UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY: INVESTIGATING THE LANGUAGE PRACTICES OF MULTILINGUAL GRADE 9 LEARNERS AT A PRIVATE DESEGREGATED HIGH SCHOOL IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Submitted by: Nomakhalipha Margaret Nongogo

Student Number: 0309644N

Supervised by Dr Carolyn McKinney

Research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in partial fulfilment of the degree of Masters of Arts in Applied English Language Studies.

2007

ABSTRACT

This research report engages with the concern that African learners attending English medium, multiracial schools are losing their proficiency in African languages. In so doing, the report explores the language practices of four multilingual Grade 9 learners at a desegregated private high school in Gauteng. In a school environment that does not overtly support the use of African languages, I explore the extent to which multilingual learners use African languages in the school context, to position themselves and others, as an identity building resource, and the extent to which the use of African languages is implicated in their identities. I also explore the possible influence of the learners' cultural and ethnic backgrounds on their language practices, and related to this, the expression of their identities. I look at how their language practices help them shift identities with space and purpose, and the contradictions therein.

The study draws on poststructuralist theories of language and identity (Weedon, 1997; Zegeye, 2001), in considering how language constitutes identity (Pennycook, 2004) and self and other 'positioning' (Davies and Harre`, 1990) It also draws on Bourdieu's (1991) theorizing of language and power and language as a form of cultural capital.

I draw on two traditions in qualitative research: case study and ethnography. In my analysis of the data, I argue that both African languages and English are important in learners' identities. I indicate that through their language practices, the learners continue to position themselves in multiple and contradictory identities that continue to shift with context. I also argue that the learners' proficiency in English has not led to them losing proficiency in their home languages, which are retained and used as a primary marker of ethnic identities and for ideas of ethnic purity. This purity is in turn not constructed in a staidly 'traditional' manner, but negotiated through joking and verbal competition. Notions of ethnic purity are also often discursively constructed through the use of English, illustrating the contradictory nature of identities. I also point out that some learners protected apartheid constructed ethnic compartmentalization by setting boundaries of belonging. I point to language being a site of struggle for power and contestation in an effort by the learners to resist linguistic assimilation.

DEDICATION

To the loving memory of my mother Jane Hena Nongogo (nee`Methola) (1919-1992) that continues to inspire me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND THE CONTEXT OF RESEARCH

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

3. RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF RESEARCH

1.1 General Introduction

This study, conducted in a Gauteng high school, focuses on how multilingual Grade 9 learners at a formerly White private school use different languages to position themselves and others, thus as identity building resources. The study engages with the concern from certain quarters (Joe Khumalo: 1997; De Klerk, 2001; Murray, 2002) that African[1] learners attending English medium, multiracial schools are losing their proficiency in African languages. This set of concerns has registered itself in the academy and has resulted in efforts to look at the question of language and identity in multiracial schools.

1.2 Background to the school

The school is a desegregated private boarding school situated South of Johannesburg, in Gauteng. It accommodates approximately 200 learners. The average class size is 15 learners, and the largest group is about 24 learners. It is a small independent school, whose expensive fee structure (R29 000 p.a.) is not easily affordable to many people. Like many other schools, whose origin was structured according to racial lines during the apartheid era in South Africa, the research site for this study, Gola[2] High School, (hereafter referred to as Gola), was founded in 1951, as a private, Whites only, Afrikaans boarding school, based on a particular Christian denomination, and set to accommodate learners who belonged to the school's faith alone. With the advent of time, the school's policy changed to accommodate White English - speaking learners, and this resulted in the school having a dual medium language policy, where Afrikaans and English both became languages of instruction. For quite some time, this was the practice, until a concession was made in the 1980's to allow Black[3] pupils access. It is interesting to note

---

[1] I have used African here to refer to South African Black learners who are neither Coloured nor Indian.
[2] The name of the school has been changed to protect identity.
[3] Black is used inclusively here to refer to African, Coloured and Indian learners.

that even though most religious private schools opened their doors of learning to Blacks after 1976, this was not the case at Gola.

As time progressed, the number of White Afrikaans-speaking learners decreased as the number of Black pupils increased at the school. Even with the notable change in the demography of the school as far as learners were concerned, the school's language policy was not changed. Currently the school's learners are predominantly Black, with a small number of White learners. Most Black learners are boarders at the school, while with the exception of one boy, there are no White learners that are boarders. The rest of the White boys and girls are day scholars. There are however, some Korean girl boarders. The administration is however the opposite and, in a staff of about twenty two, there are three Black teachers. Other Black people work as support staff.

The language policy that accommodates Afrikaans is strictly adhered to. In the teaching of content subjects, teachers are required to use both English and Afrikaans, even though there may only be one or two Afrikaans-speaking learners in a class of 18 or more learners. Examination and test papers have to be set in both languages and memoranda must be available in both languages. The number of Afrikaans-speaking learners has declined so much that it is not uncommon to have a maximum of two learners in some classes, and none in others. These learners' language is accommodated in teaching, in line with the requirements of the school's language policy.

1.3 Language in Education Policy in South Africa and at the school

I find it important, at this juncture to look at some of the requirements of the *Language in Education Policy* (LiEP) as announced by the then Minister of Education on 14 July, 1997. The Language in Education Policy carried over what was one of the principles of the Constitution dealing with multilingualism, and:

- emphasized the equal treatment and use of 11 official languages of South Africa;

- provided measures to promote African languages to ensure redress in the light of historical discrimination;
- recognized and respected language diversity, variety and choice; and
- maintained that language rights formed the basis of fundamental human rights, and multilingualism is a resource for additive bilingual and multilingual models in educational institutions (Mda, 2004: 179).

The Language Plan Task Group (LANGTAG) was entrusted with setting up a number of language committees. Granville, et al (1998: 263- 266), make recommendations on how the proposals of the LANGTAG could be made a reality:

- All learners should have access to English as a language of power.
- All students should learn at least one African language as a subject throughout the years of compulsory learning.
- Promotion of learner's language of choice for learning and teaching.

Like many schools in South Africa (Chick and McKay, 2001), the language policy at Gola does not make room for equal treatment of some of the country's official languages that the learners wish to learn. English and Afrikaans have a superior status at the school as both are languages of learning and teaching. Since 2004, Zulu has been offered as a first additional language, and learners have to pay a private teacher for tuition in Sotho, Tswana, and Pedi as first additional languages.

White learners tend to keep to themselves on campus and socialize separately from Black learners. They walk together in between classes, stand together at break, sit together in class, and there is no notable mingling with pupils of other groups. Black learners do occasionally start conversations, ask questions in class or borrow the odd ruler or pencil from the White learners. There is however no mixed friendship group. Applying Granville et al's recommendation that all students should learn at least one African language as an additional language to the few Afrikaans White learners at the school, would be very difficult. The first step towards learning other languages would be to mix

with African language speakers and at least be familiar with the sounds if not words of other languages. Being on their own, far from the influence of other languages, limits their chances of learning and remotely understanding other languages even informally.

While most of the Black learners are multilingual, most of the teachers are at best bilingual in English and Afrikaans. Research in desegregated schools in South Africa does not provide much evidence of White teachers in these schools being familiar with or proficient in African languages. Studies in desegregated schools show that even though schools are racially, culturally and ethnically integrated, teachers are not usually multilingual (Mda, 2000; Taylor and Vinjevold, 1999; DoE, 2001; Soudien and Sayed, 2003; Soudien, 2004). In the desegregated schools Chick and McKay (2001) researched, White teachers and principals did not see African languages as important. Many staff members at my research site, Gola, admit that their competency in English is not what it should be, and will speak Afrikaans at every opportunity they get. The learners' perception is that Zulu first additional language was introduced to curb or address the high failure rate of learners who were not competent in Afrikaans as a first additional language in Grade 12. Before 2003, Zulu, Sotho and Tswana were only offered privately to Grade 12 learners. From 2003, the Grade 11 learners asked for these languages to be offered privately, and the following year the school placed Zulu on the official school curriculum from Grade 10 to Grade 12. This is how Zulu came to be officially offered at the school. The school did not offer any other African languages as it felt there were not enough learners to justify this, and it did not want to employ another teacher.

Whatever their motivation (whether the school has been forced by the fear of losing learners if they are not allowed to take the languages of their choice, or this is an effort to improve the pass rate, or the school is trying to 'recognize' diversity), the school uses the fact that it is one of the few schools to prepare learners for the Matriculation examination in two or more African languages to recruit learners who prefer learning African languages to Afrikaans.

In my study, the learners are exposed to a school culture that is in many ways alien in its links to White Afrikaans and Christian ways of being and doing. Their efforts to belong in the school may be met with resistance by the authorities. However, there is also some resistance on the part of the learners and their parents to the existing school culture, e.g. in parents paying for private tuition in African languages and demanding that these be written for examination purposes at Grade 12 level. It is interesting to note that while the official language policy of the school, medium of instruction in English and Afrikaans, reflects the power stakes of those privileged in the apartheid regime, the new Black elite who constitute the fee paying parent body of the school are demanding changes. Whilst in many private schools, African parents are in the minority, at Gola African parents are in the majority. It is important to note in relation to ideas of power that these parents come from wealthy and powerful social class backgrounds. Parents are thus using their economic power to pay for the tuition of their children in the languages of their choice, rendering the school's policy powerless. The struggle for power in my context, thus seems to be between the old (White, Afrikaner) elite as the custodians of the language policy of the school, and the new (African) elite who have the economic power that they use to defy this language policy. This is also indicative of the interplay between power, culture and citizenship as we see it in the new South Africa, between the old and the new elites. Demanding instruction in indigenous languages may be seen by some as assertion of a particular kind of identity.

1.4 Rationale for this research and the research questions

Against this linguistic and language policy background, my study aims to answer two questions:

- What are the language practices of multilingual Grade 9 learners at an officially Afrikaans and English-medium private school?
- What is the relationship between the language practices and the identities of Grade 9 learners at the High School?

I am using the term language practice, for example, to refer to how learners use language to convey meaning:

- as bilingual and multilingual speakers, e.g. when and how they use different languages
- how they use code–switching; alternate use of more than one language, during the same speech event.

I explore the possible influences of learners' cultural and ethnic backgrounds on their language practices, and related to this, their identities. Their discourses as also influenced by their learning and other environments, form a major focus of my study. In an environment that does not overtly support the use of African languages, I am interested in exploring the extent to which multilingual learners use African languages in the school context, and the extent to which the use of African languages is implicated in their identities.

The broad aim of this research is to understand whether the learners' choice and use of languages constructs different kinds of identities. I wish to state that even though my findings will not claim generalisability, they may help dispel misconceptions and stereotypes about language use by African learners in desegregated schools, and develop our understanding of these learners' choice of language in everyday interactions. I also wish to examine the learner's language practices in relation to claims about assimilation in desegregated schools.

1.5 Desegregated schools in South Africa: assimilation and language

With good reason, many studies have shown that the desegregation process in South African schools has been assimilationist in form (Soudien, 2004; McKay and Chick 2001). This situation has resulted in the multilingualism of many African learners being ignored in an effort to make these children "proper" English speakers (Soudien, 2004; Mda, 2004). In defining desegregation, I will align myself with Fine, Weis and Powell's

(1997) definition of desegregation as the existence of learners from different racial and ethnic groupings within the same institution.

Although Dolby, (1999), Vally and Dalamba, (1999), Soudien and Sayed, (2003), and Soudien, (2004) argue that language use is critical in processes of inclusion and exclusion in schooling, they do not explore how this might be working in any detail. I have not come across published work on school desegregation in South Africa that has directly looked at the learners' language practices, how they use language to position themselves and how this relates to their identities. There is however, a small, but growing body of work on questions of language and identity in schools. This work has learners' voices as the focal point in exploring their language practices and the relationship with the way in which they construct their identities. There is work in this field from Makubalo, (2006; in press, and McKinney, 2005, in press) amongst other studies. In general this work is starting to show that a much more complex and variegated relationship than was initially expected exists between language and identity in desegregated schools. While these studies look at day scholars, my study focuses on learners at a boarding school and specifically explores multilingual language practices.

This study focuses on the language use of four multilingual Grade 9 learners at Gola High School. This, as has been indicated before, is a desegregated school. If as Nkomo, McKinney and Chisholm (2004: 1-2) argue, integration is about "schools changing to meet the needs of *all* children enrolled", then the school's language policy still faces some challenges. The school has not reached a stage where it can be said to cater for multilingualism in the classroom in the way in which Article 6 of South Africa's new constitution tabled and introduced in April 1996 stipulates (Mda, 2004).

1.6 Chapter Outline

My Research Report is organized into five chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Rationale

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

In this chapter I discuss theories that underpin my study and ideas that support some of the theories. I also review literature on which the study is based.

Chapter 3: Research Methods and Methods of Data Analysis

I present the methodological frame of my study, my research participants, the research process, and methods of data analysis.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

In this chapter I present case studies of four research participants. I then explore important themes that emerged from the data: discourses of ethnic purity; language and the institutional context, youth and language practices.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

My conclusion outlines the main findings of the study. I illustrate that learners in my study use both home language and English equally well. I indicate that the learners' identities though ethnolinguistically articulated, are space and context based, and shift accordingly. I contend that there does not seem to be any home language loss in these learners as a result of being in a desegregated school. However there is continuous contestation, and implications of power relations, regarding language use.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This research focuses on issues of language, discourse and identity. In this chapter I will begin with a discussion of the theoretical concepts underpinning this study. This includes a discussion of language as it is positioned in poststructuralism, because of the manner in which language choices in multilingual contexts are embedded in larger social, political, economic and cultural systems. I discuss the concepts discourse, language as 'capital', language and identity, language and culture. Chris Weedon's (1997) poststrucuralist theorizing of the relationship between discourse and society - how discourse constructs the social, as well as the relationship between language and identity informs this discussion, as does the work of Bourdieu. I will then move on to present research on multilingualism in South Africa, code–switching in South Africa, and end with a discussion of South African research on youth and language.

2.2 Language in Poststructuralism

Weedon (1997: 19) defines poststructuralism as "a range of theoretical positions developed in and from the work of Derrida (1973, 1976), Lacan (1977), Kristeva (1974a, 1981, 1986), Althusser (1971) and Foucault (1978, 1979a, 1979b, 1981, 1986)". All forms of poststructuralism, notes Weedon, assume that meaning is constituted within language and is not guaranteed by the person who speaks it. Here the poststructuralists differ from other theorists in their belief that signs cannot have a fixed meaning or stable identity. They thus, in this respect, differ from Saussure. In challenging the theories supporting the fixed notion of signs, Jacques Derrida developed the concept, 'difference', which means the endless process of the production of meaning through the dual strategies of 'difference' and 'deferral'. From this, one can understand that meaning can never be said to be absolutely fixed, but will continue to change with context of use. There are no fixed intrinsic meanings which language reflects or expresses. Different languages and

different discourses within the same language give meaning to the world in a way that cannot be explained in a simplistic manner (Weedon, 1997: 22).

Poststructuralism offers a productive framework for understanding the mechanisms of power in our society and the possibilities for change (Weedon, 1997: 10). To support this statement, Weedon, (1997: 20) indicates the existence of different forms of poststructuralism that, even though they "vary both in their practice and their political implications, they share certain fundamental assumptions about language, meaning and subjectivity". For poststructuralist theory, the common factor in the analysis of social organization, social meanings, power, and individual consciousness is language.

> "Language is the place where actual and possible forms of social
> organization and their likely social and political consequences
> are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense
> of ourselves, our subjectivity, is *constructed*" (Weedon, 1997:21)

Thus, concludes Weedon, subjectivity cannot be said to be "genetically determined, but socially produced" through language (ibid).

This argument makes it important for my study to look at what situations prevail in the research context by looking at the discourses expressed in different languages, as well as different discourses expressed within the same language, and the resulting effects thereof. The language use of the learners in my study does not occur in a vacuum. Language should be viewed as a system that will always exist in historically specific discourses (Weedon, 1997:23). In South Africa, discourses have been influenced over the years by the various stages of historical movement from pre- to post-apartheid. Weedon's indication that discourse operates within a historical context explains how discourses considered acceptable and unacceptable change over time, for example, racist discourses in South Africa.I now move on to discuss the concept of 'discourse' in more detail.

2.3 Discourse

According to Chris Weedon, (1997: 108-109), discourses are more than just ways of thinking and producing meaning, but also engage the body, the conscious and the unconscious mind, and the emotional life of the people that discourses govern. It is easy to attach the meaning of discourse to language use only because of the continued association of discourse with language more than with other aspects of the human being. From Weedon's point of view:

> "The discursive constitution of subjectivity addresses and constitutes the individual's mind, body and emotions" (p.108), and

> "…the acquisition of modes of subjectivity involves the accumulation of the memory, conscious or unconscious, of subject positions and the psychic and emotional structures implicit in them" (p.109).

It thus becomes clear that discourses are not confined to language use only, and that people do not use language only to choose or construct identity positions in their daily interaction, but the whole being comes into play in defining one's identities.

Discourses, she further claims, operate in specific historical contexts, to serve certain people's interests at a particular time. Weedon's view of discourses as not limited to language thus differs from the earlier work of Norman Fairclough, who defines discourse as,

> language as social practice determined by social structures, ideologically
> shaped by power relations in social institutions and in society as a whole;
> has effects upon social structures, as well as being determined by them,
> and so contributes to social continuity and social change (1989:17)

From this definition, discourse is exclusively about language. Pennycook, (1994: 36) takes a safe position in defining discourses as "*ways of organizing meaning that are **often** though **not exclusively** realized through language*" (my emphasis).

I have chosen to use the broader definition of discourse by Weedon and Pennycook because they emphasize discourse as broader than language, as embedded and expressed

in bodily performance as well. My research is looking at the discourses at play in the way in which the learners express themselves.

2.4 Language as 'capital'

Bourdieu's contribution to a number of fields including the study of culture, education and language has been immense and has resulted in a unified social theory of language that forms the basis of a framework against which many of the broader phenomena associated with language in society can be analyzed (Mesthrie e.a., 2000). In looking at his work, the relationship between language and power will be examined. Following Max Weber, power is the fundamental concept in relations of inequality, and concerns the ability of people or groups to carry out their will despite objection or opposition by others (Mesthrie and Deumert, 2000: 319). Weber indicates that classes, status groups and political parties are key to the distribution of power (ibid.).

Bourdieu, in indicating the power that comes with being competent in particular privileged cultural practices, refers to 'cultural capital', which he defines as

> a form of knowledge, an internalized code or a cognitive acquisition
> which equips the social agent with empathy towards, appreciation for
> or competence in deciphering cultural relations and cultural artifacts
> (Bourdieu, 1993: 7).

Interaction in ones' social networks, e.g. family, church, community and educational institutions like schools, can help one acquire cultural capital, though not all of these sites may carry equal potential for the acquisition of cultural capital.

If one looks at the relationship between language and society, then one can see that language is socially determined, and varies according to the social situation that it is used in. Bourdieu indicates that all human activity takes place within a web of socially constructed fields: family, community structures, educational systems and institutions, corporations and businesses, all of which change with time and circumstances. One, he continues, may be subjected to a number of fields or can pass through a number of fields

17

in one day. The 'cultural capital' that one has places one within the hierarchy of society. Whichever field one is placed in at a given time, it becomes crucial to use one's social power – which can be through language, to negotiate a position of power in the societal structure. This by no means suggests that the same capital can be used across all fields. Different forms of capital however, can be used in different fields. Bourdieu refers to a system of habits (habitus) that guide peoples' behaviours. Habitus, defined by Bourdieu (1991: 342) as the sum total of all the social and cultural experiences that shape us as a person, is linked to visible material conditions or status of a class or group, and further linked to the class or group's style of living, as in wealth and material possessions. According to Bourdieu habitus thus also affects and determines what is linguistically acceptable in a group. Bourdieu points out how the individual and collective habitus of the powerful or dominant group is recognized as socially valuable and normal, while the habitus of the subordinate group is viewed as without value and abnormal if not suspect (Bourdieu, 1991: 342). I am interested in the influence of my research participants' elite social class status, as learners at an expensive private school, on their language practices and beliefs about language.

In relation to language, Bourdieu (1991:18) creates the concept of 'linguistic capital'. His notion of linguistic capital refers to the different quantities of symbolic capital that speakers of different languages possess. The higher the status of a language, such as English, the higher is the value placed on it and the belief in its capacity to ensure one success in education, power and wealth. Linguistic capital concerns one's ability to participate in linguistic exchanges that are appropriate to particular communities, which Bourdieu refers to as 'markets'. In both cultural and linguistic capital, one's ability, or level of power can be seen in cultural and linguistic circles. Could then the learners' ability and different kinds of linguistic competencies be indicative of how much symbolic 'capital' they possess? It is also important to note that different languages and different varieties of languages, carry different linguistic capital, as indicated by the value placed on standard English compared to slang. In South Africa, there is currently a notable power struggle over 'linguistic capital'.

The social context in which human activity, in this case, linguistic exchange, takes place, is identified as the 'field', as discussed above (Bourdieu, 1991: 14). Power plays a crucial role in any social context or 'field', because it determines the level of exchange and the outcome. It can also be the deciding factor in the choice of principles governing inclusion and exclusion, where one group can decide who to include or exclude in their group and interaction by simply changing the language of interaction. Bourdieu (1991: 23; 169 – 170) aptly captures this relationship in defining the 'invisibility' of what he calls 'symbolic power'. He defines symbolic power as that form of capital constituted by accumulated prestige or honour (1991: 14). He explains that symbolic power is invisible in that it is legitimized by the powerful people who wield it against the weaker people who are at the receiving end. It is invisible in that it has no material existence, such as monetary wealth has. One of the notable features of the exercise of symbolic power in linguistic circles is the use of a language of choice by a dominant group to oppress less dominant groups. One cannot look at language without looking at the society that determines the language. Society gives one power according to one's language networks and interactions, thus one is accorded status in ones' society according to the 'cultural capital' and linguistic capital that one is perceived to have. The 'cultural capital' and linguistic capital that one has enables him/her to negotiate a position of power in the social hierarchy through his/her use of language.

 In pointing out the relationship between language and social class, Bourdieu (1991: 13) shows how linguistic insecurity often causes the less powerful to aspire to prematurely appropriate the linguistic properties of those seen or perceived to be dominant. This idea of linguistic insecurity from Bourdieu, (1993: 14) is important in my study as I wish to look at whether the learners' language networks and interactions have influenced the way they perceive English in comparison to their own home languages.

Languages are valued or devalued according to the power vested in their users. The cultural capital that Bourdieu speaks of (1993: 7) is concerned with forms of cultural knowledge, skills, concepts or bodily dispositions that help one decipher cultural relations. Whether one's expressions are acceptable to a particular audience, depends on,

points out Bourdieu, where the value of discourses is decided. This decision inevitably affects social relations as well as social identity, being accepted as one of the group or being rejected as a misfit. To help us understand how the exercise of power becomes crucial, Fairclough (1989: 61) reminds us that power in discourse does not belong to the 'institution, *(or society)*,' (my italics) but it belongs to the power-holders in the institution, who wield it at will, as Bourdieu indicates. The acceptance of expressions depends on, as Bourdieu puts it, the 'market', which decides acceptability, by giving or denying value to the discourse. For any ideologies, to be acceptable to a particular market, they should be seen to be appropriate and acceptable in the context in which they are used by those in power. Fairclough points out the dynamic nature of power relations (1989:68). Power relations are not rigid or static, but continue to change with situations at play. This to me also raises the question of whether the learners' use of language is attached to their desire to place themselves at a particular level in their society, and of how they are positioned within a social hierarchy through their language use. I hope to use my data to discuss whether and how their discourse is affected by their social positioning in different fields.

