



**Faculty
of Education**



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn



ISEA
Institute for
the Study of
the Englishes
of Africa

The abstract geometric pattern on the left side of the cover is composed of various shapes, including circles, triangles, and polygons, in shades of yellow, olive green, and dark brown. Some shapes have internal patterns, such as radiating lines or concentric circles.

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2023**



ISEA

Institute for the Study of the Englishes of Africa

Annual Report 2023

©ISEA, Rhodes University, July 2024

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED IN ANY FORM WITHOUT
PERMISSION FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE ISEA





CONTENTS

ISEA Board	3
Donors	3
Staff	4
Conspectus	6
Staff News	6
ISEA Publications	7
<i>English in Africa</i>	7
<i>Shakespeare in Southern Africa</i>	8
<i>New Coin Poetry Journal</i>	8
The New Coin Poetry Prizes	9
Other Publications	12
Books	12
Contributions to Books	12
Articles and Reviews in Journals, Magazines and Online	12
Poetry in Literary Journals – Print and Online	13
Conferences, Colloquia and Public Lectures	13
Research	14
Guy Butler Research Award	14
Language Teacher Professional Development Project	14
Undergraduate	15
Postgraduate	16
New Coin Poetry Reading Group 2022–2023	16
Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa (SSOSA)	17
Graduate Supervision and Examining	18
Degrees in Progress	21
External Responsibilities	21
Conclusion	22



ISEA Board

- * Prof E Rosenberg (Dean of Education) Chair
 - * Prof M Mbelani (Director)
 - Prof Mark de Vos (HoD, Department of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies)
 - * Mr T van Niekerk (Executive Director, Dictionary Unit for South African English)
 - * Ms C Warren (Amazwi South African Museum of Literature)
 - * Dr Kavish Jawahar (Education Department)
 - * Assoc Prof L Spencer (HoD, Department of Literary Studies in English)
 - * Dr B Nosilela (Head of African Language Studies, School of Languages and Literatures), (HoD School of Languages and Literatures from 1 July 2022)
 - Prof P Mwepu (Deputy Dean of Humanities)
- * Member of Executive Committee



Above: Detail of the stained glass doors that welcome staff, students, and visitors to St Peter's Building.
(Photo: Steven Lang)

Donors

Financial support from the following sources is acknowledged with gratitude:

- African Humanities Programme
- British Council
- Faculty of Education, Rhodes University
- Khula Cape Foundation
- Sishen Iron Ore Company Community Development Trust

ISEA Staff

Director

Prof M Mbelani, BAEd (UNITRA), BEd (Hons) (UNISA), ACE (ELT), MEd (ELT), PhD (Rhodes)

Alan Macintosh Research Fellow

Dr R Mawela, STD (UNITRA), BA (Andrews), HDE, MEd (Solusi), PhD (Rhodes)

Research Officer

Ms N C Fulani, BEd Hons (Rhodes), SPDT (Cape College), BEd ELT (Rhodes), MEd ELT (Rhodes)

Assistant Coordinator and School Visit Facilitator (Northern Cape)

Mr S Sibanda, ACE (UJ), BEd Hons (UJ), MEd (Rhodes)

School Visit Facilitator

Mr R Townsend, BA, BEd Hons, HDE (PG) (Rhodes), MA (English) (NMU)

Associate Professor Emeritus

Assoc Prof M G Hendricks, BA, HDE (UCT), BA Hons, MEd (Rhodes), PhD (Witwatersrand)

Research Associate

Mr R Berold, BSc (Eng) (Witwatersrand), MA (Cantab)

Senior Research Associate

Prof B Willan, BA Hons, MA, PhD (London)

Secretary, Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa

Dr C Leff, BA (Witwatersrand), BA Hons, MA, PhD (Rhodes)

Editors: *English in Africa*

Prof D Attwell, T Voss, M Shum, G Fincham

Editorial Assistants: Drs E Kowalska, R Matsha

Editor: *New Coin*

Mr K Allan, MA (UKZN)

Editor: *Shakespeare in Southern Africa*

Prof C J Thurman, BA Hons (Rhodes), MA (London), PhD (UCT)

Administrative Officers

Dr C Leff, BA (Witwatersrand), BA Hons, MA, PhD (Rhodes) (until 4 May 2023)

