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Every teacher a language teacher? Developing awareness of multingualism in teacher education

A B S T R A C T Given the multilingual nature of South African communities, schools are usually linguistically diverse. These contexts create a challenging environment for teaching effectiveness given the fact that learners are required to use high status languages for academic purposes. It is therefore important that teacher education programmes recognise and respond effectively to this challenge. We argue that the demand for every teacher to be a language teacher is a useful way of framing how we view teaching in multilingual environments. We report on a course called Multilingual Education, a module on a Post-graduate Certificate in Education at Stellenbosch University. In the article the focus is on materials design as one important aspect of bilingual practice as well as evidence of increased language awareness. We discuss student perceptions of the course in the form of qualitative data collected by the lecturers responsible for the module and quantitative data in the shape of formal student feedback collected by the university. We conclude by highlighting the value of such courses as well as the awareness of multilingualism that it raised with students who were preparing to teach in these linguistically diverse contexts.

Keywords: Bi/Multilingualism, teacher education, bi/multilingual language awareness, bi/multilingual materials design

1. Introduction

South Africa is a linguistically complex and diverse country. It has eleven official languages of which two (English and Afrikaans) currently enjoy high status especially as Languages of

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Learning and Teaching (LoLT). The notion that every teacher is a language teacher has its roots in the early seventies, but gained particular attention as a result of the Bullock Report (1975); a report compiled by a government committee set up to review the status of English language teaching in the United Kingdom. One of the most important recommendations of this report was that "[e]ach school should have an organised policy for language across the curriculum, establishing every teacher's involvement in language and reading development throughout the years of schooling" (Bullock Report, 1975: 514). This in essence placed the responsibility for developing language skills with every teacher and also made sure that content teachers focussed on how language made content accessible in their classrooms. The purpose was to ensure that learners left school with employable skills like writing letters, and reading and responding to communications in appropriate ways. As a result of this effort, it was foreseen that the level of English would improve.

In the United States the notion of content-based instruction has become an "umbrella term" (Met, 2001:1) that is used to describe the integration of content and language programmes. These programmes according to Met (2001:2) differed in that some were content-driven and others language-driven. Compared to the monolingual context in the United Kingdom, content-based instruction had second and foreign language students as their target audience. Thus, given the particular focus – content or language – the purpose would shift on a continuum from improving curricular outcomes in the content subject to developing language ability in the second or foreign language.

Even before the advent of content-based instruction, bilingual education programmes have also been used to impact on the development of second language ability as well as academic outcomes for minority learners. These often range from submersion (where the learners are expected to function in the target language English without additional or differentiated support) to structured immersion where the first language is used to support learning of the second language. Thomas and Collier (1997) conclude that two-way bilingual or Dual Language programmes are most effective in the early years. However, the effect is only noticeable after the sixth grade (Hakuta and Gould 1987). It needs to be noted that educators with good bilingual proficiency are an important success variable in these types of programmes.

In Europe the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) movement views CLIL as "the teaching of a subject (curricular content) through the medium of a foreign language with a two-fold objective: the learning of content with the simultaneous learning of a foreign language (Marsh, 1999:27). One of the characteristics of a successful CLIL programme is the bi-/ multilingual ability of the teacher. Another ideal factor is where the teacher is skilled in languages as well as the particular content area. This allows for fluent movement between making content comprehensible and providing the necessary language support for learning.

While all of the above contexts are different linguistically, politically and culturally they do give some insight into the necessity for every teacher to play the role of a language teacher. In South Africa – a post-colonial society – language(s) bring much complexity to issues of teaching, learning and the achievement of effective educational outcomes for all. It is a feature of colonial societies that the language of the motherland very often becomes the official language. For example, when the Dutch ruled the Cape, Dutch became the official language and then

subsequently when the British took over, English became the official language. This language receives preferential treatment in terms of status resourcing and development, very often at the expense of other local languages. South Africa has eleven official languages yet, currently only two can function effectively as media of instruction, namely English and Afrikaans. Given that the majority of South Africans have another language as a mother-tongue this invariably means that a large section of the population is expected to learn through the medium of a second, or given the level of exposure, a foreign language. It is this complex situation that led to the development of the multilingual education module we present here, and the belief that all teachers should be prepared to teach within this context.

