

MARTIN MÖSSMER

Curriculum Vitae

PH.D. STUDENT, Department of Linguistics, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

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EDUCATION

2023– PH.D., LINGUISTICS, expected in May 2028

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, Ann Arbor, USA

Advisors: Professors Andries W. Coetzee & Patrice S. Beddor

2018–21 M.A., LINGUISTICS, awarded with distinction

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN, South Africa

Thesis: *Xri: A study of contact, and phonetic and phonological change*

Advisors: Professors Rajend Mesthrie, Heather J. Brookes, & Rainer Vossen

2017 B.A. (HONS), LINGUISTICS, awarded in the First Class

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN, South Africa

Thesis: *The Rise and Fall of Xri: The history of a completed language shift in the Northern Cape, South Africa*

Advisor: Dr. Matthias Brenzinger

2014–16 B.A., LINGUISTICS, & CLASSICAL STUDIES, awarded with distinction in both majors, and the degree awarded with distinction

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN, South Africa

2007–08 ADVANCED FOOD AND WINE DIPLOMA, awarded with distinction

THE CULINARY ACADEMY, South Africa

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

JOURNAL PAPERS

2026 Brookes, H., Southwood, F., **Mössmer**, M., Makaure, P., White, M. J., Coetsee, C., Yalala, S. L., Kruger, H., Ndhambi, M., Ndlangamandla, S., Bhuda, M. T., Brink, N., Buthelezi, N., Jiyana, W., Khumalo, F. P., Ludidi, B., Matfunjwa, M., Miriri, L., & Skosana, N. (2025).

[Instrument adaptation for measuring early child language development across multilingual and sociocultural diverse settings](#). *Developmental Psychology*, 62(1), 288–302.

- 2026 Brookes, H., Southwood, F., Makaure, P., White, M. J., **Mössmer**, M., Defty, C., Yalala, S. L., Brink, N., Kruger, H., Matfunjwa, M., Ndhambi, M., Ndlangamandla, S., Bhuda, M. T., Buthelezi, N., Jiyana, W., Khumalo, P., Miriri, L., Skosana, N., & The South African CDI Team. [A crosslinguistic study of gesture and lexical development in South African infants](#). *First Language*. Advance online publication.
- 2025 Brookes, H., Makaure, P., Yalala, S. L., Danvers, H., **Mössmer**, M., Little, F., Ndhambi, M., Southwood, F., Ludidi, B., & the South African CDI Team. (2025). [Mean Length of Utterance: A study of early language development in four Southern Bantu languages](#). *Journal of Child Language*, 52(2), 244–269.
- 2021 Southwood, F., White, M., Brookes, H., Pascoe, M., Ndhambi, M., Yalala, S. L., Mahura, O., **Mössmer**, M., Oosthuizen, H., Brink, N., & Alcock, K. (2021). [Sociocultural factors affecting vocabulary development in young South African children](#). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 642315.
- 2019 **Mössmer**, M. (2019). [The rise and fall of Xri: The history of a completed language shift in the Northern Cape, South Africa](#). *Anthropological Linguistics*, 60(4), 44–74.

IN PREPARATION

- (in prep.) Coetzee, A.W., Henriksen, N., García-Amaya, L., Mackay, B. & **Mössmer**, M. Supplementing historical evidence with linguistic evidence: On the regional provenance of Patagonian Afrikaans.
- (in prep.) Coetzee, A.W., Mackay, B. & **Mössmer**, M. Afrikaans word recognition: Do listeners adjust to the socio-ethnic identity of the speaker?
- (in prep.) Coetzee, A. W., Mackay, B., **Mössmer**, M., & Sneller, B. Intersectional identities: Regional and socio-ethnic variation in Afrikaans.
- (in prep.) Gowlett, D. F. & **Mössmer**, M. The development of syllabic consonants in Sotho-Tswana and Nguni.

