

**The dilemma, challenges and opportunities faced by the languages of South Africa in their learning and teaching as promulgated by the constitution**

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*This researcher wishes to postulate on the challenges faced by the teaching and learning of the languages of South Africa. The researcher will critically survey the historical development of the South African languages prior to and after the first democratic elections in 1994, their distribution, role of policy documents and the part that institution of higher learning are expected to play in the development of the previously marginalized indigenous languages. The presentation will further investigate the role played by legislation that aims at the promotion, protection and development of these languages. The legislation is considered by some as window dressing as described in the South African Media with question: "Is the Human Rights Commission a toothless watchdog? The fact of the matter is, how this legislation addresses the goal is highly questionable. Is much, if not all, of this piece of legislation, not serving as a toothless watchdog? This is perhaps prompted by the attitude and treatment that the previously marginalized languages find themselves in, despite the legislation guaranteeing their protection. As I am writing this presentation, the entrenched supremacy of English is observed. English still enjoys and commands more support at the expense of other South African languages. As a way of concluding the presentation, the researcher intends to provide recommendations and suggestions how the status quo could be challenged as a way of promoting multilingualism in a multicultural South Africa.*