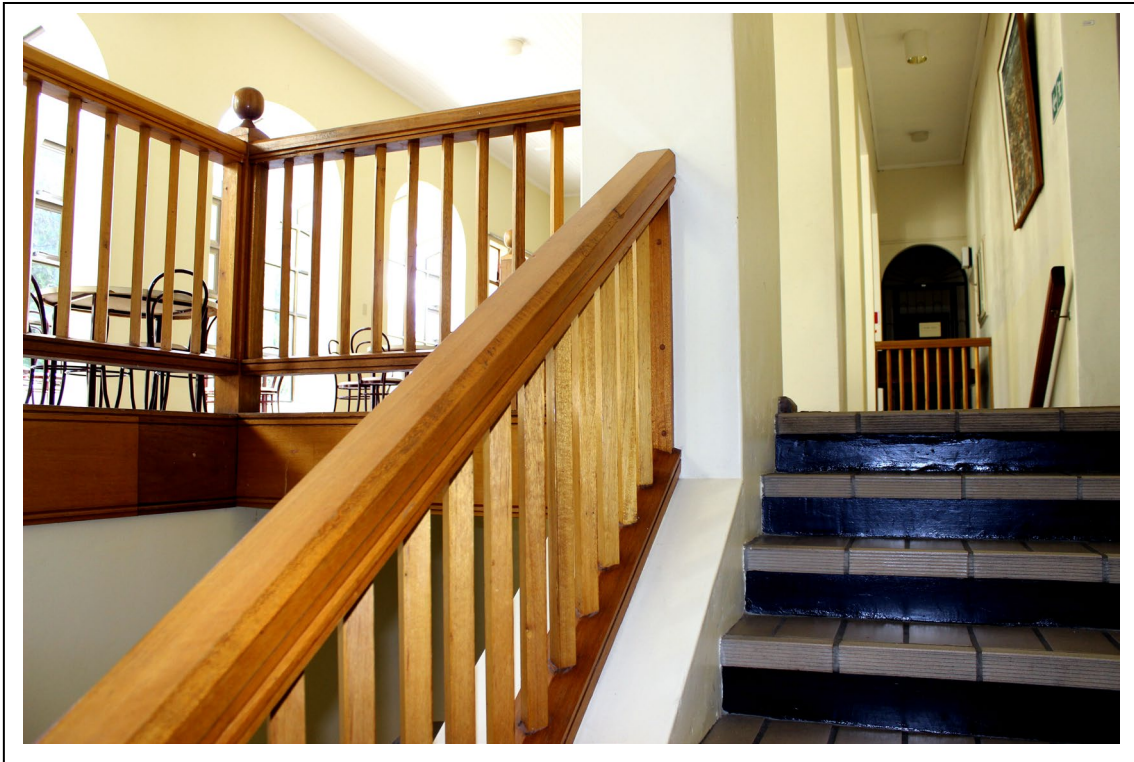
Ms U Ntshakaza (temporary from 1 July 2023)

Publications Manager

Dr C Leff, BA (Witwatersrand), BA Hons, MA, PhD (Rhodes) (from 5 May 2023)

Secretary

Ms N Kelemi



Conspectus

This report covers the period from January to December 2023.

Landmarks for this year include the following (further detail is included in the body of this report):

- Dr Carol Leff launched the paperback version of her book *The Afropolitan Flâneur in Literature* on 23 May 2023 at the Amazwi Museum of South African Literature. She was introduced by Prof Sam Naidu, and after Leff spoke about her book an enthusiastic audience kept her busy with interesting questions.
- The Sishen Iron Ore Company Community Development Trust is funding a 4th cohort of BEd in English Language Teaching students. They sat for their final exams from the 30th October to the 3rd November 2023. All the students passed, giving us a 100% pass. Graduation will be on 3, 4, and 5 April.
- A highlight was the mini-conference on 2 and 3 October 2023, which was a success.
- The hope for another SIOC-funded cohort has become a reality. SIOC offered to fund another cohort in the ISEA together with other Rhodes University units. The formal process is underway.
- Prof Mbelani and Dr Mawela embarked on a rigorous postgraduate programme for MED and PhD candidates registered in the Institute.

