



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

INVITATION

‘Reflecting critically on the conceptualisation of diversity in sociolinguistics’

4 August 2015

Professor Rada Tirvassen, Head of the Department of Modern European Languages, Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria, cordially invites you to his inaugural address entitled

‘Reflecting critically on the conceptualisation of diversity in sociolinguistics’



DATE: 4 August 2015

TIME: 18:00 for 18:30

VENUE: Senate Hall, Hatfield Campus, University of Pretoria

RSVP bongiwe.cwayi@up.ac.za

PARKING: Senate Hall (follow markers)

GPS COORDINATES: S25° 45' 21" E28° 13' 51"

ABSTRACT

While it can legitimately be claimed that research in social sciences has made significant contributions to the welfare of mankind, it is also important to acknowledge that some preconceived beliefs about people and cultural practices are rooted in certain trends in academic work. This is why it is the duty of researchers to reflect critically not only on the type of knowledge that they construct from their scholarship but also on the theoretical tools with which it is undertaken.

The conceptualisation of diversity in mainstream sociolinguistics can serve to illustrate this argument. A meta-analysis of studies undertaken in some of the islands of the Indian Ocean demonstrates that this discipline has, for a long time, highlighted social divisions along the lines of race and ethnicity and has, at the same time, ignored the role of fusion and creolisation in shaping identity. This reflection could serve to question whether sociolinguistics is equipped to contribute to fundamental issues like languages and nation building.