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Motivating attitudes and educational language planning in the context of English as an international language

A B S T R A C T In 2002 a Language Survey was conducted at the University of Stellenbosch with a view to, among others, developing a language policy and plan for the University. This article compares students' informal and unsolicited comments on classroom interaction to the results of the Language Survey to show that complexity of learning material, insecurities regarding communication skills and expectations regarding the nature of university studies put instrumental motivation under pressure. It is argued that a more nuanced understanding of instrumental motivation is required when it is used as justification for specific language planning and practices and in contexts where the usefulness of English is regarded as self-evident.

1. Introduction

The issue of individuals' or communities' motivation for language use and language choice has been brought sharply into focus in the light of the multilingual nature of language requirements in the South African Constitution. This policy necessitated language planning in government departments, in the Defence Force, Police Services and other public domains such as broadcasting services and, since December 2002, also in higher education institutions[i].

In most higher education institutions in South Africa English is used exclusively as a language of learning and teaching by speakers of English as an additional language. As is the case in schools, most of these institutions will defend this choice because of the perception that English does not act as a barrier to access and that 'this is what the students want'. The global status of English as the gateway to job markets and international communication is the most obvious reason for students wanting to learn the language. Like schools, higher education institutions interpret such instrumental motivation as justification for using English as the language of learning and teaching. In agreement with Cooper's explanation of post-colonial arguments, (1989:112) institutions will point out that "access to world commerce, science, and technology demands that at least some must learn the imperial languages. An excellent way to impart those languages is to use them as media of instruction".

Like other higher education institutions the University of Stellenbosch conducted a language survey to determine current language attitudes and practices on its campuses (in classrooms, academic departments and the administration) as a precursor to language policy development. In this process awareness of the role of language in education was heightened and it is against this background that the current study was conducted[ii].

In the first section of the article I will report on Stellenbosch University students' attitudes towards English and Afrikaans and to the use of more than one language in the classroom. I will argue that this data can be misleading because formal questionnaires tend to elicit the more cognitive aspect of attitudes. In the second section the more affective component of student attitudes will be discussed by referring to data from student feedback on their modules and lecturers. Finally I will discuss the theoretical framework within which instrumental motivation can be used for language planning and evaluate the degree to which formal questionnaires can provide valid information about instrumental motivation for responsible and responsive language planning in higher education.

The purpose of this article is twofold. Firstly I will indicate how cognitive and affective aspects of attitudes are evident in a comparison of student attitudes towards the use of English and Afrikaans in the Stellenbosch University Language Survey on the one hand and in student feedback on the other. Secondly, and in the light of this comparison, I will argue that the generally accepted conceptualisation of *instrumental motivation* as students' desire to acquire English or Afrikaans for professional purposes[iii] should not automatically be translated into a desire on their part to use English or Afrikaans as a language of learning and teaching. My concern here is that a one-sided view of students' instrumental motivation is used as justification for using a language as a medium of instruction *with the secondary aim of students acquiring such a language for professional purposes*.

My use of the Stellenbosch University data is, therefore, meant to illustrate a more general phenomenon: when students or learners are instrumentally motivated towards a language (usually English) it is generally assumed that that language should be used as the language of learning and teaching. This argument is not only common in South Africa but is used throughout the world to justify the 'simple' and 'economically viable' solution of using English as a language of learning and teaching. A comparison of the two sets of data mentioned above will clearly show that this interpretation of instrumental motivation is too simplistic and that it results from a misapplication of the theory underlying motivational attitudes.

2. The Stellenbosch University Language Survey

Since motivation and attitude questionnaires are a relatively easy and well-developed method of enquiry in Sociolinguistics, the results are often used to make important decisions for language policy purposes. As Baker (1992:5) points out:

Where languages are in danger of decline or extinction, or when cultures and languages are overtly being conserved by, for example, educational policies, changing attitudes is often prominently on the agenda. It is usually accepted that whatever the language policy, planning or provision, the favourability or unfavourability of attitudes in the population fundamentally affects the success or otherwise of language preservation.