I now move on to a discussion of language and identity from the perspective of poststructuralism which views identity as constructed through language.

2.5 Language and Identity

In discussing the relationship between language and identity from a sociolinguistic point of view, Mesthrie and Tabouret-Keller (2001) point to a great deal of work done by sociolinguists on linguistic variation using variables such as 'regional identity', social identity', 'ethnic identity', and 'national identity'. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985 :238 – 240) in their classic study of language and identity in the Caribbean, argue that the speakers' use of language is a series of acts of identity, in which speakers seek to align themselves with, or distance themselves from certain social groups. According to this argument, membership of particular groups affects our language use. Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985: 4-5) further argue that linguistic choices are "acts of identity" and

that "linguistic items are not just attributes of groups or communities, they are themselves the means by which individuals both identify themselves and identify with others: hence the existential locus of *homo*, be it individuals or groups, is in language itself". This means that the location of the identity of a person, as an individual or as a group is, amongst other identity markers, in language. Who a person is, or where s/he places him/herself at a particular time, is tied with his/her identity. The discussion of linguistic capital and symbolic power above indicates that language is closely linked to the speaker's location within a social structure at any given time. The race or ethnic group that one belongs to, gender, age, social class and geographical position all influence our language use, though not in any simplistic way because of the fluid nature of identity.

Roger Hewitt (2003 in McKinney, in press) argues that sociolinguistics as a discipline has not progressed far enough in understanding the relationship between language and identity. Furthermore, Bourdieu's model of symbolic domination discussed above, whereby the dominant group as well as the dominated group both recognize the dominant language as superior has been criticized by several sociolinguistics, e.g. Gal, (1989); Heller, (1992) and Woolard, (1985) in Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) for not accommodating the possibility of resistance. The model of symbolic domination attaches the hegemonic power to relative numbers of speakers of a particular variety (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004: 10-11). Woolard believes that Bourdieu's notion of domination being grounded in the wide acceptance of the value and prestige of a particular language is flawed because there may be other market places that could assign different values to the language. Gal indicated that speakers can "use the microstructures of interaction to transform linguistic norms" and what are regarded as "stigmatized social identities" (in Blackledge and Pavlenko, 2004:11). Heller laid the foundation for poststructuralist study of the negotiation of identities by pointing out that languages cannot "be seen solely as unproblematic markers of particular ethnic identities". Thus, as Pavlenko and Blackledge argue, a shift to the poststructuralist approach in looking at the relationship between multilingualism and identities has come about as a consequence of the belief that:

- linguistic and identity options are continuously contested and reinvented;

- diverse identity options are valued differently;
- identity options may be negotiated or imposed; and
- individuals are agents of change of their own identity, and use their linguistic resources to resist or accept identities depending on how these position them (Pavlenko and, Blackledge 2004: 27).

Pennycook, (2004: 32), agrees with poststructuralist theory on the fundamental role that language plays in peoples' lives. Weedon's poststructuralist theory has influenced other scholars like Norton (1997), and McKay and Chick (2001) (whose works are used in this study) in framing their understanding of the notion of identity as multiple and changing and in understanding how it is linked to language use. Important in the explanation of changing identities, is Hall's (1992b) hybridity theory, that argues in favour of how identity resists being fixed or rooted in a particular culture, because of a multiplicity of social and cultural influences. When one looks at desegregated schools with a mixture of cultures functioning side by side it is important to remember that:

> "... we all speak from a particular place, out of a particular history, out of a particular experience, a particular culture, without being contained by that position (Hall, 1992(b): 258).

 The notion of language use as an act of identity can also be linked to the poststructuralist idea of performativity. As indicated above, Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) point to the use of language as a series of **acts** of identity, while Weedon, (1997) indicates that different languages and different discourses within the same language can be used to perform identity. Similarly, Blommaert (2005) has also argued that the performance of identity is not the articulation of one identity, but a repertoire of identity features suited to moment-to-moment positions. In agreement, Pennycook, (2004: 36) also indicates that meaning making in language is constantly changing and being negotiated, and in supporting this, refers to Butler's (in Pennycook, 2004) notion of performativity, defined as a

> "way of thinking about language use and identity that avoids
>   foundationalist categories, suggesting that identities are

22

formed in the linguistic performance rather than pregiven".
(Pennycook, 2004:1)

Butler argues that performativity is "the way in which we perform acts of identity as an ongoing series of social and cultural performances rather than as the expression of a prior identity" (Pennycook, 2004: 8). According to Cameron (1997 in Pennycook, 2004: 13), the difference between the manner in which traditional sociolinguists and postmodernists[4] see the performance of identity is that the traditionalists assume that people talk the way they do, because of who they are, whilst the poststructuralists suggest that people are who they are because of how they talk. Performance of identity thus means that knowledge and its objects, social relations and social identity are being constituted and reconstituted over time; and are not fixed or static. Of utmost importance is to understand that Pennycook's (2004: 1) use of performativity is about seeing language *use as an act of identity that calls a particular language into being*.

If language, as Chris Weedon, (1997: 82; 93 - 94), puts it, is the site where meaningful experience is constituted, then language also constructs how we perceive possibilities for change. Language consists of a range of discourses, the different versions of which one can use to construct meanings of social relations and how they affect each individual. This is of interest in my study in determining whether the use of discourse by learners has anything to do with the desire to influence social relations and social identity. Norton Peirce, (1995), in distinguishing between social and cultural identity, indicates that people form an individual relationship with a group with whom a common language and understanding of the world is shared. Drawing directly on Weedon, Norton Peirce further identifies three characteristics of social identity. Firstly, identity is seen as multiple and contradictory because individuals are the subjects of more than one discourse during any one time in their lives, and may be positioned in contradictory ways in these discourses. Secondly, social identity is a site of social struggle as an individual can resist her positioning in a discourse, or set up a counter discourse which puts her in a position of power rather than weakness. Thirdly, social identity is subject to change owing to the dynamic nature of discourses that a person is a subject of. An important aspect of

---

[4] I have used postmodernist following the writer's preference, but will henceforth refer to postsructuralist.

language and identity to consider in South Africa as a result of the apartheid past, is the potential relationship between language and ethnicity.

2.6 Language and ethnicity

Kubota and Lin (2006: 475), argue that ethnicity is used as a politically correct code for race. They further point out that it is used as a category to distinguish groups based on sociocultural characteristics such as ancestry, language, religion, custom and lifestyle. Blommaert defines ethnolinguistic identity as "an identity expressed through belonging to a particular language community" and elaborates that an ethnolinguistic identity often emerges "at the confluence of a sense of belonging to a language community and a sense of belonging to an ethnic community" (2005: 214). However, Blommaert problematizes this definition by arguing that the moment one begins investigating this notion in practice, "every ingredient represents a major empirical problem" (Ibid). Poststructuralism rejects essentialised and stable identities based on categories such as language and ethnicity. Blommaert (2005: 216) describes such homogenous notions of ethnolinguistic identity as "a particular discourse on language" with particular ideological effects.

Ethnic discourses are passed from generation to generation by custodians in the community. Mesthrie (2000: 112) highlights the importance of ethnic discourses by pointing out that they sometimes cut across class divisions and result in variables that are constructed along ethnic lines. He refers to ethnic varieties of language such as Puerto Rican English in New York as "**ethnolects**" (Mesthrie, 2000: 107). Ethnolects, he claims, are sustained by "a sense of identity that is based on ancestry, religion and culture" (ibid). He refers to ethnic discourses also to refer to the use of mother tongue by some African communities when communicating with members of the family or own ethnic group to maintain ethnic identity (Swann, 2000: 155). It is important to note that Mesthrie's discussion draws on the classic sociolinguistic position which posits the relationship between language and ethnicity as more static than Makoni and Kamwangamalu or poststructuralists argue. Makoni and Kamwangamalu's (no date) argument, relates to the

situation of South African languages during the apartheid era, where the idea of distinct ethnic groups formed the basis on which distinct language groups were placed in separate homelands according to their supposed ethnicity. This was despite the reality of individual multilingualism which was far more complex. Makoni and Kamwangamalu thus argue against a simple lining up of language with ethnicity. This in itself reveals the potentially complex relationship between language and ethnicity. People do not, especially in the multilingual context of South Africa, only, always speak languages associated with a single ethnic group. It is thus impractical to tie peoples' linguistic abilities to their ethnicity. Pennycook (2004: 2) also argues against "the over-determined sense of linguistic fixity", which is the notion that language can be closed into small compartments, and be solely owned by a particular group or region, to the exclusion of anyone who is not in the group or region.

Not one, but many languages can be used to indicate and point out the many facets that make up an urban or township identity in South Africa (Slabbert and Finlayson, 2000: 120-125). In South Africa this may involve the mixing of English with one or more of South Africa's official languages, but could also include switches between different African languages. This switching depicts the language situation in South African townships, areas previously reserved for Blacks during the apartheid era, where language not only plays a role in establishing the urban or township identity of an individual, but also the identity of the many groups that live side by side. This idea on switching ties in with Slabbert and Finlayson's (2000: 125) observation of the use of language in South African townships to position one in the subcultures of the city and its divisions. The use, they claim, of secret languages like Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho can be used as manifestation of group identity. Language cannot be used in isolation. It is "closely linked the speaker's location within the social structure. By learning a language relevant to their social position, speakers learn the requirements and restrictions which regulate behaviour within that social position" (Leap and Mesthrie, 2000: 363). This notion is important in helping me to explore how the learners in my study use language to position themselves or others, and use language to accept or resist such positioning.

Zegeye (2001) emphasizes fluidity and shifts in identity despite fixed groupings or 'ethnicity from above' as instituted by apartheid (Zegeye, 2001:1). These shifts, points out McKinney (2005) happen in desegregated schools as learners continue to use gaps and moments that avail themselves to resist, remake and create new identities for themselves. Gaganakis (1992) also points out that problems faced by Black pupils in desegregated schools are much more complex than simply being Black and speaking English, and cannot be simplified in relation to notions of cultural difference. The question of ethnic identity is very complex in diverse South Africa, and is further compounded by individual multilingualism which in some cases includes two or more home languages.

2.7 Multilingualism in South Africa

South Africa is a multilingual[5] country that boasts 11 official languages. However, McKinney (2005) points out that despite the language-in-education policy set out to promote all official languages as languages of learning and teaching (Department of Education, 1997), there is very little evidence suggesting that this is in fact the case in schools. In many South African townships, multilingualism, as pointed out by Slabbert and Finlayson (2000: 125) gives users of many languages access to a complex linguistic network. At the same time it empowers people in the township to communicate at will, thus putting them in control, to such an extent that few people can use language to exclude them from any group. Competency in a number of languages ensures that people will not be shut out of a conversation by their inability to communicate or understand the language in use.

De Klerk, (2002) and Murray, (2002) voice the fears of some African parents that sending their children to previously White English-medium-of-instruction schools may lead to loss of identity and also loss of proficiency in African languages. Their work

---

[5] Unlike Mesthrie (2000) who uses the term 'bilingualism' to define the use of two or more languages, for the purpose of my study, placed in a school where many learners use more than two languages, I will use the term 'bilingual' to indicate the use of two languages, and 'multilingual' to refer to the use of more than two languages.

serves to strengthen the belief that comes with the results of studies that maintain the existence of a strong link between language and identity. Current Language in Education Policy advocates additive multilingualism, whereby learners should learn other languages over and above their home language/s (Department of Education, 1997). De Klerk (2000b, 2001) conducted a study post 1994 in and around Grahamstown, to find out the situation regarding the choices of African and Afrikaans parents in sending their children to English schools, and the resulting effect of this on their home languages. De Klerk (2000b) found evidence among both sets of parents for a shift away from their home languages towards English. Parents of the African children in desegregated schools indicated to de Klerk, that their preference for English was based on its market value in relation to Xhosa. Her study of the views of Afrikaans-speaking parents (2001) who moved their children to English-medium schools produced similar responses as that of Black parents; participation by their children in the economy in the future was the parent's major concern. These Afrikaner families also came from the wealthier and well educated social class in their communities. The situation of these families can be likened to Bourdieu's (1991) interpretation of the linguistic marketplace. He points out how language controls exchanges among individuals as if the speakers were at a linguistic market where certain languages are more valued than others. English is in this case more valued in the 'linguistic' market place of South Africa.

The Afrikaner parents reported that there was also rejection from some members of their communities, as well as incidents where, on hearing a child answering the phone in English, a member of the community would drop the phone thinking it was a wrong number because they knew the family to be Afrikaans-speaking (De Klerk, 2001). The rejection of Afrikaner children and their families by some members of their community because they attend English-medium schools, is similar to the rejection that some African children experience who are called 'coconuts' because they are seen as traitors to their home language (Hodgson, 2002). Also, there were indications of language shift from Afrikaans to English, and similar concerns as voiced by the Xhosa communities about the future of the Afrikaans language and culture. However, as a result of bilingualism and multilingualism, many South Africans do successfully move between two or more

27

languages with ease in their speech, for a number of reasons that scholars studying code-switching have looked into.

2.8 Code–switching

Swann (2000: 148-9) refers to code-switching as a form of language variation, or language use prevalent in societies where more than one language is spoken, because the communities are bi- or multilingual. Bi- and / or multilingual speakers then need to choose a language that they wish to communicate in on any given occasion and sometimes switch back and forwards between languages, even during the same speech event. In the South African situation, Slabbert and Finlayson (2000: 120-125) indicate that one's competence in a multiplicity of languages and language varieties is indicated in the use of complex code-switching patterns which can be both inter and intrasentential, within and between conversational turns. Hodgson (2002: 25) concurs by referring to code-switching as the alternate use of more than one language that can occur at the morphemic, lexical, phrasal, clausal and sentential levels.

For ideas on code-switching debates, which are crucial in understanding the language patterns of learners in my study, the works of Myers–Scotton (1993), Mesthrie (2000), Slabbert and Finlayson (2000), Finlayson e.a. (1998), and Gaganakis (1992) are very important. Further arguments on code-switching relate to language choices in speech events. Drawing from other sociolinguists, such as Auer (1995, 1998 in Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004) and Jacobson (1998 in Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004), argue that many speech events are not tied to a particular language. They further say that even within communities that observe certain tendencies, these tendencies are never strong enough to predict language choices in a probabilistic way. They refer to the acknowledgement by these scholars (Auer and Jacobson) that identity is not the only factor influencing code-switching; other means including the linguistic competencies of the speakers come into play. Codeswitching was observed in particularly multilingual communities in which national, ethnic or regional identity was displayed through the use of a given language or language variety.

Carol Myers-Scotton (1993) sets the beginnings of current interest in code-switching at 1972. Myers-Scotton, in her work in East Africa explains code-switching as a marker of solidarity with other members of one's ethnic or tribal group (1988, 1993). She refers to code-switching as both a 'means and a message' (1988:156). It is a means of communication in that people use it to communicate, and a message, as in shaping what people communicate. Code -switching can, as is the case with all linguistic choices, be used to convey certain meanings about the speaker, as well as to index and negotiate certain rights and obligations between speakers.

Gaganakis, (1992: 53) in a paper entitled Language and Ethnic Group Relations in Non–Racial Schools, focused on Black pupils' own responses regarding their experiences in private schools in the greater Johannesburg area. She looked at the linkages between ethnic identity and the perceived prestige of the English language. Her observation was that the use of code switching was more common in informal day-to-day discourse. She further noted that with these Black English speaking pupils, most of whom came from townships, code switchings were situational; and that the language or dialect alternation was governed by a change of topic, participants or situations. Ncoko et al's study, (2000:229) agrees with this observation, and lists variables such as interpersonal relationships, social positions, group solidarity, ethnic identity, exploring new relationships, status, level of education, authority, neutrality, distancing or intimacy as some of those that can be negotiated through code–switching. Code–switching may not be seen as appropriate language use in certain contexts as this observation by one of the learners from Gaganakis' study (1992: 53) indicates:

> 'I can never finish a sentence in Tswana without using an English word and
> people really hate it'.

Both the studies by Myers–Scotton and Gaganakis are important for my research because they highlight possible relations between ethnic identity and the learner's language use. Studies by Hodgson, (2002) and Rudwick, (2004) among students in KwaZulu-Natal, an area that is homogenously Zulu, point to Zulu being the preferred language of

communication. One can relate their preferred language choice to the fact that their ethnic group is Zulu. Dlamini (2001) also alludes to the need of her subjects in a study of youth and identity in the same region, to be seen to speak pure "Zulu". However, referring to urban township contexts in Gauteng, Slabbert and Finlayson (2000) point out that many Black South Africans for a number of reasons, some of which originate with apartheid structures, speak more than one language. Code-switching is for many an acceptable manner of expressing themselves. Slabbert and Finlayson capture the complexity of the South African situation by pointing out the important role that language plays in establishing the identity of not only an individual, but that of the group as well. This example by Slabbert and Finlayson (2000: 124), from their study in Gauteng, captures the South African situation of code- switching very aptly:

> Go DEPENDa mo SHOPong gore go na le mang. Go na le Mosotho go ba Motshangane, Nna ge go na le motho ka gore ke rata maleme ka boledisa motho o ka segagabo SO THAT I CAN LEARN LANGUAGE ya motho oo le go re a se ka a STRUGGLEa go bolela LANGUAGE yaka. Ge e Lekgowa, ke mmoledisa Seburu geke rata, geke nyaka go mmona gore HOW IS HE, ke mmoledisa ka English.

This is an excellent example of the use of English, Tswana and Pedi in one conversational form which is common in a number of Gauteng townships. This translates to:

> 'It depends on who you find there at the shop. If it's a Sotho or Shangaan-speaking person, I like to use their language, to address them, because I like languages. I can learn that way. It's also so that the person does not struggle when they try to use my language. If it's a White, if I like I will use Afrikaans. If I want to check him out, I use English–to see how he is'.

It is also common for learners at my school to code-switch between different languages including English, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana, isiSwati, Xhosa, and Pedi. My interest is in understanding how they use code-switching, among other language practices, to negotiate different identities.

The contribution made by a number of researchers in code-switching, has led to the acknowledgement by Sridhar (1996:58-59) that one of the more oustanding functions of code-switching is identity marking. Mark Sebba and Tony Wootton (1998: 262-264), cite Gumperz's (1982) concepts of 'we–code' and 'they–code' to indicate the association of code–switching with not only identity, whether it be group or cultural identity, but with the concept of inclusion and exclusion as well:

> The tendency is for the ethnically specific, minority language to be regarded as the 'we-code' and become associated with in-group and informal activities, and for the majority language to serve as the 'they' code associated with the more formal, stiffer and less personal out-group relations (Gumperz, 1982:66 in Sebba and Wootton, 1998).

Of course minority and majority take on a different meaning in South Africa, where in instances such as that at my school, African pupils are in the majority, but their languages have been given a minority and inferior status, and while White pupils are in the minority, their languages are seen to have a majority and superior status. Because my study is informed by a poststructuralist view of identity as fluid, to support the claims regarding the use and functions of code-switching, it will be necessary to examine the learners' specific historical and local contexts in each use of code-switching. Another form of language variation that is sometimes confused with, but differs from code-switching is what Rampton, (1995) refers to as 'language crossing', and defines as the use of language varieties that belong to a group that one is normally not associated with.

2.9 South African Research on Youth and Language

There is a small but growing body of work on youth and language in South Africa. In this section I will discuss the findings of Gaganakis (1992), Rudwick (2004), Kapp (2000). Makubalo (2006), McKinney's (in press) and Hodgson, (2002).

Gaganakis (1992) in her study of desegregated private schools in Johannesburg, focused on the complex linkages between ethnic identity and the perceived prestige of the English language. Even though the pupils showed pride in identifying themselves as 'Black', they

alluded to the superior status of English, the use of which was perceived as a marker of upward mobility as compared to their own languages. Their day to day discourse was also characterized by a high degree of situational code-switchings.

Rudwick (2004:168) in her study of the language use and attitudes of pupils in three secondary schools in Umlazi, a township in KwaZulu–Natal, discovered that learners preferred to speak Zulu that was not mixed with English, (which they are exposed to for academic purposes). English was regarded as a formal language used for academic purposes only, and Zulu used informally and for general conversation with teachers and other learners. The learners believed that they had no need to speak English other than for academic purposes, which they regarded as the language of 'others', or the 'they–code' in Sebba and Wootton's (1998) terms. Here we are looking at a situation that is very different from the situation in Soweto, and other urban townships in South Africa with a number of communities and languages living side by side. In the Umlazi situation there was no place for code–switching. The pupils did not see the need to mix 'their' language with English because they did not regard English for communication as superior in status to their language. One reason for this behaviour may be the fact that they live in a linguistically homogenous area that is Zulu speaking. Rudwick (2004) also points to the close association between the Zulu language and the Zulu culture, home and belonging expressed by Umlazi adolescents. She further says that even though some learners struggled with English at school, they denied that they felt disadvantaged by this, because of the importance and the pride that they associated with their mother tongue, Zulu.

Kapp (2000) studied students' attitude to English in relation to their home languages at two schools in a Western Cape Township. Her findings were that students conflated knowing English with being educated. They associated African languages with the past and limited access to employment opportunities. Learners in Kapp's study did not see any reason why they should study their first language, Xhosa, and did not understand why they were having difficulty in studying it. At school they only defended Xhosa when it was, in their view, linked to cultural identity. However, even though they wanted to be proficient speakers of English, English was seldom spoken outside the classroom, was

used in code-switching and with pupils who were non-Xhosa speakers. Makubalo (2006) in his study of the English language practices of pupils in a desegregated Johannesburg school, points out that the learners' shifting identities were constructed through the use of different accents and different varieties of English, code-switching, proficiency in English, and the positioning of themselves or others as speakers of English and other languages. McKinney's (in press) study of language practices of South African youth in Johannesburg desegregated schools revealed that learners used shifts in accent, code-switching and multilingualism to perform acts of identity. It was complex for learners to find a perfect balance between mastering the English language for the status that it carries, as well as to show their valuing of 'township culture' and modes of 'Blackness' through the use of African languages.

There has been a growing trend among some African people to refer to other African people who, as well as their overall way of saying, being, doing, valuing, are believed to speak more English than their perceived African languages as 'coconuts'or 'oreos' (Nongogo, 2004). The meaning here is that one is perceived to be African outside but White inside, or as "acting White". The term is used mostly to refer to learners who go to formerly White schools where the language of learning and teaching is English. This has resulted in some African learners being self conscious about their language use in an effort to resist discourses that portray them in a negative light in their community or audience at any given time or place, and to avoid unpleasant labeling within their multiple identities. My own previous research (Nongogo, 2004) in a Gauteng school shows how the learners use the term 'coconut' as a term of exclusion to refer to African pupils who are perceived to be running away from a culture that refuses to let them go, to a culture that refuses to accept them. Even though there does not seem to be evidence that this follows automatically, this group of people is perceived to have an identity crisis. A number of definitions indicative of a struggle between Blackness and Whiteness emanated from students, *it is a Black trying to act White; a Black person who has a White person's mentality; a White person who is trapped in a Black body* (Nongogo, 2004). These are the negative labellings that many Black children wish to avoid.

