

2012 Wits Language School EPD Certificate Ceremony

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A cool summer's evening and a celebratory atmosphere greeted the English for Professional Development (EPD) students as they arrived for the annual EPD Certificate Ceremony on the 18th of October 2012.



A significant event on the Wits Language School calendar, it provides the EPD unit with an opportunity to acknowledge students for their hard work put into each course, the sacrifices undoubtedly made, and the excellence achieved.

This year's ceremony was certainly a memorable one. Dr Cate Almon, the EPD Course Coordinator, welcomed students and their guests with the message that learning is a lifelong journey, one that is never too late to be embarked upon. Dr Nhlanhla Thwala, Director of Wits Language School, then engaged the audience by emphasising the importance of English in today's business world.

Then it was up to the guest speaker, Chris van Wyk, to captivate the crowd. And this was what he certainly did! Van Wyk, author of such books as *Eggs to Lay*, *Chickens to Hatch* and *Shirley Goodness and Mercy*, had the crowd in stitches with his anecdotes about English, and the hilarious, and sometimes poignant, moments that may challenge any speaker. Acknowledging the necessity of learning "proper" English for specific contexts, Van Wyk nevertheless gave both students and staff pause for thought by highlighting the evolving nature of the language and thus the value of our rich hybrid, "South African English". His words drew an evocative picture of language as a creative landscape to play in. He encouraged students to experiment and explore to find their own creative ways of expressing themselves. Sharing some of his own embarrassing English moments, Van Wyk reminded students that making mistakes is a vital part of any learning process and that it is actually okay to laugh at one's mistakes!

On that refreshing note, it was time to hand out the certificates, with the customary posing for photos. Special awards were handed out in recognition of the immense dedication and diligence displayed by a few of the students. Ceremony over, the night melted away to the sounds of mellow conversation and light-hearted laughter over delectable canapés and sweet treats.

The message of this year's special event was most certainly that learning a language is a journey and one that should never have a destination, because life is made rich by discovering and growing.

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Wits Language School



Wits Language School is one of the leading language schools in South Africa. With over 20 years of experience in the world of languages, our school offers a wide range of language courses and services. Wits Language School is evolving through face-to-face and blended learning with full-time and part-time options.

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