In the following section we examine in more detail the impact of language policies – the Language in Education Policy of 1997 and the Western Cape Education Department Language Policy – and how these impact on teaching. We discuss our module, Multilingual Education as a response to the implication of preparing teachers for a multilingual teaching context. We report on the students' responses to, and growing awareness of multilingual teaching, and conclude by emphasising the importance of rethinking and re-evaluating how we prepare teachers for teaching in linguistically complex environments.

2. Policy demands and classroom complexities

It is a well-known fact that the right of children to receive education in their home language is enshrined in the Constitution and qualified by the Language in Education Policy of 1997, which limits the right to situations where mother tongue education is reasonably practicable. In principle learners should receive at least the first three years of education in their home language before switching to English (and in a few cases to Afrikaans) as language of learning and teaching (LoLT). However, many parents resist this policy either because of the apartheid legacy whereby home language use is equated to Bantu education or is seen as a way to prevent learners from having access to and developing proficiency in English. Schools using the home language of a particular area in Grades 1-3 may be shunned by parents in favour of English or Afrikaans-medium schools that are perceived to offer better education or a better chance at performing well, particularly in the Senior Certificate examinations.

'Mother tongue' and 'home language' are terms that hide complex realities in multilingual communities. In the South African context, with its apartheid past, this reality necessarily includes language policy decisions that are closely aligned to our history. Slabbert and Finlayson (2000: 133) point out that the Constitution, by the legacy of Apartheid, endorses nine African language categories, implying "that black South Africans operate in nine separate African language groups". Regional dialectal variation is common (Finlayson and Slabbert 1997) and the use of urban varieties, sometimes referred to as 'street language', often appears in classroom code switching practices in schools (see Van der Walt, Mabule and De Beer 1997).

The use of the so-called mother tongue in education often presumes standardised forms of the mother tongue which may not be familiar to all children. This phenomenon is not, however, necessarily linked to the degree of standardisation of languages: it is an educational issue for the German child whose mother tongue is Kölsch and who has to use 'high German' in the school just like it is for the South African child who speaks Cape Flats Afrikaans and/or English

and who has to use standard Afrikaans and English in the school. The school contexts that are familiar to the students involved in the Multilingual Education module can be described as bilingual but a better description would be 'multi-dialectal'. The same can be said of some of the students who follow the module. Although most of them would refer to themselves as Afrikaans-English 'bilingual' it appeared from classroom discussions that some are multi-dialectal and others are multilingual (in that they use a third language like isiXhosa or German). These linguistic borders are contentious, as Makoni & Pennycook (2007) argue, and for that reason it was decided to call the module 'Multilingual Education' and to refer to our predominantly Western Cape students as 'bi/multilingual'.

Despite Desai's claim (2003:144) that only 28% of South African schools are multilingual, the existence of different language varieties creates a much more complex picture. In short, isiXhosa in rural Eastern Cape is not the same isiXhosa used in Khayelitsha, and the Afrikaans used in Eikestad Laerskool in Stellenbosch is not the same as the Afrikaans spoken by learners in Delft Primary/ Laerskool on the Cape flats. When such variation is linked to socio-economic divisions in society, language management models that presume a simple one to one relationship between 'mother tongue' and 'LoLT' simply do not offer sufficiently sophisticated procedures to deal with education in increasingly diverse and diversifying communities. In the case of children using varieties of a standard language the challenge may be to develop school literacy in the standardised form of a particular home language, only to switch to another LoLT after a mere three years of schooling in the 'mother tongue'.

As argued by Banda (2009), in bi/multilingual communities a switch from one LoLT to another is just another form of monolingual education and this practice relegates the home language to the position of being merely a 'bridge' to high status language varieties. In the Western Cape a policy of mother tongue-based bilingual education (WCED 2002) foresees an extension of the initial three-year period of mother tongue instruction to seven years, with the gradual phasing in of English or Afrikaans. The policy can be seen as a maintenance model of bilingual education. The Ministry of Basic Education has recently made pronouncements about extending the period of mother tongue instruction in the rest of the country while introducing English in the school curriculum as from Grade 1. However, in view of the status of English this policy will probably not change the perception that it is the language of education and opportunity, even though the intention is to strengthen English language development by maintaining the home language of learners.

