

South African Association for Language Teaching Suid-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Taalonderrig Mbumbano ya Afrika Tshipembe ya u Gudisa Nyambo



SAALT Special Issue 2022

As a result of the substantial contribution that Prof. Adelia Carstens has made over many years to the field of Applied Linguistics (and various others), the executive committee of the *South African Association for Language Teaching* decided to dedicate a special issue of the *Journal for Language Teaching* to her. This will be considered a Festschrift and fully accredited; it will be published as the second number of 2022 of the journal.

Adelia Carstens retired as Full Professor and Director of the Unit for Academic Literacy, University of Pretoria, after an academic career spanning nearly 40 years, but continues to remain a valued colleague and expert in the fields that she has worked in. In the course of her academic career she has taught close to 23 different modules from first-year to Masters level, designed and developed highly successful writing and communication modules and contributed greatly to the advancement of the institution through her work in the development of the Institution's language policy, its language planning and overall language support from undergraduate to postgraduate level. She has mastered and published extensively on academic writing at undergraduate and postgraduate level, course development, academic reading, genre-focused teaching of writing, translanguaging and multilingualism, to name a few.

In light of her vast expertise, the editors of this special edition will welcome contributions under the broad theme: **Supporting Language and Literacy Development in Higher Education.**

The intensification of the internationalisation and associated massification of higher education implies the need for universities to accommodate the diverse learning needs of increasingly heterogeneous student cohorts (Briguglio & Watson, 2014). In catering for the diverse needs of this heterogeneous student body, the 'international university' must offer effective support for students' language development. As language teachers, academic literacy and writing centre practitioners, course and curriculum developers, and as those generally responsible for the implementation of institutional language policies and language support programmes, the issues raised by Briguglio and Watson (2014) ring close to home. Despite the contentious role language and literacy development still holds today, institutions of higher learning in the South African context have, and continue to make great strides in the continued language and literacy development of our students. These have ranged from stand-alone offerings in the form of generic and/or discipline-specific academic literacy modules to embedded writing across the curriculum initiatives, and the establishment of writing centres and other support structures focused on developing the overall language ability of our student body. The decision to offer such support is, of course, driven by institutions' language policies, which to date have been skewed in favour of English as the language of teaching and learning (LoTL) - today at least 18 of the country's 23 universities use only English in this function (Webb, 2012). This, despite government policy frameworks to promote the use of the African languages in higher education in order to facilitate conceptual access and social inclusion (Stroud & Kerfoot, 2013). What is needed, therefore, is 'a renewed focus on developing the African languages in universities'; and 'one that integrates African languages into the formal programmes of institutions' (*White paper for post-school education and training*, 2013:38). Translanguaging is often offered as one possible solution (Carstens, 2016) where at least two languages are used in a functionally integrated manner to mediate cognitive, social and affective processes in literacy and learning (Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012). The adoption of such strategies are, however, context specific and must be dictated by the language needs of a specific cohort, and not applied as 'one size fits all solutions' to language problems.

Clearly, then, language and literacy development, in especially the South African higher education context, confounded by the multiple language and language backgrounds of our students, cannot remain static. The language and policy specialists involved in the design, development and offering of such support must remain committed to the continued development of our students' language and literacy through context-specific, theoretically grounded and empirically driven research (Carstens & Rambiritch, 2020). In keeping with this call and the overall theme of the special edition, the editors welcome research articles that address key issues pertaining to language and literacy development in higher education. These include, but are not limited to, aspects related to:

1. academic literacy;
2. writing centre interventions;
3. language course/curriculum design and development;
4. multilingualism and/or translanguaging;
5. language test design, development and implementation;
6. language policy, language planning and language support.

Deadlines

Submission of papers: **30 May 2022**

Reviews to be completed by: **30 July 2022**

Revisions due : **1 October 2022**

Publication: **1 December 2022**

Submissions

All papers should be submitted electronically on our website:

<http://www.saalt.org.za/submit-a-paper.html>

Unfortunately, no papers submitted via any other medium can be considered.

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