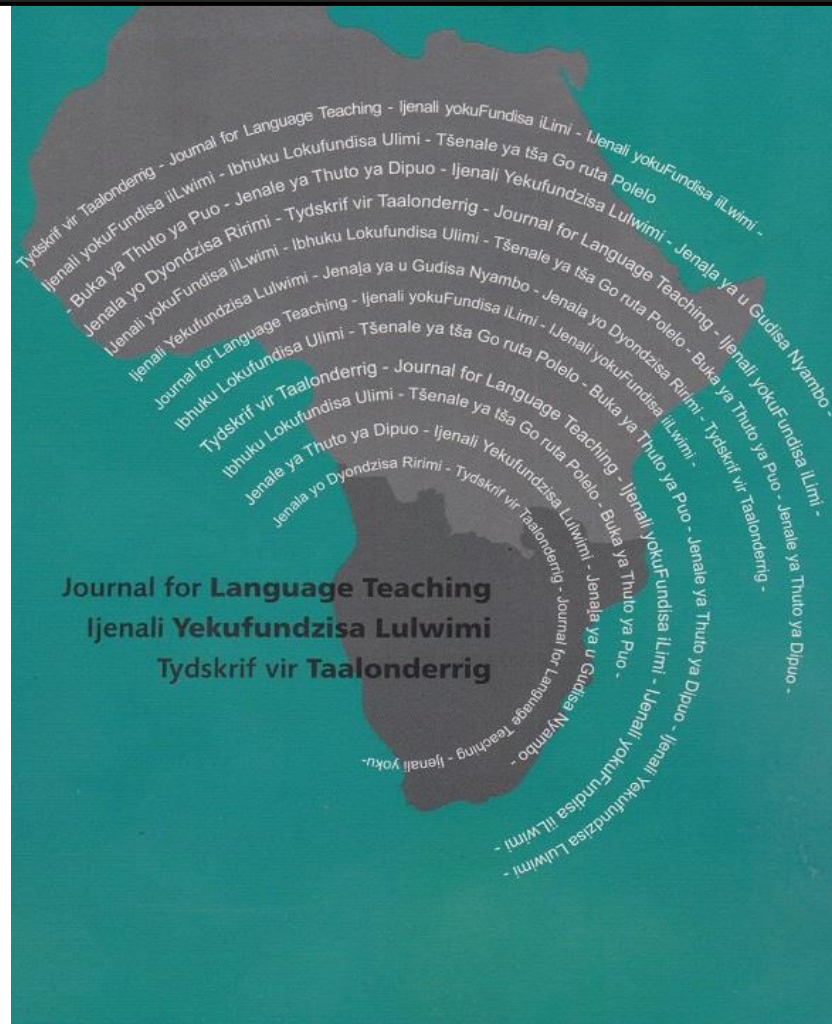


South African  
Association for  
Language Teaching

# Journal for Language Teaching: Editorial policy



June 2022

(Version 2)

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## 1. Background

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### Origin

The *Journal for Language Teaching* (ISSN 0250-1244) is owned and published in-house by the South African Association for Language Teaching (SAALT) / Suid-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Taalonderrig (SAVTO) / Mbumbana ya Afrika Tshipembe ya u Gudisa Nyambo.

The Journal originated in 1967 at the Rand Afrikaans University (now University of Johannesburg) as a bilingual (Afrikaans/English) newsletter of the Association: *Nuusbrief van die Suid-Afrikaanse Vereniging vir Taalonderrig* = *Newsletter of the South African Association for Language Teaching* (ISSN 0250-1244).

The first issue of the journal, now with title *Journal for Language Teaching*, was published in April 1980. It is sometimes referred to as the *SAALT Journal for Language Teaching*.

### Official title

The Journal embraces multilingualism, which is also reflected in its current title: *Journal for Language Teaching / Ijenali Yekufindzisa Lulwimi / Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig* (ISSN 0250-1244).

