De-creating Language Borders at the University of Cape Town: "The Fall of English" and the Rise of African Languages in Education

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[Minor] Thesis submitted in [partial] fulfillment of the Master's of Social Science Degree in Social Anthropology

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The University of Cape Town
2021

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signed by candidate

Signature: Date: 01/07/2021

Acknowledgements

The theories of incompleteness & conviviality that inform this research are much more profound than mere academic lenses. These ideas have the potential to shape us into more accepting and creative versions of ourselves. It is for this reason that my most profound thank you goes out to my supervisor, Prof. Francis Nyamnjoh, whose steady hand and wise mind has shaped my ideas about the academic project, but also about the complexities and potentials offered by diversity in our society. Thank you for patience, humour, presence, an inexhaustible wealth of knowledge and resources. Thank you for the gift of conviviality that you shared with me in such abundance throughout my postgraduate studies so far. I am a richer scholar and person because of it.

I am indebted to colleagues and staff at UCT, to those that have allowed me to debate through ideas and engage in meaningful conversation about the topics close to my heart. To my friends and those that cared for me mentally and physically during this process, thank you for feeding all parts of me.

To my family, thank you for allowing me the freedom to walk on unchartered territory. Thank you for sharing your passions with me and encouraging me to make them my own. Thank you for taking on mine.

This research was in part subsidised by a Lestrade Scholarship, aimed at promoting the development of African languages in education. There was no conflict of interest in the ends and means facilitated towards the research.

Baie dankie.

Abstract

The salience of English as the main language of instruction at tertiary institutions across South Africa has not been without critique. At the University of Cape Town, henceforth UCT, conversations surrounding language and academic success have become bolstered by the rhetoric of decolonisation, necessitating a review of policy and practice. This in turn has opened up research opportunities pertaining to student and staff experiences of language at the institution. This thesis is a response to the urgent need for ethnographic focus on the language situation at UCT and higher education institutions countrywide, where increasingly light falls on the language question within quests for decolonisation and social justice. Focusing the language question within frameworks of decoloniality, glocalisation, translanguaging and the development of African languages in education, this thesis distills ethnographic data to argue that language borders need to be reevaluated in a quest for conviviality informed by the universality of incompleteness, where fluidity, interconnection, and interdependence are prioritised over the current dominance of English. Grounded in rich ethnographic evidence in the form of student interviews and reflections, meeting at the intersection of social and linguistic anthropology, this thesis grapples with the critical questions: “What is language at UCT? And what does language do?”

Keywords: Language, Multilingualism, African Languages, Globalisation, Translanguaging, Decolonisation

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Acronyms

ACALAN - African Academy of Languages
ASnA - Anthropology Southern Africa
DSA - Department of Student Affairs
HEI - Higher Education Institutions
ICT - Information and Communications Technology
NSFAS - National Student Financial Aid Scheme
#RMF/RMF - Rhodes Must Fall
SA - South Africa
SRC - Student Representative Council
UCT - University of Cape Town
UFS - University of the Free State
UNISA - University of South Africa
UP - University of Pretoria
UWC - University of the Western Cape

Chapter 1
Introduction: Beyond "A Language": Rhodes, Linguistic Miscreations, and Rising Lingos at UCT

Introduction to Research

Language is a constructive feature of day-to-day life. It impacts peoples' ability to communicate with one another, formulate thoughts, and facilitates learning. Language is, additionally, both an identity making tool and artistry of expression. The aptness of language repertoires informs all aspects of life.

This ethnographic research project is interested in the ways in which language use plays out at UCT. The goal has been to attempt to understand whether and how multilingualism manifests at UCT, and in what ways decolonisation movements and rhetoric inform this.

Multilingualism has been affirmed and confirmed as an important goal nationally, within education more broadly as well as in HEIs in particular. It is proclaimed as a prospective goal for inclusion, in the context of a history burdened by language oppression and legislated inequalities (South African Government 1997, UCT 2013). Multilingualism is understood here as a desirable goal, as a measure that is able to redress inequalities of the past towards a future of inclusion of the diversity of language repertoires that people in South Africa bring to the table. Whilst this is not to dismiss opponents of multilingualism, it is in affirmation of the rich possibilities offered by policy and practice that allows for people to draw fully all their linguistic resources. This is also to recognise that those that have promoted English on a national and global level are not necessarily opposed to multilingualism, but rather, that the linguistic dominance and the hierarchy intrinsic to the South African language landscape have historically affirmed, and still currently affirm English to be at the apex of that hierarchy.

Although there are many contexts and aspects that inform this study, the point of focus is UCT's attempts at multilingual interventions, as well as how the Fallist movements and decolonisation initiatives more broadly inform language at the university. So too, the politics of globalisation informs the tension between multilingualism, English globalisation and decolonisation initiatives. This thesis argues that we are observing *the Fall of English in the Age of English*, where we are witnessing a turn in language conversation, where conversion to a particular brand of standard English is being widely questioned. This is

leading to exciting prospects for various forms of multilingualism within UCT, and perhaps in education more broadly, whether in SA, the African continent, or internationally. This links additionally to the broad argument that language borders are being 'de-created' in innovative ways, making way for the development of African languages in education. Decoloniality has been taken up in curricula as well as by student collectives, pushing for decolonial tertiary education systems and institutions, providing qualitative data in which students at UCT confirm the complications they experience with regards to language at UCT, and provide useful starting points for how to consider about multilingual intervention.

Phipps' (2019) case for Decolonial Multilingualism claims that multilingualism has been experienced as a colonial project for much of the world's population (Phipps 2019:2), with pedagogies, modalities and chosen languages still serving western democracies. Understood this way, multilingualism is not in and of itself decolonial, and interventions need to take note of both frameworks of decolonisation and multilingualism in terms of both their input and output. Phipps' *Decolonising Multilingualisms: Struggles to De-create* (2019) is adamant in its goals to *write without borders* and *de-create* linguistic imperialism. These principles inform this project likewise, where the very borders enforced upon languages are questioned, deconstructed, and hopefully, de-created towards expanded language agency and access.

Decolonisation has long been a key word and pursuit in the discussion on rethinking the African university, outside of the boundaries of Eurocentricity (Mamdani 2016). In 2015, the Fallist movements called for colonial symbolism to be removed from campus, and colonial mechanisms in the university to be interrogated. As participant students pointed out then, and continue to do today, the statue of Rhodes is neither an accidental nor incidental manifestation of the shadow of coloniality that tracks itself across the institution, day in, day out (Nyamnjoh: 2016). The 'fall of Rhodes' by ceremonial removal on 9 March 2015 was a historic moment in the fight for decolonisation, not just at the university, but intersecting with movements around the world with similar motivations. Yet, after the fall, students continue to use the pedestal in creative ways to point out that whilst Rhodes may have fallen physically, the project to decolonise remains ongoing.

The decolonisation movement did not lose pace and manifested in the realms of calls for fee free education, decolonisation of curricula, diversification of staff, and an overall call for a decolonial manifesto in all aspects of university life (be that the physical

environment (in terms of buildings and names)[1] or decolonising of the mind, through curricula and other interventions). These protests and various calls will be discussed at greater length when looking at language within a historical continuum at UCT, as well as the ways in which national and global debates are relevant. This awareness of recent protests does, however, affirm the validity of a decolonial, activism-centered approach to the language question at UCT. An equally important backdrop to this thesis is the increased ways in which UCT has piloted and implemented various multilingual language learning programmes across the university, and has taken increasing symbolic steps in recognising that UCT, as an African university, can no longer be compelled to follow the exclusively English teaching model (Madiba 2010, 2014). It is a meeting of decolonisation rhetoric and multilingual initiatives that provides a key introduction to this research, considering how colonialism can be challenged via language; and to discuss the extent of the successes and failures that UCT has thus far encountered in that ambitious goal. The lens of translanguaging and other creative language interventions provides the framework for this endeavour. Translanguaging holds that multilingual repertoires are only artificially separated. As a pedagogy, it argues that students be allowed to bring their full set of linguistic resources into the classroom, even where this does not conform to imagined bordered languages/artificial separation. This is useful in this project's quest to recognise the diverse ways students at UCT come to interact and learn.

Frameworks relating to decolonisation, multilingualism, translanguaging, globalisation, incompleteness, and others, are discussed in detail in the chapter to follow.

Research Questions

With statues having fallen, this thesis asks 'where language stands' at UCT, in terms of whether the language policy at the institution aligns with enactment of policy, and whether multilingualism as promoted on a policy level is productive in practice. It is worth noting at the outset that although UCT's Language Policy (2008) recognises the importance of multilingualism, this study seeks to determine the outworking of this policy sentiment. Next, the research asks whether the development of African languages in education is a priority within the larger linguistic framing of the university. Finally, the research seeks to determine in what ways languages become, whether through formal or informal means, blurred and transfused with one another, especially looking at the intermingling of African

[1] Whilst concluding this thesis, it was announced by the SRC of UCT that the bust of Jan Smuts perched above former Smuts Hall had been removed, and the building temporarily renamed Upper Campus Residence.

languages and English within a framework of translanguaging and decolonisation. This thesis also takes its cue from Funda's (2018:3) unpublished dissertation that examines "whether the persistence of the dominance of English within the University of Cape Town is symbolic of the space's conviviality, reciprocity and bricolage (or lack thereof), towards transformation within the University of Cape Town, and perhaps the country as a whole."

This translates briefly to the following main questions:

- What is the language situation at UCT?
- Does policy and practice align at UCT?
- In what ways is the development of African languages in education being prioritised?
- How are the borders between languages in an academic environment 'fuzzy'?
- How does the dominance of English promoted by the institution impact the above questions?

Research Objectives

Students cross borders in their lived realities at UCT. These borders may at times be physical - such as when students travel from other parts of the world, other parts of the country, or other sides of the train tracks to reach UCT, and bring with them a certain language repertoire, which they come to marry with that of the standard academic English that is propagated and exaggerated in many UCT classrooms. This marriage, although sometimes indicative of compromise, is more likely a reflection of the creative mobilities students come to possess as they add different language varieties onto their existing repertoire, often subordinating one for another.

More blatantly, this manifests when English becomes an ever-present force within the students' repertoires, not by capitulating to English, but with an intermingling of English into other languaging scenarios. The phenomena goes both ways, so that one is able to conclude in this context at least, that European and African languages are often simultaneously present in the lives of many Africans (Nyamnjoh & Shoro 2019: 12), as with UCT students. At UCT, this means an important shift towards more egalitarian ways of teaching, marking and learning, where pure language varieties are decreasingly relevant or reflective of the concrete language experiences of students and staff.

These, and other language related curiosities are discussed with a special focus on isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English - the main languages of focus in UCT's language policies and programmes, and the most prevalent home languages in the Western Cape (discussed in detail in chapter detailing language politics and policies in SA). With a focus on these languages, this thesis examines how themes like status, identity, heritage, belonging, power, guilt and decolonisation are present and relevant in the context of language at UCT.

The university completed the 2020 academic year online, showing that the physical boundaries of the university have long been mutable. UCT is here considered as both a physical space, but also an online space, including social media accounts related to the institution, and the various online platforms used for teaching, learning and communications. South African language history will be used to provide necessary context to the various language contacts and situations reified on campus, noting multilingualism as a form of catharsis in a decolonial moment.

Two lenses for viewing this topic are the development of African languages in education as an enactment of multilingualism, and the ways in which the singularity of English is being challenged. So whilst this thesis will pay pertinent attention to the globalisation of English and what this means for the ways the language has, and continues to spread worldwide and becomes normalised in institutions and communications the world over, it will also pay attention to the ways in which English has become adaptable to the regions and languages with which it comes into contact.

Together, these aspects converge to form the question as to the language situation at UCT. This in terms of both its isolated form as a *specific* tertiary institution, but also as part of the broader South African landscape, as well as part of the African decolonisation movements and an increasingly globalising world, confronted with a local and global in a process of reconciliation and turmoil.

The research thereby documents Englishisation as a form of globalisation, and the development of decolonial forms of multilingualism, which have increasingly been taken up as the goals of policies and research makers, with educators and students being actors and agents in both of the above. As a qualitative study, this research intends to encapsulate students' and educators' experience of language at the institutions, both inside and outside of the classroom, and to compare this with the policies and

communications shared by the institution. Primarily using the reflections of individual students, the study is ethnographic in approach.

Overwhelmingly, this research shows a disjuncture in how language is used, where classrooms are perceived in a completely monolingual way, and yet, communications between students themselves and between students and staff often happen in a diversity of languages (Madiba, 2014). Whilst the institution is shadowed by the clouding experience of standard, "native" language English associated with the colonial heritage of the institution, the reality of language at the institution seems to be one where multilingualism is the norm. The overwhelming indication is that the pressures and standards of a particular brand of English is still felt by students as they undergo their academic training, and especially students at the start of their undergraduate degrees that have been schooled at institutions where this brand and variety of English was far from the norm, or indeed not engaged in at all. For this reason, many students struggle unduly to adapt academically, since institutional access is often contingent on English fluency. In this way students confirm that language can be an obstacle to academic success. This said, the institution has made progress towards challenging these obstacles, with many educators referencing unique and institutionally recognised ways of trying to bridge language gaps in the learning and teaching experience. Intention and execution often do not converge in the ways intended, however. Similarly, there is disjuncture when it comes to how students experience their language freedom and the academic challenges offered to them. These frameworks are all explored in greater depth in the literature review to follow.

Whilst not always reflective of the debates happening in institutions, the overwhelming movement of linguistic policy is to recognise that languages are indeed fluid and that in a conversation about language, we are not necessarily speaking of the presence of complete language(s), but rather creative ways of making do with *incomplete* resources.

Plan/Outline

This introduction is followed by a literature review, which begins to offer some of the key texts for thinking about the themes that arise throughout the given research. The review is focused on themes of glocalisation, New Englishes, language and power, translanguaging, decolonisation, and incompleteness & conviviality. This is followed with a section on methodology. This section discusses both the intended ways in which research

was to be conducted, as well as some of the challenges that arose linked to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. It also discusses how qualitative data was gathered towards this project. The ethical considerations that contributed challenges and opportunities is also discussed briefly thereafter, especially as this pertains to the challenges of creating decolonial, multilingual research within the context and confines of a standardised thesis, as well as discussing the appropriateness of the topic within a framework of positionality.

This leads up to the four main chapters and themes, which provide data and dissemination. The first of these (Chapter 4) is to focus on an overview of language in South Africa, as it relates to its history, current policies and debates, and an overall argument, recognising the continuum of past into the present.

Chapter 5 frames decolonisation in terms of the language question, specifically relating ethnographic data on students' experiences of language and identity, to the manifestation of decolonial multilingualism. This section asks after the practicality of language use, but also about the philosophy and theory that inform students' experiences of language decolonisation at the institution, and of their heritage as it relates to educational experiences.

Chapter 6 locates translanguaging within the broader theme. It focuses on the real ways in which students employ different languages in their day-to-day lives. Comparative analysis is made between language in theory and in practice at UCT, for one, but also discusses how colloquial and standard language are used side-by-side at the institution, especially as this pertains to the development of African languages in education. This gives way to the question of how translanguaging is (un)knowingly used as a tool of learning at the institution. This intervention of small-scale language innovations at the institution have made way for more large-scale projects that incorporate language diversity in the UCT classroom itself.

Thereafter, the thesis reaches its culmination in Chapter 7, recognising the diverse ways in which English at UCT becomes mutated, where the normativity of the language is witnessing a cascade that opens up exciting prospects for post-colonial and decolonial language practices.

These chapters each discuss an important component of language experience at UCT. Together, I argue they make a powerful case for language innovation and a new form of

decolonial, multilingual praxis at the institution, but also as a roadmap for other South African universities to follow. Whilst this project has much in the way of critique for the ways in which UCT has remained an institution haunted by its British colonial roots, which have kept its language policy staid, there is also no doubt that adaptation is contributing to innovative reimaginings of what it means *to language* at the institution.

This leads the thesis to conclude that fluidity, rather than fluency, ought to inform conceptualisations of language at UCT. To this extent, rigidity and fixity are combatted by de-creating, which recognises the diverse ways in which UCT students make meaning in light of decolonisation initiatives and translanguaging experimentation.

Summary Conclusion

This research is interested in various decolonisation initiatives and multilingual language opportunities at the University of Cape Town. Specifically, it presents decolonisation in the context of language and education and in the prospects of multilingual education endeavours, by documenting decolonial possibilities. In its intersection between ethnography and social and linguistic anthropology, the research is pertinent to subjects such as incompleteness, hybridity, fixity and belonging, relevant to the field of anthropology.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

Introduction

This research concerns multilingualism, translanguaging, globalisation and decolonisation, and this chapter reviews literature at an intersection between linguistic and social anthropology. A tension between Englishisation (within a framework of globalisation) and the development of African languages in education (as part of the decolonial project) characterise the language situation at UCT, which is informed by multiple, often contradicting experiences of language. This review presents the various frameworks that inform policy and mindset towards multilingualism at the institution. This is a multi-disciplinary overview, which seeks to bring into conversation linguistic and anthropological theory and ethnography. Relevant literature from linguistics and anthropology receive attention, particularly in terms of the operational concepts of globalisation, mobility, decolonisation, and incompleteness.

Glocalisation

This aspect of the literature review focuses on globalisation through the lens of glocalisation. Kearny (1995) cautions against autochthonous views on language so as "to assess [the] communicative mutations resulting from the intersection between mobile people…" (Jacquemet 2005: 257). This thesis takes the diverse UCT student population into account, and pays special attention to the different language capabilities with which students enter higher education in SA. Globalisation features prominently in this review as an introduction to the ways in which language contact occurs, and acts as a precursor to the education of students at UCT as a 'global' university. English receives priority at UCT, as part of its global aspirations.