BOOK CHAPTERS

SUBMITTED

- (submitted) Coetzee, A. W., & **Mössmer**, M. Afrikaans diphthongs. In M. J. Ball & F. Hu (eds.), *Diphthongs, Triphthongs and Polyphthongs: A survey*. *Studies in Phonetics and Phonology Series*. University of Toronto Press.

IN PREPARATION

- (in prep.) **Mössmer**, M. Xri and Afrikaans. In B. Sands, M. Percival, A.-M. Fehn & J. Coburn (eds.), *Non-Pulmonic Consonants*. *Studies in Phonetics and Phonology Series*. University of Toronto Press.

MANUSCRIPT

- 2024 **Mössmer**, M. (ed.). (2024). *Woordelys van die Griekwataal, ook bekend as Xri* [Wordlist of the Griqua Language, also known as Xri]. [[Unpublished manuscript](#)].

GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, DISTINCTIONS

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

- 2025 Deborah Keller-Cohen Teaching Award: Department of Linguistics.
2024 SAIO Research Grant: Department of Afroamerican & African Studies.

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

- 2023 Fellowship: Gates-Cambridge Scholarship. [declined].

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

- 2019 Fellowship: Centre for Curating the Archive: [Onthouers | Rememberers Project](#).
2019 Lestrade Scholarship for Linguistic Study of Indigenous Language in Africa.
2018 Language Legacies Grant: The Endangered Language Fund.
2018 Fellowship: Centre for Curating the Archive: [Onthouers | Rememberers Project](#).
2018 Lestrade Scholarship for Linguistic Study of Indigenous Language in Africa.
2017 Fellowship: Harry Crossley Research Fellowship.
2017 Lestrade Scholarship for Linguistic Study of Indigenous Language in Africa.
2016 Humanities Faculty Scholarship; Dean's Merit List (Humanities Faculty).
2016 *Class Medals*: SLL3057 The City in the Ancient World; SLL3055 Athenian Life & Culture.
2015 Humanities Faculty Scholarship; Dean's Merit List (Humanities Faculty).
2015 *Class Medals*: AXL2300 Linguistics IIA, SLL2122 Mandarin IIB.
2014 Dean's Merit List (Humanities Faculty).
2014 *Class Medal*: SLL1054 The World of Odysseus.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

- 2026 Graduate Student Instructor
LING137 (Winter) Epic Grammar Fails (sociolinguistics). Dr Bradley Mackay.
2025 Head Graduate Student Instructor
LING111 (Fall) Lenses into Language: Mind, Society, Justice. Prof. Ezra Keshet.
2025 Graduate Student Instructor
LING114 (Winter) A World of Words (semantics & psycholinguistics). Dr Lisa Levinson.

2024 Graduate Student Instructor
LING115 (Fall) Language in a Multicultural World. Dr Yourdanis Sedarous.

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

2022–23 Lecturer
GL348 Critical Sociolinguistics. Designed and taught new upper-level class structured around critically examining three controversial topics in linguistics and the debates around them: linguistic relativity, creole exceptionalism, and the ‘Khoisan’ languages.
GL318 Critical Sociolinguistics. Second iteration of the above class, with an additional module on language endangerment and obsolescence.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

2018 Head Tutor (Head Teaching Assistant)
AXL2300 & AXL2301. Head tutor for second year linguistics students in formal and sociolinguistics; coordinating tutor team, grading assignments and exams.
2017–18 Tutor (Teaching Assistant)
AXL1300 & AXL1301. Tutor for first-year linguistics students in formal and sociolinguistics; grading assignments and exams, and individual tutoring.