As is clear from the arguments above, the notion that learners need to be moved from one language to another is problematic, since many learners are bi/multilingual or bi-dialectal when they enter school (see e.g. McCormick 2002 and Plüddeman et al. 2004 on the situation in Cape Town and the Cape Flats). In a project to develop literacy in Spanish-English bilinguals, Escamilla (2010) argues that the purpose should be to develop biliteracy. Building on a body of research that sees the mother tongue simply as a temporary basis for the development of literacy, she points to existing research that found "while first language literacy was highly correlated to second language literacy, attending only to language of instruction was insufficient to ensure high levels of literacy achievement in a second language" (Escamilla 2010:21).

It seems, therefore, that teachers are confronted with bi/multilingual classrooms for which they are ill-prepared. Their training should avoid the perception that proficiency in a LoLT is

enough to ensure effective learning and aspects of critical language awareness and bilingual teaching strategies need to be included to ensure effective teaching.

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3.1 Rationale

The multilingual nature of school classrooms was the main motivation for the inclusion of a Multilingual Education module in the Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) at Stellenbosch University. The certificate is aimed at preparing students for the Senior Phase of the GET band and for grades 10 to 12 of the FET band.

Currently the structure of the programme requires that students follow two modules, called language endorsement modules, in the languages of learning and teaching that are officially used in the Western Cape at Senior Phase and FET level: Afrikaans and English. These language endorsement modules are not popular in the PGCE programme. They are taught by English and Afrikaans lecturers and their aim is to develop the ability to teach e.g. Mathematics and Geography through the medium of English and/or Afrikaans. What this means is that the PGCE students are supposed to develop proficiency in the language of Mathematics or Science or History. In language teaching terms these are specific purposes courses and they exhibit the same weaknesses that such courses have, which is, "a tendency to work for rather than *with* subject specialists" (Hyland and Hamp-Lyons 2002:3). In addition to this general problem, the majority of the students in the programme are Stellenbosch University students who, to some extent, developed academic biliteracy in Afrikaans and English because of the teaching model in their undergraduate studies. The language endorsement modules start with a diagnostic and placement test at the beginning of the year to determine the kind of support for different levels of language proficiency. Students have often expressed their conviction that the skills and competencies developed in the course, such as setting test questions and developing lessons, should be integrated with their subject-specific curriculum studies modules. Since they have to complete a specified number of credit-bearing courses, an alternative language education module that addresses the demands of multilingual schools seemed like a viable alternative module for students who do well on the initial placement tests and are deemed to be active bilinguals.

A decision was taken therefore to give students who achieve above 65% in both English and Afrikaans placements test at the beginning of the year the option to de-register from the Afrikaans and English modules and register for the Multilingual Education module. Since the module was introduced in 2009, the number of students who qualified have hovered around 20 each year from the total number of between 130 to 150 PGCE students, with two to four students deciding not to deregister from the Afrikaans and English modules. The reason that they provide is that they are anxious to improve their language proficiency. Since students have a choice whether they want to enrol for the module they feel entitled to ask questions about what they are letting themselves in for. Students seem incredulous about the possibility of multilingual education and the "but how does it work?" question is asked most commonly. However, this curiosity acts as good motivation to switch to the module.

3.2 Structure of the module

Various sub-disciplines from Applied Linguistics are integrated in the module: (a) psycholinguistic perspectives on language acquisition, (b) sociolinguistic aspects in terms of language policy and language variation across speech communities as well as (c) educational perspectives on language curriculum development and classroom practices. Students who also enrol for language teaching modules, e.g. English/Afrikaans or isiXhosa Curriculum Studies, experience some content overlap but this is consciously kept to a minimum. More overlap is experienced by students who completed modules in Linguistics at undergraduate level (of whom there were two in three years) but they seem to enjoy taking the lead in classroom discussions.