Hodgson, (2002) in her study of issues of language and identity among sixteen young African women studying at Technikon Natal, examined ways in which identities are structured by discourses and what part language practices played in this. She points out the importance of shifts in subjectivity experienced by individuals as they integrate new discourses into their lives. Hodgson refers to the importance of ethnic discourses. Ethnic discourses can be identified as the type of language or language variables associated with a particular ethnic group, and that best portray the understanding of a group, of the values and norms held dear by the group. Another factor which Hodgson, (2002: 46 - 48), picked up was that learners are seen as 'vehicles' of power for ethnic discourses. This means that they are regarded as ambassadors of ethnic discourses wherever they may be, and neglecting to have an ethnic voice among 'others' is seen as a betrayal that is rewarded by negative name-calling. They are expected to carry their language in high esteem, and not allow it to be swallowed up by environments in which the speakers find themselves. This situation denies many learners the right to choose to speak English at will, over their African language, lest they are called unpleasant names.

2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented the poststructuralist view on language, discourse and identity; including how identity is multiple and changing and how it exists in historically specific discourses (Weedon 1997; Pennycook, 2004). Within this framework I also refer to the work of Blommaert (2004) who makes us understand identity as a semeotic construct not owned by individuals or groups, but organized in a repertoire influenced by access to different identity building resources. I have also presented Bourdieu's concepts of language as 'capital' and symbolic power, as well as the concepts of language and identity, language and ethnicity. South African research on multilingualism and code-switching, youth and language, all of which will be crucial in analyzing my data, has been reviewed. My analysis, puts at the centre the importance of discourse in determining the relationship between specific language uses and the performance of identity. I will look at whether language use indicates multilingualism, code-switching, issues of power,

inclusion or exclusion and how this relates to changing identities. In the next chapter of my study I discuss the research methods that I have used.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS AND METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I outline my research methodology. I begin by discussing the two approaches to qualitative research that I draw on: school ethnography (Gaganakis, 1992, Wright, 1998 and Dolby, 1999) and case study (Knobel and Lankshear 1999). I then address my role as a researcher. I go on to discuss access to the research site and timing of the research, as well as the composition of the research sample. I then address my role as a teacher and researcher, followed by the data collection process. Finally, I deal with the data analysis techniques that I used to analyze the collected data.

3.2 Ethnography

Following Hitchcock and Hughes (1989: 28), interpretive ethnography concerns understanding and interpreting the social world, in which people relate their interpretation to the natural everyday situations in which they live. Social life, they argue, can best be understood from the point of view of the actors themselves. Interpretive research emphasizes grasping the human side of human behaviour, because people are live beings who think, feel, are conscious, and use language and symbols. Social research should therefore aptly capture the way in which individuals' experiences are indicated in the way in which they do and say things. Unlike much social research that neglects the medium through which social reality is expressed, interpretive research views the question of language and meaning very seriously, thus unraveling the user's description of events in a qualitative fashion takes priority. Direct, first person accounts provided by subjects themselves in their own language form an important feature of ethnographic interpretive research.

Hitchcock and Hughes (1989: 35), refer to ethnographic research as an attitude or frame of mind which embodies a certain orientation towards investigating schools and

classrooms. This type of research, and the techniques that accompany it, they claim, is suited to the needs of a teacher researcher as it is capable of delivering valid knowledge of school and classroom processes. Thus by implication, interpretive ethnographic techniques have a special value in school based research.

George Spindler and Lorie Hammond (2000: 2-5) point out some of the specifiable attributes of ethnographic research, some of which describe my situation well. These include observation which is mostly referred to as participant observation, spending extensive periods of time at the site of study, and the collection of a large amount of data because ethnographers usually have volumes of material that they collect through note taking, records on audio and video tape, texts, speeches and artifacts. Gaganakis (1992: 47) indicates that one of the reasons that she used the ethnographic approach in her school-based research was that it 'took the pupil's perspective or definition of the situation as the starting point'. However, I must point out that in my analysis, it is more my perspective of the situation that guides my observations.

My study draws on ethnography in that it investigates the real life setting of a school. It also uses participant observation as I formed part of the school community as a teacher, and this placed me in a situation where I could observe learners' language use. The learners' explanations and own points of view, (a key aspect of ethnographic approach) on language use, also form an important part of my data. However my study differs from an ethnographic study in that I was not an outsider to the research context, but formed part of the community that I was studying as a teacher. I was aware of interpersonal relationships at school, allegiances, and major lines of disagreement. Participation and observation also happened during the course of my routine work. I did not have to come in at specified times, and so could adjust my times as the situation demanded and avoid interfering with the academic programme. Furthermore my data collection took place over six months, and thus I did not spend as long in fieldwork as would be required for an ethnography.

3.3 Case Study

According to Knobel and Lankshear (1999: 95), a case study is an 'intensive (in-depth and detailed) study of a bounded, contemporary phenomenon'. This makes a case study more useful in small scale study, where intensive focus on a particular group is made possible. Christie (1991: 192) points out that what differentiates case studies from other studies is that they are concerned with instances rather than with samples and their representativeness. Thus my study is also a case study in that it looks at a particular group of learners, and a particular phenomenon: language practices. It also draws on ethnography in that I am part of the community that I am studying. My methods are also in accordance with the methods underlying interpretive research which advise gathering material from first hand encounters with research participants.

The learners' situation is understood as being socially constructed, as indicated by specific discourses that the learners use. Carr and Kermis (1986) point out that interpretive theory does not interpret the actions and experiences of individuals for its own purposes, but serves to provide a deeper understanding of the research participants' own understanding of their actions and experiences. Contrary to the constructionist approach which is accused of reducing everything to language and the world of ideas, and in so doing losing touch with the participants' perspectives, I wanted to acknowledge the participants' views, and involve them in interpreting their language use. This involved finding out from them whether my interpretation of what they said was correct, as well as their reasons for saying what they said in the way that they did. I thus felt that interpretive theory would serve my study best.

3.4 Access to the research site and timing of the research

I had access to the research site by virtue of being an African languages and Social Sciences teacher at Gola High School and staying on campus. I am proficient in a number of languages that the learners speak, such as English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa, Pedi, Sotho and Tswana. I taught Tswana and Zulu to Grade 9 learners during school hours, as well

as Tswana, Pedi, and Sotho to Grade 10-12 learners privately. Because of my multilingual proficiency, I was conversant with the switch from one language to the other, and could easily identify when the switch occurred, and the languages between which it occurred. Data collection was also not limited to the classroom as I met the learners all over campus, during break, after school, in town, sometimes when I was on the bus with them, in dormitories during week-ends and in church. I did not have to find time to be with them. They sought me out to talk to me about one or the other thing. I began by obtaining written consent from all 15 learners and parents of learners who would participate in the study and guaranteed confidentiality for participants. (See letters in Appendix 5). All learners have thus been given pseudonyms to protect their identity.

The research at the school took place over six months, in the classroom as well as on campus grounds during break, in dormitories, and during 'Tuck' time.[6] Despite being on the site, there were problems with balancing the time, because of the learners' other commitments like cycle tests that would be due when I needed to verify something and the learners were not easily available. There were also hostel commitments and lock up times that I needed to fit in with, or an out weekend that would be decided promptly by the school because of a public holiday that fell in the middle of the week. I thus found myself having to conduct group interviews to meet my deadlines, or sometimes do a follow up interview at night or another unplanned time when I could get hold of the pupils. However being on campus enabled me to do this.

3.5 Composition of the research sample

Many students at the school indicated willingness to be part of my study, but for practical reasons I could not involve all of them. I thus chose to focus on the Grade 9 learners who study African languages, and so ended up with 15 Grade 9 learners as potential participants in my study. I decided to involve all 15 learners in the first data collection stage and then to choose 4 learners as participants based on this data. Some of the learners in my sample joined the school in Grade 8, and some joined the school in Grade

---

[6] Times when the schools Tuck shop was open, during breaks or afternoons after afternoon studies.

9. Not all the learners were South African. Some came from other African states, but the majority, 10, were South African. If we consider Dolby's (1999: 294) correct observation that learners moving from township schools to formerly White schools are unprepared to be taught exclusively in English, these learners differed in that they were already proficient speakers of English. Their language of learning at the school was English, and they took English First language as one of their subjects, as well as Zulu or Tswana first additional language, and were in my Human and Social Sciences group. Besides teaching them, I had a greater opportunity of being with them both formally and informally, and a greater opportunity to observe their language use in the vernacular classes as well as in the Human and Social Sciences class where the expectation was that they would use English only which is the language of teaching and learning for the subject. I did not have Afrikaans-speaking learners in my Human and Social Sciences class.

The class was made up of five learners studying Tswana (4 boys and 1 girl), one boy from South Africa and the rest from Botswana; and 10 learners studying Zulu (4 girls and 6 boys), two girls from Swaziland and the rest from South Africa. These learners also constituted friendship networks. From the language histories, a group of no more than four learners whose responses were seen to bring more light and would help give more clarity to the research was chosen. Some of these learners were lively and talkative, and although I looked at having a mix of boy and girl in each language group, I ended up with 1 Zulu girl, 1 Zulu boy, 1 Swazi[7] girl and 1 Pedi boy, who were very lively in class discussions about language related issues. I thus had 4 learners, both male and female, two boys and two girls; different language groups, Zulu, Swati and Pedi; and talkative learners as I needed to collect conversational data. I am aware that the small size of the sample means that the responses of the learners cannot be said to be representative of learners in similar situations.

---

[7] Swazi and Swati are used interchangeably to refer to the Swazi group.

3.6 My Role as Teacher and Researcher

When I started my research at the school, it seemed like it was going to be easy, being on the staff and on campus. Nothing prepared me for the challenges of conflicting interests as a Black teacher in a 'White' environment, regarding the school's language policy that excluded the African languages that I teach. It was difficult to explain the school's language policy to the learners who saw the division brought by it as an extension of the apartheid system. Keeping a balance between the two worlds proved harder than I had expected. Sometimes I closed my eyes to some of the issues such as the unequal status of the languages and just continued with my research; sometimes I became a teacher and shared the pupils concerns about the exclusion of their African languages, and having to pay extra to have lessons in them.

Whether researchers conducting participatory research can remain objective is a subject of debate. Heron and Reason (1997: 274-294) argue that "the mind and the cosmos are engaged in a co-creative dance". This means that the mind and its environments at different times continue to influence each other. When worlds and people meet, (Heron and Reason: 1997) "the meeting is shaped by our own terms of reference. When we open ourselves to meeting the given we are arrested by the presence of other". How then, they ask, can we know if we have met "anything or anyone, if the meeting is always given our own shape"? (ibid). Detachment and reflection are important skills that qualitative researchers should develop, but I am also aware of an argument against neutrality and detachment. The best way to proceed would be to identify my prejudices and biases as well as how my prior knowledge, interest and personal preference may influence the way I see and interpret data. I already had a good relationship with my learners, as their African language and Social Sciences teacher, and so my study was advantaged by the fact that I did not have to first establish a rapport with them. I had developed a relationship with students by being a multilingual Black teacher in an environment where most teachers are White and Afrikaans speaking. My learners related well to me, particularly as far as they could address me in any language they chose without restriction in proficiency, and many times I was accused of responding or behaving 'just

like Mom'. The Tswana learners called me *Mma,* the Tswana equivalent of *Mother* whether they were in class or outside, and the Zulu learners called me *Mem*, using the Zulu accent, instead of the English version, *Ma'am*, which other learners who speak neither of these South African languages preferred. I was at the same time not oblivious to the 'teacher presence' effect on the data, and pupils 'editing' of what they said because they knew me and know what I may not approve of. Davis (2001) cites Preston (1989) who argues that when respondents are aware that their speech is being observed they interact less naturally. In a similar manner Swann (1994) observes that being in the same space as the participants can affect the interaction that takes place. I however had no way of controlling learners' editing of their conversations. I could only work with the data that they voluntarily gave to me.

I continually had to ask myself whether I was looking at the learners as my pupils or as research participants. As Hitchcock and Hughes (1989: 29) correctly point out, I recognized the inevitable involvement of my personal feelings and views in my research, and would have liked to keep this in check. However, they continue to point out that interpretive social research allows and stresses the value and inevitability of the researcher becoming involved and developing relationships with the subjects of research. This enables the researcher to choose in a more direct way participant forms of observation. Since I had a close relationship with my learners who are participants of this study, even observing them hardly felt like I was intruding in their space. I did however, expect that sometimes the lines of demarcation between teacher and researcher would be blurred. Cecile Wright, (1998), in her study as a Black researcher focusing on Black learners in a multi–racial British school, points out the dilemma of being "caught in the crossfire" of relations between Black students and their White teachers. Being a Black teacher myself, in what felt like a 'White' environment where the majority of learners are Black, but teaching staff are White came with its own challenges. Sometimes, I felt that I was caught between having to uphold a language policy that I did not believe in personally, by virtue of being in an authority position and thus its supposed custodian, and sympathizing with why the children rejected it.

3.7 Data collection process

In the first data collection process, the 15 Grade 9 learners were requested to write language histories so that I could get to know their feelings about the languages that they use, where they were born, grew up, went to school, and the languages they used in those environments. I gave them the choice to write their language histories in any language that they were comfortable with, so they would be free to express themselves without unnecessary linguistic constraints. The retrospective nature of language history is useful in providing rich historical depth about the learners' language use and acquisition process. The different ways in which the learners perceived their past language use would be clearer. I hoped that the language history would give insight to their feelings and emotions about language. (An example of instructions about the learners' language histories is attached as Appendix 1). The task was given in the Zulu / Tswana language class so that the learners would feel free to explore language related issues. The class also constituted friendship networks. For example, some of the children studying Tswana have been friends since they started school in Botswana. The language histories were typed up as they were originally written by the learners without any editing or the correction of spelling mistakes. Some examples of the learners' language histories are attached as Appendix 2. The language histories were followed by interviews. I conducted three interviews with the learners at various stages of the research process. The interviews helped me to probe and expand on the learners' responses in the language histories and to find more clarity on unusual choices by individuals. Interviews are often used to provide room for discussion, to reveal issues that can be explored in more depth later by other techniques. They bring to the fore what the learners are bringing into the process by means of words, phrases and idioms.

The learners' linguistic styles and dialects can thus also be exposed to the researcher. The interviews were used to cross check the learners' language histories. The interviews were recorded and transcribed later. My interview questions were open ended to give me the opportunity to rephrase or refine them as the data collection proceeded. Interpretive research that guides this study, is deliberately open ended, to allow a change of direction

and accept the possibility of using a variety of sources of data, in so doing acknowledging the complex nature of the social world (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989: 29). Interview questions (Appendix 3) were based on responses from the learners' language histories as well as audio recorded conversations. An example of interview questions was:

Do you think the school appreciates the fact that you are Zulu, Pedi, Swati or Tswana? Do you think that the school treats you equally as speakers of different languages?

In an environment that is seen to be favouring English and Afrikaans, I wanted to understand whether the learners used African languages as a defence against, or to counteract perceived hostility towards their languages, or irrespective of what their environment was they would still feel the same need to use their languages.

A further important source of data collection was the audio recording of learners' naturally occurring conversation. The four learners were each, in turns, given a small digital audio recorder to go around with for short periods such as at break, from assembly to class, on the sport field, to record their naturally occurring conversations. The learners were not given the audio recorder to take to dormitories because I felt that this activity might intrude in their privacy. Furthermore, I could not guarantee the safety of the recorder from theft in a situation that I did not have control over. I collected no more than 2 hours of audio data for each of the four learners. These recordings took place over five weeks.

Throughout the stages, I, in an ad hoc manner recorded in a book the language use of these learners as it occurred, in class and on the campus grounds. Field notes were thus used to make note of natural conversations at 'Tuck', on campus, at the sports field, and during break. I chose this method of collecting data because field notes enable one to collect data unobtrusively at any time out of which I could reconstruct the learner's language use. The data included short pieces or verbatim parts of conversations, anecdotes that had a bearing on learners' language use like code switching, or the language they used during unpredictable significant moments such as when buying at the

'Tuck', or the language they used to find out from a teacher what was said in the staff room. These field notes not only produced data, but also formed the preliminary stages of data analysis, out of which ideas, patterns and trends of inquiry developed.

3.8 Data analysis

3.8.1 Data Analysis Techniques

I used different methods of analysis for the different kinds of data generated through my study. From the collected data, I identified dominant and less dominant discourses after reading the language histories, interview data and listening to audio-recorded data several times over. Reading the data a number of times enabled me to have a sense of the coherence of the research material. Themes were identified and further refined to be used or discarded following their relevance to my research questions. Hitchcock and Hughes, (1989: 98) argue that general units of meaning need to be related to the research focus in an effort to answer the research questions. The tools suggested by Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999: 158 – 162) to diagnose the effects of discourses were looked at - the silences, the use of metaphors, the consistencies or lack of, as well as extracting patterns and themes in the data to see if these in any way help to explain the learners' language choice and use.

My analysis, undertaken within a critical, poststructuralist framework, notes the sociopolitical context in which the discourses are used. The central importance of discourse, as in talk and conversation, has been highlighted by ethnomethodologists, and has resulted in the need and importance of exploring classroom processes by means of a detailed examination of verbatim transcripts of data (French and French in Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989: 34). The analysis of the data is therefore based on the verbatim transcripts of what the learners said orally and in writing. It was however not always easy to make out what the learners were saying because of the level of noise or many voices. I also looked at how discourses vary or remain consistent.

3.8.2 Language history

The learners' language histories gave me an indication of the learners' experiences in meaning making, the portrayal of self and sense of identity, as well as their feelings towards language and its use, and so I could identify themes that support trends of language use. In analyzing the language histories, I combined analysis of what the learners said – 'facts', as well as themes, with how they said it, by analyzing pronoun use and figurative language (Zubair in Lillis and McKinney, 2002).

3.8.3 Fieldnotes

Fieldnotes were used to assist the analysis of interaction as it occurred. I looked at what the learners said as well as how they said it, word choice or lexis, use of figurative language as well as pronoun use and at how power relations were played out in communication. I also looked at how by engaging in particular kinds of talk and behaviour, pupils performed particular identities. This I did by observing their body language, as in their use of hands to emphasize a point; or facial expressions, or laughter, or listening attentively, or somber moments, or indications of emotions like anger or displeasure and noted these in my notes. Furthermore, I looked at whether there is a relationship between specific uses of language and ways of interacting with specific aspects of identity.

3.8.4 Group Interviews

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and then coded. The interview data was used as a source in analyzing the spoken interactional data. The interview data was also used to analyze the learner's manner of expression, their emotions and feelings when they spoke. The analysis was used to determine the relationship between specific language uses and ways of interaction, and the performance of identity. I also looked at whether there would be traces of what Rampton (1995) refers to as 'language crossing' i.e. use of language

varieties associated with social or ethnic groups that the speaker does not normally belong to.

3.8.5 Recordings

3.8.5.1 Transcription of tapes

I began with the transcription of audio-recordings, opting for selective transcription of the contents of the audio–recording because of time constraints. Data was selected on the basis of relevance to the research in question, i.e. whether it indicated multilingualism, code switching, issues of inclusion or exclusion, power, and identity. The following conventions were used to transcribe audio recorded conversations:

Convention	Explanation
? , ! .	Punctuation marks used to make speech more readable
[Pause]	Pause
(Zulu)	Language other than English used is named in brackets
Mina ngumZulu Phaqa	Italics used to indicate a language other than English that is used
[I am clearly and prominently a Zulu]	English translation is in square brackets
Name:	Name of speaker

Audio recordings were labeled. Analysis of data looked at whether language was used to indicate identity, interpersonal relations, social positions, group solidarity, exploration of new relationships, status, level of education, authority, neutrality, distancing or intimacy; and the function served by code–switching.

Examples of the use of English, African languages and code–switching were identified and analyzed. Data from various sources was compared, and where there were

differences, these were investigated. Patterns as well as contradictions and surprises were identified and looked at in analysis. I took some of the findings from transcriptions back to the learners to see whether they agreed with what I had written and to check for interpretation of meaning and more clarity about issues.

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined my research design as qualitative, consisting of case studies of four learners, as well as drawing on ethnographic methods. I presented an outline of the research context, the participants, the research process as well as methods of data transcription and analysis. In the next chapter I present the data and findings from my research.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter Two I indicated that my argument on the relationship between discourse and society, how discourse constructs the social as well as the relationship between language and identity is based on poststructuralist theory (Weedon, 1997; Pennycook, 1994) and its influence on other scholars (e.g. Norton, 1997; McKay and Chick, 2001). Drawing on such theory, this chapter aims to answer my research questions:

- What are the language practices of 4 African multilingual Grade 9 learners at an officially Afrikaans and English – medium private school?
- What is the relationship between the language practices and identities of Grade 9 learners at the school?

In this chapter, I will first present case studies of the four chosen learners, drawing on their language histories and audio – recorded conversations. The learners' case studies have enabled me to focus on the different ways in which they 'perform' (Blommaert, 2005) their identities. In the case studies I will discuss the learners' language practices, their use of African languages as well as English, and how this may be related to issues of identity. Although I begin by presenting separate case studies of each learner, many of the conversations involved several of the case study learners, thus there is some cross over. I must hasten to indicate that the learners' case studies will in no way explain completely the complexities of the relationship between learners' identities, their language use and the way they place themselves in any situation. The case studies will rather partially indicate how learners can use language for identity purposes in a particular institutional space. In exploring how important language is in defining who the learners are, I particularly looked at how important an African language or English or both languages are to them, and the reasons thereof. Following the presentation of the four case studies, I move on to discuss important themes that emerged across the data: discourses of ethnic purity, learners' language practices and views on their use of

language in the institutional context. I discuss these themes in detail in analysing my data in as far as they have a bearing on the research questions of my study.

4.2 Bonga[8]

In her own words, Bonga was born in '*EThekwini –Umlazi*'[9], but her parents have since moved to Gauteng, the industrialized commercial hub of South Africa. Bonga speaks Zulu at home, as well as English. She reports that she learnt English after she started attending a multiracial primary school, and her parents spoke to her in English at home and so helped to fuel her fluency in the language for academic purposes. In her language history Bonga says that she initially spoke Zulu as a toddler, and at the same time also emphasizes the importance of speaking English fluently, and the help she got from her parents to achieve this:

> I learned english after in primary school and my parents started talking
> english to me so I can learn early and speak it fluently.[10]

and the resulting effect of this help:

> ….but my English is better than my Zulu.

Bonga speaks Zulu, English and Xhosa. She learnt Zulu and English from home, and Xhosa from other family members such as her uncle, aunt and her cousins. She indicates in her essay that her English is better than her Zulu. Bonga is a talkative girl, and will take part actively in any debate in class, or simply start one if the class seems dull. She loves asking and answering questions (even those that are not directed to her) and easily dominates the class.

In the context of a classroom discussion that took place during a combined Zulu and Tswana class, an interesting audio recording surfaced. The learners were doing an

---

[8] The pupils names have been changed to protect their identity.
[9] EThekwini is Zulu for Durban and Umlazi is a Township outside Durban in South Africa.
[10] The learner's language histories have not been edited; they are reproduced verbatim.

50

activity (See Appendix 4) with a reading based on the topic of multilingualism. In the text a girl tells of the languages that they speak at home and with relatives and family members. The girl indicates that they speak Zulu and Tsonga at home because her mother is Zulu and her father is Tsonga. This topic sparked a discussion in class about who speaks what language and why. I actively participated in the discussion playing the role of facilitator, trying to get all learners to contribute and indicate their language proficiencies.

