

NEWS



**Nelson Mandela
Metropolitan
University**

for tomorrow

Port Elizabeth & George

June 2014



ICT PROJECT:

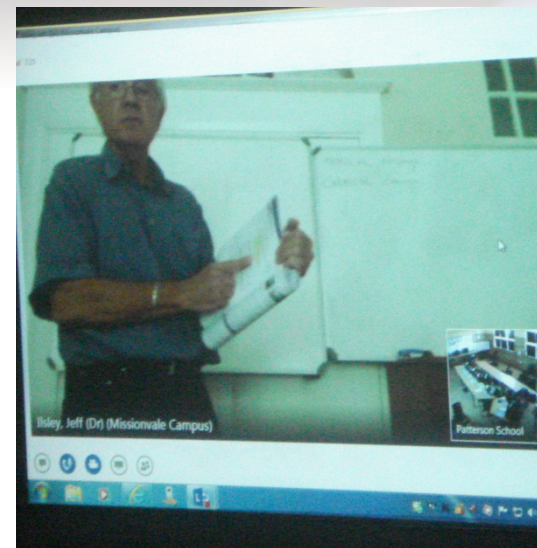
Sandisulwazi High School Paterson

The SMATE Unit assists various schools with ICT development. One of the schools, Sandisulwazi at Paterson, has been taken to a new exciting level with the establishment of a video link between the Science Laboratory and a Facilitator (Dr Jeff Ilsley) based in Port Elizabeth. Dr Ilsley is now conducting Science lessons for Grades 10-12 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Lessons are interactive with learners being able to communicate with the facilitator. This also serves as mentoring for the teachers involved as they are always present during the transmissions.

The school timetable has been adapted to accommodate this venture in such a way so that the sessions are scheduled in set time slots. CAMI Maths has also been installed.

ICT support is well managed by Mr Preston Geswint, in collaboration with Dr Andre' du Plessis, Prof Paul Webb and Viv England. We are also ably assisted by the NMMU ICT services, Grant Abbot, Eldridge van der Westhuizen and Connie van Wyk. We are also thankful to Mr Steve Viljoen and Creswell du Preez for their contribution.



Dr Jeff Ilsley teaching Grade 12 Physics learners at Sandisulwazi High School, Paterson, from his home over 100 kilometres away via an interactive audio-visual internet connection.

Khosa CR 2

George Awards 3

Funza Lushaka 4



Drs Mayaba and Geduld with FP students who volunteered to teach English (FAL) in isiXhosa medium schools.

Back row from left: Nicole, Elizabeth, Angela, Sarah, Dr Geduld.

Front row: Adrienne, Jani, Amy, Dr Mayaba, Jolandi, Liske.

POSITIONING AN ISIXHOSA CONVERSATIONAL MODULE IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE NEW CURRICULUM

As we all know, the Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) (Department of Education, 2011, p 8) framework mandates that teacher education programmes must ensure that as part of fundamental learning, 'students whose language of choice is English or Afrikaans should learn to converse competently in a second official language which should be an indigenous language'. In the case of my students, isiXhosa is the indigenous language which is currently offered in their 4th year of the B Ed programme. In this module students are taught basic conversational skills such as being able to greet, introduce themselves, name objects etc. As part of the recurriculation journey in the Foundation phase (FP), it became clear that there was a need to rethink the purpose of offering an isiXhosa module in the curriculum.

In this journey there were important factors that could not be ignored: that the current cohort of student teachers in the Foundation phase are English and/or Afrikaans speaking who are going to teach in schools where some of the learners are isiXhosa speaking; that when learners begin school in Grade R they bring with them multiplicity of languages (Alexandra, 2004); that although literature reports on most black parents sending their children to English or Afrikaans medium schools (to be taught in English) (Probyn, 2009) it is difficult for these learners to acquire a language of learning and teaching (LOLT) which is different from their own linguistic repertoires (Bloch, 2002) and obviously these learners are not even proficient in their own home languages. Clearly we needed to take into account the position of isiXhosa in the FP curriculum. We had to ask ourselves how these student teachers can be prepared to effect learning in classrooms where they do not share a common language with some learners (in fact, with isiXhosa speaking learners)?

Research on classroom discourse argue that in classrooms, the quality of knowledge that is constructed by both the teachers and learners relies on the quality of communication that takes place in the classroom (Nomlomo, 2010; Makoe and McKinney, 2009; Pontefract and Hardman, 2005; Bourne, 2001). So, what happens when teachers and some learners do not share a common language, especially when the learners' language is undervalued in favour of the LOLT? I personally observed during the teaching practice last year that in FP classrooms, student teachers could code switch to Afrikaans but they could not do the same when it comes to isiXhosa despite the fact that they were learning isiXhosa at the same time as they were doing their teaching practice. Some student teachers even hinted that when they were in schools they realized that a classroom discourse requires a certain level of communicative competence which includes the ability to use English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans.