In cases where language planning and policy do not take cognizance of the attitudes of the population, they are, at best, simply not implemented and, at worst, the trigger for political unrest[iv]. Ager (2001:5) asserts that "language policy represents the exercise of political power" and it is therefore in the interest of governments (or any governing body, including the management of a university) that their policies be seen as expressing the wishes and aspirations of their constituencies. At the same time it is within the power of such a governing body to present choices in such a light that the constituencies see the advantages, disadvantages and/or consequences of particular choices.

In the South African context, as is the case in most Anglophone, post-colonial countries, it is often not even necessary to present English in a particularly favourable light because its status as a language of world-wide communication and access to the job market is such that its advantages are absolutely self-evident. An instrumental motivation for the use of English is, therefore, hardly ever questioned in language attitude surveys.

In the accepted Sociolinguistic tradition, the Stellenbosch University Language Survey was conducted with a representative sample of students (n = 700) in the first semester of 2002 as a precursor to language policy development[v]. It attempted to gauge language practice, perceived language proficiency and language needs as well as attitudes towards the use of more than one language in the classroom. There was a direct attempt to determine students' and lecturers' attitudes towards English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa and towards bi- and multilingualism in the classroom.

As pointed out by Smit (2000:139) it is impossible to draw "a clear dividing line" between the different aspects of an attitude or to attach weights to the different aspects. Her solution is "to take attitudes as complex constructs, which according to the situation will show more of the one or the other aspect". Baker (1992:12) points out that attitude measurement is usually made in the form of formal statements "reflecting the cognitive component of attitudes ... [t]hese may only reflect surface evaluations". The Language Survey was conducted in a formal setting: in classrooms with the lecturer presiding. These questionnaires probably tapped into the more cognitive aspect of attitudes firstly, because of the formal circumstances and secondly because of the formal register of the questionnaires themselves. In addition to the typical Likert scale statements, the Language Survey Questionnaire addresses students in Afrikaans in the formal 'U' (equivalent to German 'Sie' and French 'Vous') and the English translation reflects this register.

The belief that English is *the* language of access to jobs and therefore to economic security was not questioned but was balanced by including items on the importance of other languages and specifically Afrikaans. The researchers involved in developing the questionnaire contextualised questions about language use and language practice by asking students whether they thought that they were sufficiently exposed to English and Afrikaans to prepare them for their studies and for the world of work[vi]. These questions presume instrumental motivation for improving language proficiency and require that students distinguish firstly among the traditional four language skills in Afrikaans and English by asking them about the extent to which they are exposed to these skills in different class situations (for example lectures, class discussions, tutorials). This presumption is, of course, evidence of the researchers' brief, which was to focus on the use of language in academic settings, which meant that social integration[vii] was not gauged.

The results clearly show students' orientation towards the importance of English in the workplace. Although 69% indicated that high-level language skills in Afrikaans are important for effective studies, 73% thought that such skills are also important in English. However, when the focus is on the language skills required for a future job, there is a significant difference between English and Afrikaans: 91% regard high-level English language skills as important for a future job compared to 57% who think that high-level Afrikaans language skills are important for a future job. This difference can also be seen in the importance that students attach to specific language skills in Afrikaans and English (Final Report 2002:19-20).

Students responded to questions about their exposure to the various language skills in a predictable way. In the evaluation of their exposure to writing skills, 24.3 % of the students indicate that such skills are their biggest problem in Afrikaans as opposed to 32.5% in English. Speaking skills are next on the list of skills that concern students and 17.8% were worried about exposure to Afrikaans speaking skills and 24.4% to English speaking skills (Final Report 2002:19). When the results are broken down to indicate the difference between undergraduate and postgraduate students, and between exposure with a view to effective study on the one hand and effective preparation for a job on the other, postgraduate students are more worried about exposure to speaking and writing in English in preparation for a future job. In general both groups of students are worried about exposure to reading skills in Afrikaans, because of the predominance of English texts. However, there is little difference between exposure for study and professional purposes in Afrikaans, whereas the difference for English is marked.

