

Postscript

Johannes A. Smit

Over the last number of years, we have started to publish abstracts as well as full peer-reviewed articles in one or more of South Africa's indigenous languages in *Alternation*. And, we are grateful for the scholarly leadership in research in indigenous languages, that Nobuhle Ndimande-Hlongwa and Nhlanhla Mkhize, as well as Langa Khumalo, amongst others, have been providing in this regard (cf. for instance Mkhize, Sandwith & Moran 2008; Ndimande-Hlongwa & Wildsmith-Cromarty 2010; Ndimande-Hlongwa, Mkhize & Kamwendo 2014; Mkhize & Nobles 2020; and Khumalo & Mchombo 2021).

And, with this volume, thanks, appreciation and congratulations go to Nobuhle Ndimande-Hlongwa, Hloniphani Ndebele, and Sibonsile Zibane. It is truly great, pioneering work in the history of Humanities scholarship in South and Southern Africa, our continent and internationally.

Then, following their lead over the last few years, with this *Alternation* journal issue, we will now start to publish full volumes in interdisciplinary studies, in isiZulu, alongside regular full volumes in our current academic lingua franca, viz. English. The plan is to in future support and publish full volumes in both English or isiZulu, and, depending on the language of the full volume, we shall publish the abstract of every *Alternation* journal article and *Alternation* African Scholarship Book Series (AASBS) book chapter, in the accompanying language – either isiZulu in the case of a full volume in English, or English in the case of a full volume in isiZulu. So, with this volume, that comprises of the publication of fully academic peer-reviewed research articles in isiZulu, in the chosen field of the author/s or disciplinary or sub-disciplinary field of scholarship and research, abstracts are in both languages. And, I have asked the editors to also provide the abstracts in a full document in English, that we publish here as the second manuscript in this issue¹.

¹ Together with the editors, I want to sincerely thank Dr Phindile Dlamini, Director of UKZN Press, for her incredible insightful work related to the

And, as is evident from this volume, we shall start to upscale the intellectualization and research in indigenous languages, in the professional qualifications, including education, too. These focuses will importantly contribute to the responsible and responsive scientific education and training of our students and graduates to professionally meet the specific needs of local communities. Scientific, cultural and especially modern African literary development will be key – as is evident from not only the scientific but also the blooming literary industries and publishing houses on our continent.

In order to contribute to this task, both interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research are needed. Interdisciplinary research aimed at identifying and researching specifically African scientific, cultural and educational scholarly opportunities, problems, and conundrums. Throughout, transdisciplinary research and scholarship development and advancement, will provide the framework where local communities and their epistemic and socio-economic practices will be articulated with international initiatives.



In the interest of seeing the publication of this volume of *Alternation* as a truly major pioneering event, in the struggle for cultural liberation and freedom and equity and justice, in, from, by and for the people from the global South, I provide a few personal perspectives. (Cf. the *Alternation* FAQ Sheet 2012.)

One of my most engaging discussions on the future of the development, intellectualisation, and use of indigenous languages in South Africa, was with Neville Alexander at the United Nations-sponsored ‘Future of Education in South Africa’ conference that took place in late April 1991 in New York. I was invited by Prof Mala Singh, then Head of the Department of Philosophy at the former University of Durban-Westville. (Cf. amongst others, Alexander 2002; 2008; 2014; Singh n.d.)

Having myself pioneered the move away from Afrikaans to English as a universal academic lingua franca, in tertiary Humanities classroom lectures and classroom language usage, during the 1980s, Alexander’s position and arguments, came as a surprise. Since then, I have followed his insightful and often incisive evidence-based arguments on indigenous language develop-

production of this volume, including the English translations, and the full language editing of all articles.

ment. And, Alexander, and later PANSALB's work (since 1995), as well as work on the Khoi language (Van Vuuren 1994; Moran 1995; 2009), amongst others, were also some of the push factors, for us establishing the Centre for the Study of Southern African Literature and Languages in 1994. We have opted to include the focus on the development and use of Southern African Languages – also in the southern African literature corpus – following Ngugi wa'Thiong'o's 1986 views and arguments, and not one focused only on the literary (or more broadly speaking the 'cultural' in terms of understandings of cultural formation and impact as well as *Bildung*). In the earlier period of *Alternation*, the study and research on the history of southern literature was though seminal, at the CSSALL, given the corpus's profound history of anti-colonial, and anti-apartheid, and also postcolonial and since more recently, decolonial scholarship.

So, since the establishing of *Alternation* in 1994, and then assuming the editorship in 1995 (cf. Smit 1995), and *Alternation*'s accreditation by DHET in 1996, we have had some important projects related to the intellectualisation, development and scholarship building and teaching and learning as well as pedagogical use of indigenous languages. With just a few broad brushstrokes, I provide an outline sketch below.

