

## **Teachers' Professional Knowledge Competence and Second Language Education in South Africa**

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**ABSTRACT** In this paper, the researchers propose that teachers' professional knowledge plays a significant role in the scaffolding of second language education. This is because learners need both linguistic and content knowledge scaffolding to be able to make meaningful associations and build more knowledge onto what they already know. Teachers are not only responsible for comprehensibly delivering learning materials but they are also responsible for initiating the process of learning. It is through the teachers' use of the language that complex concepts are unraveled so that learners are able to build representational structures that are the basis for the understanding of unfamiliar subject-matter. In other words, professional knowledge underpins teachers' capacity to effectively link the demands of language to content subject matter. The researchers conclude firstly, by emphasizing that teacher training programmes have to be fore-grounded in professional knowledge that is congruent with appropriate theoretical frames underpinning English as a medium of instruction; and secondly, by acknowledging the pervasiveness of language across disciplines which embeds the fact that every teacher is a language teacher and as such, teachers need to be explicitly apprenticed in professional knowledge for the facilitation of new forms of practice and identities for themselves and their learners.