GUEST LECTURES

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Nov 2025 *Language endangerment and loss: The story of Xri*. LING 101 Languages of the World.
Dr Sophia Eakins. Online.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Nov 2025 *Multilingualism I*. LING 340 The Social Life of Language. Dr Bradley Mackay.
Mar 2025 *Word Acquisition*. LING 114 A World of Words. Dr Lisa Levinson.
Feb 2025 *Let's Talk About 'Watersnakes' in Xri: Non-traditional elicitation methods for documenting critically endangered languages*. LING 780 Reflecting on our Identities in Language Research. Prof. Cherry Meyer & Prof. Savithry Namboodiripad.
Nov 2024 *The Rise and Fall of Xri*. LING 115 Language in a Multicultural World. Dr Yourdanis Sedarous.
Nov 2024 *Multilingualism I*. LING 340 The Social Life of Language. Dr Bradley Mackay.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

- 2023– Graduate Research Assistant, Phonetics & Phonology Lab
Data collection and research contribution for Prof. Andries Coetzee’s ongoing investigations of sociolinguistic variation in Afrikaans varieties, and diasporic Afrikaans in Patagonia.

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

- 2021–23 Study Coordinator, [Child Language Development Node](#)
Coordinating the second phase (with five languages) of a major nation-wide research project developing and validating McArthur-Bates Communicative Development Inventories (MB-CDIs) for South Africa’s 11 official spoken languages (www.sa-cdi.org). Research management and contribution, data management, quality control, logistics, finance, budgeting, coordinating 11 fieldworker teams (~120 fieldworkers) at nine research sites, scientific questionnaire development, and organizing workshops and scientific meetings with projects contributors from nine universities.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

- 2018–21 Study Coordinator, Child Language Africa
Coordinating the first phase of the South African research project adapting MB-CDIs for six official languages (www.sa-cdi.org). Pilot study and main study for six languages.
- 2018–19 Fieldworker, [Onthouers | Rememberers Project](#), [Center for Curating the Archive](#)
Supported by Prof. Pippa Skotnes’ Mellon Foundation and Oppenheimer Generations grants, and working with community members, I documented part of the cultural heritage and traditions of the Griekwa people, as told by over 50 community members, integrated with their personal histories and stories. People told stories about encounters with the *Waterslang* – a dangerous water being that inhabits rivers and springs, about their initiation experiences as young women, older ways of life from their childhoods, and how things changed in the turbulent times of Apartheid, and the bitter-sweet years post-Apartheid.
- 2018 Research Assistant, Linguistics Section
General research-related duties as assistant to Prof. Heather Brookes, chair of the *8th International Society for Gesture Studies Conference (ISGS8)*. Logistics, budget, conference program, and abstract collation and publication, for the *ISGS8* conference.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2017–23 Localization and Language Consultant, what3words.com, Freelance
Localization and translation of the what3words geolocation platform for Afrikaans, including map localization and translating ongoing updates and user interface features.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2026 How listeners do and don't adjust for cross-dialectal differences: Socio-ethnic variation in the Afrikaans vowel system. With Andries Coetzee & Bradley Mackay. *Linguistics Society of America 2026 Annual Meeting*. New Orleans, Louisiana.
- 2025 Afrikaans word recognition: Do listeners adjust to the socio-ethnic identity of the speaker? With Andries Coetzee & Bradley Mackay. *5th Afrikaans Grammar Workshop (AGW5)*. Ann Arbor, Michigan & Online.
- 2025 Let's Talk About 'Watersnakes' in Xri: Non-traditional elicitation methods for documenting critically endangered languages. *9th International Conference on Language Documentation & Conservation (ICLDC9)*. Honolulu, Hawai'i.
- 2025 Intersectional identities: Regional and socio-ethnic variation in Afrikaans. With Andries Coetzee, Betsy Sneller & Bradley Mackay. *Linguistics Society of America 2025 Annual Meeting*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- 2021 Equivalent child language assessment instruments across languages: Southern Africa CDIs. With Michelle J. White, Heather Brookes, Nina Brink, Olebeng Mahura, Mikateko Ndhambi, Helena Oosthuizen, Michelle Pascoe, Sefela Yalala, & Katie Alcock. *13th International Symposium on Bilingualism (ISB13)*. Warsaw, Poland.
- 2021 Adaptation and development of the MacArthur-Bates Communicative Development Inventory (CDI) for South African languages. With Sefela Yalala, Olebeng Mahura, Babalwa Ludidi, Helena Oosthuizen, Katie Alcock, Nina Brink, Heather Brookes, Mikateko Ndhambi, Michelle Pascoe, Frenette Southwood & Michelle J. White. *South African Linguistics and Applied Linguistics Society Conference (SALALS 2021)*. Online.
- 2021 Sociocultural factors affecting vocabulary development in young South African children. With Mikateko Ndhambi, Babalwa Ludidi, Frenette Southwood, Nina Brink, Heather Brookes, Olebeng Mahura, Katie Alcock, Helena Oosthuizen, Michelle Pascoe, Michelle J. White & Sefela Yalala. *South African Linguistics and Applied Linguistics Society Conference (SALALS 2021)*. Online.
- 2019 "I drank this language from my mother's breast": Layers of proficiency among Xri-speaking elders (Northern Cape, South Africa). *9th Cambridge Conference on Language Endangerment (CLE9)*. Cambridge, United Kingdom.
- 2018 The former distribution of Xri speakers and their language shift: A critical review of the historical sources. *20th International Congress of Linguists (ICL20)*. Cape Town, South Africa.