Staff News

Ms Beverley Cummings-Penlington retired at the end of 2022. The Publications Officer vacancy was upgraded and re-packaged into that of Publications Manager. Dr Carol Leff was appointed as the Publications Manager from May 2023. The shift from the Administrator post by Dr Leff created a vacancy in that office. Ms Unathi Ntshakaza is currently the Administrator in a temporary capacity. We welcome Dr Leff into the new publications post and we welcome Ms Ntshakaza into the administrator office and to the ISEA.

ISEA Publications

The Director, Dr Carol Leff, Ms Nomangesi Kelemi.

Income from the electronic distribution and marketing of our periodicals continues to rise as their international presence registers more widely.

English in Africa 50.1 (April 2023)

Eds David Attwell, Matthew Shum, Tony Voss. pp. 142

English in Africa 50.2 (September 2023)

Eds David Attwell, Matthew Shum, Tony Voss. pp. 124

English in Africa 50.3 (December 2023)

Eds David Attwell, Tony Voss, Gail Fincham with Guest Editor Sandile Ngidi (pp.110)

New Coin 58.2 (December 2022) Ed. Kyle Allan. pp. 153

New Coin 59.1 (June 2023) Ed. Kyle Allan. pp. 126

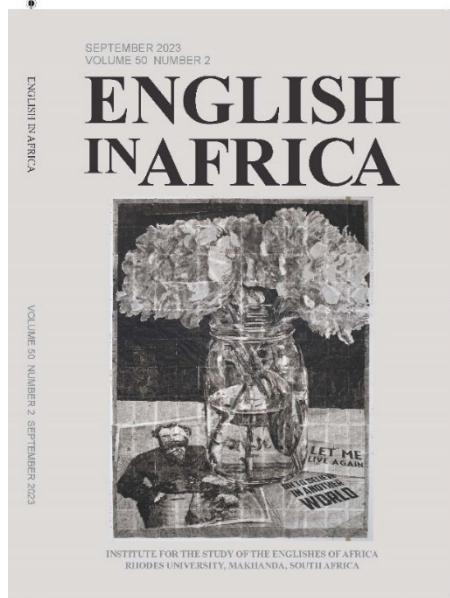
New Coin 59.2 (December 2023) Ed. Kyle Allan. (pp. 107, in process)

English in Africa

English in Africa, Volume 50, Numbers 1 and 2 (April and September, 2023)

Editorial Board Report

In its first issue of 2023, *English in Africa* turned from what Sophy Kohler had called “its reach northward” into Africa to an emphasis on South African works, from a wide range of critical perspectives: an eco-critical reading of some early South African travelogues to an account of “Story-telling as cultural translation” in Jolyn Philips’s *Tjieng Tjang Tjerries* of 2019. A rewarding collocation was that of a study of “Bosman’s *Cold Stone Jug* and the genesis of the South African Prison Memoir” with something of a re-discovery essay on Frank Anthony’s *The Journey: The Revolutionary Anguish of Comrade B* (1991). An essay on print and broadcast humour in South Africa (1943-1963) discovered imagination and courage in some of the darkest days of segregation. Reviews covered both Anglophone African women’s writing (thus continuing the Africa outreach) and a study of post-apartheid same sex sexualities.



Volume 50, Number 2 kept the Africa connection with a substantial essay on “Some Early Soyinka Letters”. The trans-national intertextuality of some South African writers inspired essays on “Transnational Hinterlands in Dan Jacobson’s *Heshel’s Kingdom*”, and the presence of Virginia Woolf’s *Mrs Dalloway* in novels of Karel Schoeman and Fiona Melrose. Eva Bezwoda’s life and work were the subject of an interpretative and biographical essay. Current work was covered in a review essay on Duncan Brown’s *Reflections on South African Literature*, and a review of the late Graham Pechey’s posthumously published *In a Province: Studies in the Writing of South Africa*.

The final issue of 2023 will be devoted to Bessie Head, guest edited by Sandile Ngidi.

The editorial board was helped in many ways by readers and colleagues. More submissions were received than could be published. The hope is that *English in Africa* remains a committed South African journal with a co-operative outlook on the continent.

Shakespeare in Southern Africa

The Editor’s Report on *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* Volume 35 (2022) appeared in ISEA’s 2022 Annual Report. Volume 36 (2023) will appear in 2024 combined with Volume 37 (2024).