### Accreditation

The journal is accredited by the South African Department of Higher Education (DHET) and reliably and extensively indexed by a number of agents, see: '9. *Digital archiving, preservation and indexing*' in this document.

## 2. Focus and Scope

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The *South African Journal for Language Teaching* focuses on the publication of research in the domains of language teaching and applied linguistics with a particular focus on course and syllabus design, language testing in educational settings, and literacy and language proficiency development.

The Journal is not restricted to English – articles in all official South African languages may be included. Although the focus is on language teaching and applied linguistics in South Africa, the Journal engages with international

research and researchers. The Journal places a high value on both its international standing and on scientific research in applied linguistics. Colleagues and postgraduate students from South Africa and the African continent, as well as from the wider international scholarly community, are invited to contribute to any of the following research foci:

**Empirical studies.** The Journal gives preference to the publication of research with an empirical base (quantitative and/or qualitative studies, mixed methods research, case studies, action research, etc.). Descriptions of language classroom interventions or courses with no empirical component are not typically considered for publication in the journal.

**Longitudinal studies** and large scale studies on contemporary language dilemmas will receive special consideration.

**Original research articles.** The majority of articles are original research articles, but **replication studies** to validate previous findings are welcomed too.

**Conceptual articles** and meta-analyses are published from time to time.

**State of the art reviews.** The editor may invite specific authors on occasion to write “state of the art reviews” on relevant topics.

**Special issues.** The journal may include theme-based research. The Journal will consider featuring invited debates in special issues, for example with invited international contributors in dialogue with local scholars.

A **Festschrift** of a specific colleague’s work is published occasionally.

**Book reviews** are welcomed, and the editorial board reserves the right either to request or to refuse to review such submissions.

### 3. Frequency

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The Journal appears at least twice a year. Issues are pre-scheduled to appear in June/July and December/January, and issues are published on time. The editorial team ensures that there is no publication backlog.

## 4. The Editor

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### Function of the editor

The editor-in-chief will be an established researcher with an excellent publication record. Editors invite peer reviewers as advisors, but have complete authority to reject or accept articles. Editors will only accept a paper when reasonably certain that all conditions have been met by the authors.

Conventionally, the findings reported in the journal will be contextualised in the editorial section.

The editor's contact details appear on the journal's website, as well as on the AJOL and Sabinet publishing platforms:

- SAALT website ([www.saalt.org.za](http://www.saalt.org.za))
- African Journals Online (AJOL) ([www.ajol.info/index.php/jlt](http://www.ajol.info/index.php/jlt))
- Sabinet Online (<https://journals.co.za/content/journal/langt#>)

A report on the journal with recommendations for journal improvement is submitted annually to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) by the editor.

### Appointment of the editor

The appointment of the editor is based on the Association's constitution – nominations are invited and then voted upon at an AGM. The SAALT Board (the executive committee) has the right to decide on what further procedures it should adopt for screening and selecting applicants before this appointment is made. An editor-in-chief is appointed for a term of four years, but this can be changed by the SAALT Board.

## 5. Editorial board

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### Function of the editorial board

The editorial board is considered to be the advisory board for the content of the journal. The board comprises national and international experts in the field of language teaching. The editorial board members are involved as reviewers in cases where they are considered to be experts in their fields. Board members also advise and give input on editorial policies and

- advise the editor on matters concerning quality assurance;
- monitor and safeguard the publishing ethics of the journal;
- advise the editor on matters concerning timeous publication;
- advise the editor on topics for special issues;
- act as reviewers of articles;
- recommend eligible reviewers; and
- support and promote the journal by encouraging submissions to the journal that derive from their own professional environment.

## Appointment of the editorial board

Nominations from members are considered at the AGM. Appointments are made after consultation with members of the editorial board, and new members are presented to the SAALT Board for notification and ratification. A substantial percentage (about 40%) of members are scholars from the international community. The journal actively encourages, and is currently in the process of seeking to include on the editorial board colleagues from the African continent.

