GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS (APPLIED LINGUISTICS)

This glossary includes terminology used in the following modules:

HAPL481; HAPL482; HAPL483; HAPL484

Accuracy	Precision of language when speaking, writing or reading aloud.
Additional language (AL)	Any language learnt after the first language.
Additive bilingualism	The practice of gaining competence in an additional language while the first language is maintained.
Affective factors	Emotional factors, such as motivation and anxiety, that may influence language learning and use.
Affective filter hypothesis	One of five hypotheses in the Monitor Model. The affective filter hypothesis predicts that learners acquire language best in an environment that is pleasant.
Alphabetic principle	The belief that there is a correspondence between letters and sounds.
Anaphor	A word that refers back to another word already mentioned in the text, e.g. *Siya did so well on the test because **she** studied hard.*
Assimilation	Learners are integrated into classrooms where the medium of instruction is different from the learners' first language; the goal being that learners learn the additional language in a natural environment.
Attitude	A person's orientation towards themselves and their own cultural group, as well as one's orientation towards others (for example an additional language speaker group).
Audiolingual method	A method of language teaching that using drills and dialogues and emphasises listening and speaking before reading and writing and that discourages the use of the mother tongue in class. Also known as the 'Army method', as it was used to teach foreign languages to American troops during the Second World War.
Automaticity	When the use of a skill becomes increasingly rapid and automatic with practice and does not require conscious effort.
Barking at print	The process in which a learner places emphasis on sounding out words in a text, which results in poor comprehension of the text's meaning.

Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS)	Refers to oral language competence and are the language skills that people need on a day-to-day basis to interact with others in social situations.
Bilingual classroom	A classroom where two languages are used for communication, to support teaching and learning.
Bilingualism	The ability of a speaker to communicate fluently in two languages.
Bilingual education	An educational setting where two languages are used in a systematic way to teach the curriculum.
Biliteracy	The ability to read and write in two languages.
Blends	Consonant clusters such as *bl-, thr-*, *str-* in English.
Bottom-up processes	Information processing where material is processed from smaller units (such as letters/symbols) using perception, to larger units (such as sentences/paragraphs), using higher-order mental processes.
Cataphor	Pronouns which refer to someone or something to be introduced later in the text, e.g. *Knowing that **he** would be hungry soon, **Tebtaso** set off for the shops*.
Cloze test	An activity where words are left out of a sentence (e.g. every fifth or ninth word) and the learner is required to fill in the word most likely to fit in the open space. Also known as gap-fill tests.
Code-switching	A practice where one moves between different languages, dialects or registers in a conversation.
Code mixing	The mixing of two or more languages or dialects in conversation. The emphasis is on the hybridisation/fusion of the two codes involved, to create a third, new code which has unique structural characteristics.
Codification	Developing a writing system, establishing rules of grammar and developing vocabulary for standardised language use.
Cognate words	Words in different languages with the same etymological origin whose forms and meanings are similar. For example, *nurse* and *unesi* (isiZulu).
Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)	Familiarity with the conventions of academic language and the ability to process and produce written academic language in complex ways.
Cognitive strategies	Mental tools and tactics used by learners to organise the learning material to support the learning process.
Coherence	The organisation and integration of information within a text to produce a unified whole.
Cohesion	The ways that clauses in a text are linked together.

Communicative competence	The skills needed to communicate effectively (which includes knowledge of the grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic and discourse rules of a language).
Communicative interference	The inappropriate transfer of first language culture and communicative patterns to an additional language culture, which often leads to miscommunication.
Communicative language teaching (CLT) approach	An approach to language teaching that emphasises communicative competence in real-world situations through authentic interaction.
Competence	The ability to do something successfully or efficiently.
Comprehension	The ability to understand language input. Reading comprehension refers to the reader's understanding of written information. Listening comprehension refers to a listener's understanding of oral information.
Consolidation stage	The period in a learner's scholastic career during which reading skills become increasingly refined.
Constructs	Theoretical entities that form the key components of theories. 'Intelligence', 'motivation' and 'anxiety' are examples of constructs. In psychology, a construct is a skill, attribute, or ability that is based on one or more established theories. Constructs are not directly observable.
Context disembedded/ context reduced	Language in which the context is explained and meaning construction does not rely on interaction.
Context embedded	Language that contains many linguistic items whose meaning must be recovered from the interactional context.
Contrasts	Differences between languages that may give rise to errors.
Contrastive analysis hypothesis	The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis states that errors in the second/additional language can be predicted through a systematic analysis of the differences between a speaker's first and second languages.
Correlation	In statistics, a correlation coefficient describes the relationship between two variables. Correlation coefficients range from 0 (no overlap between variables) to 1 (complete overlap between variables). A positive correlation means that as one variable increases the other variable increases. A negative correlation means that as one variable increases the other variable decreases.
Covert errors	Errors which only become evident in the broader context; i.e. errors that cause a semantic breakdown, even though the sentence is grammatically well-formed.
Criterion	A standard used to judge something. You may know this word in its plural form (*criteria*).
Criterion-referenced testing	Testing that assesses performance in relation to a criterion.

