

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

**FOR ORAL REPLY
QUESTION 246**

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Mr W D Spies to ask the Minister of Education:

With reference to a certain speech (details furnished), what steps has she taken to promote multilingualism at South African universities?

N1561E

REPLY:

A number of initiatives have been taken or are being planned to promote multilingualism.

There are a number of pilot projects promoting multilingual proficiency for academic staff and students registered in service disciplines, like Social Work, Law, Nursing, Medicine and other health sciences. Support is also provided for academic tutorials conducted in indigenous languages.

UKZN recently announced a plan to introduce the use of Zulu as a language of teaching and learning. Potchefstroom has a well established system of providing lectures simultaneously in a number of languages. All universities have pilot projects in podcasting lectures and other learning materials.

The ministerial committee, which reported on the development and use of African indigenous languages, made a number of recommendations, including the need to develop a “well-coordinated, long-range national plan that would work at national, provincial, and local levels to provide adequate resources and support for indigenous African languages”. The success of such a plan would require systemic under-girding by the entire schooling system and the enhanced public and social use of indigenous African languages in the daily lives of South Africans.

The development of multilingualism includes the development of Afrikaans. In this regard, I continue to engage with Vice-Chancellors from formerly Afrikaans mono-lingual institutions on how best to enhance multilingualism, including the use of Afrikaans at these institutions.