The fact that postgraduate students are more concerned about English is probably an indication that they are more conscious of the world of work (because postgraduate students in South Africa, specifically master's and doctoral students, are usually employed) or that they are able to give a more mature evaluation of their own language abilities. Whatever the case may be, the results demonstrate students' orientation towards their future careers and the important role that they see for English in that career. These and similar results in educational contexts are usually provided as reasons for using English as a language of teaching and learning. Such results can cause lecturers to adapt their teaching and increase 'exposure' to English (in whatever form).

Since it was very clear from the outset that the University felt a responsibility to maintain the academic use of Afrikaans and develop the scientific use of isiXhosa, the survey determined students' attitudes and opinions about multilingualism in education by, among others, asking the following:

"Multilingualism in education as a point of departure means that Afrikaans as well as English must be used by the lecturer in lectures" (%)

The results were as follows:

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
9	21.5	45.5	21.8

Although responses in the categories *agree* and *agree strongly* are in the majority, the *disagree* and *disagree strongly* responses constitute a third of the total and this result is not negligible.

With regard to the use of African languages in the classroom, the questionnaire asked:

"Multilingualism as a point of departure in education means that students who have an African language (e.g. isiXhosa, isiZulu, Sesotha, Setswana) as their home language should be given the opportunity in group work to discuss the work among themselves in their home language."

The results were as follows:

Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
9.9	16.2	47.9	19.4

When the questionnaire starts probing the experiences of students in class by focusing on the more affective aspect of attitudes, dissatisfaction emerges more strongly. Asked for their reaction to the use of a language other than their home language or preferred language of study, 26.8% indicated that they felt frustrated when their *home language* was not used and 38.2% felt frustrated when their *preferred study language* was not used.

The exact reasons for and nature of this frustration is not evident in the Language Survey and it seemed important to find such information so that the best picture of student attitudes could be obtained. It is important to know what happens in the classroom when the pressure is on to achieve high marks or even just a pass. A more qualitative look at the affective component of student attitudes is required in this case.

3. Qualitative data: Instrumental motivation under pressure

In an effort to find less formal information (and hopefully the more affective component of attitudes) regarding students' classroom experiences of the use of more than one language in the classroom, one has to look for sources that would show student attitudes when they are not on their guard. Such information can be gathered by means of the student feedback system. At the University of Stellenbosch each lecturer is required to conduct student feedback on his/her lectures and on the relevant module once every two years. The questionnaire that is currently used provides space for open-ended comments from students about the modules and the lecturers' teaching. The student comments provide unexpected and useful information for the improvement of teaching practice. Moreover the emotive language use is indicative of the affective side of attitudes. Those few lines at the bottom of the questionnaire have been a valuable source of information for this study since language preferences and language frustrations regarding the mode of tuition and availability of study resources are not covered in the main part of the questionnaire where responses are, once more, restricted to Likert scale ticks and circles[viii].

3.1 Procedure

What follows is a summary of a process of analysis that forms part of a larger research project conducted by Dr Margot Steyn and myself (see Van der Walt and Steyn 2004). The purpose of the analysis was to find the more affective aspect of student attitudes and the focus was on comments that emerged in the first semester of the 2002 cycle of student feedback; the same time at which the Language Survey was conducted. Since the students are completely free to write on whatever issue they feel strongly about, and since the questionnaire itself does not ask anything about language, we wanted to see to what extent the language issue came up in these comments. The analysis was done by means of the programme Atlas.ti[ix] because of its ability

to organise this kind of text in a way that would demonstrate the links among different kinds of comments on language.