Globalisation rhetoric is mostly framed around mobility and interconnections (Kearny 1995: 549), within a framework of unequal relations of power (Tsing 2005), and with a discourse of English assimilation of the global world, "forced linguistic assimilation into global markets, increasing disappearance of local vernaculars, language standardisation, today this understanding is increasingly complicated by the framework of glocalisation", or "...on the other, that of cultural pluralism, hybridity, popular democratization [sic]" (Jacquement 2005: 258). Glocalisation is explained as the intersection and

interpenetration of the local and global, a concomitant 'flow' and 'spread' (Kearny: 1995). The focus of glocalisation is an awareness that local habits and practices infuse global ones, as much as vice versa, making homogeneity an unlikely outcome. Gupta and Ferguson (1992) point out that, because of mobility and ever-increasing forms of globalisation, autochthonous mindsets regarding place and language as very much outdated - that is to say that France has long since been the sole capital of the French language, as *'Les Immortels'* (also Académie Française) can attest,[2] with some of the main holders of the prestiges membership being located far away from France, or supposed French culture. Of course, this is not solely because of modern mobilities. Unequal and violent processes of colonisation provide the context into which such mobilities continue to expand, through new modes of transport and communication (Mufwene & Vigoroux 2008).

With new technological modes of communication becoming extensions of the self and ICTs featuring prominently in the lives of people all over the world (De Bruijn, Nyamnjoh & Brinkman 2009), no one is untouched by the global, even whilst engaging in their local lives. South Africa's rainbow nation, although evasive, remains an example of novel mobilities developing against the backdrop of systemic violence (Sichone 2008), where multiculturalism manifests in increased heterogeneity.

A globalisation rhetoric that fails to recognise that globalisation is not the story of a single assimilation into a global culture (Appadurai 2008), with language diversity and other forms of difference diminishing, is acutely unaware that this does not resemble the experiences of Africans (Mufwene & Vigoroux 2008: 28). Jacquemet (2005: 257) adds that globalisation cannot be understood only in terms of "dystopian linguistic catastrophe." Mufwene and Vigoroux (2008) caution this specifically with their analysis of linguistic diversity on the African continent, pointing out that much of rural Africa is still unaffected by the intrusion of coloniser languages. Equally so, in cities and parts of the continent very much affected by the processes of globalisation, it is the unique and creative ways in which local and colonial languages come to intermingle with one another that is the point of focus for this thesis. Tsing (2000: 336) reminds of the darker side of globalisation, stating that it is not so much the story of healthy bodily flows that best represent globalisation, but rather a sort of rape; "a forcing of some peoples powerful interests onto other people." Yet, it can be argued that likely these arguments are either too optimistic

[2] This French Academic/Literature society originally had members exclusively in France - a predominantly white and male society, yet increasingly diverse the society members, including many French African writers.

or otherwise too crude to encapsulate this conversation of structure versus agency in language experiences.

When it comes to accurately reviewing the literature pertaining to globalisation, it is worth being cautious of both sides of the spectrum. Both local and global discourse on language endangerment have demonised English to view it a killer language (Mufwene & Vigoroux 2008: 22), swallowing up languages whole or otherwise infecting, like a virus, those it comes in contact with. More accurately, glocalisation intensifies worldwide relations, whereby local happenings are shaped by other distant localities, where English has been taken up in many places the world over, not simply as a beacon of the (non-existing) homogenous global. Whether it is to be considered an intruder or welcome guest is as yet undetermined.

New Englishes

According to Kachru (1990), three circles of English make up the totality of English globally. Inner circle English refers to the areas of the world where English is a native language to the majority of the nation state individuals. These are the areas associated with standardised versions of the language, such as the US and UK. The rules associated with the language are informed by the standardised written form of English most common to these places. The second circle of English refers to areas where English is a home language to some of the population and where a good deal of the main economic and institutional functions of the nation state is conducted in English. Often, this is the case for former colonies of Britain, and includes South Africa. Whilst most countries conduct themselves in languages other than English at home, English is often a lingua franca, and much of the official functions of the country are conducted in English. The outer circle of English includes countries where English language learning is a relatively new phenomenon, and where official functions are conducted in languages other than English. However, in these areas there is increased focus on English language learning. This includes countries like China and Russia. This overly simplified version of the circles of English are both useful and problematic. It is useful insofar as it points to the far-reaching places and domains in which the language is prevalent, yet it is problematic for failing to recognise the layered complexities existing within the given circles. For one, it must be recognised that due to increased globalisation it is not uncommon to find the English associated with inner circle English in its peripheral circles. It is equally the case that standardised versions of the language have been excluded from many official functions

where English is used. This is to say that what counts as “good” or correct forms of the language is very much a localised experience.

There is thus the need to recognise that globalisation that leads to the rapid spread of English, whilst posing a threat to smaller, indigenous languages the world over, does not necessarily engulf these languages in ways popular discourse has predicted (Jacquement 2005). Instead, glocalisation seems more to resemble convivial forms of hybridisation. This is *not* to say that English should be accepted as a neutral language, necessarily bridging language barriers in its global spread. It is at least to say that globalisation is not so much a homogenising process (Coupland, 2010), as it is a process whereby the local and global come to intersect and engage in diverse relationships (Baraldi, 2006). They converse, become friendly - even familial, but also bicker and even end relationships where it no longer serves the desired functions. Even upon appreciating these facets of globalisation, I remain sceptical of the role of English in many areas, especially urban spheres, where English is taken to be the only facilitator of glocalisation. Even in indigenised forms, it must not be taken for granted that English is widely formalised by states as the de facto language of many regions, often possessing official status despite most people in the nation state not possessing proficiency in the *accepted* forms of the language. What counts as competence in real language environments (Blommeart et al. 2005) is often not friendly to popular repertoire. Blommeart et al. (2005: 197) make an important argument in recognising that multilingualism in a globalised context is not what languages individuals use and don’t use, “but what the environment as structured determinations and interactional emergence, enables and disables.” Perceptions regarding what constitutes competence in a language may result in judgments that deem multilingualism a ‘valued asset' or ‘having no language’. More will be said on this when discussing translanguaging pedagogy (Chapter 6).

Throughout this thesis the term *New Englishes* will be used to refer to English impacted by local realities, pertaining to accent but also other aspects of local nuance (Mesthrie 2010). Beyond the native speaker debate, not all Englishes even aspire to conform to standardised versions of the language (Mesthrie 2010: 600). This is to argue that the idea of “native speaker” and “mother tongue” are not cogent terms, as peer groups more than parents impact language patterns for one, but also because what may have once counted as “non-native” has the full potential to stabilise and become a native variety (Mesthrie 2010: 600). Similarly, it may be more appropriate to think of all forms of a language as varieties or dialects, the “standard” or native version being just one (Mesthrie & Bhatt

2008: 14). Elsewhere, New Englishes are sometimes referred to as World Englishes (with many varieties globally) (Jenkins 2006). English is also referred to as a lingua franca. This relates specifically to the ways in which people use English as a bridging language, not necessarily with the intention of obtaining standardised conformity, but to lessen social distance between parties of differing language capabilities. New Englishes can be seen to encompass these terms (Jenkins: 2006), and relate specifically to English beyond what is considered "standard". This is useful for thinking through the ways in which English use manifests at UCT, where much of the student population conform to varieties outside of what is considered standard, and the institution is necessitated to adopt views on a diversity of Englishes.

Globalisation is, to this extent, a double edged sword, which disguises itself as a result of mobility, even as it does indeed endanger localities. Equally, it does not engulf and destroy them, but intermingles the local and global in conversation over conversion. Whilst English is often understood as the language that best represents the prevalence of globalisation, it is not necessarily the standardised version of the language which has come to prevalence, but the local varieties. Pidgin or creole languages of their own show no sign of disappearing, despite the stigma that may be attached to them as aberrant forms of the language (Sebba: 1997). As relevant to the South African milieu, localised ways of making sense of English and other global (often colonial) languages can be seen to inform the language practices of people all over the world.

Linguistic Capital

This review would be incomplete without reference to the various ways in which Bourdieu's (1977) framing of linguistic capital and power is relevant to the study. A Bourdieun framework refers to the various forms of capitals (cultural, economic, and social) that enable people to form their habitus in order to navigate various doxa's (rules) of the field (place or situation). Linguistic capital, i.e. the language skills that people habituate in their day-to-day lives is a key point of focus here. Bourdieu discusses capital (the accumulated symbolic forms of capital that a person possesses), habitus (the learnt behaviour people use to navigate their lives), and doxa (representative of the rules of a field/space that sets the standard for what gets counted as good and bad) in relation to power. In the context of this thesis, UCT is the field at hand, and the various ways in which English is perpetuated as the language of power, best reflecting the rules of the

field, is discussed in relation to students' capital. This is further deconstructed later, in relation to translanguaging at UCT.

Translanguaging

Pioneers in the field of translanguaging, Garcia and Wei (2013), have brought the term to the forefront of education language policy since it was coined by Cen Williams in 1994, and subsequent translation into English by Baker in 2001. The term was originally conceptualised as trawsiethu (Williams 1994), and came to exist in response to the Welsh classroom where bilingual students (Welsh and English competency) were using a combination of languages in their learning experience. In its most simplistic terms, translanguaging as a language policy invites the full repertoires of students into the classroom, stressing the importance of allowing free-flowing language in education in order to utilise the maximum potential of students. Williams (2002: 40) defines the term, in its pedagogical origin as "using one language to reinforce the other in order to increase understanding so as to augment the pupil's ability in both."

One of Garcia and Wei's (2013) main arguments is that for the bilingual and multilingual speakers, knowledge of languages is not stored separately, but rather is made separate by the external imposition of the artificial rules disallowing language mixing. Not allowing the mixing of languages, according to the authors, is equivalent to asking students to leave their linguistic resources at the school gate. As a metaphor Garcia (2017) utilises the image of ocean and shore, arguing that the start and end of water and sand is a blurred line, as is equally the case with the ways in which languages are naturally combined. It is worth noting two additional elements here, the first being *what constitutes a language* and the second, *what is the difference between language and languaging*. For the former, Garcia and Wei (2013) argue that for a speaker to be able to draw on a given language, they do not need to be able to utilise the full range of rules and vocabulary from that language - or the whole language. Even a little knowledge of a language makes it possible for a speaker to draw from it. A multilingual speaker is then not one that is able to access the entirety of multiple languages. Seen differently, multilingualism does not refer to many monolingual, native language speakers in one body (Garcia & Wei 2014).

Multilingualism is relevant wherever a speaker is drawing on resources from different languages, or even different codes and registers (Canagaraj & Liyanage 2012). This is then to say that it is not accurate to claim that unless the whole language is absent, it is not

present. Limited knowledge still constitutes knowledge in the realm of languages. Garcia and Wei (2013) advocate that it is useful to not only allow, but to encourage this creative, linguistic freedom to make its appearance when useful for learning and teaching purposes. Elsewhere, scholars have argued that terms like code-switching and multilingualism have exhausted their usefulness in the assumption of whole separable units (Blommeart 2012, 2014). Instead, blending and complexity are more accurate references that open outwards towards translanguaging. Lewis et al. (2012) do however mention that the distinction between translanguaging and code-switching is somewhat ideological. Both terms refer to switching between languages, but translanguaging insists on non-separable units, and flexibility.

The other distinction is between language and languaging. Here, authors argue that language is not a thing that one possesses (able to be transcribed as a noun), but rather, that language is an act of doing (Garcia and Wei 2013), that is converging, blending, bending, muting, and becoming. Thinking of language as a verb rather than a noun allows one to think of language not in terms of possession, but to think of the act of communication as an act of becoming, not as an act of acquiring completeness, but in recognition of the possibilities of always expanding, creatively and convivially (more on this topic later). Elsewhere, Rymes (2014) has also suggested adopting the term "communicative repertoire" as opposed to language(s) to refer to the variety of acts and communicative practices people use to make and dissect meaning. Both these approaches are adopted for this thesis.

Prof. Mbulungeni Madiba, previously associated with the Linguistics Department at UCT, has also extensively advocated for and implemented translanguaging policy and practice at various levels at UCT, and much of this work provides ethnographic and theoretical underpinnings for doing so. He discusses at length the importance of translanguaging in the HEI South African context, arguing for its usefulness as a pedagogical tool (Madiba 2010, 2013, 2014). The field of linguistics for tertiary language policy implementation is burgeoning. An important component of this is evolving African approaches to the management of linguistic diversity, which include developing terminology for certain scientific concepts in African languages, a project which Alexander and Madiba have both advocated for through the ACALAN Project (Alexander 2009, Madiba 2014). Madiba explores this aspect of translanguaging with regards to multilingual teaching and learning. Both ethnographic examples and theory relating to translanguaging at UCT will be discussed at length in the chapters that follow. According to Madiba, the complementary

language use facilitated by translanguaging "enables students to participate meaningfully in knowledge creation, dissemination and application" (2014: 10).

Mignolo (2012) makes an important bridging argument for the crossroads of translanguaging and decolonisation, showing the potentiality of translingualism as a tool for decoloniality.

> "When languages and categories begin to be activated in order to build a world in which many worlds will co-exists, by social actors aiming at de-colonization of knowledge and being and of de-linking from the imperial modernity, the splendors of human imagination and creativity will open up."

Translanguaging as a decolonial pedagogy is an important point of focus for this thesis, seeking to make itself an ethnographic document in support of the many ways in which language offers potential for the decolonial moment.

Decolonisation

In *#RhodesMustFall: Nibbling at Resilient Colonialism in Cape Town, South Africa* Nyamnjoh (2016) makes an important case for decolonisation movements across South Africa and indeed, globally. Leveraging a discussion on the nature of Cecil John Rhodes as *amakwerekwere*,[3] Nyamnjoh discusses the possibilities for conviviality, prioritising conversation over conversion. A key monograph reflecting on the #RMF protests in near real time, Nyamnjoh discusses the ways in which coloniality has remained a part of education and life in South Africa despite the conception of transition at the advent of democracy. He offers that mobility, not just in its physical form, but as a movement between ideas and identities, ought to inform understandings of citizenship and belonging. This text additionally makes important observations about the role of language in preserving and reflecting this very racism, with English acquisition still an act of 'whitening up' towards greater social visibility. Nyamnjoh reflects on English as the language of power, holding a hierarchical place, which dismisses the power of language, in favour of the language of power (Nyamnjoh 2016: 150). Proficiency in a particular brand of English holds symbolic capital, which is weighed as being more important than capabilities in a multitude of languages.

[3] The derogatory term is used to demean and threaten foreigners and/ illegal immigrants in South Africa. It can be used specifically to refer to Africans from outside of South Africa, but in the context of Nyamnjoh's (2016) work takes on a more fluid meaning as relating to mobile foreigners.

In *'Potted Plants in Greenhouses' A Critical Reflection on the Resilience of Colonial Education in Africa,* Nymanjoh (2012) uses the analogy of potted plants in greenhouses to discuss the domestication of African ideas and creativities in Western moulded greenhouses, positing the unfortunate durability of colonial and colonising epistemology as a forerunner to a "devaluation of African creativity, agency and value systems and an internalized sense of inadequacy" (Nyamnjoh 2012:129). Furthermore, this has hindered African pride, contributing to an urge to "lighten […] darkness". It reasserts the well-known and long standing argument forwarded at first by Ndebele on the value of the ordinary, in a call for the stories of ordinary people to take precedence in education. Elsewhere, Nyamnjoh (2019) discusses the prospects of decolonising the university in Africa, claiming that whilst these universities may have diversified their staff, western epistemologies continue to dominate the curricula and policies that shape their students. Discussed in the following section, Nyamnjoh (2017) urges that the recognition of incompleteness in language and all other spheres of self and environment, is the most important tool for the decolonisation project.

The well-canonised debate between important African literary figures, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Chinua Achebe, as well as other prominent writers on the continent, provides a crucial point of analysis for the concept of decolonisation, showing that this can be done in various ways. In this regard, it is a question as to whether African languages in education are at odds with the resilience of English.

Wa Thiong'o in *Decolonising the Mind* (1986), claims that the omnipresence of colonial languages is a direct reason for the ongoing colonisation of the mind. He urges that for true decolonisation to take place, western languages, epistemologies, stories and modes of being must be completely rejected and replaced by an indigenous mode of being on the African continent. That to say that the stories of Africans must be told by Africans and in African languages. This important literary text came in reaction to the 1962 conference "African Writers of English Expression", after which Ngũgĩ critiqued his colleagues' inability to see beyond the standards and expectations set by European interlocutors - where the judgement and success of African writers still rested on their ability to express themselves in English. He urged that the decolonisation movement must break away from these chains by undergoing a complete process of rejection of eurocentricity (and English) and ground itself in a pan-Africanism outside of western canons, awards, and ideas. Interestingly, some of his African compatriots commented on the division that could be

harvested were the continent not to have a unification in language (Nyamnjoh & Shoro 2019:11).

Today, this viewpoint is no less relevant than it was in 1986. The calls from students and staff alike that call for a decolonisation of the curriculum at UCT still draw on wa Thiong'o in order to argue that the learning of western histories, languages, and particular ways of doing academia must be abandoned in order to allow the institution to reach its pan-African, Afrocentric potential, a topic which will be of focus in the main chapters of this thesis.

