

EASA NEWSLETTER #2

2024

EASA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025

Learning on the rising tides: Inspirational approaches
to education, creativity, harmonious collaboration,
and deeper social connections

DATE: 19 - 22 January 2025

VENUE: Sun City Resort, Sun City, North West
Province,
SOUTH AFRICA



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CHAIRPERSON 2024




Prof Fumane Khanare

Dear Valued EASA Members,

As we reflect on the thirty (30) years of democracy in South Africa, EASA has made significant strides in advancing education nationwide through research aligned with both national and continental development objectives.

Our Association's activities – including the annual conference, Special Interest Groups webinars, and the South African Journal of Education (SAJE), our internationally accredited journal – provide a robust platform for scholars in Education. These activities are aligned with Agenda 2063's aspiration for transformed education system across Africa. This year, we have also renewed our focus on revitalising our Special Interest Groups.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a central topic in the education sector, presenting both opportunities and challenges in teaching, learning and assessment. Successfully integrating AI requires 'all hands-on deck' to uphold academic integrity while using it as a tool for educational growth. Our Special Interest Group on Open and Distance Learning hosted a webinar, "AI and Machine Learning in Higher Education: Opportunities, Possibilities and Challenges" on August 8, 2024. Therefore, EASA's activities support the National Development Plan's vision to address educational challenges and contribute to the African's Union's vision of developing a well-educated, technologically skilled citizenry.




We are deeply grateful to the University of Johannesburg (UJ) for hosting the 2024 EASA Conference. Special recognition goes to Prof. Maximus Sefotho, whose exceptional leadership as the organiser, ensured the conference's success. We also extend our sincere appreciation to his dedicated team, particularly highlighting the invaluable contribution of Narina Basson and Marian Louw from Event Behella, who served as conference administrators. Their combined efforts created an outstanding platform for knowledge exchange under the theme "The Cradle, Evolution, and the Future of Education", bringing together over education professionals and partners from across the country and beyond.

The Association's continued success is a testament to the collaborative spirit of our member members and partners. We extend our sincere appreciation to the Executive Committee for their dedication and strategic leadership across various portfolios, as reported in this newsletter. We are particularly excited to announce several distinguished additions to our Executive Committee. We warmly welcome Prof Candice Livingston as our incoming Chairperson and Newsletter coordinator. Dr. Tony Mpisi joins us to lead our Special Interest Group (SIGs), bringing fresh energy to revitalize these important forums. Prof Maximus Sefotho takes on the crucial portfolio of Internationalization and Postgraduate Student Development, while Dr. Eugene Machimama brings his expertise as the new coordinator for the EASA website. We are also delighted to welcome Prof Micheal van Wyk as an additional member of the EASA Executive Committee.

Our international standing is strengthening through our membership in the World Education Research Association (WERA), with Prof Ruth Mampane representing EASA on the WERA Council. We warmly welcome Dr. Marisa Leask as our WERA-DEC Representative. Prof, Johnnie Hay, our dedicated secretary, we remain grateful for your insight and leadership in the association. We are equally proud of Prof. Ronel Ferreira and her team for maintaining the South African Journal of Education (SAJE) as a leading internationally accredited journal in education research in Africa. Additionally, Prof. Raj Mestry continues his exceptional stewardship of the association's finances as Treasurer.

We are thrilled about our upcoming conference at the Sun City Resor near Rustenburg, South Africa. The EASA 2025 annual conference will be hosted by the University of Pretoria from January 19 to 22, 2025. The conference theme is "LEARNING ON THE RISING TIDES: INSPIRATIONAL APPROACHES TO EDUCATION, CREATIVITY, HARMONIOUS COLLABORATION, AND DEEPER SOCIAL CONNECTIONS". We extend our sincere gratitude to Prof. Funke Omidire, the conference chairperson and EASA Executive Committee





member, and her team for their tireless dedication in organizing the conference. Special thanks also go to the conference administrators Narina Basson and Marian Louw from Event Behella for their valuable support.

We are looking forward to an enriching conference experience filled with thought-provoking presentations, dynamic discussion, and valuable networking opportunities. A highlight of our gathering will be the award ceremony, where we will celebrate our distinguished EASA award recipients in person. I eagerly anticipate connecting with you at the 2025 conference. As we wrap up this year, the Executive Committee joins me in wishing you a joyful holiday season. May the coming year bring you continued success and fulfilment.