The themes that are covered in the module have varied little since 2009 and they include:

- Misconceptions about language and multilingualism in education
- How does one become multilingual?
- Key issues in bi/multilingual education: Content and Language-Integrated Learning (CLIL)
- Bilingual models and frameworks
- SA context: policy and practice
- Bilingualism in the curriculum
- Language support flowing from policy
- Minority languages/ varieties
- Classroom practices: code switching and translation

Raising awareness of the bi/multilingual nature of Western Cape classrooms is the primary aim since materials development and instructional design will depend to a large extent on language arrangements and practices in individual schools. Since students complete the bulk of the module before they do their practical training in the schools, their design of materials (in the form of PowerPoint presentations, posters and exercises) is necessarily speculative. However, the degree to which awareness has been raised is demonstrated in the development and design of classroom materials. This aspect will be discussed next.

4. Designing materials for putative learners

For teachers in bi/multilingual settings the practice of allowing learners to use their home or community languages when discussing academic work may be common practice and unproblematic. Setati et al. (2002:136) point out the necessity for this practice as a necessary step towards control over the LoLT:

> Teachers also need to enable exploratory talk, which invariably needs to take place in learners' main language(s), or in a combination of those languages and the LoLT, constituted by code-switching. At the same time they are to provide learners with access to subject-specific discourses. In particular, they need to assist learners to develop formal spoken and written mathematics, science and language competence in English.

Setati et al. (2002:139) also found in their study, "the journey that needed to be navigated from learners' informal, exploratory talk in their main language to formal, discourse-specific talk and formal written work in English appeared to be incomplete". The focus on English in the

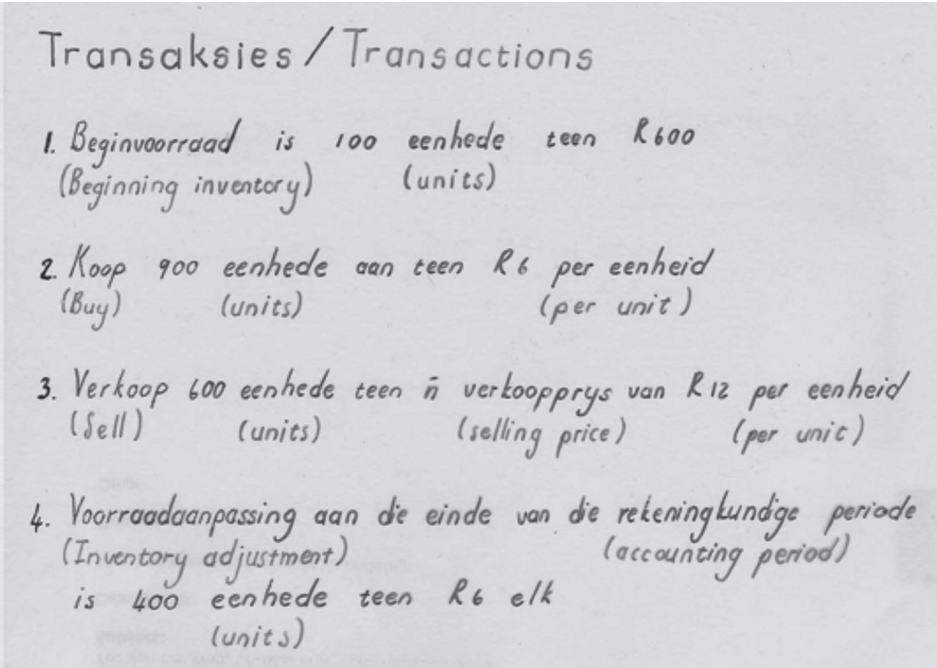
particular classrooms that these authors investigated is realistic but one can also argue – and this is the point of view taken in our Multilingual Education module – that strengthening the academic use of both (or more) languages is required to move from exploratory to discourse-specific talk and writing. The 'incomplete journeys' that Setati et al. describe may result from their requirement that learners limit their academic expression to one language. We drew on Hornberger's justification for the development of academic biliteracy as a way to pay "attention to the diversity of standard and nonstandard language varieties, orthographies, and communicative modes and the range of contextualised, vernacular, minority knowledge resources that learners bring to the classroom" (Hornberger 2009:187), thereby constructing language as a resource rather than a problem.