Elsewhere, Achebe (2000) speaks to the decolonisation project in different terms, where the marriage of European and African languages are viewed as the only realistic path for decolonisation. For Achebe, and as is argued throughout much of this thesis, the mobility of languages has already facilitated that European languages be taken up in the day-to-day lives of Africans, who have moulded these languages to fit their own stories and ways of life. Language contact, although at least in part existing because of a cruel history of colonisation, has also become malleable and has been taken up by people in creative ways that have gone far beyond the rigidity and fixity of the languages in their autochthonous European heritages. Achebe points out that like himself, many other African literary visionaries have used languages that might have previously been considered European and made them into mixed breeds of languages, facilitating new communicative possibilities that may not have been possible were African languages to be the sole barriers of literary communication. Achebe argues that the intersection between African and European social and linguistic life be recognised, despite its problematic origins. He shows that not only have Africans mastered and excelled in European languages, they have made it into something quite different and utilised it as lingua franca but also as something *Africanised*. Since "a growing number of people in Africa actually straddle both an African and colonial language thus inherit cultures and memories embedded in both" (Nyamnjoh & Shoro 2019: 12), Achebe's argument has only become increasingly relevant in an increasingly globalising world. For Achebe, this is pertinent for, per example, the *Igboisation* of English, and the *Englishisation* of Igbo, showing that where the languages come to meet, they hybridise into versions that do not exist in simplistic hierarchies of power as much as they are important representations of the creative ways people mesh their worlds. This reminds of Vakuntu's (2007) review of Nyamnjoh's (2003) *Stories from Abakwe*, where Vakuntu remarks:

> "What strikes the reader the most in this anthology of short stories is the linguistic engineering that the author adeptly avails himself of Camfranglais - the mumbo-jumbo that not only baffles Fineboy Ayuk but leads to his unanticipated demise, is the hallmark of the code-switching that Nyamnjoh employs as a narrative technique in the collection."

This very mumbo-jumbo/creative linguistic engineering relevant in the meaning-making process is an apt example of the types of translingual incompleteness this thesis is interested in. This is discussed at more length in the following section, where Achebe, Tutuola and Saro-Wiwa are brought into conversation with one another in the context of incompleteness as a theoretical framework, as well as in the context of translanguaging and English throughout the thesis.

For now, this debate may be settled by drawing on Nyamnjoh and Shoro (2011:1), who argue that pan-Africanism can best be seen as a "flexible, inclusive, dynamic and complex aspiration in identity making and belonging." I argue throughout this thesis that pan-Africanism and Afrocentricity are key pillars of decolonisation and for this reason eagerly draw on pan-Africanism as an important component of decolonial multilingualism. If key actors in this thesis are considered to partake in "scholarly traditions that privilege African-centred knowledge production, epistemologies and perspectives that challenge perceived Eurocentric (mis)representations of Africans and people of African descent" (Obenga 2001), then it is key for this literature review to discuss the philosophical traditions that enable these aspirations. For now, this review concludes with Nyamnjoh and Shoro (2011:21) that "The promotion of indigenous and endogenous languages does not have to be at odds with the use of colonial languages and cultures…" as part of the quest for Pan-Africanism. This conclusion is discussed throughout as the voices of participants come to represent varying degrees of sympathy with the possibilities offered by such a version of Pan-Africanism.

Bringing this debate closer to the realms of language in education, Antia and Dyers (2019) urge for practical interventions on de-alienating the academy by using multilingual teaching as a decolonial pedagogy. Based at UWC, they draw on what decoloniality has meant in the context of higher education, stating that it "refers to undoing the asymmetrical power relations inherent in the conditions within which much contemporary disciplinary knowledge is constituted and mediated" (Maldonado-Torres 2006 in Antia & Dyers 2019: 91), which, drawing on leading South African theorists, is a quest in combating

“the invisible vampirism of technologies of imperialism and colonial matrices of power that continue to exist in the minds, lives, languages, dreams, imaginations, and epistemologies of modern subjects in Africa and the entire Global South” (Ndlovu-Gatscheni 2013: 11). They critique that whilst much has been said about the importance of decolonising language at institutions, little has happened in terms of practical interventions. The paper is a reference to and evaluation of the decolonial, multilingual innovations they have used in their own classroom. This is a key text, as some of these very interventions are used as methodology towards this thesis.

The authors engage in a quest for self-reflection when they affirm that whilst they are scholars teaching a course on the importance of multilingualism, they had been teaching solely in English “…pathetically re-inscribing and reinforcing the very values and ideology we sought to deconstruct” (Antia & Dyers 2019: 94). Drawing on Hornberger’s biliteracy model[4] (1989), they conduct an intervention where they make course materials available in both written and audio forms (including informal audio material such as podcasts), as well as making the material available in formal and informal varieties of Afrikaans and isiXhosa (the languages used by the greatest proportion of the student cohort). Furthermore, they use the examination process as a space for students to discuss their own experiences of the multilingual resources - for which a very positive response is given. The authors’ honest confrontation of their own broadly representative reinforcement of monolingual habitus in an important and necessary tool.

In *Decolonising Multilingualism*, Phipps (2019) theorises ways of doing ethical multilingual work towards decolonial ends. She takes on a conservationist tone, pointing to declining numbers in the use of small languages, whilst simultaneously breaking from the Western illusion of monolingualism as the norm. Whilst her work focuses mostly on the topic within the framework of conducting fieldwork in communities where she is not a speaker of the language of the community, she provides a useful manifesto for such work. The manifesto that follows will be touched on again in the ethics section of this paper, especially as it pertains to attempting decolonial scholarship as a white woman. For now, this manifesto provides an important introduction to the decolonial multilingual goals attempted in this project, in the context of UCT.

[4] In *Continua of Biliteracy* Hornberger (1989) argues that the development of additional language learning resources is not isolated, but continues the language learning and development of the language from which is being learnt, too. Thus, one language is always developing in relation to another.

"If we are going to do this, if we are going to decolonise multilingualism, let's do it as an attempt at a way of doing it.

If we are going to do this, lets cite with an eye to decolonisation, citing from the Global South, giving multilingual scholars more airtime than usually accorded, alongside more women, who are the ones tasked with the teaching and interpreting of languages for the majority of the world's population, through the mother languages.

If we are going to do it, let's not only cite with reference to publications.

If we are going to do this, then we need to rethink our copyright and intellectual property claims.

If we are going to do this, then let's improvise and devise. This is how we might learn the arts of decolonising.

If we are going to do this, then we need different companions.

If we are going to do this, we will need artists and poetic activists to break the hold of the discourse of the colonising multilingualisms and foreign language pedagogies and their performative assumptions.

If we are going to do this, let's do it in a way which is as local as it is global; which affirms the granulations of the way people name their worlds.

Finally, if we are going to do this, let's do it multilingually, let's language is"

(Phipps 2019: 5-10).

Incompleteness

Nyamnjoh (2015, 2017, 2019) draws on Amos Tutoula's story entitled *The Complete Gentlemen* as an anecdote that provides a convivial way of interaction. These reflections throughout Nyamnjoh's oeuvre provide an important lens for the conceptualisation of language, too, as inhabiting values and virtues of incompleteness. Nyamnjoh's reading of

Tutoula's (1952) *The Complete Gentleman*, as part of the novel *The Palmwine Drinkard* follows an otherworldly skull who, in an attempt to win over a beautiful woman, borrows body parts and attributes from various realms and creatures. These borrowings transform him into, seemingly, the Complete Gentleman, handsome and whole in all ways. Of relevance is the importance of recognising our own incompleteness, and accepting the inevitability of borrowing from and lending to the many strangers that we meet along the way. By recognising and coming to appreciate this very incompleteness, we are, surely, more able to fully immerse ourselves in a world of possibilities and convivialities. Nyamnjoh elsewhere discusses Cecil John Rhodes as *The Complete Gentleman of Imperialism* (Nyamnjoh 2021), arguing that it was Rhodes' illusionary masquerading that made him believe he was complete (and thus his vision worthy of being imposed onto the entire African continent). The illusion of completeness is what makes the evangelising and conversion of people into disciples a reality, and this is the very story of Rhodes' imperialist ideals. If all beings are able to recognise their own incompleteness, they might prioritise conversation and conviviality over conversion, and in that way contribute to a world more at ease with its own difference.

The theory of incompleteness, as it will henceforth be used in this thesis, is not just important for its scrutiny of colonial ideas, but also for what it means for language repertoires. If all people are to recognise that their own language repertoires are incomplete, and that striving for a standardised, complete and whole form of language is a futile task, new possibilities for convivial language use are opened up. Together with that, harsh judgments about the language capabilities of others' are rejected and acceptance and conviviality are prioritised. This is an important ethical framework for this project, which seeks to move beyond the idea of languages as separate, whole entities, necessarily there for people to make themselves "complete" and desirable with, but language as a state of becoming, borrowing, lending, appropriating and appreciating, in all its incomplete forms.

A useful example of this is the way in which Ken Saro-Wiwa (1985) uses *incomplete* English in the novel *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English*. The author states in the introduction that the project is an ambitious and creative endeavour into the possibilities of using the English language, not in its complete form, but in the incomplete fragments that are part of the repertoires of many people. The novel ends up not only transgressing the conventional rules of English, but transcending them. The story marries the ordinary ways in which people use language with a creative project that shows the possibilities enhanced

by creative languaging. It is useful to strive towards conceptualising language on these terms, as part of the ordinary repertoires of people, rather than the mighty rule books. As discussed elsewhere, authors indulge this project in various ways. In Achebe's work, it is the Igboisation of English and the Englishisation of Igbo which represent this transcendent languaging, whereas for Tutuola, the Yorubanising of English and vice versa provide the framework. This is discussed throughout this thesis as an important ethical consideration, not as a quest for a right or wrong or a complete answer, but in recognition of languaging diversity and possibilities.

Summary Conclusion

This review has connected the topics of globalisation, decolonisation, translanguaging, and incompleteness. Linguistics and anthropology both inform the question of multilingualism, English and decolonisation, and it has been argued that there is a need to recognise and appreciate an *ethics of incompleteness* in prospect of the decolonial multilingualisms that manifest at UCT. With main chapters dealing respectively with decolonising, translanguaging, and the malleability of English within frameworks of incompleteness, the given literature provides a roadmap for the philosophies that inform the broader thesis, as well as contributing data from the ethnographic component of the project. The conclusion, as was confirmed throughout, is that the language situation at UCT is multifarious and complex. The following chapter will discuss methodological concerns.

Chapter 3
Methodology

Introduction

The distance between theory and praxis notwithstanding (Rutherford 2021, Babcock 2020), the Covid-19 pandemic has presented a challenge to this research. Authors (Varma, Gunel & Watanabe 2020) offer an exciting *Manifesto for Patchwork Ethnography* which summarises the ways in which ethnography has changed due to categories like digital opportunities, feminisms, and decolonisation. Their argument is one that recognises that the field is not always far away, and the lines between participants and researchers become blurred through multi-sited work and auto-ethnography. Furthermore, this chapter introduces ethical considerations pertinent to the execution of the given project, especially as it relates to race, field, positionality, as well as administrative procedures relevant to acquiring permission and consent to execute the research.

The chapter discusses the decision to conduct digital and hybrid fieldwork. Secondly, it presents the original planning prior to the pandemic, and the final methods used. This chapter considers the debates around first-hand data, while digging deeper into alternative modes of doing fieldwork in a world increasingly drawing on and living through technological resources. It furthermore discusses the various modes of data collection that constituted the methodology of this project, paying particular attention to asynchronous online interviewing processes, past papers/reflections as ethnographic data, online debate/conversation analysis as a mode of data gathering, as well as the process of auto-ethnography as a useful tool for conducting fieldwork. Miller (2020) is optimistic regarding conducting fieldwork online and during a pandemic, arguing that it offers opportunities to enhance communication. Additionally, this chapter draws richly on resources that may not have traditionally been considered part of the scope of anthropological fieldwork. A combination of interviews, auto-ethnography, teaching and learning experiences, video analysis, online debate analysis and use of students' reflections on language in essays and blogs informed the bulk of the ethnographic data for this thesis.

Planned pre-pandemic

This project is both interested in pedagogical interventions for multilingual teaching, as well as the ways in which student activism drawing on decolonisation discourses have contributed to thinking through and about language. The physical field site was: 1. The institutional spaces – university campuses and 2. university classrooms. The original plan involved the live physical classroom, where I had anticipated conducting a majority of the research, as a language learning participant engaging in language pedagogy. Conducive to this, I would have conducted interviews with students and teachers alike. This would have happened mainly in language learning classes, as well as linguistic classes, and other spaces where teachers made use of language experiments in their teaching, including education and social sciences in synchronous modes.

Additionally, the physical campus of UCT, which may until recently have had fairly solidified boundaries encompassing the various physical campuses, has recently been forced to fortify boundaries, becoming a mobile institute online. Although initiated under duress, there is ever-increasing use of technology and social media for learning purposes (Sobaih, Hasanein & Elnasr 2020). This is all to say that this project has necessitated rethinking what the field site means and how far it is able to stretch due to the various mobilities that inform it.

The expected timeframe from the project was Term 1 of Semester 1 of 2021 (March - April), however, unexpected hold-ups due to slow registration, due to then ongoing protests relating to fees, had contributed towards delays. Apart from this, since the field site was no longer a physical space visited over a period of six weeks, the timeframe of the project was extended. This will be discussed later on with regards to asynchronous modes of data gathering and what this meant for the planning of the project. Future research may include a blended approach to online and in-person modes of data gathering.

Main Execution

Malkki (2007) argues that ethnography is an undeniable part of doing anthropology, but also goes on to explain that doing ethnography is an almost undefinable process that relies heavily on improvisation (Malkki 2007: 179). It must be acknowledged that this process that already requires improvisation was only exuberated by the need to move in somewhat unchartered territory by engaging in digital and hybrid methods not particularly prominent

to similar research projects. Using principles highlighted by Pink et al. (2015) in *Digital Ethnography: Principles and Practice* this thesis takes note of the rising relevance of digital ethnography to recognise that all aspects of the research was increasingly intertwined with digital domains. This was not only because of the particular moment when the work was executed, but also because of the increasing dependence on technology for communicative and other purposes, as part of the way in which localities are shifting into digital space.

After having obtained permission from the DSA I had spread a call for participation (attached) to current undergraduate and postgraduate students, mostly in the humanities faculty. The idea was not to exclude any particular demography of students, but to work mainly with students that had given language and/or decolonisation some thought. The idea was also to work either with more senior undergraduate students or postgraduate students (here, meaning students that have been part of the UCT academic landscape for at least two years and ideally longer). I also interviewed a staff member. I was thus able to reflect both on the teaching and learning process as relating to language at the institution, not through language learning, but rather through incorporating language-based discussion and freedom of language use. The result was five students who volunteered their time for asynchronous interviewing stretching over a two month period, as well as an academic who had taken an active interest in student activism and language. The call for participants was answered by a few students who I have been teaching during their third year anthropology course as a teaching assistant. Additionally, I reached out to previous classmates who have gone on to various postgraduate positions in various departments, two of which agreed to participate.

Below is a table dedicated to the demography of the participants, as well as their chosen fields of study. Pseudonyms are used throughout, but other information is reflective of data shared by participants without making their identity knowable. This table shows the limited scope of participants from only the Humanities Faculty (with some planning to follow this up with a B.Ed. certifications). Whilst the demography is not necessarily curated to fit the university demographic profile and statistics, it does call upon a wide range of students of different races, genders (to a limited degree), ages etc.

Name	Race	Age	Gender	Field of Study
Ayanda	Black	23	Woman	Social Anthropology
Mia	White	21	Woman	Social Anthropology
Amber	Coloured	27	Woman	Education
Noah	White	21	Man	Social Anthropology
Dr. Thomas	Coloured	34	Woman	Linguistics

I used two modes of data gathering which did not resemble the traditional fieldwork exercise, yet contributed the type of data that contributes to ethnography. Discussed at greater length below, this project made use of online debates and conversations - often in contexts where I was not necessarily involved, but where people were directly reflecting on the questions I was posing in my research, often in the form of blog posts or comments to posts online. These were not necessarily formal articles written in academic papers, but rather the direct ways in which people engaged with questions I viewed as pertinent to the discussion, even if I was not asking the questions directly to participants. This expands the question of what makes up the field in anthropology, and how new modes of digital ethnography can enrich the field. Of course, it also highlights peculiar questions of ethics. The internet may be considered a space where anything that is posted becomes public.

Additionally, some of the most useful reflections were gathered from blogs students had written as part of their coursework where they regarded language and power in their own lives. The idea to use these reflections was sparked by Antia and Dyers' (2019) similar ethnographic method, where they used students' exams as a space to reflect on the successes of their experimented decolonial pedagogical attempts. I made use of previous blog posts written by students, where they were tasked with reflecting on the value of translation, both for academic purposes and otherwise, as well as blog posts relating to experiences of language and power, and code-switching experiences. I drew mainly on the *AXL1400F Words, Deeds, Bones and Things* course within the Social Anthropology department at UCT, specifically from 2020 and 2021, for the purpose of seeing the ways in which tasks assigned to students may assist in a form of decolonial multilingualism, as well

as using the responses by students as an act of reflection. Again, whilst these students never directly partook in interviews with me, much of what they reflected on constituted direct comments and observations to questions I was posing.

Whilst writing this thesis I was also working as a teaching assistant in the *AXL1400F* course. A combination of resources from the 2020 and 2021 academic year of this course also contributed written work towards this project. With the course focusing substantially on a linguistic component, I regularly had the opportunity to engage with students regarding themes of language experiences. Although this was not done explicitly for this project, comments that featured in discussion in the online classroom setup greatly enriched the research. Meetings were recorded for educational purposes, and where useful components arose from the discussion I reached out to students after completion of the tutorial to ask permission to use particular anecdotes. The reason for refraining from setting this up more explicitly as a component of my research is that I did not want to skew my educational responsibilities and mould discussions to introduce bias. The recordings allowed me to act as both a teacher and a researcher, but I was able to wear the hats at different times, rather than simultaneously.

