

PREFACE

This number of *Per Linguam* starts with language development at higher education level in the first three articles and then moves to the development of reading competence at intermediate phase level in the primary school and the development of literacy at foundation phase level.

As in previous numbers of *Per Linguam*, the concern with developing academic literacy for higher education studies shows the extent to which higher education practitioners need to engage with language proficiency development in particular subjects. Cillié and Coetzee discuss the possibilities of transferring scientific literacy, and critical thinking skills in particular, from one subject to another in a Faculty of Science. The conditions for optimal transfer are discussed with a view to creating a context in which systematic practice, explicit conceptualisation, active self-monitoring, the use of metaphors and/or analogies and the role of mindfulness are transferred from a first-year course to subsequent modules and years.

From the Department of Civil Engineering Science and that of Geography, Environmental Management and Energy Studies, Simpson and McKay look at academic literacy from the side of the lecturer and her/ his assessment rubrics. They argue that such rubrics need to be understood by students so that they can interpret their results to improve their writing. Such rubrics need to be mediated to be seen as valid forms of assessment and to be used as guidelines for improved practice.

The article by Lemmer and Qi moves away from academic literacy to consider the importance of providing opportunities for teaching and learning Mandarin. Although one can argue that the provision of Mandarin as a foreign language in four South African universities is an indication of the influence of China in Africa, it is clear that the offering of languages at South African universities, both African as well as European languages, has shrunk alarmingly. As an indication of the internationalisation at South African universities, the inclusion of Mandarin seems a positive, but very small step towards reclaiming lost ground in faculties of Arts at South African universities.

The last two articles focus on the South African school context. The article by Klapwijk shows how relatively simple measures of reading ability can be used to assess the reading development of Intermediate Phase learners. In view of the increasing pressure on teachers to develop and assess learners' reading development, it is important to provide teachers with research-based measures that can give them information that is relatively easy to interpret.

In the final article Hugo and Horn emphasize the interaction between music and listening development. In their experiment, the authors show how learners of English as a first additional language can improve their ability to listening and understand English. This is an important insight for teachers in the Foundation Phase whose integrated approach to teaching numeracy, literacy and life skills is supported by this finding.

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