Critical period hypothesis	A specific period of time in a human being's life which is optimal for acquiring a particular skill, such as language.
Cross-linguistic transfer	A transfer of linguistic knowledge/skills between two languages.
Debilitative anxiety	The state in which a person is so overcome with worry that they are unable to use the additional language effectively.
Decoding	Reading a word by converting the word's orthographic (written) form to a phonological (sound) form to access the word's meaning.
Decolonization	Rejecting colonial cultures and languages as part of a process to release a country from the political and economic control of a more powerful country.
Dialect	A regional or social variety of a language which is distinguished from the standard variety through characteristic features in the vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation.
Diglossia	The use of two varieties (for example a 'high' and 'low' variety) of the same language in different situations in a speech community, typically by the same speakers, but in non-overlapping roles.
Differential performance	Differences in proficiency between additional language learners.
Direct testing	Tasks that require the learner to perform the skill that is being tested, for example asking learners to write a paragraph if writing is being assessed.
Discourse analysis	A range of approaches used to critically analyse texts.
Eclecticism	The selection of various techniques or activities from different language teaching methods when planning and presenting a lesson.
Emergent bilingualism	The use of both the first language and additional language in the classroom in the early school years.
Emergent literacy	Children's early knowledge about reading and writing.
Encoding	Putting the phonemes of a word together to create meaning.
Environmental print	Text that occurs in everyday life, such as logos and names of products.
Epistemological	Relating to, or based on epistemology. Epistemology is the study of the nature, origin and limits of human knowledge, especially with regards to the distinction between justified beliefs and opinions.
Error	A faulty utterance which occurs because the learner has not yet mastered a particular feature of the additional language.
Ethnography of speaking	The original name of the SPEAKING framework that Dell Hymes developed for the analysis of communication within the wider context of the social and cultural practices and beliefs of the members of a particular culture or speech community.

Explicit	Clearly expressed communication or instruction that leaves nothing to be assumed. Explicit instruction, for example, directs attention to the object of learning.
Expository texts	A text type that contains facts and information.
Extensive reading program	Readers read as many texts as they can. The focus is not on completely understanding all the information in every text, but on the quantity of texts being read.
Facilitative anxiety	The state in which a person feels alert, energised and able to cope with the demands of learning an additional language.
False cognates	Words that have similar forms and/or sounds in different languages, but have different meanings. For example, English *assist* (to help) and Spanish *asistir* (to attend).
Feedback	Information provided by a teacher regarding a group or an individual's performance.
Field dependent learning	A learning style in which the learner tends to approach concepts holistically rather than analytically and prefers inductive styles of learning.
Field independent learning	A learning style in which the learner tends to be analytical and prefers deductive approaches to learning material.
First language (L1)	The language that a child learns first and maintains throughout life or the language the child feels most comfortable using. In the South African context also referred to as the Home Language and in other contexts also referred to as the mother tongue.
Fluency	A measure of both speed and accuracy i.e. efficiency; Speaking fluency: Ability to speak rapidly with some mistakes but overall coherence in meaning; Reading fluency: Reading with accuracy and speed which enables understanding (comprehension); Writing fluency: ability to write with sufficient speed and accuracy for the task demands.
Foreign language (FL)	A language to which a learner has very limited contact outside the classroom.
Formative assessment	Assessment that takes places continually throughout the year or course.
Fossilisation	In second language learning, a state where persistent errors in a learner's additional language occur and are hard to overcome
Functional literacy	Reading and writing skills that are adequate to manage daily living and employment tasks that require literacy skills.