Bonga's own definition of who she is, in this conversation is full of meaning. In describing herself, Bonga foregrounds her ethnolinguistic identity and emphasizes her ethnic purity:

> '*Mina NgingumZulu phaqa, abazali bam bobabili ngamazulu'*
> (Zulu) [I am clearly and prominently a Zulu, both my parents are Zulu]

In the statement above, there is no mistaking the pride that Bonga takes in her being Zulu. The use of the emphatic first person,*' mina' (I; me)* is meant to emphasize and challenge whoever doubts her. It is also a statement of reaction to indicate contrast with a different identity. She further closes her first statement with the powerful '*phaqa',* the meaning of which is equivalent to 'clearly', 'prominently', or 'stand out without fear', to challenge any different opinion about her identity. The use of the first person possessive *'bami'* (my) in referring to her parents serves to justify her ownership of her identity. She further adds the quantitative pronoun '*bobabili'* (both, the two) to close her argument about her purity. She reiterates, *'Mina NgingumZulu phaqa!'* [I stand out clearly as a prominent Zulu] in her language history to give her identity purity, exclusiveness, completeness, and adding the quantitative pronoun *bobabili* [both, the two] to refer to her parents closes her argument about her purity. The phrase *abazali bam **bobabili** ngamazulu* [**both** my parents are Zulu] completes her picture in dispelling any doubt about her 'pure' origin: not one, but both her parents are Zulu.

Bonga's expression of her identity,*'Mina NgingumZulu phaqa!'* [I am clearly and prominently a Zulu] is similar to the manner in which some of the Zulu participants in

Dlamini's (2001: 205) study identify themselves using ethnic identities in KwaZulu Natal. She points to the use of terms like *uwuZulu Zu, uZulu woqobo* (you are Zulu Zu, or you are a real Zulu). These terms are used to demonstrate descent lines associated with entrenching one's ancestry, as well as to disqualify others from claiming full Zulu identity.

Despite these strong expressions of Zuluness and clear affinity to her ethnicity, Bonga began writing her language history essay in English. (The learners had an option to use any language). This was probably because it was written in the Zulu class, and so she regarded it as an academic piece of writing which should be written in an academic language, English. Considering her powerful expression of Zuluness, one might have expected Bonga to leave out her English name even if she has it, but she does not. Furthermore, she is generally called by her English name at school, even in the Zulu class. Bonga opens her essay by saying:

> Who am I?
> My name is Faith, Ntokozo, Sibongiseni, Bongeka, Lethu and my surname
> is Ndlela which is my fathers and my mothers surname is Cele.

She thus foregrounds her English name, and her Zulu names follow. For a girl who seems to feel so strongly about being Zulu, it is surprising that she does not start with her Zulu name. It is especially surprising because some children in desegregated schools use their African names to be politically correct in the context of the new South Africa. In the past, when African children went to school, many African teachers at the local primary schools expected a child to have a **school** name. The practice of this school name originated with the White philanthropists or missionaries who started schools in rural areas and could not pronounce their learners' names. Learners were thus given either an English, and later Afrikaans name to use at school to enable teachers to address them. This became a practice even when African people, who could pronounce African names, became teachers. The expectation was that one's identity was not complete without a 'school' name, and the African name was not acceptable at school. Teachers even went as far as giving a child an English name if s/he did not have one. In his autobiography, *Long Walk*

to Freedom (1995: 15-16), the former President of South Africa, Rolihlahla Mandela recounts how he got the name Nelson from his teacher because he did not have an English name. As time went by, people increasingly, because of the political climate, felt insulted by the rejection of their African names by the apartheid system, and decided to regard their African names with pride. It is also true that a number of parents in more recent years have done away with the practice of giving their children English names and have given them African names only. Fred Khumalo (2007), writing for a popular Sunday Newspaper points to the fact that African children's names were a sign of the times. African children are in many communities named after important events surrounding their birth. He refers to many children born during the dawn of democracy being called *Nkululeko* [Freedom]. He jokingly refers to 'adventurous' African parents who have decided to name their children after the present technology, citing names such as Network Madondo, Subscriber Zulu, Call Me Mkhize, Nokia Khumalo, indicating the waning pressure to be seen to have a 'politically correct' name. To this effect, Charlene Smith (1999) in her book, *Baby Names for South African Babies,* points out that even before 1994, a number of people including White and coloured families gave their children traditionally African names. It is possible that this was an effort to reach out to Africans and to embrace a united community of South Africans that transcends boundaries of race and ethnicity.

The use of English in opening her essay as well as the foregrounding of her English name, Faith, reveals other markers of Bonga's identity, and an identity that is not as rigid as might be expected based on her strong feelings about being Zulu discussed above. While Bonga moves comfortably between English and Zulu in her essay, and uses both languages with ease, she writes more of her essay in English, with thirteen lines in English, and six in Zulu. In contrast to this, when it comes to oral language use, her audio-recorded conversation are mostly conducted in Zulu.

In the following conversation, three learners, Bonga, Merafe and Kgomotso are discussing the baptism of one of the learners (Merafe) that is going to take place the following Saturday in church. The conversation happened in class as learners were busy

with a Human and Social Sciences task in which they had to complete a project on Natural disasters. This involved finding information in news papers about the chosen disaster, cutting and pasting pictures. The class was informal and a lot of talking about various topics was going on as pupils moved around sharing papers, scissors and glue stick.

1. **Merafe:** I'm getting baptized …[11]
2. **Bonga:** *Siyakubongela* (Zulu) [Congratulations]
3. **Merafe:** Saturday
4. **Bonga:** *Ngizazokubukela yhazi!* (Zulu) [I will come and watch]
5. **Merafe:** Yeah! You must come.
6. **Kgomotso:** Ill pray for you, *Bra*![12] *Maar* you mustn't forget the rule
7. (Afrikaans) [I'll pray for you, Brother, but you mustn't forget the rule]
8. **Merafe:** Huh?
9. **Kgomotso:** Do not sin or anything like that …
10. **Bonga:** *Merafe ungenzi izinto ezigangile* (Zulu) [Merafe you should
11. not do naughty things] You can't be baptized and still go back to
12. your normal life.

Whilst Merafe (a Tswana speaker) opens the conversation in the common language, English, and continues to speak English with Kgomotso (a Pedi speaker who is struggling to learn Zulu), Bonga interacts with them in Zulu. She understands what they say perfectly because she is a fluent speaker of English as well, but she chooses not to speak English here. She interacts with them naturally as if she is not even aware that they are speaking English. Her language use is relaxed and informal, *Ngizazokubukela yhazi!* (Zulu) [I will come and watch]. She is also aware that the two learners who she is speaking to, Merafe and Kgomotso, are not fluent speakers of Zulu. Merafe takes Tswana as a subject and not Zulu, while Kgomotso is struggling to learn Zulu and speaks Pedi. From the way she participates, it seems that she is convinced that they must understand what she says, and Merafe's response in line 5 shows that he does indeed understand. The message she is conveying in Zulu is actually very serious given the way baptism is regarded at the school: ***Congratulations; I will come and watch***.[13] In line 9 she

---

[11] Reference is made to lines rather than to sentences.
[12] Tsotsitaal township language for Brother.
[13] The watching is done as a symbol of support at the school, because it involves leaving whatever other commitments one has to go to church and support a friend or whoever gets baptised. The level of one's

54

paraphrases Kgomotso's words (spoken in line 8) ***You should not do naughty things***; and thus if paraphrasing, it becomes less of a problem if they do not understand. She clearly does not see the need to speak English because judging by Merafe's response, the Zulu that she uses is not too complex to understand. Merafe's problem from his response in line 7 is rather understanding Kgomotso's cryptic reference to the 'rule' (line 6) and not the language used. In line 9 she is merely rephrasing what Kgomotso has already said in English in the previous conversational turn, thus it would not be a problem if either Merafe or Kgomotso had not understood her. She further goes on to repeat this message in English. (Lines 10–11).

Despite her strong feeling about her being 'proper' Zulu, Bonga cannot deny the influence and crossing borders that comes with being related to Xhosa speakers, as her father's brother is married to a Xhosa woman (follow up interview). So she claims, she can also speak a little Xhosa:

> *Ngiyasazi futhi nesixhosa* I learned it from my uncle, aunt and cousins
> but then I don't know it that well. (Zulu)
> [I also know Xhosa I learned it from my uncle, aunt and cousins but then
> I don't know it that well.]

This admission can also be seen to illustrate Rampton's notion of language crossing as discussed in 2.8, where Bonga is taking use of a language that she generally does not regard as her own in demonstration of alternative solidarity with her Xhosa relatives.

Multilingualism, as pointed out by Slabbert and Finlayson (2000: 125), is common in many South African townships, and gives users of many languages access to a complex linguistic network. Whilst Bonga writes more in English than in Zulu, and speaks mostly in Zulu to emphasize an ethnolinguistic identity, she also uses code – switching in her language history as we see above. In contrast to the frequent use of code – switching as a strategy to accommodate others (e.g. Ncoko, Osman and Cockcoft, 2000), Bonga seems to be using code – switching here to show solidarity with the 'imagined community' of a

---

popularity at the school is measured by the number of people who attend the service and stand up in church as a gesture of support when one gets baptised.

Zulu ethnic group (Kanno and Norton, 2003) and is definitely not accommodating Kgomotso and Merafe. Kanno and Norton (2003) apply Benedict Anderson's idea of nations as 'imagined communities' to language learning and identity, explaining that these 'refer to groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination' (2003: 241). Bonga signals her links to a broader imagined community of Zulu speakers when she insists on speaking Zulu in conversations with peers whom she knows do not usually speak Zulu themselves. This is an unusual manifestation of the use of code – switching to mark group solidarity, as in this case, members of the imagined relevant group were not present in the conversation.

As we can see, even though Bonga articulates her identity as primarily Zulu, she challenges this very rigid construction by being an articulate English speaker and by being influenced by other markers of her identity such as her school environment. She thus demonstrates freedom to adapt and negotiate her identity as she pleases despite her expression of ethnic purity.

4.3 Kgomotso

> *A! mfana nna ke moPedi: my mother is Pedi, ke goletse ko maPeding gareng ga maPedi, ke moPedi feela full time.*[14]

In his language history, Kgomotso writes that he was born in '*Bushbuckridge ko Mpumalanga*' [15] and reports speaking Pedi at home with his parents. He learnt English from Grade 1 in a township school. Kgomotso thus speaks Pedi and English having learnt Pedi from his parents and English from school. Like Bonga, he says his English proficiency is better than his Pedi. Kgomotso is not as talkative as the rest of the class. He will not initiate a conversation, and will only participate if drawn in. He speaks Pedi fluently, but struggles with the Zulu that he is learning. Thus he tries his best to speak Zulu, but is most comfortable addressing himself in either Pedi or English. He speaks English better than Zulu. He also stammers, which is probably why he does not speak

---

[14] A**!** man I'm Pedi, my mother is Pedi I grew up with the Pedi, among the Pedi, I am only Pedi full time.
[15] Bushbuckridge in Mpumalanga.

much. In a similar expression of pride to Bonga, Kgomotso, in his language history, refers to himself as:

> *Ke moPedi, Koa gae re bolela sePedi, mme waka ke moPedi le*
> *ntate waka* (Pedi)
> [I am Pedi, at home we speak Pedi, my mother is Pedi, and so is my father]

His use of Pedi to define himself, and mentioning both his parents individually as Pedi, ensures that no one should doubt the purity of his origin.

> ***Mme*** *waka ke moPedi le* **<u>ntate</u>** *waka* [My **<u>mother</u>** is Pedi and my **father**
> is Pedi]

Kgomotso's strong feelings about his identity come through in the way he starts his essay, using the first person *'Ke ...'* (I …). In a similar manner to Bonga, he uses the first person possessive *'waka'* (my) to refer to his mother and father, and so owns his family and parents' identity.

Unlike Bonga who code-switches when writing her essay, Kgomotso writes his entire essay in Pedi. Even though he indicates that at home they speak English and Pedi, he says this in Pedi and not in English. He also alludes to the importance of English as a global language, but pits this against the importance of his local Pedi which he says he and his parents speak at home:

> *Koa gae re bolela Spedi le sekgoa feela, kagore sekgoa ke polelo ya*
> *mmusho o monts`i wa lefase le.* (Pedi)
> [At home we only speak Pedi and English, because English is a language
> used by many governments in the world.]

I find Kgomotso's use of *because [kagore]* above interesting, because it is unusual and unexpected. It seems that he feels the need to justify his use of another language other than Pedi at home. In his essay Kgomotso emphasises the need to speak Pedi:

> *Spedi ke polelo yaka le batswadi e bile keya e rata*! (Pedi)
> [Pedi is my language and my parents' and so I love it!]

To further show how important being Pedi is for him and emphasize the idea of ethnic purity, Kgomotso points out in the classroom conversation that even his stepfather is Pedi. He thus emphasizes that he does not come from a family of ethnically and linguistically 'mixed' descent, and so can lay claim to a pure identity:

1. **Kgomotso:** A! *mfana nna ke moPedi*: my mother is Pedi*, ke goletse ko*
2. *maPeding   gareng ga maPedi, ke moPedi feela* full time
3. (Pedi) [A! man I'm Pedi, my mother is Pedi I grew up with the Pedi,
4. among the Pedi, I am only Pedi full time]
5. **T:** And your parents? [Pause] Do they speak Zulu?
6. **Kgomotso:** My parents? [Pause] Every single one of them is Pedi
7**. T:** How many are they *ge o re* every single one of them?
8. (Pedi) [How many are they when you say every single one of them?]
9. **Kgomotso:** About two [Pause]
10. [Group laughs]
11. **Kgomotso:** O K! Actually no, about three [Pause] I have a stepfather, *ke*
12. *moPedi le yena.* (Pedi)
13. [O K! Actually no, about three [Pause] I have a stepfather, he is also Pedi]

At a glance, the use of the emphatic "Every single one of them" to refer to his parents seems grammatically problematic, until one realises that Kgomotso has more than two parents.

However, despite being surrounded by so much Pedi, Kgomotso indicates:

I am more proficient in English than Pedi at school

Interestingly though, he feels that his proficient English is not enough to hide the fact that he is Pedi-speaking. This is evident in an informal conversation with another learner in a Zulu class when he discusses his linguistic proficiency with friends:

Lindiwe: *Kgomotso, o bua sePedi?* (Sotho)
          [Kgomotso, do you speak Pedi?]
Kgomotso: Yea! You can even hear my accent.

This can be interpreted as that, even though Kgomotso claims to speak English better than Pedi, he feels that his Pedi accent is strong enough to give him away as a Pedi rather

than an English speaker. He probably is aware, as Garcia (1995), indicates, that language attributes like style and accent are symbolic assets that can determine the level of acceptance in a particular group. Thus he signals his awareness of his accent before someone decides to use this against him. Kgomotso's language use depicts his general comfort with his identity. In a conversation in a Zulu class where the learners were 'competing' about who could articulate their ethnicity better, Kgomotso, responding to Bonga and Lindiwe, code – switches among three languages:

1. **Bonga:** '*Mina NgingumZulu phaqa abazali bam bobabili ngamazulu'* (Zulu)
2. [I am clearly and prominently a Zulu both my parents are Zulu]
3. **Lindiwe:** I'm Swati, my mother is Swati, my father is Swati, the whole
4. way from beginning to end, Swati!
5. **Kgomotso:** A! **mfana**[16] *nna ke moPedi*: my mother is Pedi*, ke goletse ko*
6. *maPeding gareng ga maPedi, ke moPedi feela* **full time** (Pedi)
7. [**A! man I'm Pedi, my mother is Pedi I grew up with the Pedi, among**
8. **the Pedi, I am only Pedi full time**]
9. **T:** *O bolela sePedi* but you are doing Zulu?
10. (Pedi) [You speak Pedi but you are doing Zulu?]
11. **Kgomotso:** Yea! Cause I want to learn Zulu.

Youth in many South African townships have developed a vocabulary used among affinity groups, the knowledge of which illustrates that one is part of the group (Motshegoa, 2007). Even words that are part of a conventional language are used in a different manner that is only known to a particular group. Thus membership to a particular group ensures that one is familiar with how the terminology works. "Mfana' is one of those words that have acquired another meaning other than the conventional in the township. *Mfana* is a term used among friends in the township to indicate comradeship and closeness. It is also a Zulu word for son or boy, but was adopted in the township language such as Tsotsitaal to refer to friends. Writing for a daily newspaper on a weekly basis, Motshegoa writes an article in township language entitled *'Tsa Kasi*[17]' (Sotho) [From the Township]. The language used in the article is a mixture of African languages

---

[16] Mfana is township language for 'friend' or to show comradeship. It is also Zulu for boy or son. In this extract it is used to refer to a friend.

[17] *Kasi* is the corruption of the Afrikaans word lokasie for location, an apartheid term referring to a residential area for Africans, which more often than not, is a township. *Kasi* is then used to refer to the township.

and Tsotsitaal. It is a language that only people familiar with township discourse understand.

When Kgomotso joins in the competition for ethnic purity (lines 5-6), he asserts his 'full-time Pediness through code – switching amongst three languages: township language (A! **mfana** *nna ke moPedi*)[18] to fit in with township boys; English, (my mother is Pedi) to fit in with his affinity group that speaks Zulu, and Pedi (*ke goletse ko maPeding gareng ga maPedi,*) to fit in with his 'imagined' community of the larger Pedi group. The comfort with which Kgomotso uses township language ties in with, (as pointed out in Chapter 2) Slabbert and Finlayson's (2000: 125) observation of the use of language in the townships to position one in the subcultures of the city and its divisions. The township language gives him access to and demonstrates his solidarity with township discourses. He uses it to affirm a social*, (mfana*-man*)*, and an ethnic identity, (ke *moPedi feela*- I am just Pedi). Slabbert and Finlayson's (2000: 125) claim, that the use of "secret languages"[19] like Tsotsitaal and Iscamtho in townships can be used as manifestation of group identity.

Pedi 'full time' as Kgomotso is, there is also another interesting side of him. He is one of a group of learners that comes from an affluent or upper class background. In one recorded conversation, he indicates his ability to participate in linguistic exchange appropriate to his class and community when discussing cars. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1991: 18) concept of 'cultural capital', (2.4) we can see Kgomotso's language use here as indicative of his social class position and power. In the following linguistic exchange with friends, the interaction is in a particular way, different from emphasis on ethnicity because the exchange is different. His performance of identity here is multifaceted: firstly, they are all boys, thus stereotypically interested in cars; secondly, he is part of a group of youth - age 13 -14; and thirdly, he, like them, is a member of a similar social class – they come from affluent families. The conversation below took place with some male friends at break. The friends are looking through a *CAR* magazine and discussing the latest cars.

---

[18] **[A! man I'm Pedi].**

[19] One has to be part of a particular group to understand the discourse used in secret languages in townships. These languages are secret because they are not easily interpretable or understandable to every one except members of the group.

1. **C:** *Nayi le* ML *entsha.* (Zulu) [Here's this new ML]
2. **S:** *Hayi yimbi yimbi le moto*, the new ML *imbi*, I don't want to lie to
3. you (Zulu)
4. [No, it's ugly, ugly this car, the new ML it's ugly, I do not want to
5. lie to you]
6. **Kgomotso:** It's nice
7. **S:** *Hayi imbi* (Zulu) [No, it's ugly]
8. **Kgomotso:** This is just the ML 350
9. **C:** *Kufuneka i*AMG *yakhona* (Zulu) [They need to design its AMG]
10. **S:** *Hayi imbi.* (Zulu) [No, it's ugly]
11. **C:** *Yi* entry level *yakhona,* that's why *imbi.* (Zulu) [This is it's entry
12. level, that's why it is ugly]
13. **S:** *Kubi loku ...* (Zulu) [This is ugly]
14. **Kgomotso:** How can you make a car that goes 400km/h*? He!*
15. *kungathi...* (Zulu)[How can you make a car that goes 400km/h*?*
16. It's like …]
17. **S:** *Hayi inhle ke leyo...* (Zulu) [Now that is beautiful!]
18. **C:** *I* GT3 *nayo* is not a joke. (Zulu) [The GT3 also is not a joke]
19. **S:** Have you seen the 911 turbo *Bra,* that is what I want.
20. (Township) [Have you seen the 911 turbo Brother, that is what I
21. want.]
22. **C:** To believe Bandile's uncle's got a Cayene S, and its Black
23. **Kgomotso:** But it doesn't touch the Range Rover Sport, the fastest
24. SUV.
25 S: *Nako ke mfana, uyabona, lapho ungishayile.* (Zulu) [Now there's
26. something I can't argue against].

The sophisticated linguistic exchange above, illustrating Kgomotso's knowledge of the discourse of luxury cars in English, occurs irrespective of how attached the learner seems to be to his ethnicity (Kgomotso - *Pedi, full time*) because the guiding principle underlying the discussion is social class and status and so ethnicity and the African language or ethnolinguistic identity that goes with it takes a backseat. The conversation above takes place in a mix of English and Zulu. The other two Zulu home language speakers are taking Zulu as a subject at school. In the four contributions that Kgomotso makes to the conversation above, three are in English. The third (lines 14 – 15) is started in English, and then switches to Zulu, which is a language that the other friends are predominantly speaking. This he probably does to fit in with his 'affinity' group here who are mostly speaking Zulu in the conversation. The limited use of Zulu here by Kgomotso can be described with Ramptons' term 'crossing', because Kgomotso is

61

generally not comfortable speaking Zulu. In the conversation he says only two words in Zulu, but is comfortable expressing himself in English. One doubts if he would have expressed himself as well in this conversation, or been able to display his knowledge of cars if he had used Zulu or Pedi. The use of English here is indicative of progress as in their social class, modernity as in knowing the latest models of luxury cars; general knowledge of cars indicated by their explanation of models and the technology that forms the basis of their manufacture and linguistic empowerment as in the use of English and the terminology associated with the cars. His utterances grow in length as he gets deeper into the topic. His first contribution is just two words long, the next is six, followed by a long complex sentence that indicates his growing confidence in his speech and topic. The last sentence clearly shows his confidence with the use of English and the topic of conversation – luxury cars.

Even though Kgomotso articulates his identity as a Pedi *full time,* we have clearly seen a *time* in which he was more of a member of his affinity group of wealthy young boys than Pedi. In contrast to his use of Pedi in his language history, with his friends in the conversation above he spoke mainly English. This is the *time* when social class position and status, as well as gender superseded his ethnicity. Also this is the *time* when the use of English is for practical reasons; for easy expression, to be understood, to use fitting terminology. Thus we see the fluidity of Kgomotso's identity where at different moments and depending on the context, different aspects are foregrounded. We also see that being Pedi does not mean that Kgomotso cannot also be a boy, be wealthy and be young, other aspects of his identity. A person uses language to negotiate a sense of self within and across different sites at different times exactly because identity is multiple and contradictory (Peirce, 1995: 13; Kapp, 2000: 232). Similarly, Blommaert points out that "the performance of identity is not a matter of articulating *one* identity, but of the mobilisation of a whole *repertoire* of identity features converted into complex and subtle moment to moment speaking positions" (2005: 232). Whilst speaking and writing in Pedi functions as an important marker of ethnic identity for Kgomotso in some contexts, in the above exchange he uses English as a form of symbolic capital that helps him gain social status in the group. As he continues to position and reposition himself with new linguistic

varieties, we are reminded that all human activity, takes place within a web of socially constructed fields as Bourdieu, (1993) argues, all of which change with time and circumstances. Thus Kgomotso's language practices here show several levels of solidarity and position him in multiple ways, rather than as simply Pedi.