What this means in practical terms is that student teachers need to think about ways of using both languages in teaching and texts, so that the presentation of languages orientates learners towards a predictable pattern of use in the classroom, for example by associating a particular colour, typeface or position with a particular language. The fact that the majority of the students experienced some kind of bilingual education in their undergraduate years at Stellenbosch University means that they have some experience of bilingual materials and lecturing. The challenge is to link their experiences to recently acquired knowledge about the curriculum for their chosen school subjects. The types of material (for example, PowerPoint presentations, informational posters) are less important than students' justification of their code switching and translation strategies. The separation of languages in terms of spacing, use of different fonts or colours and the regularity of switching from one language to another may not be typical of multilinguals' language use but such strategies are regarded as important to consolidate knowledge of terminology and subject-specific language use.

In addition to co-languaging strategies (Garcia, 2009) like presenting languages in separate columns on a PowerPoint slide or putting one language in a particular colour above the translated text in another colour, students came up with strategies that clearly emerged from their own experiences with bilingual lectures. However, as evidence that they are aware of the challenges in their own subjects and the classrooms that they envisage for themselves, student teachers also surprised us with their insight into language structure and use. For example, an Accounting student justified presenting translated terms only rather than full sentences (on an OHP transparency) because of the similarity between Afrikaans and English (Figure 1).

Another student argued in her Life Orientation poster about the dangers of Methamphetamine (known as 'tik') that she needed to include the terms that are used in a specific version of Cape Flats Afrikaans, since the Afrikaans and English terms are not commonly used (Figure 2, indicated by the phrases in inverted commas).

Not all students were willing to include more than one language in their materials and indicated that they will make the terms in the other language available in a monolingual handout but that the languages should be kept separate. This was also the argument against teacher code switching and is fairly typical of attitudes against code switching in general. These attitudes also emerged in students' feedback on the module, an aspect that will be discussed next.



Transaksies / Transactions

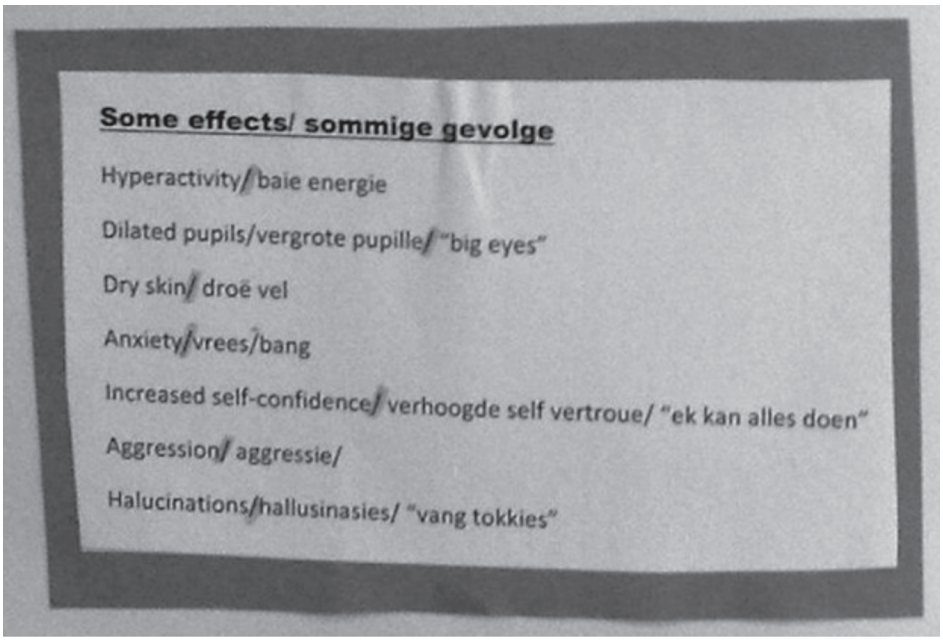
1. Beginvoorraad is 100 eenhede teen R600
(Beginning inventory) (units)

2. Koop 900 eenhede aan teen R6 per eenheid
(Buy) (units) (per unit)

3. Verkoop 600 eenhede teen ñ verkoopprys van R12 per eenheid
(Sell) (units) (selling price) (per unit)

4. Voorraadaanpassing aan die einde van die rekeningkundige periode
(Inventory adjustment) (accounting period)
is 400 eenhede teen R6 elk
(units)

Figure 1: Example of bilingual Accounting material



Some effects/ sommige gevolge

Hyperactivity/ baie energie

Dilated pupils/vergrote pupille/ "big eyes"

Dry skin/ droë vel

Anxiety/vrees/bang

Increased self-confidence/ verhoogde self vertroue/ "ek kan alles doen"

Aggression/ aggressie/

Halucinations/hallusinasies/ "vang tokkies"

Figure 2: Extract from poster about the dangers of 'tik'.