INVITED TALKS

- 2023 *But is it 'Khoisan'?* Re-examining a popular linguistic term. Department of General Linguistics, Stellenbosch University. May 8, 2023. Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- 2022 *Xri: A study of contact, and phonetic and phonological change.* Department of General Linguistics, Stellenbosch University. February 3, 2022. Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- 2021 *A Slow Death: Language contact and phonetic change in Xri.* [Kalahari Basin Area Network](#). January 21, 2021. Online.

SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

- 2025–26 Organizer, Phonetics & Phonology Discussion Group (Phondi).
- 2024–26 Graduate Committee (member).
- 2024–26 Co-organizer (with Em. Sarah Thomason), Historical Linguistics Discussion Group (Histling).
- 2025 Organizing Committee, 5th Afrikaans Grammar Workshop (AGW5).

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

- 2017–18 Executive Assistant to conference chair, Prof. Heather Brookes, *8th Conference of the International Society for Gesture Studies (ISGS8)*. Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2018 Assistant to conference chairs, Dr Mantoa Motinyane and Dr Matthias Brenzinger, *7th International Conference on Bantu Languages (Sintu7) & 19th Interim Conference of the African Languages Association of Southern Africa (ALASA19)*. Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2018 Student volunteer, *20th International Congress of Linguists (ICL20)*. Cape Town, South Africa.
- 2017 Assistant to conference chair, Dr Matthias Brenzinger, *6th International Symposium on Khoisan Languages and Linguistics (Riezlern-6)*. Cederberg, South Africa.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

- FLUENT: Afrikaans (native), English (native), German (heritage)
- CONVERSATIONAL: isiXhosa [S. Bantu], Mandarin Chinese, French
- RESEARCH LANGUAGES: Orange River Afrikaans, Xri [Khoekhoe]; Nguni (isiNdebele, isiZulu, Siswati); Sotho-Tswana (Northern Sotho, Sesotho, Setswana); Tshivenda, Xitsonga

FIELDWORK

- 2024 *June/July*: Northern Cape, South Africa. Orange River Afrikaans speakers.
- 2023 *July*: Western Cape, South Africa. Afrikaans speakers, for Prof. Andries Coetzee.

- 2019 *March*: Northern Cape, South Africa. Xri documentation & searching for speakers/rememberers, recording Griekwa personal histories, cultural heritage and traditions.
- 2018 *July/September*. Northern Cape, South Africa. Xri documentation & searching for speakers/rememberers, recording Griekwa personal histories, cultural heritage and traditions.
- 2018 *February*: Northern Cape, South Africa. Searching for Xri speakers/rememberers.

MEMBERSHIP

Linguistics Society of America (LSA)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Praat, FastTrack, ELAN, Qualtrics, some R, some Python