

ABSTRACT

Microsoft (MS) Teams is a virtual conference software that incorporates a Learning Management System (LMS). Like many such learning environments, the affordances of this tool are underutilized by teachers who could use them to achieve learning outcomes especially in second language subjects that need extended learner engagement. IsiZulu First Additional Language (FAL) is one of the nine indigenous South African languages that is taught as a second language in English medium schools in compliance with the Language in Education Policy. English is the mother tongue of most learners in these schools, and they generally struggle to acquire IsiZulu FAL proficiency within the confines of a classroom. It is therefore the aim of this study to explore how Microsoft Teams affordances can be utilized to promote the development of the four IsiZulu FAL skills for Grade 7 learners in an urban private school. This is a practice-based case study that adopts a mixed-methods research design and uses a questionnaire, and lesson observations to determine the pedagogical benefits of using this technology. Critical reflection was employed in this study to help the teacher (researcher) understand or make explicit how IsiZulu FAL teachers can use MS Teams affordances seamlessly to develop and enhance specific FAL outcomes in a blended learning environment that employs the communicative teaching approach. The findings indicate that the access affordance is essential as it ensures all learners have access to content prior to and after synchronous teaching. Thus, the affordances help supplement learning as learners are exposed to the language and its conventions. Guided practice emerges as the approach that enables the success of this learning experience as illustrated in the framework developed in this study. This study contributes to the advancement of teaching and learning of IsiZulu First Additional Language with Information Communication Technologies (ICTs).

Keywords: *Blended Learning, Language Learning Outcomes; Microsoft Teams, Affordances, Communicative teaching approach*