuela, Axel Mahlau (on Basque), Joachim Born (on Aranese), Yaron Matras and Gertrud Reeshemius (on Yiddish, Kurdish, and Romani).
1988


1986


The book provides a detailed historical account of the youngest of the three German founding institutions of “Afrikanistik” besides Berlin (1885) and Leipzig (1900), namely Hamburg (1909). It makes reference to the early political and ideological background of Christian missions and colonialism, and acknowledges the input of African co-operators for the development of African linguistics at Hamburg. The book delineates foci of teaching and research as they developed and changed over time, and lists publications by staff members and the awarding of degrees – as far as the available archival documents allow.
1983


1983


This book is the first monographic description and a kind of model analysis of a Central Chadic (A) language along the Nigeria/Cameroon border with highly complex and typologically challenging structures in phonology and grammar. The verbal grammar is fully tonal, the nominal grammar is not, with interference of syllable-initial “depressor” consonants on non-contrastive pitch. The vowel system allows for abstract analyses which leaves the language with possibly only one true vowel phoneme in diachronic terms. In verbal morphology, inflexional and derivational subsystems interact in intricate manners, with complex coding of information structure playing a salient role. – Since the book is out of print and stock, “A Revised Grammar of Lamang” has been included in “The Lamang Language and Dictionary” (2015).
1981


1980


In this book, a small corpus of proverbs and riddles from Lamang, a Central Chadic (A) language in North-Eastern Nigeria, are subjected to refined analysis in terms of identifying various kinds of parallelism, such as both segmental and tonal rhymes, in addition to startling lexical selection. The book applies a stringent structural linguistic approach to the formal and semantic analysis of miniature pieces of verbal art, and offers astounding insights into the aesthetic beauty of Lamang proverbs and riddles. The study belies traditionally held assumptions that traditional African verbal art is ignorant of “rhyme” unless borrowed from Arabic models.

1972


Pilot study on the segmental morphology of the verbal piece in Lamang, a hitherto practically undescribed Central Chadic (A) language, based on the author’s initial field work of five months in Gwoza, North-Eastern Nigeria, in 1968/69. This study preceded the full description of the grammar of this language, based on a second and more extensive field work period (1973-74), published 1983 and revised 2015.
1971


In preparation


In press/submitted


127. 'Vocalogenesis' in (Central) Chadic languages. (Festschrift on the occasion of Paul Newman’s 80th birthday, ed. by Samuel Gyasi Obeng.)


125. Language Policies in Ethiopia and the “linguistic landscape” in Adama. ITYOPIS Northeast African Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (NEAJ). (Mekelle University.)

124. On noun plural formations along the southern periphery of Afroasiatic (Chadic, Ethiosemitic, Cushitic). In Topics in Chadic Linguistics VII, ed. by Roland Kießling and Theda Schumann. (Chadic Linguistics – Linguistique tchadique – Tschadistik 8.) Cologne: Köppe.


122. Contact-Induced Disturbances in Personal Pronoun Systems in the Chadic – Benue-Congo Convergence Zone in Central Nigeria. (Symposium on Endangered Languages in Contact: Nigeria’s Plateau Languages, Universität Hamburg, 2004.)

2017


2016


2015


2014


2013


2012


2011


2010

http://www.zeitgeschichte-online.de/Themen-Wolff-12-2010

93. Human journey out of Africa – a perspective from language studies. (Summary of “Darwin Lecture” at the African Genome Education Institute, University of Cape Town, South Africa). 

http://www.uni-leipzig.de/ganaa/ (Downloads).


2009


http://wold.livingsources.org/vocabulary/4


http://wold.livingsources.org/vocabulary/5

86. The impact of clause types and focus control, aspect, modality, and referentiality on negation in Lamang and Hdi (Central Chadic). In Negation Patterns in West African Languages and Beyond, ed. by N. Cyffer, E. Ebermann and G. Ziegelmeyer, 21-56. Amsterdam-Philadelphia: John Benjamins.


2008

78-83. *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*


2007


74. Was sie sagen und was sie tun: Die “Sprachenfrage in Afrika” im politischen Diskurs. In *Die gezeigte und die verborgene Kultur*, ed. by Bernhard Streck, 103-124. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

2006


66. Encoding focus in Kanuri verbal morphology: Predication focus and the “Kanuri focus shift”. In Papers on Information Structure in African Languages, ed. by Ines Fiedler and Anne Schwarz. ZASPil 46: 185-209. (Together with D. Lohr.)


2005

2004


2003


2002

2001

54. On the non-linear ancestry of Tasawaq (Niger) - Or: How ‘mixed’ can a language be?
*SUGIA Sprache und Geschichte in Afrika* (Special Issue, ed. by Derek Nurse) 16/17: 523-574. (With Ousseina Alidou.)

Rekonstruktion des Proto-Afroasiatischen. *Afrika und Übersee* 83: 115-139.


2000


1999


1998


1995


1992

44. Historical properties and dynamics of the verbal system in Western Saharan (Kanuri, Tubu). *Afrika und Übersee* 75:75-109.


1991


1990


1989


1988

1987


1986


1985


1984


1983


1982


1979


1978


1977


07. Interferenzen zwischen Benue-Kongo- und Tsad-Sprachen. ZDMG Suppl. 3.2: 1518-1543. (With L. Gerhardt.)

1975


1974


1971


(Last up-date: July 2017)