Additions

Additionally this project made use of a range of auto-ethnography methods and tools, with auto-ethnography understood as "an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze [sic] personal experience in order to understand cultural experience" (Ellis, Adams & Bochner 2011). I also draw on Pedersen (2020: 2) who, in her examination of white English middle-class South Africans, argues for autoethnography as an examination of her *own* being in relation to her research subject. As I have been keenly aware of the way in which this topic has impacted my own tertiary experiences, and have been narrowly connected to numerous language related activities and events, it seemed a natural choice to engage in attempts of free-writing, journaling and reflecting upon the topic at hand. In early 2021, while I was conducting the fieldwork for the given project, I was involved in the composition of infographics, and took part in podcasts and debates online relating to language policy at tertiary institutions and society more broadly. Yet an autoethnographic lens is not only one of method, but one that finely attuned me to my own positionality and experiences as relating to the subject. This does not manifest explicitly in the inclusion of personal entries or quotes, but more an overall orientation in the thesis that allows personal biography a (consciously subjective) place.

The lens was often through an Afrikaans language group speaker, but in narrow conversation with the development of African languages in education, and multilingualism more broadly, such as attending seminars related to the possibility of writing theses in languages other than English, etc., but also a broader orientation to numerous literature festivals, seminars and podcasts I attended whilst growing up and during my entire academic career. During the conclusion of the fieldwork in May of 2021 the stage was set and ripe for these types of conversations as the University of Stellenbosch was calling for comments and suggestions for their new language policy, and protests both dismissing and demanding Afrikaans as an indigenous language were happening frequently, and was well discussed and versed in the media and amongst language scholars and activists. Using my own reflections, however subjective, made me a participant in my own research as well, drawing richly from the comments and conversations I was able to take part in during and before the research. It is obvious that this is not a project far removed from my own lived experience, rather one that dates back firmly to my schooling experiences prior to and during university, and a keen awareness of the ways in which monolingual experiences have hampered my own, as well as the experiences of many other students.

Ethical Considerations and Conundrums: Languages and Lanes

This set of ethical considerations firstly focuses on my own positionality in the project and poses critical questions regarding what it means to stay in one's own lane in contemporary anthropological research. Discussing this in the context of pan-Africanist research whilst acknowledging my own ideas and prejudices as they inform the project is key here, especially as it pertains to race. Furthermore this section discusses other conventions of ethical considerations, such as those stipulated as guidelines by the ASnA, and how they apply to this project specifically.

Positionality - What lane?

Perhaps the most obvious and most crucial concern was to consider whether firstly this project was in any way well suited to me, and secondly to ask whether staying in a particular lane was a necessary albeit negotiable part of doing social anthropology today. As a white woman, having grown up in a (mostly) conservative Afrikaans community in the Free State proved both problematic and beneficial to the research at hand. It is then important to recognise that using the lenses of decoloniality, as well as the development of African languages in education seems to be topics beyond the scope of my own

positionality, as these topics are rightfully dominated by black scholars in the context of the topic in Africa. My own language repertoire being limited to Afrikaans and English, and a very rudimental education of Sesotho (in primary school), German (secondary school) and a brief stint of introductory isiXhosa lessons at UCT, makes it controversial to have chosen African languages as a key point of focus.

I consider Afrikaans an indigenous language, where it is widely held amongst speakers of the language that it is creole and indigenous. Although I completed my secondary education in Afrikaans I was, like many Afrikaans students inclined and eager to complete my tertiary studies in English. The calls by Prof. Jonathan Jansen (2013, 2015) (who was rector of the University of the Free State whilst I was completing my secondary education at an Afrikaans school in Bloemfontein) somewhat informed my feelings towards my own home language. The idea of Afrikaans being the language of the oppressor, not suitable to tertiary education in a country with so many other divisions seemed compelling, and seeing English as the language of opportunity and globalisation, I, like many others were sold on the idea of refining and redefining our place in the political field of the country and our institutions by embracing the supposed unification of the country through the English education project.

Yet, upon entering the University of Cape Town just a few months after the statue of Rhodes had capitulated, and amidst the ongoing struggle for fee-free, decolonial education, I quickly became sceptical of the rhetoric of English as a unifying language and the irony that it presented that I was swapping what seemed like one colonial language for another. This I expressed in a first year linguistics essay early on in my undergraduate career, where I was tasked with writing a poem pertaining to my own multilingualism. An extract reads:

> Krog[5] struggles to make sense of how apartheid came to be
> in the language of her heart
> and I turn to English to rid myself of that past
> just to find again
> that I am speaking a language guilty of sin.

[5] The poem refers to renowned multilingual Afrikaans poet and anti-apartheid activist Antjie Krog, who famously in *A Change of Tongue* (2003) and throughout her oeuvre contemplated the role of language in personal and political life.

A love for language, and indeed literature in a multitude of languages, had already been instilled in me through my upbringing, and the introduction to debates regarding decolonising the mind made me wary of the place of English, and language more broadly, within this quest for decolonisation, often under an umbrella of multi- or monolingual education. I followed the language debates, policy changes, and initiatives at tertiary institutions and around the country with a keen curiosity throughout my undergraduate and postgraduate studies. This project is a result of these interests. As a South African, white, Afrikaans woman, my purpose here to deepen understanding of the topic has positioned me on the side of 'the oppressor'. This makes it necessary to recognise my own positionality and to go about the topic with caution, aiming first and foremost not to convert or evangelise according to my views (Nyamnjoh 2016: 216-225), but to position the views of a multitude of people with different experiences of language and decoloniality in conversation with one another.

Administrative and Protocol Ethics

The standard and necessary ethical considerations towards setting up and completing this project included:

1. Gaining ethical approval for the project through the formal processes required by the Social Anthropology department at UCT as part of the broader ethical review committee of the institution. This included a presentation of the proposal for this project with a clear outline of literary and methodical intentions and all other key areas contributing to executing the project.
2. I applied at UCT for permission to recruit and interview students and staff members through the HR194 and DSA100 processes, respectively. This included setting up forms and protocols for informed consent, retracting consent and recruiting participants for the intended study.

ASnA Guidelines and Implications

Additionally I was guided by the Anthropology Southern Africa Guidelines (2018) for ethical research and working with participants. From this given set of guidelines, the following key sets of information stood out and accurately informed the ethics of the project.

Relations with and responsibility to research participations is a key area of focus. The responsibility of those doing research is first and foremost with research participants and

this must not be compromised. I allowed for high disciplinary standards and adopted a local understanding of dignity in line with these guidelines (ASnA 2018).

Protecting responses and accounting for the potentiality of harm through research is also important. Whilst this research provides no direct risk of harm for the safety of participants, the caution of not overloading participants with responsibility and causing any form of anxiety is important here. Since many of my interlocutors were students that I was currently tutoring, the risk of having them feel as though their participation could lead either to the benefit or detriment of our working relationship was an area that required care. This was done by repeatedly emphasising that there was no pressure to rush in response to any of my queries and to affirm, repeatedly, that the interlocutor and interviewee role would have no benefit or detriment to other relationships in which we participated. It is also key to examine whether my role as a teacher (sometimes past, sometimes present) may have contributed to an uncomfortable hierarchy influencing how participants felt compelled to answer. Whilst the nature of the research did not presume any reason for students to take on certain positions in answering or participating in key areas of research, I did nonetheless emphasise the importance of answering from a personal perspective. Whilst there was no direct compensation for acting as a research participant, I did share a small gift with each individual participant. I clearly stated to current students that there is no compensation for the research in academic terms, and it would lead to no favouritism. This is something I had to renegotiate with myself after research had concluded, mostly because the attachment to participants and the view into their personal narratives could have led inappropriately to me viewing them in a favourable light academically. For this, I consulted with colleagues to moderate me where I was unsure of my own prejudice.

I allowed all participants to assume anonymity, and made sure to negotiate consent throughout our research period together, emphasising that they could at any time retract their participation, for whatever reason. There were no minors or incapacitated persons involved in the research and so I was able to negotiate informed consent with participants directly and repeatedly.

Whilst the anticipation is that all data gathered towards this research would be used solely towards the intended research project, I acknowledged to participants the possibility that I may negotiate consent again in the future, were this to lead to public publication or future research endeavours.

Finally, whilst no people in the research were explicitly vulnerable, I nonetheless remained aware of the possibilities of mental health and other vulnerabilities that my participants may have encountered during the time they acted as participants. I attempted to be very patient in acquiring responses and data so as not to contribute to potential vulnerabilities as an anticipated harm. This was discussed briefly in the methods section as pertaining to asynchronous modes of data gathering, and proved both useful for methods as well as ethics for the project.

Summary Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the ways in which research and typical conventions of fieldwork and participants has been challenged and enriched by the need to turn to various modes of online fieldwork. It explained how research may have been conducted if this were not a given challenge. Furthermore, it has asked important questions about what constitutes firsthand data and participants. It has also engaged with what the interviewing process looked like, mainly as an asynchronous process. This was supplemented with a discussion on the ways in online debates, as well as past academic papers had offered alternative ways to gather useful first-hand data. Another point of focus was the way in which auto ethnography supplemented and fulfilled much of the research. Overall, methodology as a topic will likely become increasingly interesting, as anthropologists and other social scientists reflect on the ways in which conducting fieldwork online, and during a pandemic, has impacted their way of thinking about doing fieldwork. In conclusion, the section on ethical considerations and conundrums has discussed at some length the positionality of the researcher and how that may have impacted the research. It has furthermore discussed the extent to which appropriateness of the research topic has been something to examine, negotiate, and review during the process. It has focused on hierarchies in research and the careful negotiations pertinent to the teacher-student relationship with some participants. This chapter has also detailed the administrative ethics requirements. Finally, it has discussed the ethical guidelines of the ASnA in direct correlation with the specific project.

Chapter 4
Language Politics and Policies in South Africa: Historical and Contemporary Overview

SA Language History

> "In South Africa the past is never the past, it is active in the present. Our present condition is a consequence of the actions of the past. Any attempt to forget the past will not cure our condition" (Magubane 1996: 370).

Whilst this thesis takes the 2015 #RMF protests as a most obvious target to present the timeline of language at UCT, herein is included a broader historical analysis of the language landscape in SA, including key moments and events in HEI settings, and in the Western Cape. This chapter therefore locates itself as a historical ethnography meant to situate continuation and dissonance within language politics and policies in SA.

It is not an uncomplicated task in itself to trace the various linguistic pathways that are so token to the diverse, heterogenous, multilingual landscape of South Africa. Note here that "South Africa" is used to indicate the currently recognised borders of the country and the social imagination that acts to solidify and reinforce nation state ideals within these borders (Benedict 1983). It is this history that is the focus of this section, but simultaneously, it recognises that it is indeed language contact which has and continues to shape this history.

Mesthrie (2009) succeeds in providing a thorough overview of the language history of South Africa. This brief section attempts to summarise these findings shortly and connect them more specifically to the contemporary higher education sector. The Khoesan people (both encompassing the different San and Khoe groups) are discussed as the undisputed first inhabitants of Southern Africa. The three language families originally spoken by these groups are all nearing extinction in South Africa (although there has been unique and creative attempts at language revitalisation in recent years[6]). The contact and relations between the Khoesan groups and various South African settlers varied. Encounters with Bantu languages proved mostly benign in the cases that the Khoesan was subservient. Contact with European settlers proved more deleterious, and language loss ensued. Bantu

[6] In 2019 UCT added a short course in Khoekhoegowab, an indigenous Khoisan language nearing extinction. This effort, and others, have contributed greatly to projects of language revitalisation.

languages first appeared in South Africa south of the Zambezi and Limpopo a few centuries AD. These languages are familial to the Niger-Kordofonian language grouping spoken about 2000-3000 years ago in what is known today as the Cameroon-Nigeria area. The year 1652 Is a notable year in popular imagination in the country, a token of the start of the colonial project. More specifically, it was the year the first trade station was set up in the Cape, by the Dutch. The trade station resulted in increased mobility and new language contact. However, even prior to this, British and Portuguese sailors had been using the area as a stopover and as a result, fragments of English and Portuguese were already known in the area prior to 1652 (Den Besten, 1978). The new settlement of Europeans included Dutch, Germans, French Huguenot refugees and other small groups of Europeans. Conflict over land and cattle between these groups and the Khoesan soon started, with the new settlers also realising a desire for labour. From 1658 slaves from Madagascar, Mozambique, the East Indies and India arrived in South Africa. In the 1820s, British missionaries attempted to transcribe African languages, but the unfamiliar structures of the language made this a challenging and somewhat constructed task. Onwards into the 1840s, more groups of British settlers arrived in the country and settled in Natal. This group seems more "...mindful of the social symbols of Victorian England…" (Lanham, 1978:158) and the roots of what is today thought of as modern prestige South African English can be linked to the phonetic devices prominently present in this group. The British born children in Natal did often additionally learn isiZulu, presenting one possible, and still disputed origin of Fanagalo. Zulu people in the region refused to offer cheap labour to this group of settlers, which resulted in slaves being imported from India, increasingly contributing to New English varieties.

Elsewhere, the Trekking (moving) Afrikaners (as Dutch settlers renamed themselves in their claiming of a new African heritage) were establishing the Republics of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal in 1850. A scramble for valuable metals in the 1860s saw conflict conspire between British and Afrikaner groups, directly leading to the South African war (elsewhere the Anglo-Boer War) from 1899-1902. The aftermath of the war, which has Britain exploiting great riches from the region, is also a war on culture and language, with far reaching effects for identity discussed later. The end of the 19th century was characterised by much mobility on the part of black people to the various mining areas as well as new forms of urbanisation and an influx of Europeans.

The attempted anglicalisation of the Afrikaners between 1901-1905, executed in an attempt to align South Africa with the British empire, proved a futile and faulty strategy.

This leads somewhat ironically to Afrikaans being taken up as a symbol of Afrikaner identity, despite the origins of the language being contact due to ongoing interactions between Southeast Asian slaves/laborers and Dutch settlers. Notably, Afrikaans is first found to be transcribed in the Arabic alphabet.

In 1910, the Union of South Africa is formed, with official languages being Dutch and English, not Afrikaans, which is at this stage still stigmatised as Kitchen Dutch, as a derogatory reference to the language. Afrikaans is taken up as an official language only in 1925. The Apartheid government instates various separation laws from 1948. A notable one is the 1953 Bantu Education Act, which focused on both the language of instruction and syllabi taught. Linguistic hierarchies were now being imposed token of the ongoing rivalry between Afrikaans and English. The 1970s and 1980s is characterised by resistance, including most notably the Soweto uprisings in 1976, which rejected Afrikaans as the language of instruction and saw the murder of at least 176 students. The importance of a linguistic based demonstration contributing to the fall of apartheid does not go unnoticed (Mesthrie, 2009). With the fall of apartheid, to recognise language rights in South Africa, 11 of the country's most widely spoken languages became recognised as official languages of the country. The functional use of language in education remains a key topic. English becomes the de facto real official language of the country, along with being taken as a symbolic language of liberation, very much ironically when taking history into account. The new South African constitution of 1996 links linguistic diversity, culture and development not only as interrelated themes, but as key to the rainbow nation ideals of the "liberated" country. Throughout the 1990s language boards and groups meet to discuss and develop multilingual alternatives and positions which never see true implementation. Whilst the history and workings of language in the country do not end at this point, it does very much set the tone for contemporary discussion on language in the country.

As a historical ethnographic analysis of language history in South Africa, this is crucial to understanding the various moments of language contact that have contributed to the rich albeit complicated language situation in South Africa currently. This history links clearly and absolutely to other themes in the thesis as it stands to show the very need for decolonisation of language, due to a history in which linguistic imperialism features many times, as well as being a clear starting point to how multilingual people in SA transfuse their language repertoires as a result of ongoing contact between people and language groups that have existed since the very start of contact in SA.

Contemporary Language Policy

Another important context for discussing language at UCT is the current South African Language in Education Policy (1997). The following important aspects feature prominently in the policy:

1. Cultural diversity is considered a valuable asset and this means that the promotion of multilingualism, the development of official languages and respect for all languages must be prioritised.
2. The goal of the policy is in part to redress racial and linguistic discrimination.
3. (Controversially) the policy affirms that it is part of the nation building strategy towards a non-racial South Africa.
4. The policy takes societal and individual multilingualism as the norm, especially on the African continent. The goal of recognising this is to combat any ethnic chauvinism.
5. Language is discussed through the prism of rights, and "the language of learning and teaching is vested in the individual. This right has. However, to be exercised within the overall framework of the obligation on the education system to promote multilingualism" (Language in Education Policy 1997).

The complete policy can be accessed in the Appendices.

These highlights are a useful starting point to understanding the prism of complications represented in the language policy. On the one hand, policy acts as a redresser of inequality, and stands firmly with multilingual principles, yet individuals' language rights are a complicated topic within contemporary South African language history, as some rights seem to overshadow others, and otherwise the rights of some seem to clash with the rights of others. The policies and framing around these policies are a pertinent part of this research project as it provides some of the groundwork that allows for critical analysis. It is referenced throughout the thesis as it pertains to students' experiences of the enactment of these policies and real world implications.

