



MULTILINGUALISM MATTERS

– in class, on campus, in the world and within each of us.

At Stellenbosch University (SU) we believe that **multilingualism** is about more than just being able to use multiple languages.

It is about recognising the value of what is said, no matter what language is used, and whether it is said in English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa or South African Sign Language.

It talks to our diversity as a country – and allows us to connect in ways we otherwise could not. **Multilingualism is therefore also an attitude.**

Our focus at SU is not only on **institutional multilingualism**, but also on **individual multilingualism**. In other words, we do not focus only on establishing multilingual spaces at the University – for example by ensuring that the University communicates in three languages when addressing all staff and students – but we also actively encourage people to reach out and use more than one language, even if they can say and understand only a little in some of those languages. When we are willing to step out of our own linguistic comfort zone to connect with someone else in a language they value, a beautiful kind of human magic happens.

Individual multilingualism is an asset that we would like to develop at SU because of the academic advantages this presents. Creating opportunities for individual multilingualism allows people to develop their ability to use languages or varieties of languages in different forms and at different levels of mastery.

Have you ever tried to learn a new language? Then you will know that the learning experience can transform your life. Everything you know of and experience in relation to languages and the way they interrelate contributes to your ability to interact with the world.

So, where can one start? Join us in developing a multilingual mindset at SU.

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