New Coin Poetry Journal

Report by Kyle Allan, editor

New Coin 58.2 (Dec 2022) carried the NEW COIN POETRY PRIZE 2021 Judge’s Report by Malika Ndlovu, as well as the winning poems by Richard Fox, Sibongakonke Mama, and Rachel Chitofu. It also ran a large number of poems by forty South African poets. An interview of Makhosazana Xaba also appeared in this issue, as well as three book reviews.

New Coin 59.1 (June 2023) carried a bumper collection of poetry by over forty poets, as well as a feature article by Eva Kowalska on Eva Bezwoda and her (unpublished) poems. Book reviews by Dan Wylie and Peter Anderson also appear in this issue.



Above: A selection of issues of New Coin South African Poetry over the years

The New Coin Poetry Prizes

Formerly the Dalro Poetry Prize, the 2021 Prizes were sponsored by the African Humanities Programme. The judge's report for 2021 appeared in the December 2022 issue. The *New Coin* 2021 prizes were judged by Malika Ndlovu, whose report follows below.

I frequently describe writing and poetry specifically as a listening art and listening to the poems in the two issues of *New Coin* in 2021 certainly requires going beyond the reading or the intellectual analysis of the poetry. It has called for a listening to how the voice/s in the poems land in the vessel or cavities of the body. This particular journey of poems in both editions have a way of landing in the body that is hard to find words for. What I can begin by saying, is that it takes a particular kind of listener and lover of poetry to create and curate such a holding space, a quality of respectful listening which becomes evident when you see how the poems have been so embracingly edited together. The accompanying conversations in the form of poet interviews and book reviews feed into this space. Here a breadth of the South African poetry community gets to 'meet', a circling within these covers that allows local poets to encounter each other often for the first time, whose paths may possibly never cross otherwise. Finding common and equal ground in this publication made something in me, as a South African poet, begin to sing in resonance with much that has been offered by the poets.

The editor's note for June 2021 (written in July) alludes to a kind of archiving, mapping, mirroring of extraordinary tectonic shifts within the landscape of literature, our country and the world literally – meaning that all our bodies and ways of being

have been affected. And while this is a destabilising experience, it is also one of those fundamental things that nature does, which is to continuously reveal our interdependency and connectedness. In these times particularly evident through the social ruptures, mass losses, through the widespread conflicts and collective trauma in which we recognise parts of our own stories, common vulnerability as human beings. The majority of the poets in these two New Coins can be read as interpreters, empaths, bellringers, protestors, visionary activists of some kind, responding to this inner-outer world upheaval. International speaker, post humanist thinker, poet, teacher, essayist and author Dr. Bayo Akomolafe has championed the phrase “The times are urgent; let us slow down”. He points both to the body impact and this crises-context I have described above and unpacks these as our invitation to respond in new ways, to what he calls ‘post-activism’.

Activism is usually framed in terms that we can understand: It’s the bad guys against the good guys; it’s us versus them. But there are other moves to be made, especially in times like this – times of fissures and cracks and fault lines, which start to upset the coherence of the body. This is a crisis of form. We are now diasporic, our bodies are disorganised, we’re disarticulated by the pandemic, by the Anthropocene, by racial issues, by poverty, by all these things that we name as crises. We need to go beyond critique and maybe edge towards experimental liminal spaces of transformation. That requires a different kind of movement and thinking altogether. It requires getting lost.

These poets evidently understand loss and how to use their art to navigate the numerous ways one can feel lost or at a loss. They explore ways of witnessing (a form of listening), of naming, transmutation and even playful or wild reconfiguration amidst the various contexts of fragmentation and shattering. From disconnection, disassociation, toxic domestic and social spaces to indigenous narratives relentlessly under the threat of erasure – within the bodies of each poem such complexity can find a new wholeness. These poems grow intriguing dimensions, surface fresh insights and sustenance where each poem in itself, in the moment – is enough.

