

Terminology & Lang. developments in the RSA

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- The Republic of South Africa has 11 languages, and before 1994 only two of these were recognized as official languages, i.e. English and Afrikaans.
- By then, the government only concentrated on the development of these two languages to be used in government, education and commercial spheres.

- The Perestroika which started in the Kremlin (USSR) during the eighties encouraged Pretoria (S Africa) to start its own political reforms which some 'naughty' political analysts referred to as 'Pretoria-stroika'.
- This did not only lead to the liberation of all the people of South Africa, but also to the smooth hand over of power to the old man, Dr Nelson Mandela, in 1994.

- In 1994 all the 11 South African languages were declared official with equal status.
- The new Constitution created special mechanisms to develop the other 9 indigenous languages to come closer to the position of English and Afrikaans.
- One of these mechanisms was the replacement of all former Bantustan Language Boards with a PanSALB.

- One of the responsibilities of the Pan South African Language Board was to establish the National Lexicography Units for the 9 indigenous Languages to join the two already established Dictionary Units for Afrikaans (which was in existence since 1925) and English (established in the late sixties).

- The main objective with the establishment of the National Lexicography Units was the compilation of comprehensive monolingual dictionaries in the 9 indigenous languages to be in line with those of English and Afrikaans – since the politicians argued that there can never be a development in the language without dictionary & terminology developments.

The development of multilingualism was also encouraged by the establishment of a National Language Service (Chief Directorate) in the Department of Arts & Culture to embark on, inter alia, the compilation of multilingual terminology glossaries and Dictionaries to be used by the communities and school learners

- That's why today here we have the following four delegates representing the South African Government Department of Arts and Culture:
 - Bukelwa Kubheka
 - Dea Swiegers
 - Paulina Mogodi,
 - Lutamo Ramuedzisi

- The National Lexicography Units are attached to the 11 institutions of high learning which form part of the total of 28 Universities in the RSA, i.e.:
- The WAT (Woordeboek van die Afrikaanse Taal) in the University of Stellenbosch
- The Dictionary Unit of SA English (DSAE) at Rhodes University in Grahamstown
- The IsiXhosa NLU at FortHare University

- Setswana NLU at the University of North West in Mafikeng
- The Sesotho NLU at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein
- Isizulu NLU in the University of Zululand in Durban, Natal.
- Tshivenda NLU at the University of Venda in Thohoyandou

- The Isindebele NLU at the University of Pretoria (in Tshwane)
- The Xitsonga NLU is at Tivumbeni Multipurpose Centre (at Nkowankowa – Tzaneen)
- The Isiswati NLU in the Tshwane University of Technology at the Nelspruit Campus in Mpumalanga.

- The Sesotho sa Leboa NLU is attached to the University of Limpopo in Polokwane (Pietersburg) and has a sub branch at the University of Pretoria in the City of Tshwane. I am Editor-in-Chief and Executive Director of this Unit

- Besides the establishment and supervision of the activities of the NLU's, the Pan South African Language Board is also mandated with the duty to:
 - establish the Provincial Language Councils (PLC's) to supervise language developments and terminography in the 9 South African Provinces in collaboration with the Provincial Departments of Arts & Culture.

- PanSALB was also mandated with the responsibility of establishing the 13 National Language Bodies, with each NLB overseeing the development in the respective languages, including the standardization of terminology and the development of spelling and orthography rules for all the 11 official languages plus the Khoisan and the Sign Languages.

- The NLU's act as secretariats for the National Language Bodies in the respective languages. For instance, the Sesotho sa Leboa NLU is the office and secretariat for the Sesotho sa Leboa NLB (which acts as the custodian of this language), and the Executive Director of the NLU is head of the secretariat and a permanent and ex officio member of the NLB

- South Africa is also a P Member (participating member) of ISO/TC 37 which is coordinated by the South African Bureau of Standard (SABS) in Pretoria.
- The participating structures here include, inter alia, PanSALB, the NLU's, the NLS (Department of Arts and Culture), Universities, the NLB's, etc.

- In the last ISO/TC37 meeting held on the 18/04/2007 at the SABS headquarters in Pretoria, Dr Marietta Alberts (a terminology focus area manager at PanSALB) was elected Chairperson, and she, together with two more members will attend an international conference at Utah later this year..

- Of all the Editors-in Chief and Executive Directors of the NLU's, the Board of Directors of the Units and the National Language Bodies, I am the only one who managed to attend this important Terminology Summer School, but next time we will have many from these bodies