Warm regards,

Fumane Portia Khanare

2024 EASA Chairperson



EASA 2024 AWARDS

Prof Fumane Khanare



Outgoing chairperson

Dr Lizelle Pretorius



Postgraduate Award
(Doctoral Degree)

Dr Roxanne Bailey



Emerging Researcher

Prof Elsa Mentz



Medal of Honour

Prof Saloshna Vandeyar



Medal of Honour

EASA CONFERENCE 2025




Prof Funke Omidire

The EASA 2025 conference will be hosted by the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria. The conference will be held at the Sun City, Resort in Rustenburg, South Africa from the 19th to the 22nd of January, 2025. The theme of the EASA 2025 conference Learning on the Rising Tides: Inspirational Approaches to Education, creativity, harmonious Collaboration, and Deeper Social Connections. The sub-themes include Community engagement (CE) and teacher learning through collaboration, Community-based participatory research, Socially responsive community engagement, Parental involvement, Transdisciplinarity, Teacher Education and Higher Education, Innovative Pedagogy, Language, Resilience and Early Childhood Education, Multilingualism and linguistic diversity, Language Planning and Policy, Technology in education with a focus on the Artificial Intelligence (AI), Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and Online, Hybrid and Blended learning.

I am pleased to report that there has been considerable interest in the conference and abstracts have been received across the conference sub themes. Abstract submissions will close on 30 October 2024.

One of our keynote speakers is Prof Liesel Ebersöhn. Prof Ebersöhn is a full professor in the Department of Educational Psychology and Director of the Centre for the Study of Resilience at the University of Pretoria. Prof Crain Soudien will also deliver a keynote address. Prof Soudien is a former deputy vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town, where he remains an emeritus professor in Education and African Studies and the former Chief Executive Officer of the Human Sciences Research Council.



Prof Chika Schoole (Dean, Faculty of Education, UP), Prof Sunil Maharaj (Vice Principal—Research, UP), and Prof Loretta Feris (Vice Principal—Academic) will deliver the welcome, opening, and closing addresses, respectively.

Brief biographies of the keynote speakers are below. Additional information and announcements will be available on the EASA website and through email.


Keynote speakers



Professor Chika Schoole
Dean of the Faculty of Education,
University of Pretoria

Prof Chika Schoole is a professor of higher education and the Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. He obtained his PhD at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in December 2002. In 2003/4 he was a visiting Rockefeller post-doctoral fellow at the Centre for African Studies at the University of Illinois in Urbana Champaign. In 2005/06 he was a New Century Fulbright Fellow again, at the same university. Professor Schoole worked his career and climbed through the ranks from when he was first appointed as a lecturer in 2001, and got promoted to Senior lecturer in 2003, and Associate Professor in 2007 and full Professor in 2016. Between 2007 and 2010 he was seconded to the Department of Education where he served as Chief Director for Planning in 2007/08 and of Policy in 2008-2010.

Prof Schoole has previously worked as a Project officer for the Joint Education Trust during the period 2006-2009. This followed a stint with the Education Policy Unit at the University of the Western Cape where he worked as a research officer during the period 1992- 1996. He



has served on a number of boards of education institutions including the Board of the Institutes of Higher Education in Mpumalanga, the Board of the Institute of Education in the Northern Cape, the Board of the South African Qualifications Authority and the Board of the Higher Education Quality Committee.


His research interests are in the areas of higher education policy, internationalization of higher education, higher education in Africa and globalization of higher education. He has served in several international research projects focusing on higher education and providing expertise from the South African and African perspectives. In 2013-2017 he served as the Chairperson of the Board of the African Network for Internationalization of Education (ANIE) and he is currently serving on its board. He currently serves as the chairperson of the Education Deans' Forum of South Africa. He has one single authored scholarly book, three edited scholarly books on higher education and published more than 40 articles in journal articles, book chapters and popular media.



Prof Sunil Maharaj
Vice Principal: Research, Innovation
and Postgraduate Education
University of Pretoria

Sunil (BT) Maharaj is a Professor in the Department of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering. He has a combined experience of more than 33 years in industry as a microwave and RF design engineer, academia and consulting. He holds a BSc Engineering (Electronic), MSc Engineering (Electronic), MSc Operational Telecommunications and a PhD Engineering. He is also a professional engineer registered with the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA), a Fellow of the South African Academy of Engineering, Fellow of the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers and Senior Member of IEEE. In 2018 he was the founding Chair of the IEEE SA Section Vehicular Technology Society (VTS) Chapter. He has been involved in organizing many conferences and technical events such as IEEE Africon,





IEEE ICC 2010 and as General Conference Chair for IEEE VTS 2019 Wireless Africa Conference and the 2020 and 2022 World Engineering Education Federation and Engineering Deans Council Conference. He has been the first African Dean to be elected as the Global Engineering Dean Council Chair and assumed the Chair in November 2021. Dr Maharaj since 2008 held the position of Sentech Chair in Broadband Wireless Multimedia Communications and has more than 170 international peer reviewed conference and journal articles, 2 international patents and winner of 10 national and international awards. His research interests are in broadband wireless communications with a focus on 5G cognitive radio sensor networks resource allocation, OFDM-MIMO systems, wireless channel modelling and edge computing communications systems. Dr Maharaj was in 2021/2022 the President of the South African Institute of Electrical Engineers (SAIEE) and since 2017 Chair of TuksNovation NPC Board which is a hi-tech business incubator and accelerator.