Before zoning in on the three prize winning poems, which I see bearing equal merit, I reference a few poems which capture the wealth and variety of poems in both collections. Ari Sitas’ “Mangrove Bay by an AfroAsian Sea”, Abigail George’s “You began as particles”, Sarah Frost’s “Ghost Town”, Johann Van der Walt’s “Creek” and Joan Metelerkamp’s “Mother City, Newlands” powerfully invoke a specific location yet catapult us beyond the senses, where the story threads being unearthed transport the reader in very different ways and steadily deepen the emotional terrain. Unathi Slasha’s graphic story-telling and darkly entertaining “Anecdotes Part One to Four”, split over the two New Coins certainly deserve a category of their own as poetic narrative and the genre-blending skills of this writer. Teamhw SbonguJesu’s memories, Stephen Symons’ “The song of a bullet”, Gail Dendy’s “Four Men” and Kelwyn Sole’s “The foreboding”, each employ simple yet expansive metaphors that lead us down unexpected and unsettling pathways, evoking the sense of haunting or even profound revelation. We are drawn into the undeniable power of poetry as testimony, witnessing, protest and lament

with Siza Nkosi's "For my Uncles (Mandla and Jabu) in exile", the inescapable fire of Lesego Rampolokeng's "Riddim, Rime, Reason" and Chulumanco Ntisa's "Stoning in the city". Themes of fragility and intimacy of the body charged with the potency of intentional language at play are exemplified in Haidee Kotze's "Prognostications on a rooftop/ voorspellings op 'n dak", Luleka Mhlanzi's "Fingernails" and all three of Shane van der Hoven's viscerally intense and jarring poems.

The three prize-winning poems each reflect conscious grappling and play at the intersections of subject matter, structure and psycho- emotionally liberating form of poetry on and beyond the page.

Richard Fox, "Animal mind is tripping"

Fox takes us into surreal terrain, brilliantly reflective of our Covid-19 era-digital-divide global political circus-mindboggling-social media addiction-sparking cyber reality-collision with planetary-destruction. Without any of the predictable doomsday warnings or linear unfolding, there is a frenetic energy moving through the piece which mirrors so well the way our overstimulated brains scamper in multiple directions in an attempt to make sense of these turbulent times and are confronted with the ominous rise of 'old wars' and amplified scales of violence across the world. The visual and visceral assaults are relentless to the point of that very feeling untethered that this poem 'embodies'. Equally effective is the underlying wit commenting subtly on how we have co- created this hell and have to laugh at ourselves, the 'madness' of our choices and actions. One does not get off this racing brain train to a calm and safe destination, as the poet cleverly concludes with the dawn of a not-so-new day, a reality that feels less and less containable or assuring.

Sibongakonke Mama, "Maybe"

All four poems by this poet bear themes of traumatic or violent dislocation and the irreversible impact of these on the mind, body and being. The first of these entitled "Maybe", is both about someone's psychological unravelling and in its flow and topography, an unravelling poem. The incomplete or interrupted phrases, irregular stanzas, line lengths and spacing aptly express trauma-response and a sense of mental breaking down as the poem progresses. In the end images morph and all sense of familial rooting or comfort begin to recede, suicide ideation is hinted at as relief and ultimate release, and punctuation disappears with the last word 'noose' literally leaving us hanging. This is certainly a poem that makes more than one body hit and bears the layered gravity of a poet who writes from a place of deep knowing and the ability to speak into spaces of absence and compounded grief. If you believe that poetry serves therapeutic purpose and can offer some form of personal liberation through expression and reimagination, Sibongakonke's strength as a writer certainly shines through in this way.

Rachel Chitofu, “The tumour”

This relatively short poem is a knockout, from its heavy and unambiguous title to the harrowing last lines: ‘Trying to give birth/ to a paranormal form of myself that can/ walk on all fours and spray paint obscenities/ on the wall with its two tongues.’ The poem is dense and is sure to make you do a double-take of some phrases to re-digest what she has spat out in brutal detail or revealed through vivid pain-filled simile. It is clear that Rachel sees no point in painting pretty or soft images of the experience that is the nightmare of brain tumour surgery.

These three poets give themselves permission to voice an edginess, a raw messiness and the extraordinary human vulnerability of being in liminal states. Their work epitomises the brave responsiveness and courage to allow the ‘getting lost’ that I described earlier. What emerges is poetry that boldly claims authority over one’s own narrative, experience and perspective. They equally deserve this award.

- **Malika Ndlovu**

Other Publications

Books

John Comaroff, Johan and Brian Willan (Eds). 2023. *The Mafeking Diary of Sol T Plaatje* (50th anniversary edition). Xarra Books.

Leff, C. 2023. *The Afropolitan Flâneur in Literature* (paperback edition). Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Willan, Brian and Sabata-mpho Mokae (Eds). 2023. *Sol Plaatje’s Mafeking Diary: Reconsideration and Restoration*. Jacana.