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The thinking on how isiXhosa could be positioned in the FP new curriculum began with research. In 2013 I conducted a study with FP students in order to find out what they thought was the purpose of learning an indigenous language in the FP teacher programme and how the current module was capacitating them to use isiXhosa in their classrooms during the teaching practice. Understanding students' views was important because they had first-hand experience of teaching in FP classrooms and therefore their insights would enable me to make recommendations to change the module so that it meets their communicative needs. What was interesting was that all the students who volunteered (n=15) thought that isiXhosa was important as they recognized its value in a classroom context, however they were very critical of the content and the offering mode of the module.

As a result in 2014 some of the changes that were implemented were: having small classes of 34 students; contextualising the content of the module by creating scenarios that mirror a classroom situation; introducing isiXhosa songs and games as strategies to learn the language; creating scenarios which will enable students to converse with other isiXhosa speaking students and reflect on their experiences; having tutors to support and assist students with isiXhosa and quite recently teaching in foundation phase classrooms where isiXhosa is LOLT.

Based on research and students' experiences, in the new FP curriculum isiXhosa will be offered from 1st year to 4th year. I recognize that in order for student teachers to experience the use of the language, there will be a need for them to teach in all contexts during their WIL programme. I am hoping that we will be able to have isiXhosa modules that will enable students to acquire the language and use isiXhosa in FP classroom contexts.

I would like to acknowledge the EU funding, the director of SITE school, the dean and the HOP of FP in supporting this journey. I am very grateful to FP students (2013 and 2014) who volunteered to walk with me in this journey.

Follow this journey next month with Teaching in isiXhosa medium schools: a report by students

GEORGE MERIT AWARDS



2013 3rd Year top student Petula Booyesen with Education Dean, Prof Denise Zinn and George Campus Principal, Prof Quinton Johnson



2013 4th Year top student Monicke van Kleef with Education Dean, Prof Denise Zinn and George Campus Principal, Prof Quinton Johnson

2014 Funza Lushaka bursary update



The Funza Lushaka bursary is a prestigious bursary offered by the Department of Basic Education and aimed at attracting high quality students to become teachers. As a prestigious bursary that is awarded firstly on the basis of academic ability, applicants need to meet a set of minimum criteria in order to be considered for one of these bursaries. Given the limited number of bursaries available for new students, no applications from new students who do not meet the minimum criteria can be considered. Successful students are formally selected by the Department of Basic Education.

This year the NMMU Faculty of Education assisted the DBE in the awarding a total of 898 bursaries to our B Ed and PGCE students. The breakdown between the phases is 215 in Foundation Phase, 140 in IP Language, 185 in IP Maths & Science, 322 in FET and 25 in PGCE.

The general criterion for award of the Funza Lushaka bursary is as follows:

The applicant must be a South African citizen;
Acceptance into an approved degree or PGCE in two or more of the priority areas;
The applicant's academic ability;
Commitment to a teaching career, which includes interest in working with young people; enthusiasm for a professional career in teaching; readiness to face and surmount difficult challenges and personal integrity;
Commitment to teach in any school to which a student may be placed by a Provincial Education Department (PED); and
Everything else being equal, selection should favour candidates from rural areas, candidates who wish to teach in rural areas and candidates whose financial position would otherwise exclude them from enrolment for a teaching qualification.

For existing bursars

The student must have passed 2/3 of the modules studied in 2013 or the last year of study at the university.
The student must have passed 2/3 of the priority area modules studied in 2013 or the last year of study at the Higher Education Institution.
The student must be progressing to the next level/ year of study.
At least 50% average across all modules.

For new applicants already at a Higher Education Institution enrolling for a PGCE

The student must have passed all of the modules studied in 2013 or the last year of study at the Higher Education Institution.
At least a 55% average across all the modules studied in 2013 or in the applicant's last year of study at a Higher Education Institution.
The student must have at least 55% average in modules studied in 2013 or in the applicant's last year of study at university which relate directly to the priority area teaching specialization.

These are minimum criteria. The Funza Lushaka bursary is a prestigious bursary that must be awarded firstly on the basis of academic ability. The criteria applied at particular institutions may be higher than those suggested here, but cannot be lower.

Muriel Geswint

CONGRATULATIONS



On behalf of Prof Zinn, Dr Adam (chair of TLC) and the faculty, congratulations to Prof Pat Bean and Ms Sanet Deyssel, who have been selected as the Faculty of Education Excellent Teacher of the Year (Pat) and Emerging Excellent Teacher of the Year (Sanet).

Congratulations to both of you – and thank you for enhancing our students' learning, success and development through your commitment to high quality teaching and learning.