A review was done of 470 modules of undergraduate student feedback from the first semester of 2002. Despite the fact that this was a time of extensive and heated debate on the language issue at Stellenbosch University, there were relatively few comments on language (561 across all modules). This can be understood either as an indication that students have relatively few problems with the use of more than one language in the classroom or that the comments must be taken more seriously than their frequency suggests. In support of the first case it is important to mention that language comments seldom appeared in isolation: when they were mentioned, more than one student mentioned the problem. In one case 44 comments (from a possible 181 respondents) appeared. In only one case was there an isolated language comment from a total of 197 respondents. This means that language problems can be linked to a specific classroom situation and can therefore be dealt with in the context of the module. In other words, one could argue that the problems are 'contained' and not general to the student population. In support of the second case (which is that the comments should be taken more seriously than their frequency suggests) the argument could be that since the questionnaire does not elicit any feedback on language use in the classroom, it is an indication of extreme frustration (or happiness!) when students comment on it. These two arguments support one another to some extent, because if more than one student per module commented on language use, it means that the frustration or happiness that they experienced was general and should be taken seriously in the context of the module.

3.2 Results

Broadly speaking there were three categories of comments (see Appendix 1 for a summary). Firstly, requests for lectures and study material in Afrikaans or English, secondly disparaging comments on the lecturers' English or Afrikaans language proficiency and finally statements about their expectations for the University being Afrikaans or bilingual. The majority of responses were requests for lectures, textbooks, transparencies, notes, and web-based materials in English or Afrikaans[x]. Students provided reasons for their requests:

- The perceived difficulty of the subject was a major problem. Comments were usually in the form of "the subject is difficult enough; one cannot struggle with the language as well".
- Students found it difficult to listen to a lecture in one language and read the textbook, lecturer generated notes or transparencies in another language. Feeling or getting confused was the most common comment.
- Students blamed the dominance of one language for their inability to participate in class discussions. They felt uncomfortable posing questions in a language that is not their preferred study language.
- More militant reasons included the conviction that they have a *right* to notes in their preferred study language. Afrikaans students based this claim on the Afrikaans nature of the University or on the fact that they were the majority in the class. English students based their claims on the bilingual nature of the University or the fact that English is a global language or the fact that they were the majority in class. In some cases both groups in the same module claimed to be in the majority!

These reasons provide indications of specific attitudes that put instrumental motivation under

pressure. Despite their avowed positive attitudes towards the use of other languages in the classroom and their conviction that they need exposure to English in particular and Afrikaans to a lesser extent to prepare for the world of work, students often perceive 'language' to be a barrier to successful studying.

4. Implications of a one-sided interpretation of instrumental motivation in language attitude surveys

In section 2 it was argued that formal language surveys do not provide the full picture of instrumental motivation as a motivational attitude. This is probably the problem with most such surveys. One can easily blame the questionnaire but the fact is that the *interpretation* of instrumental motivation is the main problem. If one accepts the limitations of a questionnaire, the language planning process can still be conducted with integrity. However, if this limited view of instrumental motivation is interpreted as justification for the exclusive use of one language of learning and teaching, the resulting language policy may not empower learners to fulfill their expectations as professionals who are proficient in English. In this section I will argue that this one-sided view results from a problematical interpretation of instrumental motivation.

It is generally accepted (Gardner 1985, Ryan, Giles and Sebastian 1982) that an attitude comprises of feelings, convictions and intentions. Language attitudes "require an understanding of knowledge about language, emotion towards it, and the likelihood of a response to an issue" as Ager (2001:15) indicates. However, where the attitudes of larger groups and communities are concerned, specifically when such attitudes need to inform language policy and planning, the issue is complicated by additional motivating factors that would steer language attitudes. Ager (2001:9) distinguishes seven such motivating attitudes: identity, ideology, image creation, insecurity, inequality, integration with a group and instrumental motives for advancement. It is immediately clear that the last two of these motives coincide with motives that drive individual language attitudes, namely integration with a group and instrumental motives for professional and economic advancement.

The degree to which concepts like motivation and attitude coincide or overlap is discussed extensively by Ager (2001) in a recent publication and in a much earlier one by Baker (1992). With regard to language planning and policy Ager (2001:12) sees motivation as an overarching concept that includes three separate components: the abovementioned seven motives, the three components of an attitude and the ultimate goal of a language policy. Baker (1992:3, 12) regards motivation and attitude as alternate terms that indicate both input functions (in the sense that a positive attitude can predispose the outcome of a learning experience) and output functions (in the sense that a learning experience can produce a positive attitude). Ager and Baker's explanations coincide when Baker's view of *attitude as input* is encapsulated in Ager's term motivating attitudes. In language planning *motivating* attitudes *motivate* or *provide specific input for* the learner to make certain language choices and to expect certain language practices.