He was previously the Head of Department of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering and between 2014 and 2022 served as Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology (EBIT) until his appointment as Vice-Principal: Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Education on 1 August 2022.




Prof Loretta Feris Vice-Principal: Academic, University of Pretoria

Loretta Feris is the Vice-Principal Academic at the University of Pretoria (UP), with responsibility for all nine faculties, the business school, GIBS, and the UP Mamelodi Campus. She also holds the portfolios for undergraduate teaching and learning, comprehensive online education (undergraduate and postgraduate) and quality assurance. Before joining UP, she was the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Transformation, Student Affairs and Social Responsiveness at UCT from 2017 to 2021. She briefly joined the UP Faculty of Law in 2022 as Professor of Environmental Law where she established the Centre for Environmental Justice in Africa (CEJA). She holds the degrees BA (law), LLB and LLD from the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa and LLM from Georgetown University in the USA.

Prof Feris is an inter-and transdisciplinary scholar and has published widely in environmental law, environmental justice, environmental human rights and indigenous knowledge systems and is Executive Producer of the film "Vroedvrou" which shines the spotlight on traditional Midwives in the Northern Cape. She has also taught and published in the area of trade and environmental law. She delivered numerous keynote presentations at both international and national conferences and is a regular contributor in popular media.

She is a Council member of the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf) and serves on the Steering Committee of the University Social Responsibility Network (USRN) and is a Law Commissioner of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and a member of the



IUCN Academy of Environmental Law where she served on the teaching and capacity building committee for three years. She was co-chair of the International Association of Research Universities


Gender Group, (2018–2021) and served on the board of the South African Maritime Safety Authority between 2010 and 2013. She has collaborated with international institutions such as the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), BRICS and the World Bank, and has acted as an advisor for government, corporations and non-profit organisations.

Loretta has always maintained a strong relationship with civil society. She is currently the Chair of the board of Natural Justice, a non-profit organisation that focuses on social and environmental justice in Africa and is also a board member of Biowatch a non-profit that works with small-scale farmers to promote agroecology.



Prof Liesel Ebersöhn
Full Professor: Department of
Educational Psychology, University of
Pretoria
(Director: Centre for the Study of
Resilience)

Prof. Liesel Ebersöhn a registered educational psychologist and expert on social dimensions of resilience, draws on Sub-Saharan Africa evidence for critical contributions to understanding, from an Afrocentric perspective, resilience-enabling




responses that promote collective wellbeing given collective distress. She is the World Education Research Association President

Ebersöhn is regarded as a leading scholar and teacher in resilience and resilience promoting interventions in high-risk school settings. Her research is positioned in contexts characteristic of an emerging economy, Global South country in transformation. She combines emancipatory and intervention methodologies to investigate pathways to resilience as human-ecological and cultural adaptive responses to chronic and cumulative adversity. Her recognised scientific contributions include a generative theory (relationship-resourced resilience) describing an emic system to counter chronic adversity, as well as 'flocking', a word she coined to depict a collectivist indigenous psychology pathway to resilience. This signature work has led to foregrounding collaborative rather than competitive responses to disruption: managing finite resources in sustainable ways that support egalitarian positive education, health and wellbeing outcomes.

She is a recipient of numerous scientific association-, national- and institutional awards. She was visiting professor at Yale University, Universität Hamburg and Edith Cowan University.

Through engagement in global education and poverty think tanks, panels and boards, she is influential globally in education development circles to inform policy, training and practice for sustainable transformation in the Global South. She has read invited keynote and plenary addresses across the globe – including at the Global Development Network 17th Annual Conference, Lima; American Psychological Association (APA) Invited symposium on Indigenous Pathways to Resilience (2014, Washington, DC); 2023 Mexicali 17th International Conference on Psychology Education; International Multidisciplinary Conference on Educational Research (CIMIE) (2022, Barcelona); Xth International Congress of International Research, Nevsehir, Turkey, 2018.

Her education research roles world-wide span an array of platforms – including chair American Educational Research Association International Research and Scholarship Committee (Division C, Learning and Instruction); member Intergovernmental




Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Transformative Change Scoping Experts and Management Committee; South African representative on the Advisory Board of the International Association of Educators; member: Ecuadorian Association for the Advancement of Educational Research (ASEFIE) International Advisory Board; and member African Centre of Excellence for Education Leadership and Teacher Education International Advisory Board.