5. Student responses to the module

5.1 Qualitative feedback

In this section we report on student's responses – elicited by us – on their experiences of multilingualism (or multi-dialecticism) and the usefulness of the module in preparing them for this context. We situate the student responses in the literature on teacher education, particularly what Freeman (1991) refers to as "teacher learning". We focus here on how this developing professional discourse (or the articulation of the experience of multilingualism) presents conceptions and awareness of multilingualism, and student's attitudes towards such conceptions. The responses are quoted verbatim with English translations provided in square brackets where necessary.

In the first set of responses students show how their own bilingual status becomes the frame of reference for how they view the phenomenon in practice. The students express this as:

a. I have always been multilingual from a very young age. I did not experience it as a challenge but it was necessary to be bilingual in the school where I did my practice teaching. (Respondent 1)
b. Die grootste invloed was hoe bewus ek geraak het van my eie tweetaligheid en hoe dit gevorm het oor die jare. [*The biggest influence was how I became multilingual and how this developed over the years.*] (Respondent 4)

Mainstream and stereotypical perceptions of keeping languages pure or avoiding code mixing also surface. One student notes that the teacher's language use and code-switching in the subject Afrikaans was particularly disappointing:

c. *Ek het die indruk gekry dat sommige van die onderwysers nie oor veel beter taalvaardighede beskik as die leerders wat hulle onderrig nie. Die voorkoms hiervan in Afrikaans het my veral negatief beïndruk. Myns insiens kan geen leerkrag bekostig om swak taal te gebruik, insl. taalvermenging, in 'n vak wat spesifiek gemik is op die aanleer en aanbied van sekere tegniese taalaspekte nie. Is dit 'n uitdaging om altyd suiwer Afrikaans te praat? Ja, maar dit is nie 'n verskoning om swak Afrikaans te gebruik nie.* (Respondent 2)

   [I gained the impression that some of the teacher's language skills were not much better than those of the learners that they were teaching. The manifestation thereof in especially Afrikaans created a strongly negative impression with me. My view is that teachers cannot afford to use language poorly including language mixing (code-mixing) in a subject which specifically aims at the learning and presentation of technical aspects of the language. Is it a challenge to always speak pure Afrikaans? Yes, [maybe] but it is no excuse use Afrikaans as poorly as poorly as the teacher did.] (Respondent 2)

The student uses her/his own status as a successful bilingual to critique the teacher's use of language in the classroom. This comment is consistent with the notion of apprenticeship of observation, where the student may not be aware of the decisions or 'behind-the-scenes-thinking' that will have influenced the teacher's behaviour. Respondent 2 is the student

who consistently used only one language in teaching materials (referred to in section 4), maintaining a strict separation between languages. However, the comment also emphasises how aware students are of the value of being very proficient in more than one language to be able to teach effectively in these contexts.

For another respondent her own bilingual status, as well as mainstream criticism of code switching behaviour, creates the expectation that learners should act this way too. In the quotation below the (code switched) English words are underlined:

> En sy antwoord was: *'I like skool. My onderwyser is very nice' (Dit is hoe die leerling dit gespel het) Ek was nogal geskok want dit was 'n graad 10 klas.* (Respondent 4)
>
> [And his answer was: I like school. My teacher is very nice. (That is how the student spelled it) I was rather shocked, because it was a grade 10 class." (Respondent 4)

The student below shows awareness that there are many dialects present in the school community that s/he visited and that s/he found making sense of these very challenging despite her/his own successful bilingual status:

> *Ek moet sê dat ek meer-dialektisiteit soms as uitdagend ervaar het. Ek het soms nie verstaan wat die leerders vir my sê nie! (Haha) Of hulle spreek woorde anders as ek uit en het dit vreeslik snaaks gevind as ek dit nie soos hulle kan sê nie.* (Respondent 3)
>
> [I must say that I sometimes found multidialecticism challenging. At times I did not understand what the students were saying to me! (Laugh Out Loud) Or they would pronounce words differently and found it extremely funny when I could not say it like them.] (Respondent 3)