Contributions to Books

Willan, Brian. 2023. “Past and Present in Sol Plaatje’s Mafeking Diary: The Making of a Diarist.” In B. Willan and S. Mokae (Eds) *Sol Plaatje’s Mafeking Diary: Reconsideration and Restoration*. Jacana, pp. 145– 157.

Articles and Reviews in Journals, Magazines and Online

Effiong, O.; Engelbrecht, S.; & **Mawela, R.** (2023). “Cultivating Positive Attitudes and Reading Comprehension with Grade 8 Learners”. K-12 Volume (in print).

Mahona, J.P.; **Mawela, R.**; Gougou, M. (2023). “Investigating Internationalization of Higher Education in the Post-Epidemic Era” in *Journal of Global Education and Research* (forthcoming).

Willan, Brian and Sabata-mpho Mokae. 2023. “Celebrating Fifty Years of Sol Plaatje’s Mafeking Diary.” *Bulletin of the National Library of South Africa*, vol 77, no. 2, December 2023, pp7–22.

Poetry in Literary Journals – Print and Online

Leff, C. 2023. ‘Not Sweet Enough’. *The Avbob Poetry Project*.

<http://www.avbobpoetry.co.za/Poem/View?PoemID=208747>

----- ‘Dawning.’ *The Avbob Poetry Project*.

<http://www.avbobpoetry.co.za/Poem/View?PoemID=208744>

----- ‘Dawning.’ reprinted in *Talk of the Town*, 12 Oct 2023: 6

----- ‘Red Earth.’ *Stanzas* No 31 (Mar/Apr 2024): forthcoming

----- ‘Paralytic Grief.’ *Stanzas* No 31 (Mar/Apr 2024): forthcoming

----- ‘Mourning Coffee.’ *Stanzas* No 31 (Mar/Apr 2024): forthcoming

Conferences, Colloquia and Public Lectures

Dlamini, S. & Mbelani, M. (2023) Using poetry teaching to explore possibilities and constraints in pre-service English teacher education SAERA Conference, East London (PhD Scholar)

Jabe, S. (2023). Investigating Pedagogical Practices of English FAL Educators in Grade 12 Short Stories LITASA Conference, Gqeberha, 8–10 September 2023 (MED Scholar)

Lila, M. (2023). Exploring Challenges Grade 4 English FAL Face When Teaching Reading Comprehension LITASA Conference, Gqeberha, 8–10 September 2023 (MED Scholar)

Mawela, R. (2023). Ancient Pedagogic Strategies for Modern Literacy Challenges. LITASA Conference, Gqeberha, 8–10 September 2023

----- (2023). Strategies to Mitigate Against COVID-19 Learning Losses in Disadvantaged Communities. Africa ELTA Conference, Luanda, Angola, 11–13 May 2023.

----- (2023). Common Language, Shared Future. (Key Note Address) Belt and Road Forum for Language and Cultural Collaboration, Beijing, China, 16 October 2023

Mbebe, X.D. (2023). An Exploratory Study of the Benefits of Reading Clubs for Learners in English FAL Classrooms. LITASA Conference, Gqeberha, 8–10 September 2023 (MED Scholar)

Ntikinca, X. (2023). Investigating the Deep-seated Factors that Can Condition English FAL Literature Teaching in Grade 7. LITASA Conference, Gqeberha, 8–10 September 2023 (MED Scholar)

Sibanda, S. (2023). Using the Historical–Structural Approach to Bridge the Gap Between Educational Policies and Practice. Webinar on Teaching English in Africa, by the British Council, 10 September 2023.

Research

Dr Carol Leff participated in peer reviews for the journals *Literator*, *English in Africa*, and *Journal of Literary Studies* / *Tydskrif vir Literatuurwetenskap*.

Dr Rethabile Mawela conducted research entitled, “*Investigating the Impact of COVID-19 Lockdown on Literacy in Disadvantaged Communities and Emerging Strategies to Mitigate against the Impact*”

Participants: Intermediate and Senior phase teachers of English FAL in the Northern Cape and Eastern Cape provinces. Also, English and IsiXhosa teachers at one Primary School in Makhanda.

Outcomes: Research in progress (2023–2024)

Guy Butler Research Award

Committee: Ms Thato Tantsi, Prof Lynda Spencer, Prof Mark de Vos, Prof MaDey’Andile Mbelani.