In brief, and without elaboration now, I made some comments on our focus on multilingualism and indigenous languages development, in *Alternation*, in my presentation at the book launch of *Multilingualism in a Multicultural Context: Case Studies on South Africa and Western Europe*, edited by Guus Extra and Jeanne Maartens, in 1997. I am grateful for the invitation by Prof. Michael Chapman, then Dean of Arts, of the former University of Natal (cf. Smit 1997) to deliver the paper at the launch.

I am also grateful for my interactions with Lawrie Barnes, former editor of *Language Matters*, in the late 1990s and early 2000s (see also Barnes 1999).

Within the *Alternation* networks, additional pioneering and insightful contributions came from the innovative volume edited by Ramsay-Brijball and Narismulu (2004), and the work by the late Thabisile Buthelezi (2004); as well as Russel H. Kaschula and Pamela Maseko, 'The Intellectualisation of African Languages, Multilingualism and Education: A Research-based Approach' (2014).

The late Gregory Kamwendo, too, made important contributions, whom I first published after his visit to our first CSSALL bi-annual conference

in 1997 – ‘The Use of Vernacular Languages in the Malawian Literary Industry’ (1998). Kamwendo would also serve as Dean of the School of Education at UKZN, from 2012, and also as Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Zululand in the late 2010s. (Cf. for instance his text from 2014.)

And, finally, I must mention Kwesi Kwaa Prah, who currently is Professor emeritus of Sociology at the University of the Western Cape. I am grateful that Kamwendo invited us both to the University of Zululand Faculty of Arts annual research conference in 2017. I presented my paper, ‘#DecolonialEnlightenment and Education’, and Kwesi Kwaa Prah his now well-known, and widely used, ‘The Intellectualisation of African Languages for Higher Education’ (2017a) as well as ‘The Centrality of the Language Question in the Decolonisation of Education in Africa’ (2017b).

Even though previous points I mention here in this brief Postscript, have much to offer in substance, depth and breadth of scholarship, I am mentioning this latter point, since for me, it was also an eye opener to discuss with Kwaa Prah his notion of the ‘intellectualisation’ of indigenous languages. For me it was a high point in my career, not least for the substantial contribution that Kwaa Prah has been making and continues to make to the research on precisely this area of indigenous African languages development.

And, in terms of this brief sketch, I can only once again thank the colleagues referenced above, for this current volume of *Alternation* – Nobuhle Ndimande-Hlongwa, Hloniphani Ndebele, Sibonisile Zibane and not least, Langa Khumalo of (SADiLaR) and our Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Head of the College of Humanities, Nhlanhla Mkhize for their sterling work on the thorough scientific development of isiZulu for the Human as well as natural sciences. You, together with many of our co-workers and collaborators and networks and publications nationally, continentally and internationally, in all your scholarly and research networks, have taken the intellectualisation of indigenous languages into our envisioned, as well as the proper and valid, African-focused Humanities and Social Sciences scientific discursive domain.

The capabilities, and capacity education and training in practical communicative discursive realities of the substantial and incisive intellectualising of isiZulu, across the disciplines, are seminal for the upscaling and acceleration of our development initiatives in our region, country and nation. (Cf. Smit & Chetty 2018.)

For education and training, as well as the expanding of the employment possi-

bilities in our society and communities, we have opened the doors, to Africa-focused and Africa-owned scientific knowledge and scientific knowledge production systems. As envisioned in *The Freedom Charter* of 1955, the epistemic doors to freedom, learning, and culture, are open.

References

- Alexander, N. 2002. *An Ordinary Country: Issues in the Transition from Apartheid to Democracy in South Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.
- Alexander, N., A. Bamgbose, C. Bloch, B. Busch & D. Coste (eds.). 2008. *Literacy and Linguistic Diversity in a Global Perspective: An Intercultural Exchange with African Countries*. (Languages for Social Cohesion.) Graz, Austria: European Centre for Modern Languages.
- Alexander, N. & A. von Scheliha (eds.). 2014. *Language Policy and the Promotion of Peace: African and European Case Studies*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- Alternation FAQ Sheet 2012. <http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/faq.aspx>
- Barnes, L. 1999. Perspectives on Bilingualism in the South African Context. In Smit, J.A. (ed.): *Current Perspectives: Literature and Languages*. *Alternation* 6,2: 1 – 349.
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/docs/06.2/17%20Bar.pdf>
- Buthelezi, T. 2004. Lexical Reinforcement and Maintenance of Stereotypes in isiZulu. *Alternation* 11,2: 386 – 400.
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/docs/11.2/21%20But.pdf>
- Extra, G. & J. Maartens 1997. *Multilingualism in a Multicultural Context: Case Studies on South Africa and Western Europe*. (Studies in Multilingualism 10.) Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.
- Kaschula, R.H. & P. Maseko 2014. The Intellectualisation of African Languages, Multilingualism and Education: A Research-based Approach. In Ndimande-Hlongwa, N., N. Mkhize & G. Kamwendo (eds.): *African Languages in South African Dispensation of Freedom and Democracy*. *Alternation* Special Edition 13: 8 – 35.
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/docs/21%20SpEd13/02%20Kaschula%20F.pdf>
- Khumalo, L. & S. Mchombo 2021. *The Role of Language in Human Existence, Education, Innovation and Research, and the Intellectualisation of Afri-*