Prof Crain Soudien
Former Deputy Vice Chancellor, UCT
HSRC Centre for African Studies

Crain Soudien was educated in the fields of education and African Studies at the Universities of Cape Town, South Africa and the State University of New York at Buffalo. His PhD dissertation from Buffalo was on South African youth identity. He is a former deputy vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town, where he remains an emeritus professor in Education and African Studies and the former Chief Executive Officer of the Human Sciences Research Council. He has honorary professorial appointments at the Nelson Mandela University, the University of Johannesburg and has recently been appointed as the President of the Cornerstone Institute, a non-profit private higher education institute based in Cape Town, South Africa. His publications in the areas of social difference, culture, education policy, comparative education, educational change, public history and popular culture include four books, one co-authored book, six edited collections and over 250 articles, reviews, reports, and book



chapters. He is currently working on six books, including a two-volume history of education in South Africa, the first of which is to appear in 2024, and a book on the 'idea of race'. He has an A-rating in the South African research system.

He is actively involved in a number of local, national and international social and cultural organisations and is chairperson of the Independent Examinations Board, a founder and former chairperson of the District Six Museum Foundation, a former president of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies, and has served as the chair of three South African Ministerial Committees of Enquiry, including the Ministerial Committee on Transformation in Higher Education and the Ministerial Committee to Evaluate Textbooks for Discrimination. He is a fellow of the International Academy of Education, the African Academy of Science, a Senior Fellow of NORRAG, Geneva Graduate Institute, a member of the Academy of Science of South African, a Chen Yidan Visiting Global Fellow at Harvard University, a former fellow of the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies, the SARCHI Chair in Development Education, UNISA and the Centre for Global Citizenship Education and Research, University of Alberta in Canada. He serves on the boards of a number of cultural, heritage, education and civil society structures.

SECRETARY REPORT



Prof Johnnie Hay

Dear EASA members and interested parties

We are seeing a steady inflow of applications for EASA membership – which is heartening to EXCO. Since our last Newsletter 1 of June 2024, the following members joined or renewed their membership:

Ms Didimalang Matsheka from STADIO

Dr Farai Nyika from MANCOSA

Me Raeesa Kader from MANCOSA

Dr Millicent Ngema from UNISA

Ms Kim-Tamsin Williams from UP

Prof Corinne Meier from UNISA

Dr Murunwa Dagada from UNISA

Dr Blandina Manditereza from UFS

Me Melissa van Hal from EDUHELP

Prof Tebogo Mogashoa from UNISA

Me Mariaan Oschman from Akademia

We urge stakeholders whose membership has expired, to pay the annual R450 fee for 2025 as soon as possible – or then the R225 fee after the 1st of July. Please liaise with me about this – then I can also provide you with proof of membership.

Johnnie

Sun City



EASA WEBSITE REPORT



Dr Eugene Machimana

Dr Eugene Machimana is collaborating closely with Anna Dani from Reedflute Software Solutions to maintain and update the EASA website. All website colour palettes have been adjusted to align with the EASA logo's primary colour, which is now reflected in the headings, banners and links.

The site now features the latest updates, including the revised call for the 2025 EASA Conference in Sun City, with a new abstract submission deadline of Wednesday, 30 October 2024. Academic activities and job opportunities are regularly refreshed so EASA members and the public can access up-to-date information. For those with relevant job postings or academic events, such as seminars, webinars or conferences, please reach out to the EASA Office at <https://www.easa.ac.za/contact-us/>. Membership details for those interested in joining EASA can be found here: <https://www.easa.ac.za/membership/>.

We encourage everyone to explore the newly updated EASA website for more information. Comments and suggestions are welcome to help us keep the website aligned with current needs and developments.

EASA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)



Dr Tony Mpisi

The aim of our Special Interest Groups (SIGs) provides a forum for members who are experts and active practitioners in their core areas, whether subject-specific or interdisciplinary. The primary goal of SIGs is to transform practice through professional learning opportunities that showcase leading, evidence-based practices. Moreover, SIGs aim to create research and research opportunities around practical problems. SIGs maintain a strong presence year-round via our website and social media, playing a key role in organizing professional learning events with the EASA EXCO, including our annual conference and special interest webinars, seminars, and workshops. They also foster collaboration among postgraduate students and supervisors to pursue new knowledge, relevant research, and societal contributions.

EASA currently has the following six SIGs:

- Curriculum Studies, Philosophy and Sociology of Education, and Research Methodology.
- Education Management, Leadership, Law, Policy Studies, Comparative and International Education.