Language Teacher Professional Development Project

Ms Ntombekhaya Fulani went on extended medical leave from the 1st of June 2023 because of her health. A substitute was engaged to mark the end-of-year exams for her module, Professional Studies.

Prof MaDey’Andile Mbelani, Dr. Rethabile Mawela, Mr Rod Townsend, and Mr Sikhumbuzo Sibanda conducted workshops and classroom support visits on the following dates: 25 January to 02 February, 22 May to 29 May, and 31 July to 4 August.

The purpose of the classroom support visits was to assist the in-service students in applying the theories and pedagogical practices they learned during lectures to their classroom practice. One of the major concerns at the beginning of the year was that the students' classroom practice left a lot to be desired. Their pedagogical and content knowledge was underdeveloped. This was attributed to the learning loss incurred through COVID-19 restrictions. When this cohort began the B.Ed programme in 2021, the pandemic was still at its peak and classroom support could not be done.

The B.Ed project team of lecturers rigorously addressed this shortfall.

When the final round of classroom visits was done, there was significant improvement.



Above: B.Ed English Language Teaching students writing exams in October

Undergraduate

In 2021, when this current cohort began the program there were 31 registered students (27 SIOC-funded students and four self-funded). As we wrap up the program, there are 26 students (23 SIOC-funded students and three self-funded). One self-funded student dropped out because of financial challenges, one SIOC-funded student absconded, two discontinued the course because of ill health, and one passed away on 6 October 2023, just at the end of the contact session.

Contact classes were conducted in the Northern Cape and at Rhodes. One hundred percent attendance was because we returned to face-to-face classes this year.



Above: B.Ed third-year class with Mr Sibanda and Mr Moloko (representative of Sishen Iron Ore Company Community Development Trust (SIOC - cdt))

Postgraduate

Bachelor of Education Honours in Bilingual Education for Diversity and Access

Prof Mbelani and Dr Mawela attended the Faculty of Education Honours' coordination meeting in preparation to offer the Bachelor of Education Honours in Bilingual Education for Diversity and Access in 2024 with the rest of the Faculty. Eleven candidates have been selected from the pool of applications.

New Coin Poetry Reading Group 2022–2023

Facilitators: Mr Robert Berold, Mr Mangaliso Buzani

Mangaliso Buzani and Robert Berold continue to run the New Coin Thursday reading group, which has had another busy year. Attended by poets and poetry lovers who just want to enjoy poems, our online shared readers present international writers in translation, mainly 20th century, from European and Latin American countries, as well as from African countries like contemporary poets Tchicaya U Tam'si and Fiston Mujila.

Individual poets we read include Aimé Césaire, Adonis, Nazim Hikmet, and Cesar Vallejo. From South Africa we read poems from the *New Coin* journal, which has been publishing some vital poetry under Kyle Allan's editorship. In September we held a memorial reading to honour Mzi Mahola, who died in August. Some of our participants teach poetry in university creative writing courses, including Sol Plaatje, Rhodes, and Northwest.

Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa (SSOSA)

President's Report: November 2023 – Prof Chris Thurman

The main focus this year was the Society's triennial congress, which took the form of a conference co-hosted by SSOSA and Wits University's Tsikinya-Chaka Centre. "Shakespeare Towards An End" was held at Spier Wine Farm in Stellenbosch from 24-27 May and was attended by some 40 delegates. There were two keynote speeches (from Jyotsna Singh of Michigan State University and Ruben Espinosa of Arizona State University) and 32 papers arranged into nine panels over three days. The programme also included a performance of scenes from *Olórógun Caesar!* (workshopped with a cast of Cape Town community theatre makers by Nigerian playwright Lekan Balogun) and a screening of material from the *Speak Me A Speech* film project, followed by a Q&A with some of the artists involved.

Volumes 36 (2023, to be published early in 2024) and 37 (2024) of *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* are dedicated to articles developed from papers presented at the conference. Chris Thurman and Marguerite de Waal are co-editing these volumes.

An electronic vote was held in advance of the congress to elect a new executive committee: Chris Thurman (President), Marguerite de Waal (Vice-President), Carol Leff (Secretary and Treasurer), Buhle Ngaba (Theatre Liaison), Lauren Bates (Schools Liaison), Hassana Moosa (Academic Liaison), Trudi Adendorff (Branch Liaison) and Frances Ringwood (Media).