There is no set period for appointment of board members. The editorial board members serve indefinitely up and until they formally resign, or if the SAALT Board deems it necessary to remove them from the editorial board.

A list of the current editorial board members is published in the Journal, and the list is also regularly updated on the Journal website ([www.saalt.org.za/journal.html](http://www.saalt.org.za/journal.html)).

## 6. Submissions

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Journal articles are submitted via the online submission form on the journal website (<https://www.journals.ac.za/index.php/jlt>)

### Author guidelines

The Journal submission webpage gives a set of guidelines on:

- The scope of the journal
- A form to be completed, with author and co-author details, ORCID; suggestions for reviewers
- Covering letter and manuscript
- Length of article and length of abstract
- Reference Style Guide

- Declaration of authorship
- Declaration of having read the ethical statement
- Declaration that the manuscript has been copy edited
- Declaration of having followed the reference style of the Journal

## Procedure and workflow

The journal is hosted by Stellenbosch University on an OJS/PKP platform. OJS (Open Journal Systems) is a content and workflow management tool and the “most widely used open source journal publishing platform in existence, with over 25,000 journals using it worldwide.” (Public Knowledge Project 2022).

Once a manuscript has been submitted, the author receives an email acknowledgement that the manuscript has been received.

The form with author information and all documents uploaded are stored in a retrieval system on the website which can be accessed by the editor at any time. Further automatic workflow procedures are determined by the OJS/PKP platform.

Links to the Journal’s online Submission webpage are also provided on the AJOL and Sabinet platforms.

## 7. Peer review

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### Peer review process

A double-blind peer review procedure applies to articles submitted. Manuscripts first undergo an assessment by the editor(s) for compliance and suitability, after which abstracts are sent to potential reviewers with an invitation to review. Once such an invitation has been accepted, reviewers are asked to advise on the suitability and appropriateness of the submission, especially its academic quality, and to provide suggestions for improvement to the authors (see below “Quality checklist”). Finally, they are asked to recommend whether the submission should be accepted, revised, or rejected.

The editor receives and integrates reviews and communicates with the corresponding author/s. The editor ensures that there is rigorous implementation of valid reviewer critique and article improvement to maintain the quality of the articles. Peer reviewers receive follow-up information if

requested. Review reports are retained and are accessible for reference purposes.

The editor will safeguard the anonymity of authors and reviewers to ensure the integrity of the peer review process. Reviewers will treat reviewed articles as confidential.

Submissions are distributed to reviewers on a date and time as determined by the editor-in-chief. Distribution of submissions to the respective reviewers is either dealt with in batch format (i.e. all on a specific date), or they can be distributed as and when they are submitted. Turnaround time is usually 6-12 weeks.

## **Selection of peer reviewers**

Usually two reviewers are approached for peer review and they are selected based on their expertise and specific field of focus in the article. Peer reviewers need to be experts in the area investigated by the journal article, or established researchers with broad-based knowledge in applied linguistics or in the field of language education.

Reviewers are required to have no conflict of interest with regard to the authors, the research or its funders.

The editor uses a regularly updated “Directory of Expertise” to guide him/her in assigning articles to reviewers.

## **Peer review guidelines**

The following guidelines are provided to peer reviewers and are also published on the Journal website:

### *Quality checklist*

- Is this paper suitable for publication in the *Journal for Language Teaching*? Does it make a substantial contribution (new knowledge) to language teaching? What adjustments do you think should be made in this regard?
- Does the title succinctly capture what the article is about? If it should be improved, what are your suggestions?
- Is the abstract appropriate? In other words, does the abstract provide a clear and true summary of the article?