- Human Development in Education: Educational Psychology, Early Childhood Education, Movement Education, and Inclusive Education.
- Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education.
- Self-directed Learning.
- Social Sciences in Education: Languages, History, EMS, and Creative/Performing Arts.

We have decided to add an additional four SIGs, namely:

- Work Integrated Learning (WIL) or Teaching Practice
- Educational Technology
- Open and Distance Learning (ODL)
- Inclusive, Disability and Neurodiversity Education
- Early Career Research Doctoral (DEC)

For more information, visit the EASA website at www.easa.ac.za

SIG leaders (chairpersons) are elected at the EASA annual conference.

Dr Anthony (Tony) Mpisi – SIGs Coordinator



WERA REPORT



Prof Motlalepule Mampane

World Education Research Association (WERA) is an association of major national, regional, and international specialty research associations dedicated to advancing education research as a scientific and scholarly field, and EASA is a WERA member. Prof Ruth Mampane is a WERA Council member (representing EASA interests). In Southern Africa, and currently, as it stands, Africa, only one education association (EASA) has council representation in WERA. Education Associations are encouraged to join WERA so that their interests can be represented nationally and globally. WERA is an association of 28 national, regional, and international specialty research associations which aims to advance education research as a scientific and scholarly field worldwide to serve the public good. If you want to know more about WERA, you can access information from their website (<http://www.weraonline.org/>).

WERA Officers:

Liesel Ebersöhn, President (July 2024 – June 2026): liesel.ebersohn@up.ac.za

Geovana Mendonça Lunardi Mendes, Vice-President (July 2024 – June 2026):
geolunardi@gmail.com

Joe O'Hara President-Elect (July 2024 – June 2026): joe.ohara@dcu.ie



Bee Leng Chua, Immediate Past President (July 2024 – June 2026):
beeleng.chua@nie.edu.sg

Rocío García-Carrión, Secretary General (July 2022 – June 2026):
rocio.garcia@deusto.es

Mustafa Yunus Eryaman, Appointed Liaison (July 2024 – June 2026):
yunuseryaman@gmail.com

Felice Levine, Appointed Liaison (July 2024 – June 2026): flevine@aera.net


Ingrid Gogolin, Appointed Liaison (July 2024 – June 2026): gogolin@uni-hamburg.de
or geovana.mendes@udesc.br

Annual WERA Meetings:

In 2024, WERA held two annual meetings aligned to international conferences, which most EASA delegates attended. The first conference was in Philadelphia (USA) on April 11–14, 2024, in collaboration with the American Research Association (AERA). During these focal meetings, in most instances, WERA will call for abstracts for delegates to watch the space. Also, EASA shares all WERA announcements with all its delegates.

The second meeting was in collaboration with the University of Manchester, UK 8 - 12 September 2024. A call for abstracts was also announced through EASA communication. Most EASA Executives attended this conference, namely: Chairperson, Prof Fumane Khanare; Treasurer, Prof Raj Mestry; EASA-WERA Council Member, Prof Ruth Mampane; and Prof Funke Omidire.

During the EASA conference in January 2024, Prof Ebersöhn, WERA President, attended the conference, and this was to support EASA and to show WERA's presence in local conferences. Additionally, AERA-aligned delegates, e.g. from the University of Fordham, attended the EASA conference as well. This indicates that the association of EASA and WERA has many benefits for all EASA members as this enables all to have access to many opportunities offered by WERA. Please visit the WERA website (see link above) to find out more about all the opportunities offered by WERA. Additionally,



to have more access to WERA, you can join WERA as an individual member, see the link here: <https://weraonline.org/>

Dr Marisa Leask is the EASA-WERA: Doctoral and Early Career Network (DEC) representative. The purpose of DEC is to provide doctoral and early career scholars the opportunity to network with and meet each other, as well as to build relationships with expert researchers in the field of education. I am happy to announce that at the 2025 EASA Conference, there will be a presence of the DEC chairperson where more information can be provided. You can email Dr Leask at: marisa.leask@up.ac.za

Information on WERA focal meetings in 2025

The First World Education Research Association (WERA) 2025 Focal Meeting will be held during the American Education Research Association (AERA) from April 23–27, 2025i, in Denver, Colorado (USA). See the link below.

<https://www.aera.net/Events-Meetings/AERA-2025-Annual-Meeting>


The second WERA conference, in collaboration with ANPED (Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação e Pesquisa em Educação) Brazil, is taking place 26-31 October 2025. The call for papers is not out yet. However, you can visit the ANPED website through the link attached: <https://anped.org.br/>

WERA participation with EASA

For future planning of conferences, member Associations, including EASA, are advised to use the opportunity to request WERA Keynotes and Symposia during their annual conferences; this opportunity is open and available to all member associations. Associations can email (WERA@aera.net) or visit the WERA website (<http://www.weraonline.org/>).

