

# **UCLA**

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## Editorial

This issue of *Issues in Applied Linguistics* highlights research from diverse areas in the field. Bridging these articles together is that each one is situated on the edge of current research either by employing approaches that are underappreciated – a *position paper* that addresses the methodological concerns for current research on phonological development and a teacher's *self-analysis* of language classroom practices – or by delving into a research area that is underexplored – Bantu language speakers' nativization of English. We hope that this issue will renew an appreciation of less common approaches and areas of study in an effort to encourage creative thinking and foster support for the wide variety of methods and forms of knowledge in our field.

The relationship between age of onset (AO) and phonological attainment has been explored in considerable depth. While it appears that the field has concluded that phonological attainment declines with age, Moyer examines the methods used in previous research and underscores several methodological concerns that need to be considered to better understand this relationship: these concerns focus on participant selection, task design, ratings and rater reliability, and data analyses. To take one example – participant selection – she points out that selecting long-term or exceptional learners, as is the case with much of the research, is a type of selection bias that leads to problems of comparability and thus generalizability across (and sometimes within) studies. She concludes by proposing methodological recommendations to improve validity, comparability, and reliability of future studies.

In the second article, Makalela outlines several features of Black South African English (BSAE) that diverge from Standard English varieties, relying often on data from speakers of Sepedi (a Bantu language). He argues that rather than merely being a matter of overgeneralization strategies, as has been argued in the past, these features are strongly influenced by the logic of the Bantu language system, what he calls *Bantu language logic*. He claims that BSAE has evolved into an endonormative variety and is therefore likely to become standardized. He discusses the reasons for this likelihood: the context in which BSAE is acquired and used, the status of BSAE speakers, and the development and use of BSAE in the public domain, in particular in the media. Finally, the author suggests steps important for language planning and understanding the future role of BSAE in education.

The third article presents the self-analysis of one teacher's experiences with communication practices throughout one semester teaching Spanish to undergraduates. Edstrom combines reflection in journal entries, analysis of recorded classroom discourse, and the structure and content of teacher-designed quizzes to discuss her initial expectations and standards of classroom communication and how these standards were conveyed throughout the semester. This combination of data sources also allows Edstrom to compare her immediate perceptions of classroom

communication with what actually occurred in order to uncover and address three inconsistencies that she expressed to the students: the balance of L1/L2 use, the assumption of truthfulness in the exchange of information, and learners' voice or control over their own messages. She concludes by addressing how such self-analysis can benefit her now and in the future. Such an approach reminds language teachers of the importance of continued reflection to uncover possible ambiguities in their beliefs about successful language teaching and possible gaps between these beliefs and actual classroom practices.

In the last pieces, a dynamic and important member of the applied linguistics community, Sally Jacoby, is remembered. Sally passed away on July 27, 2007 after a courageous battle with lung cancer. Tim McNamara includes an obituary and Antony Kunnan commemorates Sally's role in founding *Issues in Applied Linguistics*. Sally's contributions and involvement in IAL, at UCLA, and in our field will never be forgotten. We dedicate this issue to her.

Lisa Mikesell