In attitude surveys the wish for academic success is often interpreted as a positive (instrumental) attitude (*attitude as input*) towards a specific language. *Wishing* for academic success in a specific language is then regarded as an instrumental attitude which is usually measured by means of Likert style statements where the learner is supposed to envision her/himself as

successful in future by means of a particular language. Typical statements to which learners have to agree or disagree are *English will be necessary in a future profession* or *English will be necessary for successful studies*. *Attitude as output* can be seen in statements like those made by Ellis (1991:118) who claims that "motivation derived from a sense of academic or communicative success is more likely to motivate one to speak a foreign/ second language". This kind of success *results* from the learning process (as output) and may act as a *further* motivating force.

When one ignores Baker's input – output distinction, it becomes possible to argue that learners' vision of their successful selves (for example, as a successful English professional) is a motivating attitude (attitude as *input*) that justifies teaching through the medium of English. In terms of Ager's three-point construction of motivation (2003:12, see above) such an argument confuses the motives informing the policy with the goals of the policy. The course of policy-making action that follows on this theoretical misinterpretation may lead lecturers and students to the mistaken assumption that studying through the medium of English is the only route to becoming a successful graduate who can function in English. In fact, such policies promise more than they can deliver. Although it is true that the wish for success would predispose one positively towards tackling a specific subject or task (*attitude as input*), policy makers (specifically in education) have the responsibility to create a policy framework that is built on a base that constitutes more substantial input than a wish. Such a framework should create conditions where students have the best chance of graduating in the shortest possible time *as well as* attain proficiency in using English in professional settings.

As the student feedback comments in section 3 show, all the high ideals of being proficient in English and accommodating other languages in the classroom (as expressed in the Language Survey) disappear under the pressure of dealing with difficult subject content. If policy makers do not take this into consideration, a simplified interpretation of instrumental motivation becomes a self fulfilling prophecy in language policy and planning: learners are polled to determine their obviously positive attitudes towards English. A few years later the successful ones are polled again to determine the success of the policy. The unsuccessful ones have dropped out and since the successful ones remain; their positive attitudes towards the direction taken by the policy are regarded as justification for its continued use.

5. Conclusion

The abovementioned complaints by students about language problems in class are probably not unique to the University of Stellenbosch and they provide institution-wide evidence of the problems that most lecturers experience in their individual classes. The University of Stellenbosch Language Survey went some way towards eliciting more nuanced responses from students regarding their experiences of language use in the classroom and this information will have to be supplemented with qualitative data as the language policy is phased in in 2004. At the moment the language policy "is committed to the use and sustained development of Afrikaans as an academic language in a multilingual context" (Stellenbosch University Language Policy 2002:1) but, like all former Afrikaans universities, there is pressure to opt for English only. In the context of English as an international language the implementation of language policies in higher education will have to go further than fulfilling the students' most obvious expectations by

building in regular reality checks to gauge the consequences of specific language choices and raise awareness of the practical problems that students experience.

This article attempted to show how instrumental motivation to learn English with a view to obtaining a job is put under pressure in classroom practice and argues that language planning efforts cannot ignore Baker's *input-output* distinction with regard to motivational attitudes. The problem described in section 3 above was that students felt their academic success was being prevented by the very language to which they wanted more exposure and which they regarded as instrumental in obtaining a job (mainly English but in the case of English-speaking students, also Afrikaans). It is also clear from the data above that, although students are absolutely convinced of the importance of English for their studies and their future careers, to the point that they can describe their need for exposure to each of the four language skills, the qualitative data show the daily frustrations that students experience and the extent of their problems in class. This information is extremely valuable in the context of language policy implementation, academic support and academic staff development.