Ruiz (1984) conceptualises language planning according to three frameworks: language as a right; language as a resource; and language as a problem. This framework is encapsulated in the above policy. Language rights become complex in South Africa for a few reasons, including the difficulty that, with 11 official languages, there are practical

challenges to making learning materials available multilingually, and training educators in a large enough language repertoire. The bilingual additive model, which sees two languages being used alongside one another, and which has been the popular language discourse to date, is becoming increasingly outdated, due to over increasing mobilities. It is then not a viable equation to imagine that each individual in every schooling institution, in this case tertiary education, will have the opportunity to learn in any and all of the official languages. The topic of translanguaging is discussed in an upcoming chapter as a possible alternative. Another problem with insisting on language as a right, is that rights and multiculturalism to some extent are faulty in their contradiction of one another (Englund 2006). Simplistically, the right of one student to learn in a particular language may be contrasted by a pupil with the right to learn in a different one, and the educators right to teach in yet another one. Language as a right framework in this way becomes a somewhat impracticable demand in a multicultural society like SA, or a multicultural space like UCT. To this extent, language policy and ideology ought to be aligned with both ethics and innovation, providing the only realistic pathway for conceptualising practical multilingualism in education. Language taken as a problem indeed recognises the complexity of language diversity. Yet this thesis argues that even as language problems persist in education and society at large, it is more useful to consider language as a resource. This means that, instead of focusing on the challenges that multilingualism brings, it is more useful to reflect on the opportunities, both scholarly, politically, and culturally, that is opened up by aligning with multilingualism as a resource.

The UCT language policy (also attached) seems aware of these given frameworks, but lacks in nuance where it states that:

> The University of Cape Town views language as a resource and recognises the personal, social and educational value of multilingualism, as well as the importance of promoting scholarship in all official South African languages. The language policy of the University takes as its starting point the need to prepare students to participate fully in a multilingual society, where multilingual proficiency and awareness are essential.

and,

> All academic programme convenors and teachers are expected to explore and implement ways in which the objective of the promotion of multilingual awareness

> and proficiency can be achieved; and to contribute towards realising the national goals of developing all South African languages and their use, and to promoting scholarship in all our languages.

But soon after contradicts itself to add

> English is both the primary medium of teaching and of examination except in language and literature departments where another language is taught and may be used. This applies at all levels, and to dissertations and theses for higher degrees.

It seems that the cup of policy and the lip of implementation (Alexander 2012) are still far removed from one another, and that whilst important ideological shifts have been made, the actual implementation is still lagging behind. As many institutions in the country are in processes of reviewing their language policies, it is hopeful that UCT will use its forward thinking policy and link it more narrowly to the on the ground experiences of staff and students (this implementation being a focus of much of this thesis). The importance of the UCT language policy amalgamates in the chapters that follow, where students discuss their lived experiences of English dominance in many spheres of life, and relate it back to themes like heritage, culture and identity. It also relates to many of the frameworks discussed in the chapter preceding this one, where English locally and globally, as well as in the context of language intermingling seems somewhat out of touch with the given policy. This then again opens up for ethnographic reflection throughout the thesis.

Summary Conclusion

This chapter introduces the question of how history informs the present. The chapter discussed South African language history, reflected on current language policies in the country and at UCT. This chapter has also spoken significantly to the chapters preceding and following it, especially in connection with frameworks relating to the dominance of English, as well as how students draw on their diverse repertoires in seemingly restrictive spaces. Whilst these threads may seem somewhat disconnected, they contribute to a conversation around how the past has informed the present, presenting a picture of multilingual continuation and dissonance, depending on the lenses we use to analyse language use.

Chapter 5
#RhodesMustFall: Language and Decolonisation

Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic of language within the context of decolonisation initiatives, focusing specifically on the ways in which RMF protests have contributed to how students at UCT experience institutional culture pertaining to language. Speaking to the literature review, it complicates the meaning of decolonisation by aligning it with various conceptualisations and debates, highlighting specifically the forementioned conceptualisations by Chinua Achebe and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, respectively, and relocating the debate as it exists within UCT, in its current (post-RMF) vision for decolonising the university. The meaning of decoloniality within the context of UCT and its implications for the current language situation is the point of focus for this chapter. The following introductory quote will richly guide the chapter:

> "I envision a decolonised UCT that will not laugh at me when I present my research paper in isiZulu, citing scholars from UKZN" (Mjoli 2015 :112).

Decolonisation has no doubt become a popular term. It roams around in academic papers, slips around in conversations, makes appearances on newsletters. It is the topic of UCT seminars and occasionally it manifests in the form of graffiti, as slogans in protests, as cries of students that reject snail pace transformation at tertiary institutions and broader society and call loudly, clearly for resilient coloniality to fall. Students contemplate what this means for their physical environments, their curricula, the demographics of staff and students, what this means for the commodification of knowledge and land, the appropriation of names and cultures. This chapter sets out to define decolonisation, as well as reflect on themes of belonging, identity and heritage in relation to language and decolonisation.

Student protests at UCT as elsewhere in the country, and globally have situated this theme in urgent and exciting ways. Students have used the slogan of decolonisation to create awareness of the various ways in which imperialist and neo-liberal manifestations of colonisation still roams prominently in institutions that are meant to serve an African student population in ways that speaks to its locality, even as it engages in global conversations. At UCT, decolonisation protests reached one of its peaks as #RhodesMustFall

protests in 2015 disrupted day-to-day university life to call attention not only to the physical statue of imperial Cecil John Rhodes, but to the legacy of coloniality that still has a looming presence on the campus. This presence has been felt by students and staff alike and so to that extent the ongoing struggle for a decolonised curriculum and physical space remains a salient goal of the movement. It is then at least in part the goal of this thesis to highlight the links between language and decolonisation and to ask what this means for the possibilities of multilingualism more broadly, as universities commit their voices to supporting decoloniality.

Contemporary Language Debate in HEIs

A more contemporary history of language in higher education indicates that the cracks have not been smoothed over. Despite the push from policy makers and linguists since the end of the 1990s, little attention had been paid to the possible opportunities for real multilingual teaching. Instead, these suggestions remained lip service to multilingualism and received references in policy documents that would never see its own enactment (Alexander 1998). Despite great strides made by key figures like Neville Alexander and colleagues, who set up organisations for the development of African languages in education and pushed many initiatives that could realise some form of additive bilingual education, those in power received the ideas with scepticism and refusal to denote the necessary resources to realise the development of African languages in education (Alexander 1999).

Even before the decolonial project received a name and recognition in the form of #RhodesMustFall, students at historically white, Afrikaans universities were calling for the dismantling of language policies that were believed to still benefit the white, Afrikaans students belonging to the institution. The ironic call within these institutions was for the removal of Afrikaans as a language of instruction and instating English as the sole language of instruction (Nyamnjoh 2016: 151,152). This links to the above history in very parallel terms, where English has somehow managed to become a language of neutrality and liberation (Nyamnjoh 2016:152), despite the very colonial history tied to the language. This language saga manifested in somewhat different ways across the country. At UP and UFS, both historically Afrikaans universities, the call was indeed for the fall of Afrikaans in favour of an English only educational model. At UP, data indicated that Afrikaans students were mostly comfortable with the move themselves, choosing the globality and economic value of English above the comfort of mother tongue education (BBC News 2019). At UFS

the language debate did not solely manifest in the realms of language conversation. Preceding the policy change in favour of an English only model, many incidents and allegations of racism threatened the university (Jansen 2010), and the call for the removal of Afrikaans as a language of instruction was coupled with a call against the danger of exclusive universities based around the preferences of the white Afrikaner community. The call for #AfrikaansMustFall was ruled constitutional, despite many attempts by Afrikaans language organisations to combat the move. It is at least somewhat ironic that initial court rulings in opposition of Afrikaans at UNISA have thus far been noted as unconstitutional, where the Constitutional Court is still reserving judgement on proposed changes to the language policy.

Nyamnjoh (2016: 152) notes interestingly in this regard:

> "Only within a framework where decolonisation is used to front for ulterior motives would it make sense to seek to replace Afrikaans with English, the ultimate global language of whitening up. Seen in these terms, to seek to replace Afrikaans with English created the impression (and rightly so) of a hierarchy of colonialisms at the top of which was British colonials, from which black South Africans are in no hurry to extricate themselves beyond their rhetorical clamours for decolonisation."

The conversation at historically English, liberal institutions has been quite different. On the one hand there is a history of these institutions actively resisting pressure by the apartheid government, yet UCT, and other universities in the country have lagged far behind in developing curricula that speaks to its locality, instead having based itself on a very Eurocentric model (Mamdani 2016, Nyamnjoh 2016). Whilst this may not be directly a language related history, it is closely tied to the more recent TB Davie Memorial Lecture where Mamdani (2016) affirmed above history and tokened language as the single most important task of the decolonisation project at UCT. Under this he headlined projects focused on translations, multilingualism, and a special focus on African language departments (most specifically Nguni languages). Mamdani presumably draws on Alexander (1999) when making these statements, explaining the possibility of language-related entry requirements[7] for universities as a necessary equaliser. Both scholars propose that language requirements may very well diversify institutions better than class or race based

[7] Mamdani argues that multilingual requirements, which necessitate students to have adequate knowledge of at least three languages, would act as a mechanism to benefit black African students that are the ones that hold this knowledge most commonly. This, according to Alexander (1999), may prove a more useful category than race or class.

categories. This begs the question as to how these institutions (historically Afrikaans and historically English), with their very distinct pasts, have come to interpret the meaning of decoloniality as relating to language in such different ways. Recognising these contradictions sets a tone for recognising the ways in which past informs present and makes necessary creating timelines for seeing the soft spoken conversation between various tertiary institutions as they align themselves (or are forced to align themselves by students) with a project of decolonisation. It is caustic that Mamdani refers to Afrikaans as a decolonial language during the above speech, where he calls it the single most decolonised language on the planet and continent, twice decolonised, both from Dutch and British imperialist rule. It is, however, the necessity of the introduction, expansion and promise of African language, which for Mamdani represents the decolonisation project best, and it is this stance which UCT has adopted, at least theoretically, the practical implementation and students' experiences thereof being a key topic of ethnographic data contributing towards this project.

Whilst the UCT case is perhaps linked only in very minor moments to the Afrikaans controversies of Stellenbosch, it is nonetheless useful also for UCT to recognise the colonial status of English, rather than to continuously insist on a global neutrality, which was never neutral and always informed by an ever-violent Anglicisation of the world. Whilst today it may not be achieved with guns, the conquest remains prevalent in the insistence of the English language as the only language capable of securing economic and cultural success both in South Africa and beyond. Where some insist that Afrikaans is the culprit, but claim the blamelessness or victimhood of English, it is more than a little bit ironic that African languages and their development for pedagogical purposes are largely left out of the conversation, out of sight and out of mind.

This was well encapsulated by the recent language ordeal at US, which started with a small group of white, Afrikaans students claiming that they were forbidden to speak Afrikaans in their residence. Jansen's (2021) comments somewhat directly contributed to the controversies that followed, when he wrote an opinion piece titled "*SU language debate 2021: Inside the anxious world of the taalstryders*" (taalstryders is used as a derogatory reference to what Jansen notes as a conservative, white Afrikaner community). Whilst Jansen insists that he is not speaking up against multilingualism, repeated contradictory comments led to extensive critique by a whole range of language activists and students, as below:

"*Hoe de hel kan eentaligheid inklusiwiteit bevorder? Uit watter woordeboek kry hulle daai snert*?" or in translation,
"How the hell can monolingualism promote inclusivity? In which dictionary do they find that?" (Sezoe 2021)

"*Iyandixaka le article. Okokuqala, yenza khapukhaphu ubabaluleka kwelwimi lwenkobe ingagh isiNgesi sinkako ukusisindisa. IsiNgesi ngumqobo kuthi sonke ngaphandle kwabo bathetha isiNgesi.*" –

"This article puzzles me. First of all, it makes light of the importance of your mother tongue in education as if English could save us. English is a barrier for all of us except those who speak only English" (Atambile commentary on Jansen 2021).

Whilst the purpose of this chapter is not exclusively to insist on the ways in which English dominance in higher education is a form of ongoing linguistic imperialism, this is indeed an element. The focus of this chapter is perhaps rather, to use the words of students and activists to deconstruct and reconstruct what decoloniality is able to look like when it draws from local tongues and local worlds, in a prevailing conversation about the intersections of globalisation and decolonisation. Focus on decolonising the university through language, activism, art, curricula etc. are the main thoughts discussed here, mostly through the words of participants of the study as they link their experiences of decoloniality, protests and activism to the dire need for rethinking their language repertoires in innovative and decolonial manners. It is important here to note that this section does not wish to make of English a culprit, but rather to reflect on why its dominance has prohibited the possibility of the development of more multilingual education and societal norms.

Decolonisation and UCT

Calls for decolonising the university were preceded by calls for Africanising the university. UCT has a longstanding history of controversy relating to this subject, whether through the likes of the Mafeje affair (1968) where a black African scholar was refused professorship because of his race, sparking large scale protests at the institution, or the Mamdani affair years later in 1998, whereby curriculum transformation to include the focused study of Africa was refused, resulting in Mandani's departure from the institution. UCT is not new to calls for various forms of decolonisation. Despite this, the focused attempts of the RMF

protests, calling firstly for the removal of the Rhodes statue (a symbolic first) has given vigour and practicality to the movement, and gone beyond a rhetorical nod to the movement, to include real pillars of transformation.

Decolonisation protests at UCT was a prominent feature of my discussions with participants, most of whom were either undergraduate students during the given protests, or otherwise entered the university space in the near aftermath of it. Take this extract as an example:

> "I came from Pretoria [right] at that time it was very predominantly white, where I grew up was predominantly white, but my school, I wouldn't say predominantly white, I would say we were pretty mixed, but it's just the culture was very predominantly white, so I had a lot of white friends growing up. I never really felt necessarily like I knew I was black, obviously I knew, but I never felt like I was black. I was just 'born free',[8] *kumbaya*, all of those things. So coming into UCT and having those things crumble right in front of you, especially during protests, was very difficult for me." (Ayanda personal interview 2021)

These protests are indicative of some of the trauma that students faced as part of the decolonisation protests. They show the process of awareness that came as a result of these movements. No doubt curricula and ideology has been mobile and active since these moments, but it is useful to reflect briefly on the ways in which this moment of deconstruction had informed students' experiences.

Others made the link between linguistic oppression and decolonisation, calling for alternatives to the various language hierarchies that exist at UCT:

> "Language is key in how people make sense of their worlds. To impose one language as superior impacts the way people view their language, how that language is taken up by generations and how it is seen in society. When I think of language and colonisation I think of language shift, moving from one language in favour of another, more prestigious one. In this mind then, decoloniality would mean the promotion of African languages, of African histories and cultures. A form of anti-erasure through language." (Thomas personal interview 2021)

[8] 'Born free' is a common term in SA used to describe people born in the country after the advent of formal democracy in 1994.

This leads to interesting conversations regarding the ways in which identity, both individual and collective, comes to be informed by decoloniality, and the promise that decoloniality holds for heritage protection and enrichment.

The latter comment then echoes Mamdani (2016), who says

> The decolonising project has to be a multilingual project whose purpose should not only be to provide Westernised education in multiple languages, but to provide resources for the development of non-western scholarly intellectual traditions as living traditions with the capacity to sustain public and scholarly discourse.

What becomes clear here is that language (within the decolonisation project) takes on the role of both chicken and egg, providing both a substantially grounded platform for new educational possibilities, and at the same time being a carrier and holder of new scholarly innovation that harness the possibilities of decolonisation. These thoughts accumulate to an important question raised by Prof. Ndebele and others at the most recent *Rhodes Must Fall lecture*, where the question was posed: *What would it mean to institutionalise #RhodesMustFall?* The above reflections confirm that language is one key reflective point for attempting this question.

Whilst attention has been paid to the ways in which language revitalisation (as a focused project of the Khoesan languages) can be a useful method of transformation, and equally the ways in which the development of African languages in education can be a useful tool for bridging academic "gaps" for those unable to conform immediately to the academic English of the institution, and even whilst important projects encouraging the (free) learning of isiXhosa for students and staff members gain traction, it is peculiar how little decolonisation features as a policy characteristic in these language initiatives. This aligns with Phipp's (2019: ii, 41) commentary that even whilst multilingualism has been taken as a positive output, proponents are still hesitant of the decolonial focus necessary to align multilingualism with the prerogatives of social justice.

Transformation and decolonisation, although interrelated subjects, are not always two sides of the same coin. Decolonisation is in itself a somewhat contested subject, where, according to the ways in which the RMF movement defined the term, it is with particular focus on the ideals of Pan-Africanism, Black Radical Feminism, and Black Consciousness. Narrowly defined, this means that the #RMF version of decoloniality is focused on the

inclusion of all Africans, focusing on a brand of feminism that pays particular attention to the intersectional elements that black woman, including black trans women face, and aligning itself with Biko's Black Consciousness whether in terms of identity or knowledge production. Whilst it is very much debatable whether the execution of protests always adhered to this logic (Taghavi, 2017), it a narrative that was confirmed both on the various social media pages and posts of protesting students as well as in the various narratives from interviews with protesting students (Taghavi, 2017).

These pillars come to be in an interesting conversation with the various ways in which decolonisation has been framed and reframed in scholarly debates over the past 50+ years. This can perhaps be epitomised somewhat by Dr. Lushaba's (2020) comment in the lecture *Decolonising the University*, where he prioritised using indigenous African knowledge systems and citing scholars from the Global South. Fuh commented on this, asking after the extent to which decolonisation can still be considered an exercise in indigeneity when the very scholars and modes of thinking that arise popularly within the decolonial school of thought are transnational, and draw on hybrid and global ways of meaning making. Although not necessarily a contradiction, it is useful to notice the possible controversy in which decoloniality can be defined, either as an exclusively local exercise, or rather as a hybrid glocal experience. This resembles the well-documented debate (discussed at length in the literature review of this thesis], where Wa Thiong'o critiques the use of European languages for African literature, and insists on the exclusive use of African languages. Achebe elsewhere debates this by showing the ways in which languages and worlds have become intertwined, insisting on the promise of translation and language intersections as a tool for decolonisation. This conversation/debate is a recurring theme, manifesting in literature and various sections of this thesis.

