

PREFACE

We are happy to publish this first number of Volume 39 with not one, but two articles in languages other than English.

We start off with an article on the importance of language policy and language education to ensure the vitality of minoritized languages in South Africa. In his article on reasons and methods of dealing with language death, **Diko** points to the ways in which economic and social contexts militate against sustainable practices that will ensure the vitality of minoritized languages. However, Diko makes a second, important point by arguing that the article is “written in the isiXhosa language, adding yet another dimension to the development of indigenous languages at a scholarly level”. The extended summary provided in English gives a glimpse into the article for scholars not familiar with isiXhosa.

From this policy-based argument, we move to multilingual Senior Phase classrooms in the article by **Ramadiro**, where turn-taking in isiMpondo, isiXhosa and English is analysed. The author concludes that a Conversational Analysis (CA) approach to multilingual classroom interaction is shaped by broader institutional factors, such as institutional goals and participants’ roles, rather than turn-by-turn sequential factors as would be the case in a conventional CA analyses.

Moving to secondary school contexts, **Koele and Awung** discuss the use of games to enhance the learning of French in a Lesotho high school. This is the second article in a language other than English, in a field that is severely under-researched in Sub-Saharan African, namely the teaching of languages that would be regarded as non-official in South Africa (such as German, Mandarin, Arabic, Gujarati, to name a few), but which are usually just referred to as *foreign* languages. This report on the use of games in language teaching is surely relevant to all language teaching, but specifically foreign language teaching in secondary school contexts, where learners often start their study of a foreign language. As we see the study of foreign languages decline, motivational activities become an important part of teachers’ skills set.

This issue concludes with an article on teachers’ expectations of learners’ reading practices. In their study across the levels of schooling in South Africa, **Cekiso, Olifant and Boakye** discuss the ways in which teachers’ expectations can affect learners’ performance when they read. Their conclusion that such expectations, particularly of learners from so-called disadvantaged backgrounds, can affect reading performance negatively, underscores the complexity of South Africa’s ‘reading problem’ (as it has come to be called). Although the authors acknowledge that teachers do try to challenge their learners sometimes, their call for awareness raising in teacher education is a timely and important one.

We hope you enjoy this diverse range of articles!

C van der Walt