

Exploring and Understanding Grade 11 Rural Teachers' Conceptions and Experiences of Teaching Sepedi Literature

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CAMPBELL - Renewing Indigenous Languages

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It is important to gain insight of teacher's conceptions of Sepedi Literature, because they convey personal meanings and influence the teaching of Literature. Rural teachers hold different conceptions about Sepedi Literature that are unknown, and the approaches teachers use during Sepedi Literature lessons have not been researched. The under-researched African language literature is influenced by the Bantu Education ideology that associated African languages with inferior education and poverty, whilst English language has been perceived as superior and promising future economic opportunities. We argue that the lack of research on the teaching of Sepedi literature and teacher's conception could perpetuate the marginalisation of African languages. We used critical discourse analysis and critical pedagogy to analyse and understand teachers' conceptions and practices in the classrooms. The study interacted with 4 teachers in four secondary schools in Nemuha, Mpumalanga Province. We used qualitative non-participatory video recorded classroom observations and video-stimulated recall interviews. The findings show that teachers' conceptions are linked to the way they were taught Sepedi literature in high school and are about the development of language and learning and culture, and the teaching methods were dominantly teacher centred. The findings are significant for teacher training institutions to help expose future teachers to different teaching methods, and the Provincial and National Department of Education to be aware of teachers' conceptions of African language literature, which indicate their beliefs that influences learners' conceptions and attitudes towards African language literature.