Nyamnjoh and Shoro similarly engage with pan-Africanism and its links to language, not as an exclusionary measure, rather stating that

> ...the promotion of indigenous and endogenous languages and cultures does not have to be at odds with the use of colonial languages and cultures, in a context where Africans, big and small, are actively navigating and negotiating their various heritages in favour of pan-Africanism as a complex, inclusive, and dynamic aspiration towards dignity and humanity for all (Naymnjoh and Shoro 2019:21).

Identity and Belonging

The topic of language and decolonisation led to other useful themes amongst participants, and made it possible to also reflect on interesting parts of student essays from the given course [see methodology chapter]. The themes that featured most prominently were linguistic oppression, language loss, and language and cultural identity.

In terms of cultural identity, students confirmed that language was a crucial part of the ways they made up their identities, and that where the schooling and higher education institutions, as well as their social worlds were not receptive or appreciative of their multilingual resources, it not only lead to losing a sense of cultural identity, but a more general feeling of being out of touch with themselves and their families. Whilst much of this thesis argues for the creative intermingling of languages, this chapter specifically takes note of experiences of language loss as it relates to the absence of educative opportunities for African languages and how this relates to students' experiences of loss.

The extract below has a student confirming that language is the most important component of their identity, and even if all other aspects were to dissipate, they would be determined by their language.

> "I once encountered a question...: 'Imagine you are nationless, homeless, stateless, and you do not have an identity document. What would define your identity?' The first answer from me was 'Language' (AXL1400F student 2020).

This then opens up a conversation with other students, who spoke about how they had lost some of their multilingual resources. Both below comments reference how English primary and secondary education resulted in a loss of mother tongue capabilities. The effect in both cases is disappointment, where student and participant respectively confirm the emotionally detrimental feelings of language loss. For the former it manifests in exclusion, and the latter finds herself jealous of those that have managed to further their multilingual abilities. It is useful to note that both these extracts took the moment of schooling and speaking English in school as a somewhat necessary, albeit problematic shift. This is highlighted most clearly in the second extract, where the participant acknowledges that her parents "needed" to send her to an English school to assimilate. Both these extracts reflect something of being caught between the devil and the deep blue sea -

where language loss, or not being able to access adequate education/opportunities are made to contrast one another.

> "I was born and raised in the Eastern Cape, where I learned Xhosa and only spoke Xhosa. When I was three years old, I moved to Johannesburg and attended an English-speaking school. Learning English was difficult at first, but I caught on quickly because I was still young and impressionable. I was not aware of how I was beginning to lose the Xhosa language that I had grown up with… not being able to interact with my peers in my home language made me feel isolated and misunderstood, that motivated me to learn the language. I hated the feeling of being the odd one out. I already had a hard time getting people to believe that I was purely Xhosa because of how light my complexion was, not being able to speak the language was like a nail in the coffin." (AXL1400F student 2020)

> "I think a part of it is my fault as well, but a part of it is just the way that we need to be raised. My parents sent me to a school where they weren't going to teach in Zulu, because with the government, technically, it's not going to be a good school, unfortunately, you have to send your kids to an ex-Model C school, where they will struggle in other cultures and other languages, and you really just need to do that in order to assimilate. I feel really, really jealous of people who can speak their own languages fluently and speak English fluently." (Ayanda personal interview 2021)

The link to decolonisation is subtle but prudent. The ways in which language and identity align, so that there is a forced assimilation that excludes mother tongues, in this case African languages, is prominent. The detriments go beyond language loss, and indeed contribute to feelings of losing heritage, or being excluded from places and spaces where one imagines possessing a form of citizenship and passport. A framework of citizenship and belonging allows this chapter to briefly engage Nymanjoh's (2016) discussion on Rhodes as a mobile being, curiously attuned to the *amakwerekwere* of South Africa (see Footnote 3). In this instance, Nyamnjoh uses it to make the argument that we are all to some extent makwerekwere in different places and moments, and that recognising the fluidity of our belonging and citizenship allows us to engage in more convivial understandings of belonging, both of ourselves and others. In response to the extracts above, I argue that language should also be viewed in more flexible and convivial terms to allow a sense of belonging, even to those that, due to forced English assimilation, have found themselves

excluded from particular aspects of their heritage. Yet, whilst this may be a political and social aspiration, it is also clear that processes of English dominance and persistence have already contributed to a feeling of disconnection among many, and that the process of decolonisation, as a convivial process of lending and borrowing, questioning borders, acknowledging mobility, and embracing interconnectedness, may be the only path to healing. Whilst this thesis takes notes of a translanguaging prerogative that draws on composite identity and repertoire making, this chapter in part acts as warning to the exclusion of frameworks of incompleteness in disallowing multilingualism as an identity-making and pedagogical resource.

This question further latches onto a very quickly changing landscape with regards to changing language institutional culture. As recently as 2017, Hlezi Kunju wrote the first isiXhosa PhD dissertation at Rhodes University, citing the value and importance of being able to access information in African languages. He went as far as to say that, "All African languages can be used as academic languages" (Kunju & Van Heerden 2017), indicating hope that this move will contribute to more teaching and publication in isiXhosa.

Summary Conclusion

This relates back to two instances in this chapter. Firstly, reflecting back on the opening quote, #RMF activist Noluvuyo Mjoli confirms that decolonisation ought to mean the chance to present her research in her mother tongue, as well as cite scholars from her autochthonous home without feeling as though she would be dismissed or ridiculed. Mamdani then draws the important connection between language and scholarly tradition, confirming that language acts as a vessel for promoting indigenous knowledge.

This is confirmed in an interesting instance by another student who says,

> "Using different languages is the same as expressing multiple cultures/behaviours. I believe each language has its identity." (AXL1400F student 2020)

This is then a crucial note on which to conclude: decolonisation as recognising the politics, heritage, culture and social mobility encapsulated in language, reaffirms the importance of multilingualism as it pertains to peoples' experiences of oppression, loss and identity. This chapter has then presented itself both as an interrogation of what is meant by decolonisation, as well as the various themes emphasised when language and

decolonisation are brought into conversation with one another. It has then argued for understanding decolonisation (as part of a project of Pan-Africanism) as a project that recognises interconnectedness and interdependence among people. This chapter has also made the effort to understand the ways in which language and belonging intersect, and has shown the potential for decolonisation as a healing process.

Chapter 6

Translanguaging: On Dwindling Borders and Rebel Speakers

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the implications of translanguaging pedagogy in the context of UCT as it relates to the ways students question language rules, in so doing, questioning the very borders of languages and through their creative attempts become rebels in the processes of linguistic engineering they engage. This chapter considers the implications of language prospects, where translanguaging becomes a pedagogical possibility. It relates to the broader theme of language borders and sets out to explain the current language situation at UCT as it relates to alternative multilingual pedagogical possibilities. It furthermore locates ethnographic examples relating to the topic at hand, such as that which follows below and throughout the given chapter. This chapter draws on the literature that feeds it, as relating to an incompleteness framework, as well as speaking to the relevant goals of imagining a decolonial form of multilingualism. It is in constant negotiation with Tutoula's supposedly complete gentleman as it reminds the reader of the promise of conviviality in composite repertoires, were these to be considered acceptable and valuable.

> "The area I was in determined the type of language I *should* speak. Tsotsitaal for when I was in the streets, English at school, Afrikaans in the class, and Sesotho at home. Code-switching was not an option as it resulted in judgement. If you spoke the wrong language at the wrong time, you were judged. If I spoke tsotsitaal in my mother's house, she would say "ole lehodu?" [*Are you a gangster?]*, if I spoke Sesotho at school, the teachers would simply say "please refrain from speaking your home language while at school", or if I spoke English while in the streets, one would say "o dinka gore o slem" [You think you're smart].
>
> Why is it that one is not given the freedom to speak a language that they want and feel comfortable with, wherever they want, without being judged?" (AXL1400F student 2020)

> "Growing up in this environment, I believed that I understood and spoke fluent Afrikaans. However, this view was altered at an early stage of my education as I was taught that "suiwer" Afrikaans is what would be taught and spoken in the

> schooling environment. “Suiwer” translates directly to “pure.” At a young age this led me to question if the language tied to my identity was “impure”? Nevertheless, I altered the language where necessary but never considered this “suiwer” language as my identity.” (AXL1400F student 2020)

The prefix -trans means *across, over or beyond*. In its simple meaning it engages in a complex task of questioning borders, refusing to be confined and literally moving despite and irrespective of boundaries. It makes boundaries liminal and unconfined to time and space, embracing a chronotopical approach to language which sees different times and spaces present simultaneously (Bhaktin 1981). It embraces fluidity and creativity. This chapter focuses on the ways in which translanguaging and translations are implicated in the language conversation at UCT. The former of the two themes are related firstly for their pedagogical possibilities, but for the latter part of the discussion, the terms are married in a conversation surrounding the prospects for these terms as identity making tools in decolonial activism and implicated decolonial multilingual pedagogy. Through the lens of translanguaging, code-switching and translation this chapter will use data obtained ethnographically and otherwise. That is, to make the case that the university language community is already engaging in many acts of translanguaging, and translating in their learning, teaching, and social behaviours. In making their identities, they draw on wide linguistic and cultural sources, exhibiting signs of identity that goes beyond imagined autochthonous confines.

Above reflections from undergraduate students at UCT seems a confirmation of Nyamnjoh and Shoro’s (2020: 13) observations regarding “pure” language and judgment, namely that:

> One need only slightly eavesdrop into a conversation between a group of township bred males in a place like Soweto to hear a single sentence containing elaborate Afrikaans words, infused with hints of English and sandwiched between a combination of isiZulu, Sesotho, and Tswana. Similarly, young cell phone and internet users combine endogenous African and European languages with fascinating creativity, in their chats and sms texts (Deumert and Masinyana 2008). These are the kinds of sentences that make grandmothers cringe at their impurity, grandfather catch a case of deja vu and school teachers shake their heads in regret about falling standards of English and Afrikaans amongst modern day youth.

Breaking the Rules of Wholeness and Purity

As a precursor, this text draws on Amos Tutoula's The Complete Gentleman (1952), that sees a skeleton traversing the boundaries between worlds in order to borrow various body parts, making himself into the complete gentleman (Nyamnjoh 2015, 2017, 2019). On a theoretical level, this sets the stage for the ways in which humans, too, move beyond boundaries set out for them in order to borrow from one another. These boundaries can include physical travelling, such as between nations, provinces or even neighbourhoods, or more metaphorical boundaries, such as those we draw on when appropriating from cultures, languages or various modes of being. It is then clear that above undergraduate students are being confronted with a contradicting experience. On the one hand, they experience and observe themselves as speakers that are able to draw from a range of language resources, and adapt these resources according to what they observe as the rules of the place. Yet, at the same time they are commenting on the ways in which their language freedom is suppressed by the expectation that they should not be transgressing what counts as the right language for the right environment, irrespective of how their own identities and natural repertoires are linked to given languages.

Bourdieu (1977), in simple terms, argues that each individual possesses sets of capital made up of cultural, economic and social capitals. This accumulates as symbolic capital. The various spaces and institutions people find themselves in are "fields" and can include anything from a schooling environment to a social event. Each of these spaces has a set of rules, which in this framework is called the doxa. These are the sometimes spoken but mostly unspoken etiquette of the various fields. This is an opportunity to engage with the former of the two ethnographic observations, where the student affirms that they move between different spaces that make it necessary to draw on different repertoires. To an extent they are confirming that in a Boudiean framework, they possess the capital to navigate the various spaces, but find themselves in a frustrating position where the rules (doxa) and their natural meaning-making processes do not match. This tells us something about an all too popularly accepted rule, namely that language mixing and or using the wrong language at the wrong time is considered to be a transgression of both formal educative rules, but also of informal social rules in certain settings. This is somewhat complicated by the ways in which youth, especially in their own communications, do engage in processes of mixing languages, but the type of language one is allowed to bring to the table is still very much restricted by prejudices and disapproval of particular repertoires.

For the above students, their experience of the rules of the field impacted their language choice drastically. Reflecting on Tsotsitaal as a language of socialisation “on the streets”, English as the social language of the school, Afrikaans as the formal language of instruction and Sesotho while in the home environment, the student describes an all too typical case of the ways in which different *fields* call for different languages. It is not unsurprising to find South African youth, especially black South African youth, being capable in four or more languages, and actively using these languages for different purposes. This acts as a confirmation that the artificial separation of languages, that sees certain languages as restricted to particular domains acts only to benefit monolingual speakers that are fluent in the chosen language. However, for the multilingual majority, only a policy which allows for the integrative use of their full repertoire will be a just policy.

Reflecting on what can also be learnt from experiences of Afrikaans in education, at all educational levels, this chapter also takes note that what is considered the correct variety of a language needs to be dismantled in addition to moving from the idea of language to that of languaging. The above student confirms that whilst she is able to adapt her usage of Afrikaans to conform to the standard variety of the language, it is the Cape version of the language, or Kaapse Afrikaans/Afrikaaps, that is the language she associates with her identity. It is indeed very useful that she is aware of how purity is a term often linked to language conversation. Being accused of not using the pure version of the language, she began to wonder how a language, or an identity, can be considered impure. This deconstruction of what purity means in terms of language makes it possible to admit that people often possess “broken” or incomplete repertoires, which they integrate into one another in order to make it suitable to the moments that deem only purity as worthy. Yet, languages are rarely pure - and even if some people call for an almost biblical awe of supposed purity, languages have all been penetrated and interpenetrated with one another. Think for example briefly of the composition of English - a language which is constituted of about 80% of borrowed words from other languages that have come to take on different forms in English. Afrikaans is another useful example, as the language can be considered a creole language - a blended hybrid of Dutch, Cape Malay, Khoisan languages and many others it came into contact with during its young history. Calling for “pure” Afrikaans is then nothing less than ironic for a language that exists only because of a past of language contact.

Having taken part in a webinar built around the topic of multilingualism in higher education, it was interesting to see the various different ways in which proponents of multilingualism envisioned the goal. Here a speaker (Prof. Mbulungeni Madiba) made the argument towards translanguaging in HEIs by drawing on success from a translanguaging initiative in the Mathematics Department at UCT. For this exercise, first year students in the MAM1000Z course (a course with a notoriously high fail rate at the university) were encouraged to attend workshops where they could work on maths problems in small groups of their choosing. Often these groups were built around the clusters of languages previously discussed. It featured prominent discussion in mixtures of English and the additional language being used. There was positive feedback for this exercise, which saw the pass rate increase and additionally showed an interactive learning method that promoted multilingualism, without succumbing to exclusionary practices, where for example, certain students had access to resources in languages that others did not. This compares well with another project piloted in the economics department at UCT, which saw students enact orals relating to key terms in economics in languages other than English. In this case, isiXhosa was used to relate to understandings of loss and deficit.

An extract of the transcription of the given exercise reads [English in capital letters, isiXhosa written normally]:

> Faci: OK, WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LOSS AND DEFICIT THEN/
> S4: I'D SAY LIKE IN XHOSA, *uMzantsi Afrika uyabo*.
> All: *e-e-e-i-EXPORT, neIMPORT*
> S4: *Masithi uMzantsi Afrika kwi-eXport ne-IMPORT uybona u-iIMPORT*(a)MORE THAN NO,NO,NO IT'S LIKE *u-EXPORT*(a) MORE THAN *ufumana*, THAT'S DEFICIT *leyo*.
> S2: Utho *a-IMPORT*(e) MORE THAN *a-EXPORT*(a)
> S4: Yha, THAT MEANS, MEANS *u-EXPORT*(a) MORE THAN *uba ufumana*
> S1: THAT'S THE SAME THING
> S2: *Ndingathi iDEFICIT mna, singayicalula ngendlela ezohlukeneyo. Uba sisondela kwelicala le-IMPORT ne-EXPORT. Uyaqaphele nhe kwi-EXPORT uba ndithenga ngemali yam. Into esijonga kuyo phaya yiRAND a neh, uba yimalini iRAND, yimalini iCOUNTRY eyikhuphileyo yayisa kwamanye amazwe, yabe yona ifumeme inkunzi ezingakani kula mazwe. Ekugqibeleni* IS NOT ABOUT *iLOSS* IS ABOUT *umahluko*.

This extract, as an example of a possible iteration of translanguaging is an ideal example as it shows the ways in which languages intersect within single sentences and even single

words. Garcia (2017) advocates that a translingual approach allows recognition that a multilingual speaker is not many monolingual speakers in one body, but instead a single speaker with a range of language resources stored together. That is to say that a multilingual speaker should not be imagined as one that is fluent in multiple languages and that keeps these cultural and linguistic resources separate from one another, but instead, a multilingual speaker integrates their various resources. The above extract is a potent example of translanguaging in a learning environment. Similar experiments have been conducted in numerous faculties and under different conditions, whether in training students or in training teachers, and many authors have confirmed that translanguaging is both the most practical and socially just (Hurst & Mona 2017) framework for language policy in teaching and learning. Kutsukake (2021: 138) also explains the extent to which the ethnocentric conceptualisation of a single language as a mother tongue and representative of a whole region is ill-suited to the African multilingual norm, and explains translanguaging as a tool for liberation in this context.