It is important that the circumstances in which information about language preference and language use is gathered be scrutinized to ensure that the environment is conducive to reliable self-reporting. The questionnaire or elicitation technique itself must be sensitive to, for example, connotations of terms such as *home language* (which may echo the idea of Bantu education for black students) and should be aware of the context in which it is conducted – especially as far as the status of English and the maturity of students are concerned. For example, Yang and Lau (2003:116) report that their respondents who were about to graduate from university thought about language skills in a more nuanced fashion than secondary school and first-year students: "Although students still thought that English would be useful in the next 10 years, they now probably understood that the language skill itself was not enough in order to excel in society". From the teaching perspective, Flowerdew et al. (1998) report that lecturers at a Hong Kong university use Cantonese instead of English (their language policy requires the use of English only): "Lecturers believed that it was more important to deliver knowledge and content matter than to use English in class" (Yang and Lau 2003:109). In the minds of these students and their lecturers there is a difference between being successful and using English on the one hand, and becoming successful *by means* of English (by using it as a language of learning) on the other.

Young people who are planning a future and working towards that future at university live in a world where the status of English and its usefulness as a door to employment and worldwide communication is unquestioned. A questionnaire that merely confirms this does not provide useful information by means of which empowering educational practices can be planned and implemented. Responses to statements that elicit instrumental motivation in particular need careful examination. In light of the students' classroom frustrations with a language that is not their home language or preferred study language it is necessary to disturb the self evidence of the link between being motivated to get a job by means of English (or Afrikaans) and studying in that language[xi]. These two issues must be disconnected in language attitude surveys by, for example, making students report realistically on their personal chances of successfully completing their studies through a language over which they have only the bare minimum of control (which may be English *and* their home language) and, in addition, by using more qualitative methods

to determine the affective aspects of motivational attitudes. Although it is important to take cognizance of students' language attitudes so that a policy has the best chance of success, language planners must make sure that they tapped into all aspects of these attitudes and that their interpretation takes into account Ager's distinction between the motives for a policy and the goals of a policy, as well as Baker's input-output distinction (see above).

The responsibility of higher education institutions to develop the other official languages of South Africa in the higher education domain has been spelt out by the Language Policy for Higher Education (2002). However, for many institutions it is easier to simply see the problems that students have when they study through a language that is not their home language – a language that is often fragmented and underdeveloped – as English second language problems. Nicholas (1994:25) provides evidence of the same problem in Britain and notes how language diversity surveys are often conceived of and interpreted "as measures of the need in schools for English as a second language teaching and support". The cost of supporting or maintaining students' home languages is always regarded as an expensive enterprise without taking into account the cost of additional academic support in English, not to mention the cost of students' having to repeat courses or dropping out.

There is increasing pressure on and in education institutions (from GET to HET phases) to move to instruction in English only and attempts to develop African languages as academic languages beyond the GET phase have been ridiculed (see for example Foley 2004). At least from the students' perspective it is clear from the data that we cannot draw glib conclusions on the basis of their responses to formal questionnaires. Their preference for English to be successful in the world of work is a powerful force, but it does not mean that second language users of English do not need support in their home languages. When they deal with material that they perceive to be complex, they may prefer the home language because their working memory capacity is bigger which increases processing speed and efficiency. The possibility of developing academic biliteracy has been argued elsewhere (Van der Walt 2004) but it is important to repeat that a language policy should do more than merely confirm students' expectations. It should also serve their needs by prescribing strategies that would exploit existing (home language) knowledge to enhance learning and improve throughput.

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i In December 2002 the Ministry of Education published a policy for language use in higher education. The multilingual nature of South African campuses is acknowledged by the *Language Policy for Higher Education* (Ministry of Education 2002:3), which requires of all higher education institutions to advance the official South African languages, in accordance with the Constitution.

