

## ABSTRACT

South Africa is a country rich in diverse languages many of which originated in Africa, including isiZulu. With the end of Apartheid in the 1990s, policies were developed to support the use of African languages through First Additional Language (FAL) and Second Additional Language (SAL) into schools and tertiary institutions. This has placed pressure on teacher education institutions to supply teachers qualified to teach African languages effectively.

This thesis traces the development of a FAL/SAL isiZulu course from its origins in a Johannesburg secondary school to its effective use in a leading university-based teacher education institution. The researcher explored alternative methodological and technical approaches in the SAL classroom to make learning more meaningful and effective in a context of policy and technological turbulence. The researcher's journey is explored using ethnographic and qualitative research approaches.

The study includes a case study of how seven iZSAL student teachers of 2014 and 2015 at the Wits School of Education grappled with a new approach called the Creative Email Dialogue (CED). The CED shifted the learning and teaching of isiZulu out of the confines of the classroom. This allowed students to work independently, at their own pace and according to their own needs. The case study underlines the value of technology and close relationships between members in a learning community, as well as the dedication of all members to improving their understanding of isiZulu.

The study concludes that closely supervised individualised language development accompanied by continuous support and insight from the lecturer results in effective learning for student teachers learning a new language. The researcher argues the importance of teaching language to students learning isiZulu for the first time. Time constraints placed pressure on the effective language learning. The CED, based on sound FAL/SAL theories and experience, is successful in teaching language. This research contributes to the scant knowledge of FAL/SAL and especially in iZFAL and iZSAL teaching and learning, at tertiary institutions and schools in South Africa. Implications for language course development and extension through technology are clear. Recommendations are made for

future research in the area of SAL/FAL teaching and learning, particularly for teaching isiZulu.

**Key words and terms:** IsiZulu, iZSAL, First Language, First Additional Language, Second Additional Language, email journals, teacher education, creative writing, vocabulary development and affirmative assessment.