


# From the editor's desk: *Reading & Writing Journal* Volume 14 (2023)

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As a result of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic in 2019, the South African Department of Education (DoE), as well as Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are aspiring towards creating an academically literate citizen body with the critical skills of reading, writing and language proficiency in order for individuals to achieve academic success at all levels. In this fast-changing landscape, preparing pre-service teachers to explicitly teach core reading, reading fluency, phonological awareness, writing, language and translanguaging, storytelling, mathematics and scientific practices to all age groups is a complex and multifaceted process. Understanding the correct academic level, content, pedagogical and, more recently, the technological knowledge that teachers need to draw on, is crucial when working towards the fourth industrial revolution. Some research projects, discussed in these eight articles, emphasise this dilemma and report on it, contributing to scientific knowledge in a variety of very necessary ways. They comment on exciting professional developmental programmes, particularly for teachers in rural and urban schools, Grades 1–9; they also encourage academics at universities to improve critical literacy, comprehension skills, language usage, mathematics and science teaching, as well as other important aspects of literacy to motivate both teachers and academics.

Important components of our *Reading & Writing* articles include those with interesting, thought-provoking titles on subjects that fit the scope of our journal. A skillfully written article, with structured arguments clearly delineated, makes it easy for our busy reviewers to understand the author's point of view. Articles that conform to the academic conventions of their scientific discourse within the various disciplines of reading and writing are required. Theoretical positioning and framing need to be explicitly communicated in juxtaposition to the findings. Methodological criteria should be sound and articulated simply, with all the details provided – sampling, sites, analytical measures, data collection instruments used, and ethical consent. Evidence is required and should be justified, with care taken to not go beyond the data.

Finally, cohesive and insightful conclusions are offered in these eight articles, with identified limitations and recommendations.

In *Reading & Writing* we accept both quantitative and qualitative research, any research that deepens our understanding of what it is that makes for better and improved literacy rates at school and at university. We particularly welcome articles in which authors have identified gaps in the literature and methodological fields, and have found creative ways to add new information and knowledge, as well as articles in which findings converge with the existing work in the field.

The editorial team would like to take this opportunity to thank the many local and international reviewers for their time, commitment and passion in shaping the reputation of our journal. And to our authors, we say 'Thank you' for trusting us with your precious research and for publishing in our journal. Timely publication of meaningful articles is a high priority, hence the identification of appropriate and available reviewers is paramount. We are proud to present you with the eight articles published this year:

1. 'Developing critical thinking in classrooms: Teacher responses to a reading-for-meaning workshop'.
2. 'Using a Community of Inquiry to explore teachers' responses to a reading-for-meaning course'.
3. 'Motivation to explicitly teach reading comprehension strategies after a workshop'.
4. 'Writing together alone: Digitally connected "snack writing" for progressing academic writing'.

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5. 'Eleven Grade 1 teachers' understandings of mathematical language in a South African context'.
6. 'Improving the reading proficiency of mature students through a task-based language teaching approach'.
7. 'Cultural taboos in mediating science in a Namibian bilingual primary school'.
8. 'Pre-service teachers' perceptions on eliciting learners' knowledge in a mixed-reality simulation environment'.