Genre	A group of texts which have the same purpose or audience, and share certain textual and linguistic features. For example, texts in the business email genre have the purpose to give or request information, the audience is usually someone at the workplace, and the emails will use the same format (a subject header, main body, salutation).
Genre pedagogy	The instructional approach in which teachers familiarise learners with different texts by teaching them the format and writing conventions of various text genres.
Grammatical competence	See linguistic competence.
Grapheme	Symbols used in writing. In an alphabet, graphemes refer to letters.
Habit	An automatic response to a particular stimulus.
High-frequency words	A collection of the most common words in a language measured by their frequency of occurrence in written or spoken corpora.
Hypothesis	A hypothesis is a claim or proposed explanation about a single observed or expected phenomenon.
Implicit learning	Implicit learning happens unconscious or is presumed from the context.
Incidental learning	Learning of information or ability as a by-product of focusing on another learning activity. For example, learning vocabulary while being engaged in reading for meaning.
Indirect testing	Tasks that test abilities that underlie the skills used in the assessment.
Inferencing	Information derived from texts that is not stated explicitly but is deduced from elements in the text and from our background knowledge.
Information gap task	A task where only some learners have the information that is required to complete an activity.
Input hypothesis	Asserts that learners acquire language when they are exposed to language that is comprehensible.
Instrumental motivation	The state of being interested in learning the additional language to further other goals such as employment or to complete a qualification.
Integrative motivation	The state of being interested in the people and culture of the additional language and desiring to establish closer contacts with native speakers of the additional language.
Intensive reading program	A reading program where each text is read thoroughly, and repeatedly until completely understood.
Interactive reading	The process between an adult and child of actively engaging while reading a text.

Intercultural communication	Interaction that happens between people which is influenced by differing cultural conventions.
Interference	When structures in the first language and the additional language differ substantially, and the learner imposes first language patterns on the additional language.
Interlanguage	A learner's developing language which contains characteristics of the learner's first language and characteristics of the second/additional language, as well as some characteristics that fall between the two languages
Interlingual errors	Errors caused by the differences between the first language and the additional language.
Interlingual transfer	The shift of a linguistic item or structure from the first language to the additional language.
Intralingual transfer	The shift of a linguistic item or structure within the additional language.
Language acquisition	The unconscious and natural process of gaining competence in a language.
Language acquisition device (LAD)	A theoretical construct, proposed by Chomsky, that makes it possible to acquire language. Also called the inborn language faculty, it later developed into Universal Grammar (UG).
Language anxiety	The fear a person feels when they are not fully proficient in the AL but they are in a situation that requires use of the AL.
Language aptitude	The extent to which one has the ability to learn new languages.
Language learning	The deliberate and effortful task of gaining competence in a language.
Language of learning and teaching (LoLT)	A South African term to refer to the language which is the medium of instruction in a classroom.
Language Planning	The concerted effort to influence the function, structure or acquisition of language in a linguistic community.
Language planning -in-education	Measures to influence how languages are used within the education sector.
Language Policy	A policy which determines how languages should be used and cultivated in specific contexts.
Learner autonomy	A learner's ability to take responsibility for their own learning and to set goals that would improve their performance.
Learning strategies	Specific methods or techniques that learners use to tackle a particular task or to solve a problem.

Learning styles	The fairly characteristic way in which a learner approaches a learning environment or engages in the learning process.
Lexeme	A meaningful unit in a language, consisting of a word or group of words. A single-word lexeme (e.g. *talk*) may have a number of inflectional forms (*talks*, *talked*, *talking*). A multiword lexeme consist of more than one orthographic word (e.g. *speak up*).
Lexicon	The complete set of meaningful units in a language; a language's inventory of lexemes.
Lexical access	Being able to recall the meaning of a word from memory, as it is stored in the lexicon.
Linguistic competence	The ability to correctly apply the phonological, grammatical and pragmatic rules of a language.
Literacy	Literacy at the most basic level refers to the ability to read and write. It can also refer to more general knowledge or ability in an area. For example, emergent literacy refers to one's early ideas about reading and writing, and digital literacy refers to an ability to use digital platforms to access and share information.
Logical relations/ semantic relations	The relationship between two concepts within or across sentences.
Macro language planning	Language planning on a large scale (for example at state level).
Macrostructure	The conventional or expected text structure of a genre.
Mainstream integrative support	When learners who are not first language speakers of the target language are grouped with native speakers and receive language support during lessons.
Matthew effect	The phenomenon where children with lower levels of a skill (such as reading) are less inclined to practice the skill and as a result further entrench low levels of the skill.
Medium of instruction	The language of teaching and learning that teachers and learners use at a school.
Metacognition	Awareness and understanding of cognitive processes.
Metacognitive strategies	A learner's ability to think about what is happening during learning and to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning.
Method	A teaching technique used and perpetuated by supporters of a particular theoretical understanding.
Micro language planning	Language planning on a small scale (e.g. family language planning).