Another useful ethnographic example discusses translanguaging for epistemic access to computer science concepts at an unspecified South African university (Mbirimi-Hungwe & Hungwe 2019: 97). Reports suggest that students perceived translanguaging as a helpful tool in their pedagogical experience. Additionally, they suggest that to acquire real relevance all members of the faculty must be involved in promoting translanguaging in the classroom. This would then conclude to help students “be able to acquire deeper meaning and understanding of subject material.” Elsewhere, authors reflect on the usefulness of translanguaging strategies for the multilingual classroom, in this case referring specifically to teacher training (Makalela 2015: 200). This draws on a teacher preparation programme at WITS university, intended to introduce speakers of certain African languages to other African languages, “in order to produce multi-competent and multi-vocal teachers”. The success of translanguaging pedagogy was confirmed. The study compares two groups of preservice teachers, who had registered for an indigenous African language as an additional language. They were assigned to either the control group or an experimental group. The poll consisted of 60 pre-service teachers (n=60) and 30 in a class (n=30). The overwhelming conclusion of the project was that the group who has used a typical monolingual medium of instruction to teach the content performed significantly worse than the group using translingual and experimental methods. This was reflected both in word recognition, overall vocabulary and oral reading proficiency. Translanguaging pedagogy allowed participants to reflect on the similarities between their own languages and that of the target language, rather than being confined to thinking about language

only in terms of the traditional teaching language (English) and the given target language. Authors concluded that "The participants realised that there were many cultural similarities between their home languages and the target language and that crossing cultural boundaries through languaging experiences in the class enabled them to see cultural gaps closing…" The use of poetry, song, proverbs and idiomatic expressions in aiding the teaching experience was a useful feature and contributed in highly innovative ways to a multilingual teaching identity. As one participant confirms (Makalela 2015: 209-210):

> "Using more than one language in class made me think the way I usually do at home or when I am with my friends. The class has allowed me to truly become myself by using more than one language to talk about something. It felt just like the way I communicate with my friends and relatives outside varsity. I had never had an experience like this… but wow, I felt so fulfilled in the way I want to think through concepts."

This piece of ethnographic data acts twofold because it both shows the usefulness of using translanguaging as a tool for training, but also carries the benefit of sending professionals into the world and country that have a skill in their translanguaging abilities and are able to use this in their future interactions. There are other rich examples, including Hurst and Mona's (2017) discussion on translanguaging as a socially just pedagogy, which discusses the ways in which translanguaging was used in a course for first year students in extended degree programmes[9] in the Humanities at UCT. This was implemented in 2015 and 2016, and draws richly from the decolonial prerogative of the moment. The given course, "*Texts in the Humanities*" is aimed at assisting students in their reading of texts in the Humanities. The given article draws from tasks in which students conduct their own language biographies, read texts in different languages, and engage with a multilingual lecturer in a variety of languages. The course acted as an opportunity for students to showcase their diverse repertoires. Whilst extended degree students are often stigmatised as not possessing adequate knowledge of English for learning purposes, this course combats this in helping students question anglo-normativity in higher education, and draws from the language resources they themselves, lecturers and tutors possess. The social justice lens, which the given paper uses, links well to decolonisation, and shows the prospects of translanguaging as a decolonial pedagogy.

[9] Extended degrees refer to a four-year programme as opposed to the regular three-year programme that most faculties offer. It is only available in certain faculties and is relevant to students who don't meet minimum faculty requirements but demonstrate potential.

The South African Classroom as a Contact Zone

As a precedent, this thesis is not considered with making judgements about the appropriateness of borrowing freely between languages, but rather with recognising the inevitable appropriation, lending and borrowing that takes place the moment people interact in contact zones. In tune with Mary-Louise Pratt's original conceptualisation of the term, contact zones are said to be the various zones in which different cultures come to meet, clash and grapple with each other, albeit often in unequal relations of power (Pratt 1992). In line with theories of mobility, this thesis has elsewhere argued that due to new technologies of movement, as well as mobility facilitated by technology (where technology allows us to be present in various places and in various forms simultaneously), there is increasing need to define language in terms mobility, and as a result the ways in which languages are increasingly impacted by contact zones. Whilst translanguaging has been defined elsewhere as "the process whereby multilingual speakers use their languages as an integrated communication system" (Garcia and Wei: 2013), forthgoing, this chapter will focus on what this integrated communication system means and what it may look like at UCT.

Madiba (2014) makes the case that whilst many students are very much aware of the ways in which the policies imposed on them act against the utilisation of all of their linguistic resources, the majority do *break the rules* as they engage in learning activities, but find the standard of English at the institution unattainable. Madiba explains that whilst educators are often still sceptical about the ways in which language standards are supposedly falling, most students have already changed their learning experiences to suit the practice of translanguaging, using different languages with lecturers and with friends, making notes in multiple languages and, often in hushed tones, using multiple language in their conversations. His argument is that translanguaging is already being used by students, but it is now a crucial next step for the policymakers to catch up and implement it, thereby potentially transforming multilingual policy into more than mere window dressing (Madiba & Tyam 2020). It is then clear that the divide between what languages gets counted as appropriate in various settings is both consciously and unconsciously being questioned by students, making them caught betwixt and between ideologies that advocate that only particular languages, and particular varieties of those languages ought to be appropriate for education, and a much more natural and free version of using language, where the various domains of their lives now come to intersect with their learning experiences.

This thesis has drawn from student paper extracts from the Social Anthropology Department at UCT, which is the home to this research. Most notably, the research draws upon my own experiences teaching in the AXL1400F course *Words, Deeds, Bones and Things* which, among others, introduces students to Linguistic Anthropology at first year level. A prompt relating specifically to translanguaging pedagogy has provided rich data for deconstruction.

The prompt reads:

Journal Entry 2 (Translation/Translanguaging activity) 800 words

- Choose an idiom or expression in English or an African Language
- Translate it into English or an African Language
- Reflect on the anthropological information you can derive from the process of translating it

Additionally, students are instructed to link it to various readings and keywords from the section of the course, including translanguaging, transadaption, and repertoire. Well aligned with content from this chapter, students' reflections affirm the value of getting to use their home languages to learn, the value of the task in assisting them with language learning and relationship building. Preceded by a tutorial meant to train students in the difference between simple translation and transadaption i.e. the difference between a culturally sensitive and creatively rich translation attempt versus a word for word translation that loses meaning, it was exciting to experience the presence of six languages in a class of as small as 12 students. The tutorial, a translanguaging activity in itself, allowed students to draw their various languages and helped them make connections between languages, but also discuss the complexity of translating certain concepts. The enculturation process, as well as the topic of linguistic hegemony featured prominently.

Students, for example, discussed the various conceptualisation of *ubuntu* as they exist in different African languages, and affirmed the lack of adequate translation for the term in English and Afrikaans. They also discussed the rarity with which they were able to use African languages in a learning environment, and confirmed that the activity provided them with a unique opportunity to affirm the validity of their home languages as valid academic languages. The table below contains some brief examples of the translation-transadaption processes from my own teaching session. Whilst the below table separates languages as a mechanism to show the multitude of languages present, a

complete transcription would emphasise even more so the fluid nature between which students optimised various languages in sentences and in this session, where they would compare and contrast with one another in order to come up with meanings.

Original Language	Translation	Transadaption
Mogwera wa tšhwene o ja se tšhwene e se sang. (Sepedi)	A baboon's friend eats what the baboon is eating.	If you befriend someone from a poor family do not look down on him but appreciate him because he might help you in the future.
Dooddruk (Afrikaans) (from a personal anecdote)	Press dead	End the call
Umuntu, umuntu ngabantu (isiZulu)	A person is a person because of other people	Community/collective identity/Ubuntu
Izandla ziyavasana (isiXhosa)	Hands wash each other	People help each other

This provides the opportunity for linkage to the Open Educational Resource Term Bank (or OERTB) a collaborative project by UCT, UP and the Department of Higher Education (DHET). This term bank is seeing to the development of African languages in education as it attempts to build a glossary of all key terms relating to learning in higher education in all official South African languages. Where these terms do not yet exist, the accumulated knowledge of experts in the field contribute key words to this bank. The goal is in part to make sure that different terms aren't initiated at different institutions, leading to confusion, but to harmonise the usage of these terms and contribute to realistic ideals where research can be published, learned and taught in a host of African languages, in combination with English. The open access nature of the bank, as well as its potential as a self-study tool, means that translanguaging and multilingual learning can be facilitated even outside of the classroom, as students can draw on these resources in their own language learning endeavours.

Refining the Understanding of Translanguaging

Now that the tone has been set for a discussion on the ways in which crossing boundaries are relevant to linguistic repertoires, we would do well to ground the thesis in the linguistic theories introduced thus far, and which have been taken up frequently and often as a new pedagogical tool for reimaging the ways in which multilingual people make sense of the world in their meaning making processes. Translanguaging as a pedagogical theory was originally conceptualised as a tool for the integration of Welsh and English in classrooms with students being speakers of both languages (Williams 2002). The idea is that rather than using a model of additive bilingualism, which conceptualises languages as distinct, translanguaging instead allows the creative free-flow between languages as is natural to students. This means that rather than teaching either of the languages in a setting that requires splitting up people according to languages, the classroom environment sets the tone for students to draw on the language of their choice as may be relevant to them.

This breaks with two commonly held beliefs surrounding language: the first being that languages are whole, distinct, separable entities, and secondly, that language is in itself an object/noun rather than an act/verb. Translanguaging seeks to do away with both these beliefs. It argues that languages, as nation state boundaries, have been separated and differences emphasised as a way of keeping languages separate, and confined. Makalale (2015) for example links this project back to the enlightenment project which sought to increase nation state nationalism and saw any abundance of one language, clearly related to a particular region and time as confusing and undesirable. These ideas confirm an unrealistically autochthonous conceptualisation of language, fixing it in time and place. The colonial project had already begun to split up parts of the world according to its Anglophone/Francophone imaginings. Yet, in Africa as in other parts of the world, imagined monolingualism was disturbed and disrupted to find that monolingualism is not the norm. Instead, most people in Africa were multilingual, even before the onslaught of colonialism, which further contributed to their growing reportaires (Makalela 2016). In South Africa, this history is also informed by the missionary project, which saw the artificial separation of Sotho and Nguni clusters of languages, due to missionary incompetence in accurately documenting languages. This was solidified not only as a missionary project, but also saw tribes in South Africa coming to use these new assigned language identities as tools for seperation (Mesthrie 2009). This was more so reified and confirmed when the apartheid state assigned homelands to different language groupings,

using tactics of seperation to create divisions between racial, cultural, and language groupings. Additionally, the shift, which sees language transition from a noun to a verb, is also key. This means that language should be viewed as a performative act, rather than a thing.

Some language purists and language separationists still hold onto an understanding that argues against language mixing, yet, it has been proved time and time again that languages are escape artists, even when they are shackled and imprisoned to different cells. The multilingual speaker is in themself a transgression of the idea of separation, inhabiting many tongues and worlds in one. And in South Africa, where some form of bilingualism and varying degrees of multilingualism are the norm, translanguaging becomes an acknowledgement and a tool of the way in which people think and speak. The artificial separation of languages according to rules designed to keep languages pure and virgin is no match for the real language principles that people inhabit and exhibit, that is; that people draw on a range of linguistic repertoires, be that “languages”, codes, accents, tones etc. when they communicate their worlds. This again allows for a framework of incompleteness, where the many tongues people inhabit are albeit not always perfect in terms of fluency, yet nonetheless allow, through flexible incompleteness, for creative conviviality.

Summary Conclusion

This chapter has focused on various aspects of translanguaging. It has drawn from ethnographically rich case studies and student reflection to make various conclusions. First and foremost it has attempted to recognise that translanguaging facilitates a process of crossing borders and confronting contact zones. Additionally, it has argued for the premise of rejecting outdated rules and definitions that do not adequately reflect what it means to use language, or how speakers use language in their lived realities. Understanding how this relates to the South African classroom has been a key priority, as well as unpacking ethnographic data pertaining to various examples of translanguaging, most notably at UCT, but also at other South African universities, both in the learning and training environments. This chapter recognises that translanguaging can act as a socially just pedagogy that supports calls for decolonisation, additionally, it helps utilise their full linguistic potential in fields that have not to date moved beyond English normativity.

Chapter 7
The Fall of English in the Age of English:
Contesting Fluency/Embracing Fluidity

Introduction

This chapter explores the extent to which the malleability of English, which sees changing standards in its expected conformity, can be read as "the fall of English." Drawing on notions of "proper" English and "academic" English, this chapter both acknowledges the pressures students at UCT experience with regards to the standard of English expected, as well as discussing the ways in which a revision to frameworks pertaining to language policy may empower students to draw on their language resources pertaining to English in more creative ways, beyond the fluency associated with a particular standard version of English and towards embracing the various Englishes that UCT students bring to the table. Below examples begin to introduce students' perceptions of English at UCT in order to make above argument and answer the main question of this thesis by showcasing an ethnographic reflection of the language situation at UCT as relating to English.

> "When I went to a mainly white high school, I was exposed to the proper English language and I realised that my family was expecting me to flourish in school because there's this stereotype in our language that states that when you speak English, you then automatically become smarter and begin to think differently and that means you're going to find a good job and become successful. So in that way, English would then start to shape how I think and eventually change how I see things, making the language a part of myself, resulting in my "success" [quotation marks original]." (AXL1400F Student 2020)

> "When I am around my normal group of friends I use my slang, various lingo, a lower register etc. However, I noticed around my professor, I used proper English, limited slang, had a higher register, and tried to dial down on my Southern accent… when I walk in a classroom in the US and in South Africa, English is the language spoken. Not broken English, nor a personalised form of English, but proper English. This is the norm and most students adjust to this way of speaking in the academic settings. The power lies in the English language because the power once/maybe still belongs to the Englishmen." (AXL1400F Student 2020)

This thesis has discussed at length the strange irony that criticism of the imperial power of English has seemingly gone unnoticed in many realms. This chapter is engaging in a balancing act where necessary critique of this supposed neutrality is set against the real benefits of having a bridging language that is malleable to the diverse linguistic necessities of South Africa generally, but also to UCT specifically. It is then necessary to recognise that along with critique, this chapter foregrounds the way people use language to decrease social distance between themselves and others, and recognises the ways in which English assists in doing this at UCT. The malleability of language in general, but English especially is the focus here, for the way in which the language has and continues to transform, morph, change, adapt and mutate makes it a less than straightforward subject. It may even lead one to ask whether the role of post-colonial English can be to facilitate much of African literature (Gasser 2021), and even other pan-Africanist endeavours, like the decolonial African university (Nyamnjoh 2019). Sensitive to the fact that multilingualism isn't only about the incorporation of a host of languages, the focus here is situating English(es) according to students experiences of the language and to ask important, albeit somewhat philosophical questions, about how incompleteness and glocalisation can be used to realign English language expectations for pedagogy.

Whilst this thesis argues for and acknowledges the important role that English as a lingua franca and even as an official language plays, it remains sceptical if not dismissive of the de facto sole official language status at UCT, as elsewhere in the country. Whilst the many interesting language innovations at the institution have been a point of focus, the experience of hegemonic English prevalence was a topic that featured prominently among my participants. As a plan, this chapter seeks to balance the conversation that sees English, and specifically academic English, as an overpowering pressure for many students, whilst at the same time recognising the mutability of English, making it possible to argue that even in the Age of English and its prevailing dominance - a moment where increased globalisation leads to a rapid spread of English language learning (whether formally or via social media, movies etc.), we are witnessing the fall of English normativity and hegemony (or the fall of a particular mould of standard English). This is due to the creative ways in which multilingual speakers blend and bend English with other languages in their repertoire and make the language their own.

Academic English

Alexander (1999:2) famously said about the English language that it is both "unassailable and unattainable", thereby affirming the power of the language, then, as relating to newly established democracy and lack of practical multilingualism in new policies. Now, years later students' experience of the language seems as closely related to this description as ever. This chapter relates the topic more narrowly to English as it exists in academia and at UCT. Academic English is a topic which many research participants had confirmed put a particular strain on their learning abilities, indeed many spoke of it as an almost new language which they had to learn, even amongst participants for whom English is a language frequented at home or in their social circles. English finds many homes in the mouths and minds of its many speakers, contributing to the remaking of a language and making it viable that the process of using English does not necessarily have to be a process of homogenisation. If research can be applied in a way that draws from speakers' rich repertoires instead of moulding them into a particular form. What follows is a few extracts from interviews with students, commenting on their perception and experience of academic English. These observations highlight the intensity with which English dominance is experienced by students, and especially of how non-mastery of academic English can be understood as a custodian of distance and difference.

> "...when I came to UCT, regarding academic English, I thought that was a foreign language. I was completely befuddled and overwhelmed by the readings… Just an afterthought, I think academic English, I think I perceived as something that remains within a bubble of the university, and is used by only university people. So it's the cycle that reproduces itself, but it feels very alienating still, and I think I've actually learnt, on the whole, I've actually wanted to reject it, because I feel embarrassed. Showing my academic essays to my family, and where I feel like they are just confused by the language and it feels really unnecessary." (Mia interview 2021)

> "My original impression of academic English was really just big words that not many people would know… And I think the way people assume someone is intelligent when they say words that no one else will know, things like amalgamation, you know, things like those. I sprinkle those in my essays just to show how smart I am." (Noah interview 2021)

These extracts could assist in developing a definition for Academic English. A quick Google search reveals many handbooks and guides to developing the skill of Academic English, confirming that as a variant it is indeed a desirable tool for those engaged in academia. Beyond the formal tones and intimidating vocabulary, it is interesting to draw on the idea of Academic English as an echo chamber. This variant of English constitutes an exclusive and excluding practice that exists in the realms of the university but functions as a measure to alienate those that are not comfortable in its production or reproduction. My own experiences as a tutor at UCT (2019-2021) have many times revealed the tensions that exist around academic English, especially as it relates to marking of student essays. It is for example noteworthy that conveners and lecturers have often confirmed, especially in first year courses, that students should not be penalised on their language use, as long as the content is clear and neatly edited. This means that what would often count as grammatical errors and be completely unacceptable at a later stage in academia gets accepted earlier on at undergraduate level, because of the impression that many students would not yet have adequately mastered academic English.