4.4 Lindiwe

In her language history, Lindiwe writes that she was born in Swaziland. She reports that she speaks "Swati"[20] and English at home as well as with her relatives. She went to a multiracial pre-school. Lindiwe learnt Swati at home but was also taught the language formally in Grade 1 and learnt English throughout her primary school. Apart from Swati and English, Lindiwe also speaks Zulu. She learnt Swati and English from home and school, and learnt Zulu from friends. In a similar expression of ethnic pride to Bonga and Kgomotso, but using English, Lindiwe describes herself in her language history thus:

> I'm Swati, my mother is Swati, my father is Swati, the whole way from
> beginning to end, Swati!

Lindiwe, like Bonga and Kgomotso, uses the first person 'I' to identify herself. However, Lindiwe differs from both Bonga and Kgomotso in her writing. While Bonga code-switches between English and Zulu, and Kgomotso writes in Pedi only, Lindiwe writes her language history in English only. She may not have felt comfortable to write in Swati, a language that is not offered at the school, and probably feels that she does not have enough confidence to write in Zulu, even though she takes Zulu as a subject at school, if one considers her reference to lack of fluency in Zulu as expressed below. While she, like Bonga, points out the help she got from her parents to improve her English, she also explains her lack of confidence in Zulu:

> I started learning to speak English when I was in pre-school
> and from that day on my parents started speaking English
> with me. I have never spoke Zulu I only started speaking Zulu in
> grade 9. (language history)

---

[20] Also referred to as Swazi.

She emphasizes her fluency in English twice:

> My first language was Siswati but as I grew up I gradually started
> knowing English more than Siswati,

and like Bonga and Kgomotso she says that:

> My English is better than my Siswati.

Lindiwe is more comfortable with using English only, or mixing Swazi and Zulu if she is not speaking English completely. Below is an extract from an audio recorded conversation in the Zulu class. Lindiwe expresses her pride in being Swati:

> **B:** (Looking at and referring to Lindiwe) This one is Swati.
> **Lindiwe:** I am Swati, my mother is Swati, my father is Swati,
> the whole way from beginning to end, Swati!

Using the phrase, *"from beginning to end",* Lindiwe indicates her view that every part of her is unmistakenly Swati. In the above extract, Lindiwe like Bonga and Kgomotso thus foregrounds her clear affinity to being Swati, and thus to her ethnicity.

While Lindiwe uses English alone to write her essay, her conversations are conducted more in Swati than English and Zulu. The following audio recorded conversation took place in the Zulu / Tswana class. Lindiwe and Kgomotso were trying to explain to the other learners that they had to record their normal conversation for my study:

1. **Kgomotso:** *Re tlo tshwanela go bolela* (Pedi) [We need to speak]
2. **B:** Ngani? (Zulu)[About what?]
3. **Lindiwe:** Conversation, *noma yini*, like *i*conversation (Zulu / Swati)[21]
4. [Conversation, anything, like, just conversation]
5. **B:** What conversation?

---

[21] Swati/ Swazi and Zulu are very similar, and do sometimes use the same words. It can thus be difficult to pin a word to either language where similar or the same words are interchangeably acceptable in both languages.

6. **Lindiwe:** *Angnendzaba,* ***angnetaba*** *angnandaba!* (Swati) (Part Sotho) (Zulu)
7. [I don't mind (what topic we speak about)]
8. **B:** *Heyi! Ukhulumani manje wena?* (Zulu)[Hey! What language are you
9. speaking now?]
10. **Lindiwe:** *IsiPedi. Angnandzaba, angnendaba siSwati!* (Zulu, Swati, Zulu)
11. [I am talking Pedi. I don't care (what you think) (I am talking) Swati!]
[Pause]
12. **Lindiwe:** Smirnoff!
13. **Kgomotso:** *Uyayithanda!* (Zulu) [You like it!]
14. **Teacher:** *Ubani okhuluma nge*Sminorff? (Zulu) [Who is speaking
15. about Smirnoff]
16. **Group:** *ULindiwe!* (Zulu) [It's Lindiwe]
17. **Lindiwe:** *Ha! Mem, ngizifundzela le ncwadi!* (Swati) [Ha! Ma'am I'm
18. just reading this book / magazine]
19. **Kgomotso:** *Unamanga uyayithanda!* (Zulu) [You are lying you like it!]
20. **Lindiwe:** *Uzamukutzini*? (Swati) [What are you (implying) trying to
21. say?]

In five of her six contributions in the conversation above, Lindiwe uses more Swati than English, (lines 3, 6, 10, 17, 20) and in three contributions mixes her Swati with Zulu or Sotho (lines 3, 6 and 10). She seems to use Swati more when she is defensive (line 17). Since none of the participants in her group speak Swati, she may, like Bonga in the conversation discussed above, be using Swati to pledge solidarity with her 'imagined community' (Kanno and Norton, 2003) of Swati ethnic group than for the benefit of her audience, none of whom is Swati speaking. While in one expression she throws in some imperfect Sotho (line 6) *angnetaba*[22] (the correct Sotho version would be *ha kena taba* [I don't care], in line 3 she mixes English and Zulu / Swati in one sentence. Where she uses the word Smirnoff,[23] it is because there is no Swazi / Zulu word for Smirnoff. In a different audio recorded conversation with a different group, Lindiwe uses English and Zulu:

1. **T:** You should take turns using the recorder.
2. **Bonga:** I'm taking it at break
3. **Lindiwe:** I'm taking it Monday. …
4. **Zola:** (Taking recorder) *Yima ka* **nyane.** [Wait **a bit**] [Zulu / **Sotho***]
5. (Group laughs)

---

[22] The prefix that she uses ***ang*** in *angnetaba* preceeds the Nguni – Swati or Zulu root *ndaba* or the Sotho root *taba (*as she uses it) to indicate a negative form.
[23] A particular brand of vodka.

6. **C:** Kwena! Listen to Zola!

7. **Lindiwe:** She is trying, guys! (To speak Sotho)

8. **C:** *Kanyane?* (more laughter) (Supposed to be Sotho for *Ha*

9. *nyane*) [A bit]

10. **Zola:** *Ke bua seSotho* (Sotho) [I'm speaking Sotho]

11**. C:** *Ha nyane…!* (Sotho) [A bit]

12. **Thokozani:** *Khuluma khuluma uzohlazeka*! (Zulu)[Speak (Zulu), Speak

13. (Zulu) or you will be embarrassed!]

14**. Lindiwe:** *Mem uThokozani ujabule kangaka!* (Zulu)[Ma'am

15. Thokozani is so excited!]

16**. C:** (to Lindiwe) *Uyamthanda u*Thokozani! (Zulu) [You like

17. Thokozani!]

18. **Lindiwe:** I like Thokozani because …

19. (Laughter)

20. **Lindiwe:** *Ngiyamthanda uThokozani ngoba muhle!* (Zulu)[I like

21. Thokozani because he is handsome!]

22. **Group:** [Loudly] *Hay bo!* (Zulu) [Tone of disbelief] [NO –O –O!]

23. (Noise)

24. **Kgomotso:** Gents! *Tholang*! Guys Stop! Lindiwe is blushing![24] (Sotho)

25. [Gents! Be quiet! Guys Stop! Lindiwe is blushing!]

26. **Lindiwe:** I'm not blushing! Why would I blush?

27. **Kgomotso:** You are blushing!

28. **Lindiwe:** *Unamanga!* I'm always smiling guys! (Zulu/ Swati)[You are

29. lying! I'm always smiling guys!]

30.**Kgomotso:**   You   were   not   smiling   you   were   laughing

31. **Lindiwe:** You made me laugh. I'm not smiling now Kgomotso. I

32. wasn't even blushing

33. **Kgomotso:** Exactly why are you blushing?

34**. Lindiwe:** I wasn't blushing. Ha! Shut up! (Siren) *Masihambeni*

35. siye klasini. Hayi suka! (Zulu)[I wasn't blushing. Ha! Shut

36. up! (Siren) Let's go to (the next) class. Go away!]

In the nine responses that Lindiwe makes above, five are in English only (lines 3, 7, 18, 26, 31/2, two are in Zulu only (lines 14, 20) and two are in a mixture of English and Zulu (lines 28, 34/5). If Lindiwe is not speaking English or Swazi only, she speaks minimal Zulu, or mixes it with another language, either Swati or English. In line 8, she uses English to defend Zola, who is Swati, and who is being teased for her lack of proficiency in Sotho. She may feel an ethnic attachment to Zola who is also Swati, and thus assumes the role of mediator and protector. Her use of English ensures that everyone in the group

---

[24] I found it interesting that Kgomotso says Lindiwe is blushing, a reaction that is normally associated with fair skinned people. I think that this may be because even though Lindiwe is dark skinned, blushing, a 'White' reaction is an expectation in this 'White' environment of learning.

understands her, which would not be the case if she used Swati, a language that she is also more fluent in than Zulu, Sotho or Tswana, but which is not widely spoken at the school. Her language choices are a linguistic means of negotiating different identities: Swati, in the earlier conversation, to pledge solidarity with her ethnic group; English to fit in with her peers who do not speak Swati, and Zulu to fit in with her classmates, most of whom, like her, take Zulu as a subject.

In the above extracts she uses English to plead, persuade and call for understanding from the rest of the group, and would probably not articulate this clearly enough in Zulu. She could say the same in Swati, which she is fluent in, but it is not clear whether the group's limited knowledge of Swati would have enabled them to understand her message that clearly. Lindiwe, who has been speaking English only up to line 7 switches to Zulu in response to what Thokozani (line 12) is saying to Zola in Zulu. This results in her being teased (line 16) and the reason for her switch in language being regarded as suspect – that she switches to Zulu to accommodate and impress Thokozani because she likes him. She is thus seen as making an extra effort to accommodate him, something that she does not seem to do with others. She starts her response in English (line 18) but stops amidst laughter to speak Zulu (line 20), probably to make sure that even though she is not speaking to Thokozani directly, (lines 14: *Mem uThokozani ujabule kangaka!* (Zulu) [Ma'am Thokozani is so excited!] and 20: *Ngiyamthanda uThokozani ngoba muhle!* (Zulu) [I like Thokozani because he is handsome!]), he gets to hear what she is saying. Her admission (line 20) that she likes Thokozani is followed by a chorus of protest (line 22) from the group, and she reverts to English (line 26) to defend herself properly from further teasing (line 27) ensuring that there are no language barriers preventing the others from understanding her. In line 28 she uses Zulu / Swati to deny that she is blushing: *Unamanga!* [You are lying!], and English to try and convince the group: *I'm always smiling guys!*

In line 31 Lindiwe uses English to accuse: *You made me laugh*, and to deny: *I'm not smiling now Kgomotso, I wasn't even blushing.* She avoids the use of complex sentences when using Zulu, but has no problem using them when she speaks English. As we can see

from the above conversations, Lindiwe moves across different languages with ease. She seems to use English more to defend, mediate, protect, plead, persuade, deny, convince and to accuse. She also seems to use Zulu to accommodate or impress. Despite alluding to being Swati from 'beginning to end', Lindiwe cannot deny the influence of those around her, Zulu because she learns Zulu, and Sotho or Tswana because some of her classmates speak these languages. She can also be seen to be foregrounding her gender identity in using Zulu to impress the boy, Thokozani. We can, as Blommaert (2005: 231) indicates, also see her not only shifting from one language variety to the other, but shifting positions and identities, from being Zola's classmate to being a fellow Swazi; from being a Grade 9 learner to being Swazi from beginning to end; and style from pleading to defending. We can thus see that her being 'Swati from beginning to end' is not about her language only. Her language use is one of the many ways through which she can construct her multiple identities.

4.5 Thabang

Thabang differed from the three learners discussed thus far, Bonga, Kgomotso and Lindiwe, in the manner in which he articulated his identity. In his essay, he says that he was born in Gauteng, South Africa. He writes that his home language is Zulu and that at home they speak Zulu, Sotho and Tswana. He can speak four languages fluently, Zulu, Tswana, Sotho and English, and speaks a little Afrikaans. He learnt the first three languages from home, and English from school.

Thabang is regarded as a problem learner by most teachers at the school. He is seen as not taking his work seriously, is forever asking to leave class, and if denied permission, simply disappears. His work is never up to-date. He spends a lot of time in the Principal's office where teachers report him for all sorts of misdemenours, from not submitting portfolio work to disrupting classes. In an audio recorded conversation in the Zulu class, this is how Thabang identified himself:

1. **Teacher:** Mfanafuthi?
2. **Mfanafuthi:** My father is Swati, my mother is Zulu [Pause]

68

3. **Thabang:** *Mina angazi ukuthi ngiyini* [Pause] (group laughs) *Ugogo wami*
4. *nguDube, Umkhulu wam umTswana umama'm ngumSuthu*[25]*, mina*
5. *ngumZulu* (Zulu)
6. [I do not know what I am [Pause] My grandmother is Dube, my grandfather
7. is Tswana, my mother is Sotho, I am Zulu]
8. **Bonga:** *Isibongo sakho u Kgosimang!* [Said with a surprised tone](Zulu) [But
9. your surname is Kgosimang!]

Thabang's statement about his ethnic identity, all spoken in Zulu, even though the previous speaker, (Mfanafuthi), uses English, can be interpreted in different ways. It can be said to signify a more hybrid African identity. If one looks at the above extract, one notices that there is a pause at the end of his first sentence. In a situation where the children were excited and were competing about who could best articulate their identity, using discourses of ethnic purity (being *full blooded Tswana*, being *Swati the whole way from beginning to end,* being *Pedi full time*), Thabang said this with a tone of sadness, and strangely, after the pause, (after which, because of its length, I thought he was not going to say anything further) regained his composure, and showed subtle anger and an 'I dare you' attitude in declaring his family background.

Ironically, Thabang, who does not 'know' his ethnic identity, starts his sentence with '*mina*', (I, me) which actually acknowledges his existence. He also acknowledges ownership of his family by the use of the possessive '*wami, wam, umama'm*' (my). The first part of his response, 'Mina angazi ukuthi ngiyini' does not only say 'I do not know **who** I am', but he further degrades himself in saying, 'I do not know **what** I am'. Using '*ngiyini'* [what I am] instead of *'ngingumni'* [who I am] shows a deep sense of loss, despair and hopelessness. The fact that he is also a loner, and finds consolation in drawing attention by being associated with offenders, and being a subject of discussion amongst staff members for a number of things ranging from not submitting his work to being disruptive in class does not help his confidence. One gets the impression that he is in most situations, ready to be on the defensive.

---

[25] Zulu version of Sotho.

I here wish to give a little background on the use of *"ngiyini"* (what I am) instead of *'ngingumni'* (who I am). In a number of African communities, including mine, 'uyini' is used as a derogatory term that places one in the same league as anything that is subhuman. Some of the Zulu children I have heard using this term, (at the school as well as out of school in informal conversations or teasing) will go further by adding to '*Uyini wena …. Uyisilwane sini'* (What are you, what kind of animal are you?). This often comes from communities who will normally use '*Ungumni*' (who are you) and in the Sotho languages this would be, '*O mokae*?' which is a polite and civil way of finding out another's ethnic identity. The equivalent derogatory term in the Sotho languages is '*O eng'* (what are you). Dlamini (2001: 217) cites an interesting response from her subjects to the question on why Zulu people do not often learn to speak other languages like Sotho even when they are living in Johannesburg where the language is commonly spoken:

> **Vukani:** Zulus don't want to learn it because **they think they are big.**
> **Muzi:** Not that they think, *sibakhulu vele. Asifuni ukukhuluma njengamazizimbane.* (**Not that they think, we are really big.** We don't want to speak like *mazizimbane* [a term that implies that someone is not real human / is animal like] (Dlamini, 2001: 217).

This by implication means that according to Muzi, speaking Sotho is speaking in an animal like manner, in a manner that is not in line with being human. Thus no person who wanted to be regarded as a real Zulu would willingly acknowledge being associated with the Sotho groups, as in using Sotho and Tswana. This explains why it raises questions when Thabang uses *"Ngiyini"* a term associated more with animals than human beings. Thabang, on being asked why he used this term to identify himself, simply shrugged his shoulders and said there was no particular reason why he chose it. However, given who he portrays himself to be, and the trouble he is always in, one cannot but wonder whether this is not how he is normally referred to (as less than human) by people (family, friends or teachers) that he rubs up the wrong way.

The first statement in Thabang's response can also indicate that he is responding to a feeling by some people that unless one fits in neatly into a single ethnic and language compartment, there is no formula by which one can define oneself. One either falls into

the silent compartment as Mfanafuthi, who states that his father is Swati and his mother Zulu, but says nothing about himself, or has clear lineage. He cannot say he is "full blooded" anything, or something "all the way", or who he is "from beginning to end". In this competitive conversation, there is no excitement about his identity. While his parents' identity can be boxed, he feels like an outsider who is looking on as other people neatly find their space.

Even though the group laughs as Thabang points out his confused identity, it certainly is no laughing matter to him that of all the ethnic and language boxes, many as they are, he does not know where to go to. He is however like many South Africans, who are descendants of relationships across ethnic lines. One must understand the above in line with the seriousness of ethnic grouping in apartheid South Africa. Carrim and Soudien (1999) map out the ways in which racial classification of South Africans was used to decide where they lived, schooled, and who they interacted with under apartheid laws. The strict grouping and compartmentalization[26] in the past (Frescura, 2001), ensured that 'deviant' behaviour such as marriage between members of different ethnic groups would result in problems of identity. His discourse places him in a class that is even lower than that of people, feeling that not knowing what his ethnic and linguistic home is, has stripped him of any right to regard himself with dignity. The imposition of ethnicity, refered to as "ethnicity from above" by Pieterse, (1992: 106, in Zegeye 2001), even though it was artificially constructed, was strangely successfully internalised by many South Africans. Thabang's dilemma about his ethnic identity, and the children laughing at his confusion illustrates this internalisation.

The second part of Thabang's statement is said with a stronger feeling, as he rattles off the ethnic affiliations of his family members,

> (*Ugogo wami nguDube, Umkhulu wam umTswana umama'm ngumSuthu,*)
> [My grandmother is Dube, my grandfather is Tswana, my mother is Sotho].

---

[26] The segregation between races and ethnic groups was legislated by Acts such as The Group Areas Act.

He can even be said to be subtly annoyed. The last portion,

> (*mina ngumZulu)* [I am Zulu]

is however said with a daring attitude. It is an attitude that says, 'I am who I am. It is O K by me to be different from you with your 'perfect' or 'pure' ethnic origin, it is not about my parents, it is about me. I do not, like you, take my identity from my parents. My parents can have their identity. This is me. I am Zulu.'

My personal feeling was that, despite his almost always going against the majority, almost always fighting to be different, this was a very brave statement. Ironically, amidst the excitement of taking others' identities to be 'acceptable', he exercised his right to be different, and let no one choose his ethnicity for him, not his family, (which he acknowledges as '*wami*'(my), not his fear of rejection, not even the possibility of inclusion as one of the 'group'. He chose his ethnic identity.

Another interesting notion about Thabang's identity is his attachment to his grandmother. I do not know whether this is a conscious effort on his part. Even though he says he does not know 'what' he is, Dube, his grandmother's name, is Zulu. In one of the audio recorded conversations, he lets us into an important family ritual in many African families, name giving. If he says he is Zulu, how did he acquire a Sotho/ Tswana name?

> N: *Ubani okunike igama lika Thabang?* (Zulu)
> [Who gave you the name Thabang?]
> Thabang: *Umamami, cha, ugogo wami* (Zulu)
> [It's my Mom, no! It's my grandmother]

This may explain why he feels more Zulu than Sotho or Tswana and associates himself more with the grandmother who gave him a name. Unlike the other three case study learners, who based their lineage on their fathers (including a stepfather), Thabang did not say anything about his father.

In as much as the other learners, Bonga, Kgomotso and Lindiwe were passionate, and competing about being 'ethnically pure', Thabang could be seen as passionate about being different. Unlike the other three, Thabang's lineage is not taken from his parents, he chooses it. In a strange way, he also transcends ethnic boundaries by choice, by refusing to be bound by his parents' ethnicity. He further challenges his self accorded ethnicity (Zulu) by being an articulate English speaker, by being multilingual, (speaking like *izizimbane*, i.e. speaking Sotho and Tswana as a Zulu!) and by according himself the choice to be as different as he wants to be. I found the expression of his identity challenging the boundaries of ethnic descent set by his classmates by not taking his identity from his parents, challenging his family name by being a "Zulu" with a Tswana surname, and challenging his choice of being part of an 'imagined community' (Kanno and Norton, 2003) of the Zulu group by being an articulate Tswana speaker. Thabang's expression of his identity illustrates Kress and Pennycook's argument (Kapp, 2000) that even though discourses delimit subject positions, individuals *can* and *do* act as agents in challenging the constraints.

4.6 Common threads

The case studies above present the learner's language practices which indicate their proficiency in English, and South African languages such as Zulu, Tswana and Swati as well as their ability to code – switch between different languages. They also present the learners' discourses about language and identity. In looking at the language practices across the learners, and the relationship between their language practices and identities, a number of interesting points and common threads emerged.

4.6.1 Discourses of Ethnic Purity

Drawing from Kubota and Lin's (2006: 475) definition of ethnicity, (as pointed out in Chapter 2), that it is a politically correct code for race, and that it is used as a category to distinguish groups based on sociocultural characteristics such as ancestry, language,

religion, custom and lifestyle, I look at the South African situation. In the South African context, language was used by the apartheid regime as one form of denoting ethnicity through the imposition of 'ethnicity from above' (Zegeye, 2001). The purpose of this imposition, to set one group of Black people apart from another, and maintain boundaries between groups, was however problematized by cross ethnic relations. In this study then, based on the South African context, ethnic purity refers to lineage traced from parents who come from the same ethnolinguistic group and who share the same home or first language. As we can see from Bonga, Kgomotso and Lindiwe's descriptions of themselves above, the discourse of ethnic purity was powerfully expressed in the data collected in this study. In saying who they are, all four learners used their African names. While Kgomotso, Lindiwe and Thabang do have English names as well, they chose to leave them out. Bonga was different in that she wrote all five of her names but surprisingly foregrounded her English name, followed by four Zulu names.

One of the most interesting findings was the way in which learners identified their parents as the source of their ethnic identities. Even Thabang, who asserts a different ethnicity from his parents, begins by listing his parents' and grandparents' ethnic identities. Furthermore, the learners' indication of ethnic purity indicates the negativity that is associated with 'incomplete' ethnicity. Even though the conversation that took place in the Zulu / Tswana class where learners were competing in the performance of ethnic identities was conducted in a jocular manner, the importance that it portrays about the learners' feelings about ethnic purity cannot be undermined:

> **T:** Merafe?
> **Merafe:** Tswana. I'm full blooded Tswana.
> (Group laughs)
> **T:** Who's half blooded?
> (Laughter)

I asked the question above to draw attention to the idea that if there is being 'full blooded', then by implication there is being 'half blooded' thus critiquing the idea of ethnic purity being based on biological descent or race. If one looks at Bonga referring to both her parents as being Zulu, Lindiwe's parents being Swati making her Swati from

74

beginning to end, and Kgomotso referring to both his biological parents and a stepfather as being Pedi, one understands where the notion of being full / half blooded comes from. When Thabang says he is Zulu, Bonga (the self appointed Zulu gatekeeper) is quick to point out that this identity cannot be said to be accurate, as his surname is actually not Zulu:

Isibongo sakho u Kgosimang! (Zulu) [But your surname is Kgosimang!]