WERA website is continuously revamped to ensure maximum exposure. Individual members and member associations are requested to contact the secretariat (WERA@aera.net) with any questions or suggestions regarding WERA. Similarly, EASA





members can utilise the opportunity WERA presents for international exposure by sending information regarding important events related to EASA. Importantly, members of EASA are encouraged to send information to the WERA secretariat (Dr / Prof.: Rocio Garcia-Carrion; WERA@aera.net) or to EASA-WERA representative: ruth.mampane@up.ac.za.

WERA Representative

Prof Motlalepule Mampane


WERA SYMPOSIUM



Prof Raj Mestry

As chair and discussant, I think that it is important to provide an analysis of the symposium on “Reconceptualization of Education in sub-Saharan Africa: The role of language in education” that was presented by EASA members at the 2024 WERA Focal Meeting in Collaboration with BERA on 8-12 September 2024 at the University of Manchester, United Kingdom.

I was highly impressed with the in-depth research on “The role of language” conducted by the University of Pretoria’s academics, Prof Funke Omidire, Prof Ruth



Mampane and Dr Ruth Aluko. Their eloquent presentations instilled so much interest and fascination of the complex language challenges experienced in South Africa and other leading African countries. The international audience posed thought-provoking questions to the panel on the implementation of the language policy in the different African countries and these were ably answered by the expert panel. Some attendees indicated that they were inspired by this presentation. The panel began networking with interested attendees after the presentation. This was indeed a proud moment for me because all three are members of EASA; and two of them serve on the EXCO.

With the permission of the UP academics, I am including the abstracts that formed the nucleus of their presentations.

I wish to congratulate the panel for a well-received symposium and encourage members of EASA to present papers or symposia at future WERA Focal Meetings.

Remember that EASA is an active member of WERA.

Raj Mestry


University of Johannesburg.





INTRODUCTION

Language in education has been, and still is, a controversial and sensitive topic globally. In the global north, displacement of individuals and families due to internal conflict and war as well as economic reasons have resulted in language issues in education being a debated topic. Across sub-Saharan Africa, in countries such as Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe, which are largely multilingual, many learners' inability to achieve the minimum threshold for reading at the end of basic education complicates the matter further. Studies identifying that there are serious gaps in the subject content knowledge of teachers means the discussion is far from over and is possibly just gaining momentum. Our study, situated across Anglophone sub-Saharan Africa has participants from, Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The purpose of the study is to explore avenues from which language in education can be approached to (a) ensure that while English continues to be the preferred language of instruction, indigenous languages are not marginalised further and can be promoted



as support tools for teaching and learning (b) explore parental language decision-making processes and raise parental awareness on the value of home/indigenous languages in the cognitive development processes of multilingual children (c) determine the nature of support required by teachers and the most effective way to deliver the support to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and competencies required to teach learners. Paper 1 focuses on the need for the reconceptualization of education in sub-Saharan Africa by revisiting the language of instruction through teachers' lived experiences and how these can be used to determine the nature of support they need and the most effective way to deliver the same. Paper 2 focuses on parental perspectives and attitudes to learning in home languages while paper 3 discusses narratives of teachers utilising innovative multilingual learning and learner support strategies in sub-Saharan Africa. The symposium ends with a discussion of the recommendations for the way forward to ensure that home languages can be used as support tools for teaching and learning.


MAKING A CASE FOR RECONCEPTUALISING EDUCATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA BY REVISITING THE LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

RUTH ALUKO

ABSTRACT

The policy context that surrounds the language of learning and teaching in sub-Saharan Africa shows English Language is preferable and has been maintained over the years with little positive impact on learner achievement. Evidence from literature supported by findings from this phenomenological study shows that teachers' realities are in conflict with policy demands. Classrooms in the 21st Century are made up of learners from diverse backgrounds with multiple languages as their L1, which makes teaching and learning challenging. This qualitative study was guided by the Common Underlying Proficiency Model (CUP) which states that acquired academic knowledge and skills in the first language can assist one in learning another language. The

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participants were purposively selected teachers from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe. They participated in fourteen individual interviews and one focus group discussion. We sought to answer the question “What are teachers’ lived experiences regarding the use of the English Language as the language of instruction and how can these be used to determine the nature of support they need and the most effective way to deliver the same? Permission was obtained while all ethics guidelines were observed. Findings from the thematically analysed data revealed that although the teachers were from different countries, they were confronted with similar challenges. Some of these were teachers’ and learners’ struggles to communicate during classes, and the latter’s inability to understand basic foundational concepts that will serve as building blocks for future learning. Some of the study’s recommendations include the need for teacher training institutions to include a compulsory module on multilingualism in their curriculum for initial teacher trainees (not only as a topic in a module) and the use of distance education methods on the same subject for in-service teachers.