- Is the introduction brief and relevant, giving the reader a clear indication of what is to follow?
- Has the research problem (this could be empirical and/or conceptual) been stated clearly?
- Is the rationale for the research problem defensible and clear as opposed to absent/vague/irrelevant? Has the study been sufficiently contextualised?
- Has a clear research question, and where applicable, sub-question(s) been formulated? Are they aligned with the title and purpose of the study?
- Is the literature well-integrated and critiqued? Are key issues/trends/silences in the subject field mentioned? Does the author display adequate insight into the relevant literature? Is the connection between the various viewpoints described in the literature review clear? Does the literature review include an appropriate range of relevant sources (national and international)?
- Is an appropriate theoretical / conceptual framework presented for the study? Is the work of relevant scholars indicated and discussed briefly to explain the chosen theoretical / conceptual framework?
- Is the overall research design appropriate for the study and has it been clearly described?
- Has the research methodology (e.g. qualitative and/or quantitative) been described? Is the research methodology based on an acceptable scientific basis?
- Are the results based on a clearly demarcated field of research and/or comprehensive database? Has the design of the protocols/instruments been clearly described? Have the sampling strategies/selection criteria been adequately described?
- Have the data collection procedures been described adequately, including the rationale, the advantages and disadvantages of using these in this study?
- Have the data analysis procedures, including rationale/advantages and limitations, been described? Is the audit trail clear? Have issues relating to validity/reliability, trustworthiness, etc., been addressed?
- Has a well-founded conclusion been reached? Have the research questions been answered? Have limitations been suggested?
- Does the author write in a scholarly/scientific manner using his/her own words, appropriate academic/technical terms and avoiding colloquial expressions? Is the article error-free with reference to grammatically and technically accuracy?

- Does the author use in-text references correctly and appropriately? Is the list of references complete and correct? Where applicable, are sources recent and sufficient for a journal article?
- With regards to the format, has the in-house style of the Journal been adhered to?

### *Ethics checklist*

Reviewers will also scrutinize the ethicality of the research reported on in the article.

- Is there a declaration of ethical intent?
- With respect to human participation, have all necessary permissions been obtained?
- Have confidentiality / anonymity issues been addressed satisfactorily? Can the author provide the necessary documentation?

## 8. Publishing ethics and malpractice statement

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The Journal requires authors and reviewers to adhere to the research and publishing guidelines of their various institutions. Where applicable, authors could be asked by the editor to provide proof of ethical clearance, as well as data availability.

The Journal also subscribes to the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) core practices. When allegations of misconduct are being investigated, the SAALT will follow the guidance provided by COPE (2020).

Should anyone be of the opinion that generally accepted publication norms have been compromised, they should alert the editor. Anonymity of whistle blowers is assured. There is also an option to lodge a formal complaint to the SAALT chairperson through the SAALT website, who will appoint someone to launch an independent investigation. False allegations will be reported to the complainant's institution.

The list below, though not exhaustive, contains some of the most important ethical principles to which the journal subscribes.

## Conflict of interest

Author affiliations and funding sources which may pose a conflict of interest must be declared. Editors and reviewers should have no conflict of interest with regard to the authors, the research or its funders.

Editors may not publish in the journal during their terms. If guest editors are appointed to manage a special issue, and the editor-in-chief is not involved in the process at all, they are allowed to publish if the submission is approved, and if they adhere to the guidelines. Guest editors are allowed to publish in an issue managed by themselves, provided that the editor-in-chief takes responsibility for their submissions, the review process and feedback.

The Journal is bound by the DHET policy and will not publish more than 25% of articles from a single institution.

## Originality and authorship

Authors must verify that an article is their own original work. Authors must list all references used in/for the article. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Upon submission of a manuscript, an author declares that the material has not already been published in another journal or other publication. Authors may also not submit to other journals while awaiting feedback from the *Journal for Language Teaching*.

In the case of multiple authors, the corresponding author will ensure that all agree on who must be listed first as the lead author. All contributing authors must consent to the submission of a manuscript, and credit should also be given to other individuals (not necessarily as co-authors) who may have made a significant contribution to the article, such as providing statistical analyses.