Other significant events in 2023 included the annual Shakespeare Birthday Lecture in Makhanda. Marguerite de Waal delivered a lecture on the topic "I knew her, Horatio: Performing Legacies in *Hamlet* 2021". The Society also contributed to the *Speak Me A Speech* film project, providing financial and logistical production / co-production support. Shakespeare ZA continues to expand as an online platform providing teaching and learning resources, making digitised versions of South African translations of Shakespeare's plays available, and promoting new productions, publications and Shakespeare-related events.

Graduate Supervision and Examining

Prof MaDey'Andile Mbelani completed the supervision of UWC candidates: Ms. Sumaya Hussen (MEd) graduated in April while Mr. Athenkosi Ngqunguza (MEd), and Ms. Chantelle August (Ph.D.) graduated in December. Ms. Xoliswa Magxala (co-supervised with Prof Monica Hendricks) graduated with her PhD at Rhodes University in October.



Above from left to right: Dr Chantelle August, Prof Mbelani and Mr Athenkosi Ngqunguza – a few minutes after December Graduation

Prof Mbelani is supervising four PhD candidates – two are completing theses (Mr Lutho Mnyanda and Ms Sibongile Dlamini), and the other two are at the proposal stage (Ms Rozanne Meyer and Ms Bromie Sisamu). He has two MEd candidates at the data analysis stage, Ms Justine Bussiahn (sole supervised) and Mr Michael Lila (co-supervised with Dr

Mawela). He also has one MEd candidate finalising their thesis for submission, Ms Xolela Ntikinca.

Dr Rethabile Mawela completed her supervision of two Namibian MEd candidates (Mr Gabriel Iita, and Ms Memory Rheeder) and one South African MEd candidate (Mr Sizwe Jabe) who all graduated in October. Mr Sydney Gazide has recently completed his MEd and will graduate in April 2024.



Above: Mr Sizwe Jabe who graduated in October

Dr Mawela is currently supervising five MEd candidates at the following various stages: three finalising the thesis for submission (Ms Sheron Moyo, Ms Sheillah Ndlovu, and Mr Xolela Mbebe), one is analysing data (Mr Michael Lila – co-supervised with Prof Mbelani), and the last one is at proposal stage (Mr Clement Sibanda).

Dr Leff's Master's in Creative Writing supervisee, Ms Lelethu Sobekwa, graduated in April with distinction.



Above: Postgraduate Seminar at the Rhodes Library

Prof Mbelani was an external examiner for two MEd theses from Wits University and the University of Johannesburg.

Dr Mawela was an external examiner for five MEd theses. One from UWC, one from UJ, one from UNISA, one from NMU, and two from NUL.

Degrees in Progress

Mr Sikhumbuzo Sibanda is currently analysing PhD data and writing up his thesis.

External Responsibilities

Dr Rethabile Mawela is the deputy chair of the Faculty of Education Higher Degrees Committee. She is a member of the ISER board, a member of the Helderberg College of Higher Education Council, and the chairperson of the Grahamstown primary school board. In addition, she was the Vice-President of the Africa English Language Teachers Association (Africa ELTA) until December 2023.

Dr Carol Leff is a member of the Academic and Non-Fiction Authors of South Africa (ANFASA), the English Academy of South Africa (EASA), and the Professional Editors' Guild (PEG).

Mr Sikhumbuzo Sibanda serves as the President of the National Association of English Teachers of South Africa (NAETSA).



Conclusion

2023 saw the ISEA stabilising post-COVID-19. The appointment of Dr Leff as the Publications Manager and Ms Unathi Ntshakaza as Administrator added much-needed stability. It was pleasing to see ISEA publications, *New Coin* and *English in Africa*, published on time. Despite Ms Fulani being on extended leave, BEd (ELT) lecturing staff closed the gap and finished 2023 on a high note. Sadly, one BEd (ELT) 3rd year candidate, Ms Ida Mpahlele, passed on due to ill health before arriving home after the October contact session.





**Institute for the Study
of the Englishes of Africa**

Rhodes University

PO Box 94

Makhanda

6140

South Africa

Tel: +27 (0)46 603 8565

Email: isea@ru.ac.za

Web: <https://www.ru.ac.za/isea/>

60 1964 - 2024
years of
languages, literatures & creativity

ISEA

Institute for the Study
of the Englishes of Africa