Keywords: Multilingualism, sub-Saharan Africa, Common Underlying Proficiency Model, teachers, language of instruction/teaching and learning, distance education


PARENTAL PERSPECTIVES AND ATTITUDE TO LEARNING IN HOME LANGUAGES

RUTH MAMPANE

ABSTRACT

Many African countries have complex multilingual family structures, which are largely connected to their history of colonisation and migration. Additionally, the prevalence of mixed marriages often results in multilingual families, that frequently face challenges in deciding which language(s) to use within their households, especially when raising children in these multilingual contexts. Unfortunately, in most cases,





parents do not have the power to choose the language of instruction for their children, which may negatively impact children's ability to thrive in the learning environment and develop reading and comprehension skills. This paper guided by Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, presents the results of a study that focused on factors that influence language usage in homes and parents' decision on the use of home language as the language of instruction. A mixed-methods research approach driven by a pragmatic paradigm was employed. The study consisted of 70 families with mixed marriage structures, comprising parents from different ethnic groups from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe, who were married or staying with at least two children in their family unit. The data were collected using a survey questionnaire and focus group interviews. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and content analysis. The study found that the value attached to a language is an important factor in the selection of a language for communication within a multilingual family. Additionally, the decision about which language to use is made to facilitate the social inclusion of the family members outside the home. Finally, language is a carrier of culture that families use to transfer their culture from one generation to another. The study recommends further research into multilingual families in both mixed and interracial marriages. Additionally, the role of children in influencing multilingual families' language decisions (directly and indirectly) can be further explored.

Keywords: multilingualism, families, languages, communication, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory



NARRATIVES OF TEACHERS UTILISING INNOVATIVE MULTILINGUAL LEARNING AND LEARNER SUPPORT STRATEGIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA


FUNKE OMDIRE

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the findings of a study that explored the multilingual learning and learner support strategies used in sub-Saharan African countries including Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Linguistic diversity is prevalent across sub-Saharan Africa which underscores the need to investigate support strategies that have been used successfully in these contexts. The study was conducted using a mixed-methods design and an asset-based approach. Drawing on Vygotskian social cultural theory (SCT) which supports mediation and scaffolding the learning experiences in multilingual settings, purposive sampling was used to select basic education teachers (n=40) from each of the seven countries (n=40x7=280). Data collection was achieved using a survey, virtual focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews. Descriptive statistics was used to determine the frequencies of strategies reported. The correlation coefficient was used to measure the correlation between the responses and the gender and/or country of respondents. The focus group and interview data were analysed thematically and categorised.

The findings from the teachers revealed that facilitating L1 and enabling the parallel use of multiple languages informed learning and supported the learners in a positive way. Translanguaging, collaborative group work, teachers' back pocket tools, structured questioning, raising parental awareness, parents' home support, and promoting the value attributed to home languages were some of the strategies that support learning in multilingual classes. These strategies were deemed to have a positive influence on learners' attitudes and motivation to learn. Part of the recommendations of the study include using the information to develop teacher

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professional development workshops for in-service teachers and including some of the findings in initial teacher training programmes to inform practice.

Keywords: Linguistic diversity, multilingualism, learner support, translanguaging, teaching and learning

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SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION



Prof Ronél Ferreira
Executive Editor

The South African Journal of Education continued maintaining its high standing over the past year. This is evident from the impact factor of 0.7 for the year 2023, with a 5-year impact factor of 1.4 (Journal Citation Reports, Social Sciences Edition, Clarivate Analytics, 2024). By the end of 2024, five issues will have been published, with one being a special issue titled Innovative applications in teaching and learning facilitation: Current trends in research, practice, and policy, under guest editorship of Prof Hüseyin Uzunboylu from University of Kyrenia, Northern Cyprus. An immense increase of contributions has been observed from international authors over recent years, contributing towards the upcoming special issue being edited by an international leader in the field.

Two special issues are planned for 2025. The first, titled Cultivating self-directed learning in diverse educational settings, will be guest edited by Prof Elsa Mentz and Prof Josef de Beer from North-West University, while the second special issue, titled Placing curriculum transformation and education for all at the heart of policy, will be

done under guest editorship of Prof MW Lumadi from UNISA. More details about the upcoming special issues are included below.