## Integrity of the research

Authors acknowledge that their data are real and verifiable and that no fraudulent data have been used. The availability of original raw data sets should be indicated where possible. Checking the research methodology and data for contradictions and inconsistencies is part of the peer reviewers' tasks, while the final responsibility lies with the editor-in-chief.

## Confidentiality and consent

Where human participation was involved in research, the confidentiality of the identity of subjects must be retained. Ethical clearance and informed consent of participants should be indicated in the article.

## Post-publication errata and retractions

Every article published by the *Journal for Language Teaching* either in print or online, constitutes the Version of Record (VoR): the definitive, authorised, formal, or published version as defined by the National Information Standards Organization (NISO, 2008). The Version of Record implies that it can be cited as a reliable source.

To ensure the integrity of the scholarly record, any errors, be they technical or ethical, should be corrected as soon as possible after publication. All post-publication notices will be public and free and made as widely available and visible as possible. On the Journal website everybody is invited to contact the editor to report errors after publication. Should the editor not respond in a satisfactory way, the chairperson of the SAALT may be contacted, who will then appoint an independent person to evaluate the complaint.

Where necessary, a post-publication notice on a separate page will be added in the next issue of the print journal with a link to the online article at the DOI address. The notice, depending on the severity of the error, can be in the form of a

- **correction notice** (erratum) — for a minor error such as missing information or a misleading column heading. This can be added in a footnote of the electronic copy
- **expression of concern** — where investigations into alleged misconduct is going to take considerable time
- **retraction** — in the case of plagiarism, false data, research without ethical approval, duplicate publication, etc. A 'retracted' watermark will be added to the online article together with a separate retraction statement that will be linked to the retracted article at its permanent online address (DOI).
- **removal** — in rare circumstances, e.g. pending legal procedures, libel or defamation

The above procedure is an adaptation of the model used by Taylor & Francis (2020).

## 9. Intellectual capital, copyright, preprints and licensing

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In 2022, the JLT opted for the [Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International Creative Commons license \(CC BY-NC-ND 4.0\)](#).

After peer review and acceptance, all articles in the *Journal for Language Teaching* are immediately free for everyone to read and download. But authors may *not* share their article publicly before acceptance, since such sharing may compromise the double blind peer review. Furthermore:

- **Authors** may copy and redistribute their article in any medium or format as long as a link is provided to its original publication in the *Journal of Language Teaching*.
- **Readers** may copy and redistribute articles in any medium or format, as long as appropriate credit is given to the author and the publication, as in normal scholarly referencing practice.

## 10. Digital archiving, preservation and indexing

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The *Journal for Language Teaching* is indexed by African Journals Online (AJOL), Sabinet Online eJournals, as well as Index to South African Periodicals (ISAP), and EBSCO Host (Africa-wide Information). Digital archives of articles in PDF format can be found on both the AJOL and Sabinet platforms. Between 40 and 50 libraries and other research entities receive the journal for purposes of indexing, and to increase the readership. The National Library and Legal Deposit Libraries receive the journal free of charge, while other libraries pay for hard copies.

## 11. Page fees and subscriptions

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The journal is funded wholly via page fees. These are recorded on the website.

To receive two issues of the Journal in print format per year, members deposit a specified amount into the SAALT account available on the website. Proof of payment is mailed to the treasurer.

All authors receive, free of charge, a hard copy of the specific issue in which their article appeared.

Copies of articles from back issues before 2022, are available via the AJOL and Sabinet platforms. Access to these are provided in the top navigation menu of the Journal.

## 12. Transparency and accessibility

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On the Journal website (<https://www.journals.ac.za/index.php/jlt>):

- [this document is published in a condensed format and](#) regularly updated in mobile friendly HTML.
- this document is downloadable in PDF format.

When printed, this document, entitled *Journal for Language Teaching: Editorial Policy*, is uncontrolled. The latest version will be published on the website.

Links to the website are provided from the AJOL and Sabinet platforms.

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