- can Languages. Alternation Special Edition 38b: 533 – 673.*
<https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2021/sp38a22>
- Kwaa Prah, K. 2017a. The Intellectualisation of African Languages for Higher Education. *Alternation* 24,2: 215 – 225.
<https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2017/v24n2a11>
- Kwaa Prah, K. 2017b. The Centrality of the Language Question in the Decolonisation of Education in Africa. *Alternation* 24,2: 226 – 252.
<https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2017/v24n2a12>
- Mkhize, J., C. Sandwith & S. Moran (eds.) 2008. Literature, *Language and Cultural Politics*. *Alternation* 15,2: 1 – 426.
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-15-2008/alternation-152-2008.aspx>
- Mkhize, N. & W.W. Nobles (eds.). 2020. Afrikan-Centred Psychology: Illuminating the Human Spirit - Spirit(ness), Skh Djr, Moya. *Alternation* 27,1: 1 – 312.
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-27-2020/alternation-271.aspx>
- Moran, S. 1995. White Mythology: What Use is Deconstruction? *Alternation* 2,1: 16 – 36. <http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/docs/02.1/03%20Mor.pdf>
- Moran, S. 2009. *Representing Bushmen: South Africa and the Origin of Language*. (Rochester Studies in African History and the Diaspora, 38.) Rochester, USA: Boydell & Brewer.
- Ndimande-Hlongwa, N. & R. Wildsmith-Cromarty 2010. *Multilingualism for Access, Language Development and Language Intellectualisation*. *Alternation* 17,1: 1 - 460. <http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-17-2010/alternation-171-2010.aspx>
- Ndimande-Hlongwa, N., N. Mkhize & G. Kamwendo 2014. *African Languages in South Africa's Dispensation of Freedom and Democracy*. *Alternation Special Edition No 13*: 1 – 425
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-21-2014/alternation-special-edition-no-13.aspx>
- Ndimande-Hlongwa, N., H. Ndebele & S. Zibane 2024. Ukuthuthukiswa kwezilimi zase-Afrika Ezikhungweni Zemfundo Ephakeme njengesu lokukhuculula insila yobuKoloni kanye nokuletha izinguquko. *Alternation* 31,2: 1 – 252. <http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-31-2024/Alternation-31-2a-2024-Ukuthuthukiswa-kwezilimi.aspx>
- Ndimande-Hlongwa, N., H. Ndebele & S. Zibane 2024. Intellectualisation of African Languages in Higher Education Institutions as a Strategy for Decolonisation and Transformation *Alternation* 31,2: 1 –

- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 1986. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. Heinemann Educational. Suffolk & Rochester: James Curry, and Boydell & Brewer.
- Pan South African Languages Board 1995. PanSALB Act of 1995 (Act 59 of 1995, amended by Act 10 of 1999. <https://www.pansalb.org/>
- Ramsay-Brijball, M. & P. Narismulu 2004. *Language and Changing Contexts: Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. *Alternation* 11,2: 1 – 473.
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/pages/volume-11/alternation-112-2004.aspx>
- SADiLaR n.d. South African Centre for Digital Language Resources.
<https://sadilar.org/en/>
- Singh, M. n.d. Biography. <https://www.ipev-fmsh.org/expert/mala-singh/>
- Smit, J.A. 1995. Introduction. *Alternation* 2,1: 1 – 4.
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/docs/02.1/01%20Smi.pdf>
- Smit, J.A. 1997. Clearing Spaces: Multilingualism in a Multicultural Context. *Alternation* 4,2: 256 – 263. Available at:
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/docs/04.2/22%20Smi.pdf>
- Smit, J.A. 2017. #DecolonialEnlightenment and Education. *Alternation* 24,2: 253 – 311. In Ramrathan, L. & N. Amin (eds.): *Advancing Teaching Innovation and Research Excellence in Higher Education*. *Alternation* 24,2: 1 – 312. <https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2017/v24n2a13>
- Smit, J.A. & D. Chetty 2018. 23/ 25 Years of *Alternation*, and the African Digital Humanities: Capacity, Communication, and Knowledge-Power. *Alternation* 25,1: 8 - 30. In Klopper, R. (ed.): *Management, Informatics and economics*. *Alternation* 25,1: 1 – 424.
<https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2018/v25n1a2>.
- Van Vuuren, H. 1994. Forgotten Territory: The Oral Tradition of the /Xam. *Alternation* 1,2: 57 – 70.
<http://alternation.ukzn.ac.za/Files/docs/01.2/06%20Van.pdf>

Prof. Johannes A. Smit
Chair: College of Humanities Institute
Editor-in-Chief: *Alternation*
Durban, Edgewood, Pietermaritzburg
KwaZulu-Natal
South Africa
smitj@ukzn.ac.za