The continuous citation of SAJE articles have resulted in many leading as well as emerging scholars being cited for the remarkable research they do. A summary of the Top 10 mostly cited SAJE articles for October 2024 are provided below:

Successful resolutions to DOI	Title	Author
342	Teachers for rural schools – a challenge for South Africa	Pierre du Plessis & Raj Mestry
252	The challenges of realising inclusive education in South Africa	Dana Donohue & Juan Bornman
176	The effect of motivation and learning behaviour on student achievement	Moses Kopong Tokan & Mbing Maria Imakulata
151	Decolonial possibilities in South African higher education: Reconfiguring humanising pedagogies as/with decolonising pedagogies	Michalinos Zembylas
112	Augmentative and alternative communication training: The effect on perceptions of special school teachers	Bathobile Charity Ngcobo & Juan Bornman
110	Strategies to enhance the inclusion of culturally and linguistically diverse learners in Gauteng schools: Teachers' perspectives	Appolonia Masunungure & Mbulaheni Maguvhe
106	Theory and practice of the quintile ranking of schools in South Africa: A financial management perspective	H van Dyk & CJ White

102	Synchronous versus asynchronous e-learning in teaching word processing: An experimental approach	Chinyere Grace Ogbonna, Nnenna Ekpereka Ibezim & Chiaka Augusta Obi
102	Establishing inclusive schools: Teachers' perceptions of inclusive education teams	Thembeke Mfuthwana & Lorna Dreyer
102	Decolonising inclusive education in lower income, Southern African educational contexts	Nithi Muthukrishna & Petra Engelbrecht

As executive editor I would like to express my appreciation to the core team of the journal – Prof Liesel Ebersöhn (associate editor), Ms Estelle Botha (administrative editor) and Mr Thys de Jager (language editor), as well as the editorial committee members and all the reviewers of manuscripts, for their dedication and support during 2024. Our heartfelt appreciation to the Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, under the leadership of Dean Professor Molatlhegi Trevor (Chika) Schoole, for your continued support and for hosting the journal and providing infrastructure and resources for staff members.

May all EASA members experience a blessed festive season and well-deserved rest! Looking forward to your future submissions to SAJE.



CALL FOR PAPERS: SPECIAL ISSUE
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Cultivating self-directed learning in diverse educational settings

South African Journal of Education

Volume 45 (Suppl. 1), October 2025

Guest editors: Elsa Mentz and Josef de Beer

Self-directed learning has become a sine qua non in the complex landscape of the 21st century, characterised by transformation and rapidly changing information. Learners should be assisted to develop the skills to, as self-directed learners, take responsibility for their own learning. Unfortunately, many South African classrooms and learning environments are characterised by a transmission-mode pedagogy that does not enhance self-directed learning (Mentz & De Beer, 2019; Mentz & Oosthuizen, 2016). Knowles (1975:18) describes self-directed learning as “a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies and evaluating outcomes.” The strong focus on good throughput rates in summative assessments often results in the marginalisation of pedagogies such as problem-based and cooperative-learning approaches that might enhance self-directed learning. An important question is whether self-directed learning receives sufficient emphasis in both pre-service and in-service teacher education. Do teachers have the knowledge and skills to apply processes and provide conducive contexts that would support the development of self-directed attributes in learners? (Hiemstra & Brockett, 2012). In this special issue we explore strategies, methods, and best practices for promoting self-directed learning across various educational contexts, including formal schooling, higher education, informal learning environments as well as different cultural contexts.



Types of Manuscripts Expected

We are in search of innovative contributions that would enhance the scholarship of self-directed learning manuscripts that deal with questions such as the following:

- How can contexts conducive for the enhancement of self-directed learning be created in learning environments?
- How could pedagogical and assessment approaches, strategies and/or methods result in enhanced self-directed learning in various contexts?
- How can best practice be implemented to enhance self-directed learning?

Deadline for Submissions

Proposals for manuscripts should be emailed to josef.debeer@nwu.ac.za and elsa.mentz@nwu.ac.za as soon as possible. Proposals should include:

- the proposed manuscript title
- a brief abstract of 300 words
- authors' names, ORCID IDs, email addresses and affiliation.

Abstracts should be submitted by no later than 11 October 2024. Prospective authors will be informed of the outcome of the evaluation of the manuscript proposals soon thereafter. Complete manuscripts should be submitted to Estelle Botha (estelle.botha@up.ac.za) before 31 December 2024. All submitted manuscripts will undergo double-blind peer review, and authors will be informed of the outcome of the review within 8 to 12 weeks after submission of the manuscripts. We intend to complete the editing of the special issue by 31 October 2025. The issue will be published online in a fully citable format.

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INCOMING CHAIRPERSON 2024



Prof Candice Livingston

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Prof Fumane Khanare for her leadership and guidance throughout this year. The EASA Conference Committee and the Executive Committee look forward to welcoming you in January at the beautiful Sun City. With As the holiday season approaches, I want to extend my warmest wishes to each of you. May this holiday season bring you peace, joy, and precious moments with loved ones.