ii The researchers involved were appointed by the Vice Chancellor and the team as a whole took responsibility for the design of the questionnaire. The results of the survey were then handed over to the Vice Chancellor. I hereby acknowledge with gratitude his permission to use the data. I also acknowledge the members of the task team who developed and administered the questionnaire and who processed the results: Dr Ludolph Botha, Ms Collena Blanckenberg, Prof Leon de Stadler, Prof Michiel Heyns, Ms Mari Joubert, Mr Robert Kotze, Prof Max Loubser, Ms Yvonne Malan, Dr Gert Steyn, Dr C van der Walt and Prof Marianna Visser. The views expressed here on the process and the questionnaire remain my own.

iii. According to the Longman *Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, language learners' orientation "towards more practical concerns such as getting a job or passing an examination" (Richards and Schmidt 2002:343).

iv. See Oyetade (2003) for a discussion of both situations in Nigeria.

v. The full report with details of the methods and data analyses used are available in the *Final Report* (2002).

vi. Although the University is predominantly Afrikaans, most lecturers are well aware of the fact that their classes will include English-speaking students and will therefore translate or code switch in the classroom. Where classes are big enough, they are divided into English and Afrikaans groups and taught accordingly. Almost all textbooks are in English and assignments, test and examination papers are provided in English and Afrikaans. Students submit their work in their preferred study language.

vii. Social integration refers to the traditional distinction in Sociolinguistics between instrumental and integrative motivation for language use as identified by Gardner (1985).

viii. I would like to thank Dr Margot Steyn of the Centre for Learning and Teaching for making the information available. The DVC Teaching Prof R Botman and the chair of the Academic Interest Council (a student body), Mr J Piek gave permission for this confidential material to be analysed and published.

ix. Atlas.ti is a computer programme that has been developed to code and categorise "*large bodies of textual, graphical, audio and video data*" (according to www.atlasti.de; see the website for a full description).

x. The frequency of these comments does not give a nuanced indication of students' concerns in the context of the feedback as a whole. A more detailed account of the context is included in the abovementioned paper by Van der Walt and Steyn (2004).

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Appendix 1

Family	Number of codes (48 Codes for Afrikaans feedback; 54 Codes for English feedback)	Feedback in Afrikaans	Feedback in English	Brief summary of the effects on students
Code switching	10 separate codes dealing with code switching	35	11	Textbooks are in English. This being so, some Afrikaans students preferred to attend English lectures as they found code switching between the textbook and Afrikaans lectures and exams a problem. Students felt inhibited to participate in class discussions if lectures were conducted in the other language (not mother tongue). Lecturers had a similar problem as they explained difficult topics not as well in their second or third language.
Exams and test papers	5 separate codes	6	2	Some students lacked the correct Afrikaans terminology needed in examinations and tests since lectures were presented in English
Perceived difficulty of module	14	72	64	Many modules were difficult and the situation was aggravated when lectures and study material were not conducted and presented via the mother tongue. When lecturers did not speak in mother tongue the situation often became worse as lecturers did not explain as well as in first language.
Lecturers and tutors	25	82	65	Some Afrikaans students objected to English lecturers that were not proficient in Afrikaans, whereas English students, on the other hand, claimed that they were not accommodated by lecturers in terms of their language needs (e.g. lecturers speaking too fast in Afrikaans, terms not translated into English).
Lectures	15	59	98	From both language groups there was a demand for lectures to be presented in their (students') home language
Perceptions of self	12	45	74	Students preface complaints by stating that they are Afrikaans or English and this is given as a reason why they find it difficult to follow lectures in the other language. Many English speaking students claimed that they are English and therefore have a problem with Afrikaans, whereas only one Afrikaans student offered being Afrikaans as a reason for experiencing problems understanding English lectures.
Puristic views about language	16	91	52	Generally students claimed that lecturers not speaking in their mother tongue spoke poor English and could not explain difficult concepts in the other language.
Requests about structure of course	4	6	15	Some students demanded parallel lecture sessions in the two languages.
Study material	30	157	134	The most frequent objection was from Afrikaans students who claimed that Afrikaans textbooks were not available and that they were therefore in a disadvantaged position. English students, on the contrary, demanded English class notes that were also not always available.
University identity	5	19	5	Afrikaans students claimed that traditionally this has been an Afrikaans university and objected against English lectures and lecturers not being proficient in Afrikaans