Mistakes	Incorrect utterances that occur when a learner knows how to use the particular word or construction correctly, but due to inattention, fatigue, anxiety or nervousness produce an incorrect utterance.
Model	A model describes processes or sets of processes related to a phenomenon and how different components of a phenomenon interact.
Modified interaction	When first language speakers adjust their speech when communicating with an additional language speaker.
Monitor hypothesis	Asserts that learners use the grammar rules of a language as an editor, allowing them to correct errors while communicating.
Monolingualism	Fluency of a speaker in only one language.
Monolingual classroom	A classroom where only one language is used for teaching and learning.
Morpheme	The smallest meaningful unit of language. For example, *unkind* consists of two morphemes, *kind* (root/stem word) and *un-* (negative prefix).
Morphology	The study of the structure of words and how they are formed (see Morpheme).
Motivation	Inner drive or desire that moves someone to a particular action.
Multilingualism	The ability of a speaker to communicate in more than two languages.
Multilingual classroom	A classroom where more than two languages are used for communicating.
Multiple intelligences	Different types of abilities which can be developed during a person's life (including verbal, logical, spatial, musical, kinaesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences).
Narrative texts	A text type that is characterised by stories and that is mainly fictional.
Natural order hypothesis	The Natural order hypothesis states that learners acquire grammar rules in a specific order and not necessarily in the order in which they are taught.
Negative transfer	When structures in the first language and the additional language differ substantially, and the learner imposes the first language patterns on the additional language.
Norm	Refers to a skill level that is typically expected based on information from many people. For example, the norm is that children produce their first two-word sentence around the age of two.
Norm-referenced testing	Learner performance reported as a score which indicates a learner's ability in relation to other learners' abilities.
Observable behaviour	These are actions that can be seen, e.g. talking, gesturing, smiling, yawning etc.

Opaque orthography	Written language in which the spelling of words is inconsistent and where a one-to-one relationship between graphemes and phonemes does not occur.
Overgeneralisation	When a learner applies a rule learnt elsewhere in inappropriate contexts.
Overt errors	Errors that are clearly incorrect, for example subject-verb agreement errors.
Parallel processing mode	The simultaneous processing of language in terms of decoding and comprehension in order to derive meaning during reading.
Performance	Actual (and often flawed) use of a language in real situations.
Personality traits	Aspects of a person's character that they are born with.
Phonemic awareness	The understanding that a word is made up of a series of discrete phonemes; a subskill of phonological awareness.
Phonemic segmentation	The ability to break words down into their component parts at the phoneme level.
Phonics approach	An instructional approach in which children are explicitly taught sound-symbol correspondences in their language and how to use them to decode unfamiliar words.
Phonics instruction	The process of developing phonemic awareness and phonemic analysis through explicit teaching of letter-sound correspondences.
Phonological awareness	Being able to hear and manipulate the sounds of your language e.g. knowing that *dog* starts with the /d/ sound and that there are three syllables in *butterfly.*
Plurilingualism	Plurilingualism is the ability to communicate in multiple languages. The difference with multilingualism is that plurilingualism is less about the level of fluency and competency and more about the ongoing ability to use multiple language repertoires for specific purposes.
Pragmalinguistic failure	Occurs when speech act strategies are inappropriately transferred from the first language to and additional language.
Pragmatics	The study of how language is used in real-life communication, by considering the context.
Primary language	The language that a child learns first and maintains throughout life or the language a person uses most regularly.
Principled eclecticism	A teacher's considered use of various teaching techniques to achieve the planned outcome (e.g. communicative competence).
Process	The stages followed during the act of writing which include planning, writing, editing, rewriting and publishing.
Product	The text created as a result of the act of writing.