Thus, for these respondents the aspects of bilingualism and awareness thereof feature very strongly in their feedback. Embedded in the responses is a clear awareness of their own bilingual status. This is important since their experiences as language learners, served as their "apprenticeship of observation" (following Lortie 1975). An apprenticeship of observation in this context refers to the "phenomenon whereby student teachers arrive for their training courses having spent thousands of hours as schoolchildren [and students in a multilingual education module] observing and evaluating professionals in action" (Borg, 2004). It is this apprenticeship that Lortie (1975) argues leads to the conceptions pre-service teachers hold about teaching. These conceptions do not take into account all the unseen decisions, reflection, planning etc. that teachers are required to make. Moreover, despite the positive message in the Multilingual Education module on a responsible use of code switching and the myth of language purity, many hours of observing teachers' warnings not to 'mix your languages' and to 'stick to one language' will weigh more heavily than 20 hours of university learning and teaching.

Student responses about the usefulness of the module in practice showed a strongly positive response. Responses (d) and (e) show a more general appreciation:

> d. The module definitely helped and I am glad that I took it this year. (Respondent 1)
>
> e. Alhoewel ek die module geniet het, het dit nie 'n deurslaggewende invloed uitgeoefen op my benadering tot klasgee nie. Tog is dit ook waar dat ek deurlopend die verskynsel van meertaligheid in gedagte gehou het.

[*Even though I enjoyed the module it did not have a telling influence on my approach to teaching. But it is true that I always keep in mind the fact that I teach in a multilingual environment.*] (Respondent 2)

Responses (f) and (g) provide the type of feedback that shows how students became aware of multilingualism in the various schools where they did their practical training. In (f) the demands of the subject Life Orientation required application of strategies discussed in the modules. In the school where the student was placed, learners could do their subjects in either Afrikaans or English which means that teachers could, in principle, teach monolingually. However, in economically tough times schools need to rely on bilingual teachers for certain subjects, in this case Life Orientation, which is compulsory for all learners. This student, moreover, also sees the need to code switch when teaching language classes, which means that s/he did not buy into the dominant discourse in language teaching, where using a language other than the target language is often regarded with deep suspicion (see, for example, Auerbach 1993):

f. Dit het definitief 'n positiewe invloed op my voorbereiding gehad vir lewensoriëntering omdat ek dit in albei Engels en Afrikaans moes aanbied – dus het ek alreeds vroeg in 'n meertalige mindset gekom om dit te kon toepas in die klas. By die taal klasse het ek gevind dat dit belangrik was om soms van kodewisseling te gebruik veral vir die addisionele taal sprekers.

[*It definitely had a positive influence on my preparation for Life Orientation because I had to present it in English and Afrikaans – so I put myself in a multilingual mindset to be able to apply it in class. In language classes I found that it was important to code switch occasionally, particularly for the additional language speakers.*] (Respondent 3)

The most direct indication of awareness of multilingualism is expressed by Respondent 4, who credits her growing awareness to the module, which also made her reflect on her own multilingualism (quoted above too):

g. Ja ek het meer aandag gegee aan die woorde wat ek gebruik het. Ja ek het meer bewus geraak van meertalige leerders en klaskamers. Die grootste invloed was hoe bewus ek geraak het van my eie tweetaligheid en hoe dit gevorm het oor die jare.

[*Yes I paid more attention to the words that I used. Yes I became more aware of multilingual learners and classrooms. The biggest influence was how I became multilingual and how this developed over the years.*] (Respondent 4)

5.2 Quantitative responses

The positive experiences that students had in the module are confirmed in the formal student feedback that was collated by the university in 2010. These responses do not, therefore, reflect feedback across the three years in which the module was offered. The questions are developed by and analysed by an independent person. We report here on some of the more relevant aspects for this paper namely reasons for doing the module, interest in the module and the open-ended qualitative section of the student feedback questionnaire. The group in 2010 comprised 12 students of whom 11 completed the formal feedback which represents a ninety-two percent return.