Dlamini (2001: 201) explains how some 'Zulus' are not regarded as proper Zulus because of the way they speak the language. Even though there may be nothing wrong with the way that Thabang, with a Tswana surname, speaks Zulu, for Bonga and the learners in my study, complete identity is about purity of descent as in having both parents (even step parents) coming from the same ethnic group. Having one of the parents with a different ethnic grouping from the other, makes one learner, Thabang feel as if he belongs to a different species than human beings (*izizimbane?*). It is as surprising as it is contradictory that a child like Bonga, who was never part of a system that died more than a decade ago, or had it enforced on her, should feel the urge to protect ethnic boundaries enforced by apartheid, so strongly that she takes it upon herself to police who should and should not be in which 'apartheid' compartment, hence her rejection of Thabang's attempt to claim a Zulu ethnicity. Likewise, it is surprising that children such as Thabang and Mfanafuthi who also were not compartmentalised by the apartheid divisions should feel that their inability to 'compartmentalise' themselves, now, is an anomaly.

Malan (1995 in Zegeye (2001: 5) explains this anomaly by pointing out how cultural differences that were emphasized by racial and ethnic segregation during apartheid, were thus translated into stereotypes. The reality is that despite the advent of democracy and the numerous efforts to break down stereotypes with the passing of time, apartheid still lingers strongly in the lives of South Africans. I must hasten to point out that this is not the same as the imposition of ethnicity by and under apartheid. It is also not just a simple replication of apartheid ethnic discourses. The learners' expressions of ethnic purity are strangely by choice, and rather it seems that in this competitive classroom conversation

quoted earlier, learners are using ethnic discourses as an identity building resource and as part of a playful competition or game among their peers. Such a game satirises the apartheid construction and imposition of ethnic groups that arose from the notorious divide-and-rule strategy. Of note above is also that youth today can play with identities and ideas of ethnicity in a way that was not possible for their parents during the apartheid era.

We see Bonga's action here reminding us of Weedon's (1997) claim that language always exists in historically specific discourses. According to Bonga, one of the criteria to check ethnic legitimacy should be one's surname, which indicates descent and language, and Thabang fails the test. Zegeye (2001: 6) explains why this may be. According to the legislation underlying apartheid, the Registration Act of 1950, a Black person was defined as one accepted as a member of any aboriginal race or tribe; distinguished by descent through classification of the *natural father* and acceptance as a member of a particular sub group. Despite this 'gate keeping' activity by Bonga, Thabang resists the normative representation (Pavlenko, 2004) of what it means to be any ethnic group. Even though he cannot claim his ethnic identity through his descent, a descent that is multiple ethnically, and language, that is also multilingual, he decides who he wants to be – Zulu. I found this contradiction interesting. In declaring himself as Zulu, I find him simultaneously transcending the boundaries that bind him, (like denying ethnicity through descent), but also reinforcing them by alluding to ethnicity in declaring himself Zulu. In the following exchange we see Bonga giving the impression that one can identify another learner, Thokozani, as being Zulu by just looking at him. She argues for Thokozani that he is unquestionably Zulu:

1. **Z:** (to Thokozani): Are you half blooded?
2. **Bonga:** (To Z) *UmZulu lo.* (Zulu) (To Z) [He is Zulu.]
3. **Bonga***: (*To Thokozani*) Ubabakho umZulu,* (Zulu) (To Thokozani) [Your
4. father is Zulu] (To Z) *noThokozan' umZulu phaqa*! (Zulu)
5. (To Z) [and so Thokozani is clearly and prominently a Zulu]
6. (To Thokozani) *Ubabakho ufana nawe, niyafana yhazi!* (Zulu)
7. (To Thokozani) Your father looks like you, you really look alike!]

In convincing those around her about Thokozani's Zulu ethnicity, Bonga does all the talking, and does not give Thokozani a chance to say anything. She becomes Thokozani's voice and points out the key markers of his being Zulu, his descent – his father is Zulu, and his physical likeness to his father.

Kapp (2000) reports that her research participants believed in the instrumental value of English to pursue material goals outside the township, and gave it the symbolic value of a key or gatekeeper according to proficiency. Bonga gives Zulu the status of being a key or gatekeeper, but this is to ethnic purity. As Blommaert (2005:210) points out, "D'hondt argues that conversationally produced identities are argumentative", and "speakers produce identities from repertoires that fit particular argumentative moves". In this regard, one is reminded of a question that Blommaert (2005:216) poses, about how we can explain the pervasiveness of static notions of ethnolinguistic identity such as that produced by Bonga, Kgomotso and Lindiwe. Hodgson (2002) points out in her study of female African students at KwaZulu Natal Technikon that such students were seen by other Africans as 'vehicles' of power for ethnic discourses. This means that they are regarded as ambassadors of their African languages, which they are expected to speak with pride, wherever they may be. In relation to this, Bonga seems to be positioning herself as an ambassador of ethnic discourses and holds on to having a "Zulu" voice irrespective of where she is.

From the way that the learners identify themselves, we can see how they refer to forms of individual personhood, '*I am...*' to indicate uniqueness and differentiation from other people, while at the same time indicating and constructing sameness with a larger group, Zulu, Tswana, Pedi or Swazi. It is interesting to note that Bonga was born in Umlazi, KwaZulu-Natal where Rudwick (2004) conducted a study and found a great attachment of her participants to their language, Zulu. KwaZulu – Natal is relatively linguistically homogenous. Rudwick observed that her participants did not mix Zulu with any other language. Rudwick's participants might be said to do this partly because of little exposure to other languages. Also, in contrast to Bonga, some might belong to a less affluent social class, and thus have less access to English. However, even though Rudwick's participants

and Bonga belong to different social classes, there is a notable connection between them. Bonga, who is proficient in other languages as well as belonging to a wealthy social class is connected to the Zulu imagined community through the idea of ethnic pride.

Whilst this association could be interpreted as presenting the Zulu participants in Rudwick's and my study as an ethnolinguistically unified group, irrespective of geographical placing, social class and interaction with other societies, there are also notable different markers of identity. Some of Dlamini's (2001: 210 – 214) participants who claim to be clearly Zulu or *Zulu Zu*, also went out of their way to perform a different identity, *tsatsatsa*[27]. *Tsatsatsa* refers to one of the groups in Dlamini's (2001) study, the members of which actively networked with Whites, at work, joining sport clubs, and being pressured by other members of the group to be friends with Whites for the benefits that this networking would bring for the rest of the group. Bonga, who is Zulu *'phaqa'* is in an institutional environment that is predominantly English and of a wealthy social class, and on the other hand the *'tsatsatsa'* (Dlamini, 2001) who are *'Zulu Zu'* are striving for Bonga's environment – fluency in speaking English, mixing with Whites and practising habits associated with being White such as manner of dress and taste in music and food (Dlamini 2001: 210 – 214) and see no contradiction with their ethnic identity in that aspiration.

Interestingly, in Dlamini's study (2001) speaking English, associating with Whites, (aspiring towards speaking a different language other than Zulu, and associating with people from a group other than Zulu) did not, in the same group (*tsatsatsa*) that regarded speaking Sotho as being animal like, raise the same sentiments about speaking English. They saw no contradiction in aspiring to be fluent in English as *Zulu Zu,* even as they showed no interest in learning another African language such as Sotho. They did not regard being fluent in English as betraying being Zulu. Bonga, who, according to her, is *Zulu phaqa*, on the other hand, did not have to consciously network to 'design' an identity. She is in a space that allows what is an acquired behaviour (speaking English

---

[27] A subgroup of Zulu youths in Dlamini's study seen to behave in a manner that is perceived as aspiring to being White.

78

and mixing with members of other races) with the other group (*tsatsatsa*) to be natural to her. She is in a private school, speaks English fluently, does not have to network with White young people, she attends classes with them, (even if they are few) plays sport with them and is constantly in their company by being a learner in the same school and in contact on campus with them. Whilst the *tsatsatsa* go out of their way to be part of a White defined social area, Bonga has always been exposed to it through her schooling and social status. However, both foreground their 'Zuluness' in how they construct their identity.

A notable similarity between the subjects of my study, as well as Dlamini's, (2001) is that even though the environment in which the exchange about ethnic purity takes place is relaxed to a point of being pleasant and jocular, it does not diminish the seriousness with which the participants take the topic in discussion. Clearly, fitting in neatly in ethnic and language compartments is important to the learners in my study, as there is a lot of teasing amongst the learners who do not fit in with ethnic and linguistic groupings that is seen to be tantamount to an incomplete identity. We see this when the learners laugh at Thabang's statement that he does not know what he is. Also, it seems like a game that the learners play – performing ethnic purity, to see who best articulates his/her identity, or who has the 'purest' identity from the ethnic point of view. It is important however to note that the discourse of ethnic purity as evidenced in the competitive discussion was in itself contradictory in that on the one hand there was joking, fun and parodying of ethnic purity by playing a game, competing to see who is most pure, e.g.

> **Bonga:** '*Mina NgingumZulu phaqa abazali bam bobabili ngamazulu'* (Zulu) [I am clearly and prominently a Zulu both my parents are Zulu]
> **Lindiwe:** I'm Swati, my mother is Swati, my father is Swati, the whole way from beginning to end, Swati!
> **Kgomotso:** A! mfana *nna ke moPedi*: my mother is Pedi*, ke goletse ko maPeding gareng ga maPedi, ke moPedi feela* full time (Pedi) [A! man I'm Pedi, my mother is Pedi I grew up with the Pedi, among the Pedi, I am only Pedi full time]

But on the other hand the interaction is serious, as illustrated when Thabang is laughed at and his self – positioning as Zulu is rejected by Bonga.

The learner's expressions, and use of figurative language such as being *full blooded Tswana*, being '*Zulu phaqa*' being *Swati the whole way from beginning to end,* being *Pedi full time*, brings to mind the modernist stance in seeing identity as static and rigid, against the poststructuralist view of identity as multiple and fluid, as outlined in Chapter 2.

In relation to ethnolinguistic identities, Makoni and Kamwangamalu (no date) argue against a simple lining up of language with ethnicity and see the apartheid idea of distinct ethnic groups forming the basis on which distinct language groups were placed in separate homelands according to their supposed ethnicity as deeply problematic. This grouping according to language and ethnicity was despite the reality of individual multilingualism which was far more complex. Makoni and Kamwangamalu further point out the complexity of identity, and how the apartheid ideology made it sound so simple to attach ethnicity to purity, and probably left people who did not find this notion practically applicable in their everyday lives wondering where their space actually was. Zegeye (2001: 1) argues for the discarding of the 'natural, static and unchanging 'notion of groups as expounded by apartheid'. Pennycook (2004: 2) also argues against the notion that language can be closed into small compartments, and be solely owned by a particular group or region, to the exclusion of anyone who is not in the group or region. We have seen how the linguistic exchanges analysed in the case studies above illustrate that in practice language use is far more complex than simply pinning it to a single group. People can perform a 'pure' ethnolinguistic identity (Blommaert, 2005) as some of the learners in my study illustrate at one moment and a different kind of identity in another, e.g. Kgomotso:

A! mfana *nna ke moPedi*. [A! man I'm Pedi]

and in the discussion about luxury cars:

But it doesn't touch the Range Rover Sport, the fastest SUV.

4.6. 2 Learners' language practices

In contrast to Rudwick's (2004) findings in her study in Umlazi, and Kapp's (2000) findings, in her study in schools around Cape Town, I argue that the learners in my study embraced both African languages and English. I found the learners thus using both African and English languages equally well in their naturally occurring conversation and alternating the use of each according to space and purpose of conversation.

What came as a surprise was the learners' emphatic pride in their ethnicity and African languages, which was in most cases, articulated in English. This practice I found to problematise the ethnic purity so highly regarded and expressed through the use of discourse such as 'full time'; 'full blooded'; 'from beginning to end'. In this instance, their African languages are important to them as an identity marker, but so is English for academic purposes, that is, as a language of learning, as well as socially. The social importance of English is illustrated in the extract where Kgomotso and the other boys discuss luxury cars. The learners also use English as a common language when others do not know or understand their home language. The complexity of identity also comes to the fore here. Whilst the learners draw explicit ethnic boundaries as being Zulu, Tswana, Pedi or Swazi, to assert their ethnolinguistic identity, the same boundaries are weakened and deconstructed by declarations of being more proficient in English than in their home language. Despite being in a 'White' space (the school that is an English and Afrikaans environment), they are not ready to give up their ethnic identities. However, rather than pitting ethnicity against modernity, the learners embrace both. They are using both African languages and English to assert their identities and in defining who they are. The multiplicity of identity is seen in their use of English and other African languages.

Though Kgomotso speaks more English than Zulu or Pedi with his friends, he wrote his language history in Pedi only. Bonga wrote in a mixture of English and Zulu, but speaks mostly in Zulu. Lindiwe, who wrote in English only, depending on her space, speaks Swati when she has the opportunity, or switches between English and Zulu. The indication here is that learners' do not perform linguistic purity, on which their ideas of

ethnic purity could be based. Dlamini (2001) and Pavlenko, (2004) cite responses to changes in government and notions of civil society, as well as gender, age, family, economic -, social - , class – and physical environment as some of the identity markers that influence individual changes or shifts in identity. We have seen above through the case-study of Kgomotso how performance of social class and gender positions can result in seemingly very different identities functioning side by side.

Myers-Scotton (1990) looks at patterns of code-switching. She cites codeswitching as an index of identity and a tool of communication. She also found users to exhibit strong loyalty to their own languages and may use languages at their disposal, including code – switching, to contest and resist identities that position them in a manner that they are unhappy about. Code switching was also a common language practice in my study depending on the space in which learners were. I noted that because the learners are fluent speakers of a number of languages, this, as Mesthrie (2000) points out, can be regarded as one of the reasons influencing their code-switching patterns. In his speech we see Kgomotso moving between Pedi, English, Zulu and Afrikaans. I have indicated that poststructuralist theory recognizes that identities are not static. Thus I see the use of code-switching by a learner who claims to be *moPedi full time,* (Kgomotso), *Zulu phaqa* (Bonga) or *Swati all the way from beginning to end* (Lindiwe) as an illustration of the aforementioned shifts in identity according to space and purpose. At different moments, code – switching can be used to perform identification with different affinity groups, e.g. the need to accommodate as well as include learners whose proficiency in the language is not as good as the speaker's, (Lindiwe) or to be part of an affinity group (Kgomotso) or to identify with one's 'imagined community' not present; (Bonga) tends to override pride in and thus use of their African language.

The use of either an African language or English by the learners, (who indicated in their language histories that they speak more than one language) seems to be coupled with the performance of different identities. Kgomotso spoke more English than Zulu or Pedi with his friends, and in some instances mixed either Pedi or Zulu with English. He did not code – switch in his language history. Bonga wrote in a mixture of English and Zulu. She

does however, though she speaks mostly in Zulu, mix her Zulu with English. Lindiwe, speaks Swati mixed with English and Zulu (and throws in some Sotho words) but does not mix her writing.

Versfeld's (1995: 24-25) findings that a number of learners are believed to shy away from speaking their indigenous languages in desegregated schools may be true for a number of Black learners, but it is inaccurate to lay that claim in a general sense. My case-study learners are using English for other reasons like inclusion in affinity groups, in informal day to day discourse (Gaganakis, 1992) to emphasize a point, to argue, to express themselves better especially in the absence of an equivalent word in their language, and not because they are shying away from their African languages. On the contrary, some are proud to display their knowledge of African languages.

4.6.3 Language and the Institutional context

In South Africa, there is currently a notable struggle over discourse, language rights and access to the powerful language – English. De Klerk (2002: 1-2) for example tells of how some Xhosa speaking parents objected to the inclusion of African languages at a suburban ex – model C school. These parents do not seem to see the need for their children to learn at school a language that they speak at home. The children have been sent to desegregated schools in order to make them competent speakers of English, and the parents probably feel that learning Xhosa will discourage or slow down their acquisition of English. The situation is however different at my research site, where parents of pupils who speak Tswana, Sotho, Pedi and Xhosa, have made specific arrangements for their children to study these languages even to the point of paying a private teacher for lessons. These parents have thus indicated their determination to have their children study their indigenous languages. It is important to note in relation to ideas of power that these parents come from wealthy and powerful social class backgrounds. This scenario fits in with Fairclough's observation about the dynamic nature of power relations (1989: 68). Power relations are not rigid or static, but continue to change with situations at play. He correctly points out that those who have held power at a particular

point work at constantly reasserting their power. For example, the largely White and Afrikaans school management who insist on the bilingual language policy that includes Afrikaans and English to the exclusion of African languages other than Zulu can be seen as representative of the past custodians of political power in South Africa. However, those who do not hold power at the time are constantly trying to make a bid for it, for example, parents counter acting the school's language policy with the use of their economic power to pay for the tuition of their children in the languages of their choice, thus rendering the school's policy powerless. Whilst in some ex-model C schools, African parents are in the minority, this is not the case here where African parents form the great majority of paying clients. In Chapter 1, I outlined the school environment in which the learners operate, where English is the main language spoken, and Afrikaans, though in the minority regarding numbers continues to have a powerful status. The interview data below shows that the pupils at the school do not believe that the school has their interests at heart. They see the existence of a relationship of tolerance between them and the school. During a group interview, responding to a question of whether the pupils thought the school appreciated the diversity of having Zulu, Swati, Pedi, Sotho and Tswana pupils, this was their response:

Question: Do you think the school appreciates the fact that you are Zulu, Pedi, Swati or Tswana?

Kgomotso: *Ba ng* appreciate (*a*) *kapa ha bang* appreciate *(i) go no tshwana …* (Pedi)
[Whether they appreciate me or not it's just the same for me]

Thabang: *Mina ngicabanga ukuthi abasi* appreciate *(i). Bayasenzela nje ngoba abazali bethu babacelile*, other than that *abanandaba nathi*, and *futhi nathi asinandaba nabo*. So *abasincengi kahle kahle kanti nathi asibancengi. Ngifuna ukuthi abasi* appreciate (*i*) (Zulu) [I think they do not appreciate us. They are doing things for us simply because our parents have requested them to, other than that they do not care for us, and we also do not care for them. So they do not need us and we also do not need them. I want to say they do not appreciate us]

Bonga: *Cha, ingathi abasi*appreciate (*i*). *Bafuna sikhulume isiBhunu nesiNgisi, sifun'isiZulu sethu* and *futhi basithatha ngoba siyabakhokhela kuphela, kodwa nje ngaphandle kwalokho uma singakhulum'isiZulu njengamanje bazothi siyabathuka, futhi mele sikhulum'isiNgisi, isiNgisi isiNgisi, kuyabheda nje.*

84

Abasicabangeli ukuthi thina siyibona kanjani le ndaba. (Zulu) [No, it seems as if they do not appreciate us. They want us to speak Afrikaans and English, we want our Zulu, and they admit us to the school simply because we pay them, other than that if we could speak Zulu right now they would say we are insulting them, so we must speak English, English, English, this is just nonsense. They have no consideration for our feelings and how we see this matter].

Several learners set up an us / them relationship with the school. In her expression, Bonga draws clear lines between the learners (us) and the school (them) by the use of 'they' to refer to the school, and 'we' to refer to the learners. Whatever the school may say it feels about the African languages and their use, these feelings do not translate to the way that the learners see the status accorded to their languages. The learners feel othered but at the same time are aware of their economic power in reference to their parents paying the required fees at the school. Mda (2004) points out that in many multiracial schools teachers are not usually multilingual (2.6). It is in line with this thought that Bonga says:

Uma singakhulum'isiZulu njengamanje bazothi siyabathuka,
futhi mele sikhulum'isiNgisi, isiNgisi isiNgisi, … (Zulu)
[If we could speak Zulu right now they would say we are insulting them,
so we must speak English, English, English,…]

By this expression, she shows awareness of the limited African language proficiency of the teachers at her school. Also in contrast to past exchanges where Bonga foregrounds her personhood by the use of 'I' she uses 'we' and 'our' to include other members of her community at the school to fight for symbolic power:

Bafuna sikhulume isiBhunu nesiNgisi, sifun'isiZulu sethu
[They want us to speak Afrikaans and English, **we** want **our** Zulu]

In line with Weedon's argument about the status of language (see 2.2), we see Bonga using language as the place where she constructs a sense of self (Weedon, 1997:21). Even though Bonga is free to speak what language she wants, she still feels an invisible obligation and expectation from the school that regulates her choice. I find this contradiction interesting. In a similar manner as Bakhtin's (in Pavlenko, 2004: 78) reference to hidden polemic, she becomes defensive as she senses and anticipates the

school's objections to her views. She responds to an assumed argument by the school because she is aware that there is no written rule that she can quote that stops them from speaking their languages. In saying that the school wants them to "speak English, English, English" she implies that this 'want' by the school is common knowledge, and her 'want', Zulu, is commonly agreed to by all 'Zulu' speakers at the school. Bonga can be seen here using Zulu as symbolic of all South African languages at the school. She further indicates unhappiness towards a sense of unfairness towards them:

> *Abasicabangeli ukuthi thina siyibona kanjani le ndaba*. (Zulu)
> [They have no consideration for our feelings and how we see this matter].

Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004: 4) argue that languages are not only markers of identity, but can also be sites of resistance, empowerment, solidarity or discrimination. Both the school and language are clearly portrayed as a site of inequality and power struggle. Bonga positions the school as powerful and controlling, and expecting her to speak English all the time, but she can also exercise her linguistic power by speaking Zulu whenever she can to confirm her sense of self in a foreign environment. While the school is seen by the learners as exercising power to protect English and Afrikaans, the learners use economic power, inspite of being who they are, Zulu, Pedi or Tswana to be part of that community:

> *…futhi basithatha ngoba siyabakhokhela kuphela…*(Zulu)
> […they admit us to the school simply because we pay them …]

The struggle for power in my context, thus seems to be between the old (White, Afrikaner) elite as the custodians of the language policy of the school, and the new (African) elite who have the economic power that they use to defy this language policy. This is also indicative of the interplay between power, culture and citizenship as we see it in the new South Africa, between the old and the new elites. Interestingly, however, Lindiwe, from Swaziland, did not seem to feel as strongly as the others. Her response differed:

Mina ekucabangeni kwam fine! *Ku* equal *yabona, ku* equal *yabona ngoba ngeke ngivele ngqale ngiyokhuluma siSwati natishamkhulu hawu tongizwa njani lapho angithi ngoba naye wati siNgisi nesiBhunu so ku* equal the fact that *ngiyakhona ngiye eklasini ngiyofunda siZulu ngize ngikhone ngiyeklasini ngiyofunda* English*, isiNgisi …*(Swati) [In my opinion fine! It is equal, you see, it is equal you see, because I cannot simply go and speak Swati with the principal. Hey! How would he understand me because he only knows English and Afrikaans so it is equal, the fact that I can go to class and learn Zulu and also go to class and learn English …]

One can only assume that it is because she, unlike the South African learners, does not come from the same apartheid historical background, and feels that the school treats the languages equally.