Reading fluency	A reader's ability to read (silently or aloud) with few errors and hesitations, to group words into meaningful units and to read with expression.
Reading instruction stage	The phase in a child's academic development in which formal literacy instruction begins.
Reading readiness	The skills required to create ideal conditions for a child to begin learning to read.
Reading speed	An individual's rate of oral or silent reading as measured in words per minute.
Realia	Objects used in lessons to demonstrate phenomena in the real world.
Recast	The process of repeating a learner's incorrect utterance, but making changes that convert the error to a linguistically correct utterance.
Reliability	Refers to how consistently a test measures the construct of interest. Reliability applies to the items in the test, as well as to the raters (scorers) and how consistently the test is scored.
Referent	A word in a text that has a logical relationship to another word in the same text.
Reproductive function of literacy	The purpose of the written word to preserve information as faithfully as possible so that established knowledge can be reproduced.
Restructuring in second language learning	Restructuring is the process by which learners change their interlanguage system and restructure that system.
Risk-taking	A person's willingness to express themselves in the additional language even though they are not fully proficient.
Scaffolding	The support given to a learner to move them from their current ability to greater proficiency and independence.
Second language (L2)	Any language learnt after the first language which is used for particular purposes (such as access to business or education), or which carries particular social status.
Segment	The skill of breaking up and sounding out a word according to its phonemes.
Short-term memory	A temporary storage facility used during cognitive processing to store auditory and visual information.
Sight words	Words which need to be recognized by sight rather than read letter by letter because they are spelled irregularly, e.g. *sugar*, *island.*
Self-efficacy	A learner's own belief in their ability to acquire language skills in an additional language.
Semilingualism	When an individual is not fully proficient in any of the languages they have acquired, resulting in partial knowledge of two or more languages.

Sequentiality	The movement of the eyes during reading word for word across the page in a particular direction (such as from left to right).
Socioaffective strategies	Interacting with interlocutors in additional language communicative situations and taking steps to ensure that the message is conveyed effectively.
Sociolect	A dialect associated with a particular social group (such as a socio-economic group, an age group or a religious group).
Sociolinguistic competence	The ability to negotiate meaning in culturally appropriate ways.
Sociopragmatic failure	Occurs when additional language speakers transfer social rules from their first language and culture to the target language in an inappropriate manner.
Speech act theory	The study of the performative function of utterances in communication.
Speech event	A set of utterances made in communication.
Storybook reading	When a child and an adult are jointly focused on the common activity of reading a storybook, during which they interact and the adult mediates the meaning of the text for the child.
Story scheme	The structure of narrative texts.
Strategic competence	A component of communicative competence which refers to the ability to overcome difficulties when communication breakdowns occurs, using verbal and non-verbal tools.
Subtractive bilingualism	The situation in which the additional language is learned at the expense of the first language.
Summative assessment	Assessment that takes the form of a single, credit-bearing task which takes place at the end of a year or qualification and which measures overall competence.
Syntax	Grammar rules of a language which determine the way words can be combined to form sentences.
Target language (TL)	The additional language which is being learnt.
Text structure	The overall organisation of information in a text.
Theme	The main idea (or gist) of a text.
Theory	A theory is a set of statements about natural phenomena that explains why these phenomena occur the way they do. A theory can make predictions and contains multiple hypotheses based on generalizations.
Top-down processes	Higher-order processes of reading which move from comprehension down to the basic processes of decoding.

Transformative function of literacy	The purpose of the written word to transform knowledge by offering new ways of seeing the world and challenging existing knowledge.
Transitional stage	The phase in a learner's academic development in which the emphasis changes from learning to read to reading to learn.
Translanguaging	The pedagogical practice where the language mode of input and output are deliberately switched in bi/multilingual classrooms.
Universal Grammar (UG)	Chomsky's theory that explains humans' ability to acquire languages as an innate set of mental principles and parameters of grammar that act as a blueprint for language acquisition and which can be applied to all languages.
Validity	The accuracy with which a test measures the construct of interest, thereby supporting the interpretation of test scores.
Vocabulary	The body of words used in a particular language.
Vocabulary knowledge	Refers to knowledge of words and multiword units. Receptive vocabulary refers to the words people understand, while productive vocabulary refers to the words people can use.
Vocabulary breadth	Refers to how many words people know.
Vocabulary depth	Refers to the quality of a person's vocabulary knowledge, i.e. knowledge of the form, meaning, collocations and associations of a word.
Washback	The effect that a test has on teaching and learning activities. The effect can be positive (encourage good teaching and coverage of the curriculum) or negative (encourage a narrow focus on only specific parts of the curriculum) depending on the test itself.
Whole-word approach	An approach to reading instruction in which children are taught to recognise words from their overall shape and from cues in the context.
Withdrawal	Additional language speakers are given a language proficiency test, and if proficiency is lacking, are placed with learners of the same age, demoted one grade or given extra lessons outside the classroom to catch up.
Word recognition	The process of perceiving written symbols and converting the symbols into a word.
Working memory	The facility in the brain that controls processing and storage of verbally or visually presented information in real time; also called short-term memory.
Zone of proximal development (ZPD)	The distance between what someone is able to do with assistance at their current level and what they can do independently in the future.