5.2.1 Reasons for doing the module

Table 1 below shows students' motivation for doing the module:

Table 1: Motivation for doing the module in 2010

	Personal Interest	To pass	Application skills	Industry needs
Which aspect was the most important to you?	2	1	3	5
	18,2%	9.1%	27,3%	45,5%

Most students indicated that application skills and industry needs were the most important aspects of the module: job needs were key factors for this group of students. This is consistent with anecdotal evidence from students who received job placements and who indicated that the selection criteria for the module and the knowledge gained gave them a competitive advantage over students who had not done the module.

5.2.2 Interest in the module

Table 2 below shows students' interest prior to doing, and upon completion of the module:

Table 2: Interest in the module

	Average	Low	Medium	High
My interest in the module before the start was	3,2	3	3	5
		27,3%	27,3%	45,5%
My level of interest towards the end of the year was	4,1	1	1	9
		9,1%	9,1%	81,8%

There is a large shift in student interest from before they started the module to the end of the year. This could best be explained by the fact that the course actively engaged students in surveys, discussions and presentations, as well as the fact that they rated the course much higher on level of difficulty compared to other modules in the programme. They also rated the quality of teaching highly both in the quantitative as well as in the qualitative (open comments) section, which could account for the increase in interest.

5.2.3 Open-ended comments on feedback forms

Students have limited space to write comments and these are necessarily cryptic. There were two main areas where students expressed opinions on the module in response to two questions:

- *What were the best aspects of the module?*

Students felt that the classes represented a very practical application of theory. Responses such as "praktiese toepassing" [*practical application*] and the "praktiese toepassing van teorie" [*practical application of theory*] confirm this. Another aspect that is mentioned is that the work is "relevant" and "interesting". This is both with reference to the articles and content of the module. Others mentioned that being part of a small class was helpful.

- *What could be added to the module?*

Aspects that students felt should be included in the module, were opportunities for them to practice aspects of multilingual teaching. Our contention here is that the extended period that students spend at schools (the 7-8 weeks of the third school term) presents ample opportunity for practice, but acknowledge that there might be some anxiety from students, and the request for practice is thus viewed as students seeking a safe place to practice their learning. Students also ask for a greater focus on code switching:

h. Ek sou meer metodes van kodewisseling by gevoeg het wat ons kan toepas.
[*I would have added more methods of code switching that we could use.*]

6. Conclusion: Future options

South African classrooms are diverse in many ways. Linguistic diversity, however, is the one kind of diversity that directly impacts on learners' chances of success: the LoLT is not usually tolerant of variety and diversity. Teacher education programmes therefore should respond to the need to prepare trainee teachers to teach in multilingual contexts. This is not only the case in South Africa. Garcia (2009:297), writing against a USA background, argues that bilingual education should be reconceptualised in 21st century terms and that the notions of additive and subtractive bilingualism are "no longer accurate in describing the reality of bilingual communities" (Garcia, 2001:2-3). Jessner (2008:45), in a European context, extends the argument for developing new approaches to studying and teaching in multilingual contexts by stating,

> in order to provide an adequate framework for applying new approaches to the development of multilingual proficiency, prerequisites and implications for teaching and studying and teaching in a multilingual context need to be discussed and re-examined.

The module we described here is a response to local and global challenges and students' responses strengthen our conviction that we need to become more responsive along the lines suggested by them. Their need for more direct guidance in terms of bi- and multilingual strategies means that we will have to work more directly with schools, particularly when we want to start changing perceptions that have solidified during the apprenticeship of observation.

We also need to think further. The PGCE module focuses on the senior phase of the GET phase and grades 10-12 of the FET phase. Being able to function in multilingual contexts is particularly important in the foundation phase and at the crucial point when learners switch from 'home language' instruction to the dominant LoLT in the intermediate phase. Therefore we need to think about extending the module to other teacher education programmes. The new *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement* (2011:6), generally known as CAPS, for home language teaching in the Foundation Phase indicates how home and additional languages should be taught side by side from Grade R onwards: an approach that opens up the way for mother-tongue based bilingual education. When this is read together with the requirement that "[t]he Languages programme is integrated into all other subject areas" and "[l]anguage is used across the curriculum in all oral work, reading and writing" (2011:6) there can be no doubt that all teachers need to be trained to be language teachers from grade R onward.

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