I also found that the learners did not have any formal pressure to use either English or an African language. They were not forced by the high school to speak any particular language on campus grounds. They exercised free choice of what language to speak, where and when. Unlike many learners who stay in the township, and go to desegregated schools, these learners did not have to prove that they fit in with the English culture of the school. Also, being boarders, they did not have to prove to their peers in the township after school that going to the 'White' school during the day had [not] made them lose their African languages. Model C learners want to prove the opposite (Makubalo, 2006). What languages they chose to use was out of free choice, and I further argue, was an identity choice. However, despite the lack of regulation, Bonga clearly still seems to feel regulated and boxed in. Davies and Harre` (1990: 48) explain how the process of positioning influences how identities are shaped, produced, and negotiated. This is all about power. They distinguish between interactive positioning whereby we position others, and reflective positioning whereby we position ourselves. The learners' social identity at the school is a site of social struggle (Peirce, 1995). They are resisting linguistic assimilation by the school by speaking their languages, while at the same time retaining membership of the global elite English speaking society.

Dlamini (2001: 212) refers to the different ways in which some of the subjects in her study portray their identity as retreating from dominant White defined society, by holding on to being Zulu, while entering mainstream society by embracing White norms. This

behaviour does not differ from the way that learners in my study act out their identities. This behaviour illustrates one of Peirce's (1995) characteristics of social identity, (2.5) that it is multiple and contradictory because individuals are the subjects of more than one discourse during any one time in their lives, and so find themselves positioned in contradictory ways in these discourses. Together with the use of language, in line with Pennycook, (1994) and Weedon's (1997) argument, that discourse is broader than the use of language only, I witnessed the learners expressing themselves through bodily performances such as 'blushing' (Lindiwe), laughing or shows of disbelief.

I indicated in my arguments earlier that identity was not fixed or rigid, and continued to shift with space and intent. This I find true with learners who express an African ethnicity in English, and though claiming to be 'pure' ethnically and linguistically, still claim that their English is better than their African languages. I found it quite interesting that they use English to express themselves and thus to discursively construct an ethnic identity. This may also be influenced, as I indicated, by the learners' environment, by the fact that they are in a desegregated school whose language of operation is English, and the multicultural nature of the school makes it difficult to draw clear lines between ethnic and linguistic identities.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I initially presented case studies of four learners before discussing emerging themes across the data. I found that whatever language the learners used to perform their identities, ethnic purity was key. The silence of those who could not articulate their identities according to expectation was notable. The challenging attitude of those that decided not to be bound by the rules defining purity (Thabang) was also displayed. Either way, ethnic purity was very prominent. It was interesting to find that generally the learners' ethnic identities were taken from their parents' identities.

 In contrast to Rudwick's (2004) findings in her study in Umlazi in KwaZulu-Natal, I argue that learners experience both African languages and English as part of their

identities. I found them thus using both African and English languages equally well and alternating the use of each according to space and purpose of conversation.

Also, the learners' ability to move freely across boundaries depended on their ability to lean on the different aspects of their identity through using language interchangeably to facilitate a shift in positioning. Resisting positioning (as being African and thus seen as just Zulu, Pedi, Tswana or Swazi) by challenging boundaries (through their use of different languages) allowed for greater identity options (Pavlenko: 2004; Blommaert: 2005). Kapp (2000) points out that speaking English at school to respond to prevailing dominant discourses does not necessarily translate to linguistic assimilation. The learners in her study also maintained Xhosa as a symbolic signifier of tradition and custom within the confines of township schooling. Learners in my study however seemed to maintain their African languages as markers of identity to challenge prevailing dominant discourses at the school. Throughout my interaction with the learners, I experienced them performing acts of identity "as an ongoing series of social and cultural performances rather than as the expression of a prior identity" (Pennycook, 2004:11).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

In my conclusion I outline the main findings of this study. I illustrate through data that the learners in my study use both home language and English equally comfortably. I indicate that even though the learners' identities are ethnolinguistically articulated, they are space and context based, and shift according to purpose. I contend that there does not seem to be any home language loss in these learners as a result of being in a desegregated school. There is, however, continuous contestation, and implications of power relations, regarding language use.

This research forms part of a small but growing field of study that focuses on questions of language and identity in schools. In an effort to understand how a group of Grade 9 learners use language to construct identity, my research report looked at two questions; what the language practices of multilingual Grade 9 learners at an officially Afrikaans and English-medium private school are; and what seemed to be the relationship between their language practices and their identities. I looked at how the learners used language to position others or themselves. This study has drawn on poststructuralist theory (Weedon, 2007; Pennycook, 1994) that views identity as multidimentional and changing, as existing in historically specific discourses, and as constructed though language use.

I found that the learners used both English and African languages, but used African languages more as an identity marker rather than simply for communication purposes. To illuminate the relationship between language and ethnic identity, I used theories that illustrate the hybrid nature of identity (Hall, 1992) and Rampton's (1995) theory of crossing to indicate the practicality of language use and the way in which the learners move across languages. I looked at ethnicity, defined by Kubota and Lin (2004: 475) as a category to distinguish groups based on, amongst others, sociocultural characteristics like ancestory and language, where learners associated their identity with language and lineage. I drew from Mesthrie's (2000) idea of ethnic discourses as sustained by a sense of identity to illustrate the learner's choice of discourse. On the question between notions of ethnolinguistic identity and practicality, I pointed out how Blommaert (2005)

problematizes the definition of ethnolinguistic identity when compared with practises in looking at the learners' practices. In addition, Pennycook's (2004) arguments against 'fixity' and Makoni and Kamwangamalu's (No date) arguments against simply lining up ethnicity with language were used in my analysis. To illustrate how language can be used in the negotiation of positions of power, I used Bourdieu's notions of capital and symbolic power. I argued in my study that it is not just English that carries linguistic capital, but African languages as well. We see this as African languages enable learners to position themselves in particular ways and to claim the kind of ethnic identities that they value. The relationship between language and culture, including youth culture, code switching and multilingualism, is supported by theories from James Gee (1996), who points to the hybrid nature of culture and Slabbert and Finlayson (2000: 125) who look at the complex township linguistic network in South Africa.

5.2 Overview of findings

The data in my study illustrates that identity is neither fixed nor rigid, but continually shifts with space and intent, and sometimes in a contradictory manner. One of the most interesting illustrations of this notion is the learners strongly expressing a 'pure' African ethnicity through English, and claiming to be 'pure' ethnically and linguistically, yet stating that their English is better than their African language proficiency. What emerges from my analysis is then the complex tension between the enunciated identities of these young people, and their actual performed identities. On the question of language practices, I found that language practices differed for different learners. There was the use of English, e.g. (Lindiwe), *Swati all the way from beginning to end,* African language/s, *"Zulu phaqa"* (Bonga) or code-switching (Kgomotso) - A! mfana *nna ke moPedi*. [A! man I'm Pedi], and these were done to varying degrees.

On the question of the relationship between learners' language practices and their identities, my study thus illustrates that learners, even though they have spent a large part of their lives in an English environment through schooling and socialization by social class, still see and define themselves in ethnic terms, confirming the rigid

compartmentalization of the former apartheid era that saw people as belonging to small, confined and marked spaces. Their compartmentalization ethnically, is however neither guided by political reasons, to be politically correct, nor by cultural reasons, to be ethnically correct. It does seem in a strange way, to be out of defiance of both systems, and an effort by the learners to be seen as just beings who are global citizens, proficient in any language that they choose; participating in any culture that they choose, and taking equally from both worlds. This I find true with learners who express an African ethnicity in English, and though claiming to be 'pure' ethnically and linguistically, still claim that their English is better than their African languages. Even though learners such as Bonga and Thabang use Zulu to express their identity, Lindiwe uses English to express herself, and others such as Kgomotso, though using Pedi, also uses 'full time' in attesting to his Pediness. They thus discursively construct an 'African' ethnic identity through English. This may also be influenced, as I indicated, by the learners' environment, by the fact that they are in a desegregated school whose language of operation is English, and the multicultural nature of the school makes it difficult to draw clear lines between ethnic and linguistic identities. I have indicated in this study that who the learners decide to be at a particular time is largely guided by the context of the situation, and so is their language choice to enforce their chosen identity. It is all about contesting power, resistance to positioning, inclusion in affinity groups and membership in imagined communities, e.g. Zulu, ("*Zulu phaqa*") Pedi, ("Pedi full time") or Swati ("Swati from beginning to end") speakers, to whom they connect through the power of imagination. A number of African learners in desegregated schools have embraced multilingualism, code switching and the use of township language like *iscamtho* and *tsotsitaal* ; and whilst proficiency in English grants them space in the academic world, it is just as important to them to be regarded as 'one of the group' by their proficiency in other means of expression. This freedom of expression allows them to transcend boundaries of confinement at will.

Even though these learners indicated that they are more fluent in English than in their African languages, my data shows they are still highly proficient (at least orally) in their African languages. In contrast to Rudwick's (2004) findings in her study in Umlazi, I argue that the learners in my study were equally comfortable using African languages and

English, alternating the use of each according to space and purpose of conversation, and to the particular identity position they wanted to assume. This brings to mind Rampton's (1995) notion of the unpredictable mobility of linguistic resources in view of identity effects. The different effects displayed by linguistic resources depend on how connected they are to particular indexicalities. These learners often articulate their ethnic identities in English, illustrating the hybridity of identity (Weedon, 2007; Pennycook, 1994). I illustrated how the learners used code switching, multilingualism and Rampton's (1995) notion of 'crossing' to negotiate and renegotiate their identities. I have argued how the learners' proficiency in English actually problematises their notion of ethnic purity.

I have, in looking at Bourdieu's notion of linguistic capital indicated that these 'first language' speakers of English, do not have to transcend any boundaries of language deprivation as their township counterparts do, being proficient speakers and learners of English since pre-school. Also, their identity is tied to their social class, many coming from wealthy families. The young people clearly seek and assert the ethnicized identities that apartheid had nurtured and confirmed and which remain dominant in the post-apartheid era. There was, I argue, the need by especially Bonga, to identify with existing and imagined members of her ethnic group, Zulu speakers, and to police belonging to the group.

5.3 Limitations of this research

The study looked at four learners, which makes it impossible to regard the results as generally applicable for learners in a similar situation. The dynamics coming out of this study may also be particular to wealthy or elite subjects, and to African learners in a majority situation at a desegregated school, but give insight into this context. I do not know of studies that look at learners attending boarding schools. This thus makes it difficult to even make comparisons on findings in similar studies. However I tried to spread my research sample to include boys and girls, as well three language groups, Zulu, Pedi and Swazi.

5.4 Contribution of this research

The contribution of this study to research is to illustrate that the relationship between language and identity in desegregated schools is much more complex and variegated than was initially expected, for example, Versfeld's (1995) findings that a number of learners are believed to shy away from speaking their indigenous languages in desegregated schools. I build on the work already done in this field, in an effort to problematize and develop our understanding of the language landscapes of elite secondary schools. My study makes a contribution to studies on youth and language, how youth use language to construct identity. (Dolby, 1999, 2000, 2001; Soudien, 2001, 2004; Kapp, 2000; Rudwick, 2004) Though there are studies (De Klerk, 2001; 2002) focusing on language in secondary schools, the focus has mainly been on desegregated day schools and township schools, and the response has mainly been from adults such as parents and teachers, with a notable silence from the children themselves. These studies as I have indicated, are in schools other than a boarding school, and the reaction of learners in my study to who they perceive themselves to be, may also have been influenced by the confined space that they find themselves in, and their being continuously placed in an environment that they believe is hostile. I have thus consciously involved the learners so they can give voice to their perceptions of who they are, and how they use language to position themselves.

5.5 Conclusion

It has been noted in studies (Mda, 2004) that in many desegregated schools where most of the teachers are White, neither the White learners nor teachers are learning an African language. Thus African learners see desegregated schools as sites where their sense of self is contested (Peirce, 1995; Weedon, 1997). We see that learners in this school also perform other kinds of identities other than being African, such as being 'cool', wealthy, and knowledgeable about the newest township terms to show that one is an insider in this discourse. The learners' ethnic purity is not defined in the same manner as defined by

apartheid, that one should stick to one's rural homeland, it is a fusion of the modern and the traditional, indicative of ethnicity, culture, class and gender positions. The use of English by the learners to emphasize ethnicity is in line with the poststructuralist theory guiding this study, that identity is not fixed. One can be part of a number of seemingly opposite identities at the same time, and none should be seen as an effort to diminish or destroy the other. Important work lies ahead of the fields of linguistics and applied language studies in relation to this paradox. It is still an interesting question to try and understand why the present, multilingual young people still adhere to discourses that tie them to ethnicity, while in practice, they live in a world that allows them to transcend these self made boundaries.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Language History

Relate your language history in short. Use any language you are comfortable with. Tell me:

1. Where you were born

2. What languages you / your family spoke

3. Did you go to Pre – school?

4. If yes, what language/s did you use, for what purposes (e.g. play, talk to teachers)

5. Did you go to a desegregated (multi – cultural) primary school?

6. What language/s did you use, for what purposes?

7. How many languages can/do you speak?

8. What are they?

9. How did you acquire/learn them?

10. What is your proficiency in the languages that you speak?

Appendix 2: Examples of Language Histories

Lindiwe

My name is Lindiwe Simelane. I come from Swaziland Mbabane. I was born in Swaziland Mbabane, I have lived in Swaziland my whole life, that's just because from grade seven I came to school in South Africa which is Heights.

From the time I started talking, I spoke Siswati, I started learning to speak English when I was in pre-school and from that day on my parents started speaking English with me. When im at home I mostly speak Siswati mixed with English with my siblings, with my mom I mostly speak both of the languages Siswati and English equally and with my cousins Siswati and some of them English. When it comes to my family English and Siswati are mostly mixed together.

When I was in primary school I only learned siSwati in grade one and then the rest of my primary school year I learned English.

I have never spoke Zulu I only started speaking Zulu in grade 9.

My first language was Siswati but as I grew up I gradually started knowing English more than Siswati.

My English is better than my Siswati.

Bonga

Who am I?
My name is Faith, Ntokozo, Sibongiseni, Bongeka, Lethu and my surname is Ndlela which is my fathers and my mothers surname is Cele. *Ngineminyaka engu 14 ngazalwa ngezi 12 November 1990. Ngazalelwa eThekwini, Umlazi.*

Ekhaya ngikhuluma isizulu, I started speaking Zulu when I was a toddler learning from my parents and then I learned english after in primary school and my parents started talking english to me so I can learn early and speak it fluently.

Ngiyasazi futhi nesixhosa I learned it from my uncle, aunt and cousins but then I don't know it that well. *Mina ngumzulu phaqa abazali bami bobabili bangamaZulu.*

Another thing about languages is that it is very interesting that so many tounges can be spoken and I enjoy it but I would like to learn more languages so I can communicate with others and I really enjoy it, especially Zulu. but my English is better than my Zulu.

(Translated version)

Who am I?
My name is Faith, Ntokozo, Sibongiseni, Bongeka, Lethu and my surname is Ndlela which is my fathers and my mothers surname is Cele. *I am 14 years old I was born on the 12 November 1990. I was born in Durban in Umlazi.*

At home I speak zulu, I started speaking Zulu when I was a toddler learning from my parents and then I learned english after in primary school and my parents started talking english to me so I can learn early and speak it fluently.

I also know xhosa I learned it from my uncle, aunt and cousins but then I don't know it that well. *I stand out prominently as a zulu both my parents are Zulu.*

Another thing about languages is that it is very interesting that so many tounges can be spoken and I enjoy it but I would like to learn more languages so I can communicate with others and I really enjoy it, especially Zulu. but my English is better than my Zulu.

Kgomotso

Ke mo Pedi, ke belegetswe Bushbuckridge ko Mpumalanga. Koa gae re bolela Spedi le sekgoa feela, kagore sekgoa ke polelo ya mmusho o monts`i wa lefase le. Spedi re se bolela ka gore mme waka ke mopedi le ntate waka, ke lona lebaka la gore ke kgona go bolela spedi.

Ke ithutile go sebala ko sub A Shatali High school. Spedi ke polelo yaka le batswadi e bile keya e rata! Ke kgona sekgoa go feta Sepedi ko sekolong.

(Translated version)

I am a Pedi, I was born in Bushbuckridge in Mpumalanga. At home we only speak Pedi and English, because English is a language used by many governments in the world. Pedi we speak because my mother and my father are Pedi, that is the reason I can speak Pedi.

I learnt to read it in Sub A at Shatali High school. Pedi is my language and my parents' and so I love it! I am more proficient in English than Pedi at school.

Appendix 3: Follow up Interview

Question: Do you think the school appreciates the fact that you are Zulu, Pedi, Swati or Tswana?

KG: *Ba ng* appreciate*(a) kapa ha bang* appreciate*(i) go no tshwana …* (Pedi)
[Whether they appreciate me or not it's just the same for me]

Thabang: *Mina ngicabanga ukuthi abasi* appreciate*(i). Bayasenzela nje ngoba abazali bethu babacelile*, other than that *abanandaba nathi*, and *futhi nathi asinandaba nabo*. So *abasincengi kahle kahle kanti nathi asibancengi. Ngifuna ukuthi abasi* appreciate*(i)* (Zulu) [I think they do not appreciate us. They are doing things for us simply because our parents have requested them to, other than that they do not care for us, and we also do not care for them. So they do not beg us and we also do not beg them. I want to say they do not appreciate us]

Bonga: *Cha, ingathi abasi*appreciate*(i). Bafuna sikhulume isiBhunu nesiNgisi, sifun'isiZulu sethu* and *futhi basithatha ngoba siyabakhokhela kuphela, kodwa nje ngaphandle kwalokho uma singakhulum'isiZulu njengamanje bazothi siyabathuka, futhi mele sikhulum'isiNgisi, isiNgisi isiNgisi, kuyabheda nje. Abasicabangeli ukuthi thina siyibona kanjani le ndaba*. (Zulu) [No, it seems as if they do not appreciate us. They want us to speak Afrikaans and English, we want our Zulu, and they admit us to the school simply because we pay them, other than that if we could speak Zulu right now they would say we are insulting them, so we must speak English, English, English, this is just nonsense. They have no consideration for our feelings and how we see this matter].

Lindiwe: *Mina ngiyala kute kute kute*. The fact *ukuthi uma bengezwa ukhuluma siSwati batokuthethisa fanele kukhuluma siNgisi ngisho ungasati fanele usikhulume. Angcabangi ukuthi baya* appreciate*(a) kuthi ngumSwati. Sebekwentela nje uba fundze siZulu ngoba abana*choice *ngoba kwati kufundzana nesiBhunu.*
(Swati) [I disagree altogether, altogether, altogether. The fact that if they hear you speak Swati they will scold you means that you should speak English even if you do not know it. I don't think they appreciate that I am Swati. They are only accommodating that I should learn Zulu because they have no choice as I cannot learn Afrikaans]

Question: Do you think the school treats you equally as speakers of different languages?

Kaelo: *Nna? Ke bona ba sena sepe ka rona. Re bua ka seFora hela le se nyesemane basa lebelela dipuo tse rona re batlang go di bua.*(Tswana) [Me? I think they do not care for us. We speak French and English without them considering our own languages that we want to speak]

Lindiwe: Just because you are doing Zulu the school regards you as equal? Do you think everything is equal?

KG: Ya ga botse botse siZulu…. Ya gape ke second language *ya ka,* so then *ke feel(a) gore go lokile….*(Pedi) [Yes, in reality Zulu, … yes, it is my second language, so then I feel it is fine]

Thabang: *Nami ngi*feel*(a) ukuthi abasicabangeli. I* English *nami ngiyayenza* although *ngingayithandisisi, ngikhuluma isiZulu nasesikolweni. Kumnandi ukukhuluma i*language *eyakini. Hayi mina angiboni ukuthi bayasicabangela.* (Zulu) [I also feel that they have no consideration for what we feel. I also learn English although I do not really like it, I speak Zulu even at school. It is nice to speak your language. I don't see how we can say they consider our feelings]

Bonga: *Mina angiboni ukuthi bayasicabangela ngezinye inkathi.* Sometimes *khe kufane kwisiZulu nesiNgisi lapho bakhe bacabangisise ukuthi isiNgisi yinto yokuqala, uma kungathiwa sibhale itest yesiZulu bazothi* no this that *kungcono nje senze konke kulingane* (Zulu) [I do not see how they are sometimes considerate. Sometimes where Zulu and English are concerned they think English is more important, if we are supposed to write a test in Zulu they will say no this and that, it will be better if everything is equal]

Lindiwe*: Mina ekucabangeni kwam* fine! *Ku* equal *yabona, ku* equal *yabona ngoba ngeke ngivele ngqale ngiyokhuluma siSwati natishamkhulu hawu tongizwa njani lapho angithi ngoba naye wati siNgisi nesiBhunu so ku* equal the fact that *ngiyakhona ngiye eklasini ngiyofunda siZulu ngize ngikhone ngiyeklasini ngiyofunda* English*, isiNgisi …*(Swati) [In my opinion fine! It is equal, you see, it is equal you see, because I cannot simply go and speak Swati with the principal. Hey! How would he understand me

101

because he only knows English and Afrikaans so it is equal, the fact that I can go to class and learn Zulu and also go to class and learn English …]

Kaelo: You know what*, nna kena le mathata. A ke bone e seame ka gore ke duella go dira seTswana. Sekolo se ha se gone go sempha heela e le se …. Jaaka di subject tse dingwe. 'Tshwanetse ke duele seTswana kha, ke duele* schoolfees *kha, and ga go ya siama* (Tswana) [You know what, I have a problem. I don't see how it is fair to pay (extra) for Tswana. This school does not offer me Tswana like other subjects. I have to pay for Tswana this side, and pay school fees on the other. It just is not right.]

Bonga: Do you think everything is equal the fact that you are doing Zulu equally – it's not the same as you doing English or you doing Afrikaans. You feel like its equal?

Bonga: *Cabanga sifunda nesiZulu* after school *asisifundi phakathi nesikolo mele senze isiNgisi sakhona nesiBhunu, siyakhokhela* extra *for la ma*subjects *ethu. Siyakhokha* more…*!* (Zulu) [Imagine, we do Zulu(African Languages) after school we do not learn them during school hours as we are supposed to do English and Afrikaans, we pay extra for our subjects (languages) We pay more …!]

Lindiwe: Siyakuzwa lapho ke yabona…(Zulu) [We hear what you say, you see …]

Appendix 4

UKUFUNDWA KWENDABA

- Uthisha makafunde indaba "BAPH'OKHOKHO BETHU", abafundi balalele.
- Amagama alukhuni mawachazwe abhalwe nasebhodini, kuxoxiswane ngendaba efundiwe.
- Indaba izofundwa okwesibili bese abafundi baphendula imibuzo elandelayo.

Ukufundwa kwendaba nokuxoxa: Imizuzu engu – 20.

BAPH'OKHOKHO BETHU

Igama lami nginguBongiwe Shirinda. NginguMshangane, ngihlala eDaveyton eMpumalanga neGoli. Ngazalelwa eThwathwa eBenoni. Ubaba wami nguMshangane kanti umama wami ngumZulu. Umama wazalelwa eMsinga. Mina nabafowethu nodadewethu sakhulela e-Daveyton. E-Daveyton kukhulunywa izilimi ezahlukene njengeSisuthu, isiTsonga, isiZulu, isiTswana, isiXhosa, isiVenda kanye nesiPedi.

Ulimi lokuqala engalufunda yisizulu engasincela kumama. Wulimi lolu olukhulunywa ekhaya nanxa ubaba enguMshangane uyasithanda isiZulu. Ulimi lwesibili esilukhulumayo yisiTsonga ikahulukazi uma sikhuluma nobaba. Siyamedlula umama ngokukhuluma isiTsonga. Umama omncane uma efikile ukhuluma nomama isiZulu esijulile. Thina siyabalalela bese sibalingisa, sibuze nencazelo yamagama.

Hayi – ke, uma siye kwamalume eMsinga, akekho noyedwa kubo okwazi ukukhuluma zonke izilimi ezikhulunywa e-Daveyton ngaphandle kwesiZulu. Uma sibuya kwamalume emakhaya, sikhuluma esijulile isizulu. Uma sikhuluma isiTsonga noma isisiSuthu, abakomalume bayamangala bafise nabo ukufunda. Umama yena uyaye achaze amagama esiZulu alukhuni awahumushele kwisiTsonga ukuze phela sikwazi ukuxhumana kahle nabantu bakomalume.

Ngesinye isikhathi abazala bethu bayaye bahleke uma sehluleka ukubiza amanye amagama, nokho thina asibahleki uma behluleka ukubiza amagama esiShangane.

(Le ndatshana icashunwe kuDraft Grade 7, Disemba 1999)

Abafundi baphendula imibuzo elandelayo:

UMBUZO 1

1.1 Bhala izilimi ezikhulunywa nguBongiwe?   (2)

_____

1.2 Wazalelwa futhi wakhulela kuphi uBongiwe?   (2)

_____

1.3 Bakhuluma ziphi izilimi ekhaya?   (2)

_____

1.4 Kungani bakhuluma lezo limi?   (2)

_____

1.5 Yini isizathu sokukhuluma lezo zilimi?   (2)

_____

1.6 Yini eyenza ukuthi bakhulume esijulile isiZulu uma bebuya kwamalume ?   (2)

_____

1.7 Esinjani isiZulu esijulile?   (2)

_____

1.8 Uchazani lo musho:

1.8.1 "IsiZulu esiqosheme".   (2)

1.9 Ngokucabanga kwakho, uBongiwe usitshelani uma ekhuluma ngabazala babo ababahlekayo uma kukhona amagama abangawazwisisi kahle?   (3)

1.10 Ngokukhulunywa kwezilimi, bhala umehluko okhona phakathi kweDaveyton noMsinga   (3)

1.11 Nika izizathu ezintathu ezenza kube kuhle ukwazi ukukhuluma ezinye izilimi (3)

/25/

Memorandamu

1.1 Isitsonga nesiZulu   (2)
1.2 EThwathwa / eBenoni, eDaveyton   (2)
1.3 IsiZulu / bakhuluma nobaba isiTsonga   (2)
1.4 IsiZulu – ulimi abaluncele kumama wabo, isiTsonga ngoba ubaba ungumTsonga

                                                                            (2)

1.5 Isizulu – bahlala nomama isikhathi esiningi / kujwayelekile ukuthi abantwana bakhulume ilimi lukamama ngoba bahlala naye isikhathi esiningi / nombono womfundi wamukelekile   (2)
1.6 Ngoba kukhulunywa sona kuphela   (2)
1.7 Esifaka izaga, izisho futhi asixubile amanye amagama ezinye izilimi   (2)
1.8 Sisikhuluma njengoba sinjalo / asixube amanye amagama   (2)

1.9 Ukuthi ababekezeli ezinye izilimi / abasizi abanye ukuthi bakwazi ukukhuluma ulimi lwabo / ulimi olusemqoka kubona yilolu olwabo   (3)

1.10 EDaveyton bakhuluma izilimi eziningi ezahlukene kanti eMsinga bakhuluma isiZulu kuphela   (3)

1.11 Akuklonyeliswe ezintathu kwezibhaliwe   (3)

/25/

(Translated version)

Reading a narrative

- The teacher should read the narrative "WHERE ARE OUR ANCESTORS" whilst the class listens.
- Difficult words should be explained and be written on the board. There should also be a discussion about what was read.
- The narrative should be read for the second time, and then the class should answer the questions that follow.

Reading and discussion of narrative: 20 minutes.

WHERE ARE OUR ANCESTORS

My name is Bongiwe Shirinda. I am Shangaan, I stay in Daveyton in the eastern part of Gauteng. I was born in Thwathwa in Benoni. My father is Shangaan while my mother is Zulu. My mother was born in Msinga. My brothers, sisters and I grew up in Daveyton. In Daveyton people speak different languages like Sotho, Tsonga, Zulu, Tswana, Xhosa, Venda and Pedi.

The first language that I learnt was Zulu as mother tongue. This is a language that we speak at home even though my father is Shangaan he loves Zulu. the second language that we speak is Tsonga especially when we speak to my father. We speak Tsonga better

than my mother. When my aunt comes to visit, she speaks deep Zulu with my mother. We listen as they speak and then imitate them; we also ask them the meaning of words.

Oh! Well, when we visit my uncle's place in Msinga, there isn't even one of them who can speak all the languages that are spoken at Daveyton except Zulu. When we come home from my uncle's place we speak deep Zulu. When we speak Tsonga or Sotho at my uncle's place, they are surprised and wish to learn how to speak the languages. My mother usually explains difficult Zulu words and also translate them into Tsonga so that we are able to communicate well with people at my uncle's place.

Sometimes our cousins laugh at us when we are unable to say some words. However we do not laugh at them when they cannot say Tsonga words.

(Taken from Draft Grade 7, December 1999)

Learners should answer the following questions:
1.1 Write the languages that Bongiwe speaks					(2)

_____

1.2 Where was Bongiwe born and where did she grow up?			(2)

_____

1.3 Which languages do they speak at home?				(2)

_____

1.4 Why do they speak those languages?					(2)

_____

1.5 What is the reason for them speaking these languages (2)

1.6 Why do they speak deep Zulu when they come from their uncle's place? (2)

1.7 What is deep Zulu? (2)

1.8 What does this expression mean:
1.8.1 "Well established Zulu" (2)

1.9 According to you, what is Bongiwe trying to tell us about her cousins who laugh at them when they do not understand some words? (3)

1.10 As far as speaking different languages is concerned, what difference is there between Daveyton and Msinga? (3)

1.11 Give three reasons why you think it is good to be able to speak other languages. (3)

Memorandum

1.1 Tsonga and Zulu (2)

1.2 Thwathwa / Benoni, Daveyton (2)

1.3 Zulu / they speak Tsonga with their father (2)

1.4 Zulu – mother tongue, Tsonga because their father is Tsonga (2)

1.5 Zulu – they spend more time with their mother / it is common for children to speak their mother's language because they stay with her most of the time / the learner's opinion can also be considered (2)

1.6 Because it is the only language that is spoken (2)

1.7 Has idiomatic expressions, does not include words from other languages (2)

1.8 Pure language/ not mixed with other words (2)

1.9 They do not tolerate other languages / they do not help others learn to speak their language / no language is more important than their own (3)

1.10   Many different languages are spoken in Daveyton, in Msinga they only speak Zulu (3)

1.11   Any three answers that are relevant should be acceptable (3)

25 October 2005

Dear Learner,

Request for permission to conduct research in your class at Gola High School

My name is Nomakhalipha Nongogo and I would like to invite you to participate in a research project conducted by researchers from the University of the Witwatersrand. We are also working with three other schools in Johannesburg. In this research project we are looking at how learners use language at school, inside and outside of the classroom, for example, what kind of language they use when and whether they mix languages or not.

With your permission, I would like to observe your classroom activities. Your school day activities and programmes will carry on as normal. I will observe what goes on in and out of class, audio record or video record some conversations and activities and hold interviews with learners who would like to be involved.

Your name will not be recorded in any way. You can decide that you do not want to take part at any point by telling your parent/guardian, teacher, principal or the researcher at your school. You will not be disadvantaged in any way if you do not want to take part.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask the researcher or your teacher for clarification. The researcher will be willing to explain things in more detail if you so wish.

Attached to this letter are four different forms where you can give permission to participate in the different activities or not. Please fill in your name for the different activities you agree to and leave it blank for those you do not wish to participate in.

Yours sincerely,

Nomakhalipha Nongogo
Tel 016 342 0501 (W)
Email: nnongogo@webmail.co.za

A.Learner Consent sheet – Classroom observation

I _____ consent to being observed in the classroom by a Wits researcher for the study on Language, Identity and Learning in urban schools. I understand that:
- My name will not be revealed to anybody
- I will not be disadvantaged if I choose not to participate and my interactions will be ignored.

Signed_____   Date_____

B.Learner Consent sheet – Video - Recording

I _____ consent to my class being video-recorded by a Wits researcher for the study on Language, Identity and Learning in urban schools. I understand that:
- the video recording will not be seen or heard by any person other than the researchers at any time
- I will be given a false name (pseudonym) to be used in the transcription of the interaction and my name will never be revealed in discussion of the research
- I can decide to change my mind and withdraw from the research by telling my teacher, the researcher or the principal
- I will not be disadvantaged if I choose not to participate and my interactions will not be transcribed.

Signed_____ Date_____

C. Learner Consent sheet – Audio-Recording of one day

I _____ consent to wearing a micro-phone for one full school day in order to be recorded for the Wits study on Language, Identity and Learning in urban schools. I understand that:
- the audio recording will not be heard by any person other than the researchers
- I should tell my friends that I am wearing the micro-phone
- I and others I interact with will be given false names (pseudonyms) to be used in the transcription of the interaction and my name will never be revealed in discussion of the research
- I can decide that I want the recording or parts of it deleted at the end of the day and the researcher will check with me before taking the recorder back. I can also switch the reorder off if I want to.
- My participation is voluntary and I will not be disadvantaged if I decide later not to participate.

Signed_____ Date_____

D. Consent form- Interviews

I _____ consent to being interviewed by a Wits researcher for the study on Language, Identity and Learning in urban schools. I understand that:
- participation in this interview is voluntary
- the interview will take 45- 60 minutes
- I may refuse to answer any questions I would prefer not to
- I may withdraw from the study at any time
- No information that may identify me will be included in the research report, and my responses will remain confidential.

Signed_____

Date_____

E. Consent form – Audio – Recording of interviews

I _____ consent to my interview with a Wits researcher for the study on Language, Identity and Learning in urban schools being tape-recorded. I understand that:
- the tape recording will not be heard by any person other than the researchers at any time
- I will be given a false name (pseudonym) to be used in the transcription of the interaction and my name will not be revealed in discussion of the research

Signed_____

Date_____

REFERENCES

Blommaert, J. 2005. *Discourse: Key Topics in Sociolinguistics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. 1991. *Language and Symbolic Power.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. 1993. *The Field of Cultural Production.* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Carr, W. and Kemmis, S. 1986. *Becoming Critical: Education Knowledge and Action Research.* Routledge: London.

Carrim, N.and Soudien, C. 1999. 'Critical Anti-Racism in South Africa. In May, S. (Ed.) *Critical Multiculturalism.* London: Falmer.

Chick, K and McKay, S. 2001. Teaching English in multiethnic schools in the Durban area: The promotion of multilingualism or monolingualism? *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies,* 19 :163-178.

Christie, P. 1991. 'The typical open school? A cautionary comment on case study research'. In Freer, D. (Ed.). *Towards Open Schools: possibilities and realities for non- racial education in South Africa.* Manzini: Macmillan Boleswa.

Davies, B. and Harre`, R. 1990. 'Positioning: the Discursive Production of Selves' *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour,* 20(1): 43-63.

Davis, A. 2001. 'Observer's Paradox'. In Mesthrie, R. (Ed.) *Concise Encyclopedia of Sociolinguistics.* Oxford: Elsevier.

De Klerk, V. 2000a. Language shift in Grahamstown: a case study of selected
        Xhosa Speakers. In *International Journal of Sociology of Language*, 146:
        87-110.

De Klerk, V. 2000b. To be Xhosa or not to be Xhosa … That is the Question. *Journal of
        Multilingual and Multicultural Development,* 21(3): 198 – 213.

De Klerk, V. 2001. 'What am I doing to my child?' Moving to English Schools.
        In Ridge, E.Makoni, S.and Ridge, S.G.M. (Eds.) *Freedom and discipline: Essays
        in applied linguistics.* New Delhi: Bahri Publications. 105-128.

De Klerk, V. 2002. Language issues in our schools: Whose voice counts? Part 1: The
        parents speak. *Perspectives in Education* 20(1):1-14.

Derrida, J. 1973. *Speech and Phenomena.* Evanston: Orthwestern University
        Press.

Dlamini, S. N. 2001. The construction, meaning and negotiation of ethnic identities in
        KwaZulu Natal. In Zegeye, A. (Ed.), *Social Identities in the New South
        Africa.* Cape Town: Kwela Books. 195-221.

Department of Education. 1997. *Language in Education Policy in terms of Section 3(4)
        of the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act 27 of 1996)* Pretoria:
        Department of Education. 14 July 1997.

Department of Education. 2001. *Manifesto of Values, Education and Democracy,*
        August 2001.

Dolby, N. 2001. *Constructing Race: Youth, Identity and popular culture in South Africa.*
        Albany, New York: State University of New York (SUNY) Press.

Dolby, N. 1999. 'Youth and the Global Popular: The politics and Practices of race
in South Africa.' In *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2(3): 291-309.

Fairclough, N. 1989. *Language and Power.* London: Longman.

Fine, M. Weis, L. and Powell, L.C. 1997. Communities of Difference: A look
at Desegregated spaces created for and by Youth' *Harvard Educational
Review,* 67(2), summer.

Finlayson, R. Calteaux, K. and Myers-Scotton, C.1998. *Orderly mixing: codeswitching
and accommodation in South Africa*. Journal of Sociolinguistics, 2(3): 395-420.

Frescura, F. 2001. The spatial geography of urban apartheid. In Zegeye, A (Ed.),
Social Identities in the New South Africa. Cape Town: Kwela Books.
99-125.

Gaganakis, M. 1992. Language and Ethnic Group Relations in Non – Racial
Schools. In *English Academy Review.* 9: 46-54.

Garcia, O. 1995. Spanish language loss as a determinant of income among
Latinos in the United States: Implications for language policy in schools. In
Tolletson, J. W. (Ed.), *Power and Inequality in Language Education.*
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gee, J. 1990. *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses.*
Basingstoke: Falmer Press.

Granville, S. Janks, H. Mphahlele, M. Reed, Y. Watson, P. Joseph, M. and Ramani, E.
1998. English With or Without G(u)ilt: A Position Paper on Language in
Education Policy. In *Language and Education*. 12(4): 254-270.

Hall, S. 1992a. 'The Question of Cultural Identity'. In Hall, S. Held, D. and McGrew, T. (Eds.), *Modernity and its Futures.* Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers and The Open University.

Hall, S. 1992b. 'New Ethnicities'. In Donald, J. and Rattansi, A. (Eds.), *'Race', Culture and Difference*. London: SAGE Publications.

Heron, J. and Reason, P. 1997. A Participatory Inquiry Paradigm. In *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3(3): 274-294.

Hitchcock, G and Hughes, D. 1989. *Research and the teacher: A Qualitative Introduction to School – based research.* London: Routledge.

Hodgson, L. 2002. 'Exploring Changing Identities: A Case Study of Black Female Technikon Students' Understanding of Themselves As Users of English, and As Users of Other Languages.'(M.A. Thesis). School of Languages Culture and Communication. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal.

Kanno, Y. and Norton, B. 2003. Imagined Communities and educational possibilities: Introduction. *Journal of Language, Identity and Education* 2(4): 241-249.

Kapp, R. (2000) '"With English You Can Go Everywhere": An analysis of the role and status of English at a former DET school.' *Journal of Education,* 25: 227-259.

Khumalo, F. 2007. African children's names are a sign of the times. In *The Sunday Times,* April 22, 2007, p. 22.

Khumalo, J. 1997. Joe's Beat. In *Pace,* March, p.112.

Kubota, R. and Lin, A. Race and TESOL: Introduction to Concepts and Theories. *TESOL Quarterly* Vol. 40, No. 3, September 2006.

Leap, W. and Mesthrie, R. 2000. Sociolinguistics in Education. In Mesthrie, R. e.a. *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Le Page, R.B. and Tabouret – Keller, A. 1985. *Acts of identity: Creole-based Approaches to language and ethnicity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lillis, T. and McKinney, C. 2002. *Analysing Language in Context: A student workbook.* London: Trentham.

Makubalo, G. 2006. A case study of the English language practices of six learners in a desegregated urban South African school. [MA Research Report]. University of the Witwatersrand.

Makubalo, G. (in press) "I don't know … it contradicts": identity construction and the use of English by High School learners in a desegregated School space. *English Academy Review.* 24:2

Makoni, S. and Kamwangamalu, N. (No Date) Ethnicity and Language Variation. (Unpublished Manuscript)

Makoni, S. 1998. African languages as European scripts: the shaping of communal memory. In S. Nuttall and C. Coetzee (Eds.), *Negotiating the past the making of memory in South Africa.* 242-248. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Mandela, N. 1995. Long Walk to Freedom. London: Abacus.

May, S. 1999. 'Introduction: Towards critical Multiculturalism. In May, S. (Ed.),
    Critical Multiculturalism. London: Falmer.

McKinney C. 2005. *Language, Identity and (subverting) Assimilation in a South*
    African desegregated suburban school. Paper presented at SACHES
    Conference, Dar-es –Salaam, September 2005.

McKinney C. (in press) "If I speak English, does it make me less Black anyway?" 'race'
    and English in South African desegregated schools. *English Academy Review.*
    24: 2

Mda, T. 2004. 'Multilingualism and education.' In Chisholm, L. (Ed.), *Changing*
    Class: *Education and Social Change in Post-Apartheid South Africa*.
    Cape Town: HSRC Press.

Mesthrie, R. 2000. Social Dialectology. In Mesthrie, R. e.a. . *Introducing*
    Sociolinguistics. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Mesthrie, R. and Deumert, A. 2000. Critical Sociolinguistics: Approaches to Language
    And Power. In Mesthrie R e.a. *Introducing Sociolinguistics*. Edinburgh:
    Edinburgh University Press.

Mesthrie, R. Swann, J. Deumert, A. and Leap, W.L. 2000. *Introducing Sociolinguistics*.
    Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Mesthrie, R. and Tabouret-Keller, A. 2001. 'Identity and Language'. In Mesthrie,
    R. (Ed.) *Concise Encyclopaedia of Socio-linguistics.* Oxford: Elsevier.

Motshegoa, L. 2007. *Tsa Kasi.* In Daily Sun, 18 May 2007. p. 33

Murray, S. 2002. Language issues in South African Education: an overview. In
 Mesthrie, K. (Ed.) *Language in South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University
 Press.

Myers-Scotton, C. 1988. Code switching as indexical of social negotiations. In Heller, M.
 (Ed.) Code switching, *Anthropological and Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Berlin:
 Mouton de Gruyter.

Myers-Scotton, C. 1990. *Social Motivations for Codeswitching: Evidence from
 Africa.*Oxford: Clarendon.

Myers-Scotton, C. 1993. *Social Motivation for code switching: Evidence from Africa.*
 Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ncoko, S. O.S. Osman, R. Cockcroft, K. 2000. Codeswitching Among Multilingual
 learners in Primary Schools in South Africa: An Exploratory Study. In
 International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism. 3(4): 225-241.

Nkomo, M. McKinney, C and Chisholm, L. (Eds.) 2004. *Reflections on school
 Intergration: Colloquim Proceedings.* Cape Town: HSRC.

Nongogo, N. 2004. Discourses of Exclusion: A case Study of Grade 9 Learners'
 Perceptions of the label 'Coconut' at a Private High School in Gauteng, South
 Africa. Honours Research Report. University of the Witwatersrand.

Norton, B. 1997. 'Language, Identity and the Ownership of English'. *TESOL
 Quarterly* 31(4) autumn, 409 – 429.

Norton Peirce, B. 1995. 'Social Identity, Investment, and Language Learning'. *TESOL
 Quarterly* 29(1) spring, 9-31.

Pavlenko A. and Blackledge, A. 2004. Introduction: New Theoretical Approaches to the
Study of Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts. In *Negotiation of
Identities in Multilingual contexts*. Eds. A. Pavlenko and A. Blackledge, 1-33,
Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Pennycook, A. 1994. *The Cultural Politics of English as an International
Language.* London: Longman.

Pennycook, A. 2004. Performativity and Language Studies. *Critical Inquiry in
Language Studies: An International Journal.* 1(1): 1-19.

Rampton, B. 1995. *Crossing: Language and Ethnicity among Adolescents.*
London: Longman.

Rudwick, S. 2004. 'Zulu, we need [it] for our culture': Umlazi adolescents in the
post-apartheid state. In *Southern African Linguistics and Applied
Language Studies.* 22(3&4): 159 – 172.

Sebba, M. and Wootton, A.J. 1998. "We, They and Identity Sequential v. Identity-related
Explanation in Code-switching". In P. Auer (Ed.), *Code-switching in
conversation*, p.262-289. London: Routledge.

Slabbert, S. and Finlayson, R. 2000. "I'm a cleva!": the linguistic makeup of
identity in a South African urban environment. In *International Journal of
Sociology of Language.* 144: 119-135.

Smith, C. 1999. *Baby Names for South African Babies*. Cape Town: Struik.

Soudien, C. 2004. 'Constituting the class': an analysis of the process of
'integration'in South African schools.' In Chisholm, L. (Ed.), *Changing
Class*: *Education and Social Change in Post-Apartheid South Africa*. Cape
Town: HSRC Press.

Soudien, C and Sayed, Y. 2003. 'Intergrating South African Schools? Some
Preliminary Findings'. *IDS Bulletin* 34(1): 29 – 42.

Spindler, G. and Hammond, L. 2000. The Use of Anthropological Methods in
Educational Research: Two Perspectives. In *Harvard Educational Review.*
70(1): 1-8.

Sridhar, K. 1996. Societal multilingualism In McKay, S. and Hornberger, N.
(Eds.) *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching.* Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press.

Swann, J. 1994. 'Observing and Recording Talk in Educational Settings' In Graddol, D.
Maybin, J. and Stierer, B. (Eds.) *Researching Language and Literacy in Social
Context.* Clevedon: Multilingual Matters in association with The Open
University.

Swann, J. 2000. Language Choice and Code-switching. In Mesthrie, R. e.a.
Introducing Sociolinguistics. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Taylor, N. and Vinjevold, P. (Eds.) 1999. *Getting learning Right: Report of the
President's Initiative Research Project.* Johannesburg: The Joint
Educational Trust.

Terre Blanche, M. and Durrheim, K. (Eds.) 1999. *Research in Practice. Applied Methods
for the social sciences*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Vally, S. and Dalamba, Y. 1999. *Racism, Racial Integration and Desegregation in South African Public Secondary School. Report by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC).* Johannesburg, Feb.

Versfeld, R. 1995. Language is Lekker: A language activity classroom. In Heugh, K. Siegruhn, A. and Pluddemann, P. (Eds.) *Multilingual Education for South Africa.* 23-27. Johannesburg: Heinemann.

Weedon, C. 1997. *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. (First Edition 1987).

Wright, C. 1998. 'Caught in the crossfire': reflections of a Black female ethnographer'. In Connolly, Paul and Troyna, (Eds.) *Reseaching Racism in Education: politics, Theory and Practice.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Zegeye, A. (Ed.) (2001). General Introduction, *Social Identities in the New South Africa.* Cape Town: Kwela Books.