This aligns with Baldauf's observation (2006:165) on language management that: "...a child's earliest first-hand experience of native speech does not necessarily show any resemblance to the formal 'school version' of his/her mother tongue." This is even more complicated in a scenario where many students use English only as a second, third of even fourth language, and so English as an additional language and English non-first language speakers is the reality at UCT and their interactions with English at home or in other social spheres are often very far removed from the English encountered at the institution. Madiba's (2010: 6) observations also resonate here: "...we consider that 'academic language' is itself not anyone's mother tongue, but a variety of language which students acquire from the teaching and learning situation; we can view multilingualism as a continuum of different language forms."

UCT has conducted institutional climate surveys with staff and students that focus on a host of topics but insights regarding language were particularly rewarding and included observation on how Black students have problems in using English in learning.

> "Black students also reported having difficulty with English. Whilst there was a general agreement across all groups that there has to be a common language of instruction, and acceptance of English as the language of instruction, Black

students in particular felt that English was a significant barrier to learning." (Strategy and Tactics 2004: 47)

Useful statistics also emerged from the Institution Climate Survey Report (University of Cape Town 2007) in which respondents were asked whether they felt the dominance of English as a medium of instruction was problematic. A significant 17,6% regarded it as "somewhat of a problem, and 8,4% as a "major problem." And to support this an EAL speaker at UCT concorded these statistics; "the University of Cape Town recognises the English way of life as the only custodian to civilisation" (Kapp 1998: 23). Paxton's (2007) study at UCT revealed and confirmed that "when asked to judge the level of English required at UCT, 45% of students indicated that they found it 'high', 'very high' or 'difficult to cope with'" (Kapp in Madiba 2010: 9).

Yet, even as this is the case, the university faces the prospects and active intervention of positioning itself as a multilingual, decolonial institution. Historically, however, since its establishment in 1829, the university has been considered English-only and its policy has matched that. It was indeed designed to conform to the needs and abilities of "a homogenous community (overwhelmingly white, predominantly male, English speaking, economically privileged)" (Hall 2006:14). The demography of the institution has been changed and that criteria has been turned on its head, as the university now (attempts to) cater to a racially diverse student body, whose home-languages are often not the same as the language of academic instruction (English) and whose economic circumstances differ vastly and include many students from economically disadvantaged and rural backgrounds. It is then clear that the needs of students have gone unmet with the entrenchment of an English policy that is suited around a particular academic version that does not at all align with real world experiences of the language and is not sensitive to the diverse interactions that students have that accumulate their knowledge of English and other languages.

Glocalisation - Fusing the Local and Global

It is eerily clear that the conversation surrounding English as a language of power and opportunity is by no means a conversation that is tied exclusively to the local context in which it is discussed with reference to its position at UCT. Thus, positioning English within a global framework, paying particular attention to the role of English as a lingua franca, English as a global language and variants of English/world Englishes is a crucial part of this topic. This conversation has taken on many forms across linguistic and related fields. To

some extent, the literature review has dabbled in the ways in which the various circles of English can be understood (Kachru 1990), as well as looking at the various functions the language takes globally. Overall, this chapter is situated as arguing not *against* English, but as recognising that speakers of the English language at UCT as elsewhere in the world engage in many processes of language contact, where the learning and use of the language is often not moulded to fit a particular standard/hegemonic version, but rather a version of it that makes claim to the local places in which their experience of English is formed and informed. English is therefore not one thing belonging to a particular group, in the sense that there are many different groups that use the language in different ways. Rather, English can be seen as a process of language intersection that becomes attuned to the local and global lives in which mobile people engage. This allows for embracing the idea that whilst globalisation is contributing to the rapid spread of English language acquisition, the rapid spread of English acquisition is in turn leading to the language existing in numerous forms.

It is important to embrace the starting point of an understanding of language contact and globalisation as situated along the lines of diversity and hybridity, but to remain wary of the reproduction of power pertaining to English for which some scholars in the field advocate. Whilst the intention is not to engage in a study that focuses on language threats, or language extinction (Jacquemet, 2005), it is to offer a balanced overview of some of the real implications of language contact and what that means for English, which is currently the main language of instruction at UCT. That is to say again that different varieties of English are used for teaching and learning, and that experiences of the pressures of academic English are not serving to promote inclusion, according to ethnographic data discussed above. There is potential in a linguistic overview which recognises the diverse ways in which UCT students use varieties of English to suit teaching and testing to make room for possible diversity.

Glocal English is then an acknowledgement of the interpenetration of the local and global varieties of the language and the ways in which geographically specific, but also distant versions of the language, along with various online spaces and other social communities, come to work with English.

This provides the opportunity to think back briskly to the literature review and the context of incompleteness as a recognition that perfection/fluency/standardised usage should not be considered the goals of language usage, but that the creative meaning making process

is worth pursuing. To this extent, attention should be given to the ways in which various African authors have come to use English language. Whilst many of them outright claim the coloniality of the language (and so also make reference to its mobile roots) their creative transfiguring makes it possible to see how glocal Englishes can transcend supposedly standardised/whole forms.

The introduction to Saro-Wiwa's *Sozaboy*, commenting on the glocal English of the protagonist of the story reads:

> Sozaboy's language is what I call "rotten English", a mixture of Nigerian Pidgin English, broken English and occasional flashes of good, even idiomatic English. This language is disordered and disorderly. Born of a mediocre education and severely limited opportunities, it borrows words, patterns and images freely from the mother-tongue and finds expression in a very limited English vocabulary. To its speakers, it has the advantage of having no rules and no syntax. It thrives on lawlessness and is part of the dislocated and discordant society in which Sozaboy must live, move and have not his being. Whether it throbs vibrantly enough and communicates effectively is my experiment (1985: ii).

This grasps onto Nyamnjoh's (2019) discussion on Amos Tutoula as a possible quest hero for endogenous Africa, both because Tutoula himself had limited schooling, and can in that way be seen as breaking many of the stereotypes for what constitutes a writer and thinker, but mainly because of the writers active Anglicisation of Yoruba and Yorubanising of English. Similarly, Achebe (2000) speaks to the possibilities of African literature in English by making an argument for the Igboisation of English and the Englishisation of Igbo. These authors, and their discussion on African literature do a very important job by showing how blurring the lines between languages and cultures and intermingling them, as well as going about language in the spirit of conviviality, offers up the potential to transcend standard versions of the language. The question of whether post-colonial English can be a language of African futures is one that may require some pragmatism - and whether this is desirable is still a question hanging heavily over the heads of many decolonial scholars. However, whilst the power of English remains a salient part of everyday life at UCT, it is a productive discussion to think through how glocalisation and incompleteness theorems may assist us in breaking away from the stringent pressures of academic English.

Summary Conclusion

The politics of conformity is a topic that is highlighted within this topic as an appreciation for language variation and diffusion becomes central to the ways in which English at UCT can be understood. The given chapter has sought to balance discussion on the intense pressures students experience with regards to the standard variety of English they deem necessary both to learn at UCT, but also to assimilate into the dominant culture of the institution. However, the possibilities opened up by aligning English with frameworks of incompleteness and glocalisation, means that there is a real possibility of disrupting what gets counted as valuable at the institution. Whilst this was a somewhat expected conclusion of the thesis, the emphasis on the part of students' and staff engaging in the conversation not only confirmed the study hypothesis, but underscored it enough to make it a pertinent priority to rethink the current standing of English in the university space. What is interesting is that this does not necessarily seem to mean doing away with English, but rather doing away with boundedness and English *only* models towards embracing a switching, blending, bending and mutating variety of the language that does not seek to conform its speakers, but seeks rather to conform *to* its speakers, confirming the relevance and value of all varieties of the language. The mutability of English then acts to open up spaces for African languages in the classroom and elsewhere in pedagogy.

Chapter 8
General Conclusion

Research Findings

It has been argued here that the ways in which language features in the lives of individuals at UCT is not a trivial topic. If anything, its saliency as a marker of academic success, a feature of belonging and heritage, and its possibility as a tool for renewed hope in both these aspects have been recurring themes throughout. As a whole, this thesis has argued for recognising the ways in which language is made to be de-created within frameworks of globalisation and decolonising, as the inclinations of mobility have allowed diverse interactions between people and their repertoires. Especially linking this back to the historical continuation of coloniality, it has been emphasised that the rigidity linked to pure language use is an outdated notion that does not make room for the creative ways people come to communicate and make meaning. This is not an argument that stands to discard all language conventions and systems, but one that leaves breathing room within these systems that recognise that especially in an age of glocalisation and a renewed focus on decolonising that there is a need to shift priorities within understandings of language. To this extent, this thesis has argued for recognition that even whilst English continues to become the language associated with globalisation, and with increased English language learning being commonplace the world over, and even whilst global universities repeatedly emphasis English language entry requirements and learning vocabulary, there is also the extent to which "The English Language" is falling. Explained throughout, this is an argument in recognition of the ways in which people make English, and other languages, malleable to diverse interactions, educations and other sets of factors that inform their repertoires. This is to say that through spontaneous enactments of translanguaging, people have come to transcend a version of language purity that restricts the extent to which they are able to express themselves (both to themselves and to others). The creative ways in which language intermingling takes place has made possible on the one hand to recognise the fall of normative English, but also to recognise the possibilities for the development of African languages in education, as well as noticing how the intersections and interactions between languages lead people to expand both educative and social repertoires.

As an overarching argument, this thesis has used ethnographic data to comprise a study that recognises the diverse ways people view and use language at UCT with a particularly

nuanced focus on the ways in which the past shapes the present, glocalisation, #RMF and decoloniality more broadly, and translanguaging. This has made it possible to conclude that understandings of what constitutes a language, and how language informs pedagogy is a field rich with promise, when tapping into individuals' experiences of language.

Contribution to Field of Study

This thesis has highlighted the following key sections. Firstly, a thorough overview pertaining to the topic at hand was offered. Through this literature review, themes like glocalisation, decolonising, translanguaging, incompleteness (as opposed to purity) and other minor themes were raised and connected. The review also focused on many ethnographic pieces of work that attempted to cross-reference itself and provide a useful introduction to similar pieces of research. This was followed by a section on methodology, where it was argued that the execution of this given project was impacted by the ongoing covid-19 pandemic. It touched on how research may have played out differently under different circumstances. However, this proved useful for raising questions about what constitutes a participant in an increasingly technological world, and also brought to light the possibility of asynchronous fieldwork. This section questioned the parameters of "the field" and participants in hopefully innovative ways. In the ethical considerations focus of the thesis, the idea of what it means to study in a particular lane was discussed. Furthermore it discussed the various administrative protocols necessitated by the given research.

The main chapters of the thesis respectively focused on the ways in which the history of language in South Africa continues to inform perceptions and policies today, linked the topic of language at UCT explicitly to RMF and decolonisation initiatives more broadly, discussed the extent to which translanguaging is enacted, and offers potential solutions to language diversity at UCT, and finally contemplated the extent to which English is being reformed in more inclusive ways, whilst allowing for the development of African languages in education. Along with Kutsukake (2021: 138), this thesis uses a model of incompleteness and translanguaging in support of fluidity beyond fluency, arguing that: "This way of being can, thus, make the boundary defining 'ours' and 'theirs' precarious, thereby allowing speakers to gain more fluidity."

Broadly, this thesis has been interested in what the language situation at UCT is, concluding that a fluid understanding of language, rather than an understanding that

precedes itself on fluency, provides an ideal analytical framework for understanding students' repertoires. By way of conclusion, this thesis has attempted to de-create the rigidity and fixity with which language at UCT, as elsewhere, has often been confined. Along these lines, ethnographic data pertaining to the ways students imagine their own capabilities and opportunities has allowed the recognition that normativity as pertaining to English is no longer relevant, and that the given knowledge allows recognition of the prospects and opportunities for the development of African languages in South African higher education.

Future Research Opportunities

Although useful to have the study be located at UCT, as a highly ranking global university[10] it does become clear that the ways in which multilingualism discourse, practice and policy manifests at the various universities in the country is very different, albeit informed by a history with much overlap. There is great promise in expanding this study to be a comprehensive overview of the language situation at universities and other HEIs across South Africa. Language is necessarily central to a South African public discourse, as well as global discourses that seek to resolve globalisation more broadly. The conversation between the various HEI's in the country allows the unique opportunity to understand how the past has informed present day language debates in localised ways and to consider how this impacts and is impacted by the current university cohort.

[10] UCT is currently ranked 226th in the world by QS World University Rankings (UCT 2021), placing it in the top position of universities in Africa.

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Appendix 1: UCT Language Policy

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
LANGUAGE POLICY

Preamble

The University of Cape Town views language as a resource and recognises the personal, social and educational value of multilingualism, as well as the importance of promoting scholarship in all official South African languages.

The language policy of the University takes as its starting point the need to prepare students to participate fully in a multilingual society, where multilingual proficiency and awareness are essential.

The Language Policy has several objectives.

The first objective is the development of multilingual awareness on the one hand, and multilingual proficiency on the other.

The second objective is to contribute to the national goals of developing all South African languages so that they may in the medium- to long-term be able to be used in instruction, and of promoting scholarship in all our languages.

While - given the location of the university in the Western Cape - English, isiXhosa and Afrikaans are all recognised by UCT as official languages, English is the primary medium of instruction and administration. However, although English is an international language, it is not the primary language for many of our students and staff. The third objective is, therefore, to ensure that our students acquire effective literacy in English, by which we understand the ability to communicate through the spoken and written word in a variety of contexts: academic, social, and professional.

Teaching and Examinations

English is both the primary medium of teaching and of examination except in language and literature departments where another language is taught and may be used. This applies at all levels, and to dissertations and theses for higher degrees.

All academic programme convenors and teachers are expected to explore and implement ways in which the objective of the promotion of multilingual awareness and proficiency can be achieved; and to contribute towards realising the national goals of developing all South African languages and their use, and to promoting scholarship in all our languages.

Administration

English is the primary language of internal governance and of administration. All English communication must be clear, concise and gender-sensitive. Where practical, communication will include at least the three official languages of the university: English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa.

The university management and all administrative heads of department are expected to explore and implement ways in which the aims of multilingual awareness and proficiency can be achieved; and to promote the use of the three official languages in their internal and external communication, wherever, practicable.

The UCT Language Plan

The University's Language Plan proposes strategies, guidelines and structures for implementation in relation to teaching African languages to staff and students, promoting scholarship in all South African languages, and facilitating proficiency in English and promoting multilingualism in the environment.

The Language Policy Sub-Committee

The Language Policy Sub-Committee is a Sub-Committee of the Senate Teaching & Learning Committee. Its purpose is to optimise all aspects of language development related to multilingualism at UCT, to consider annual and medium to longer term plans and policies in this area for approval by Senate (via the Teaching and Learning Committee), and to promote informed decisions about the shape, form and focus of programmes and activities designed to promote and achieve a multilingual environment at UCT. It is responsible for developing and monitoring overall policy on multilingualism for the university in the form of an institutional, Senate-approved Language Plan.

Approved by Council: 28 September 2013

Appendix 2: SA Language in Education Policy

LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION POLICY 14 JULY 1997

1.The language in education policy documents which follow have been the subject of discussions and debate with a wide range of education stakeholders and role-players. They have also been the subject of formal public comment following their publication on 9 May 1997 (Government Notice No. 383, Vol. 17997).
2.Two policies are announced herewith, namely, the LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION POLICY IN TERMS OF SECTION 3(4)(m) OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ACT, 1996 (ACT 27 OF 1996), and the NORMS AND STANDARDS REGARDING LANGUAGE POLICY PUBLISHED IN TERMS OF SECTION 6(1) OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT, 1996. While these two policies have different objectives, they complement each other and should at all times be read together rather than separately.
3.Section 4.4 of the Language in Education Policy relates to the current situation. The new curriculum, which will be implemented from 1998, onwards, will necessitate new measures which will be announced in due course.
4.LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION POLICY IN TERMS OF SECTION 3(4)(m) OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ACT, 1996 (ACT 27 OF 1996)
5.
1.PREAMBLE
2.This Language-in-Education Policy Document should be seen as part of a continuous process by which policy for language in education is being developed as part of a national language plan encompassing all sectors of society, including the deaf community. As such, it operates within the following paradigm:

1.In terms of the new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the government, and thus the Department of Education, recognises that our cultural diversity is a valuable national asset and hence is tasked, amongst other things, to promote multilingualism, the development of the official languages, and respect for all languages used in the country, including South African Sign Language and the languages referred to in the South African Constitution.
2.The inherited language-in-education policy in South Africa has been fraught with tensions, contradictions and sensitivities, and underpinned by racial and linguistic discrimination. A number of these discriminatory policies have affected either the access of the learners to the education system or their success within it.
3.The new language in education policy is conceived of as an integral and necessary aspect of the new government's strategy of building a non-racial nation in South Africa. It is meant to facilitate communication across the barriers of colour, language and region, while at the same time creating an environment in which respect for languages other than one's own would be encouraged.
4.This approach is in line with the fact that both societal and individual multilingualism are the global norm today, especially on the African continent. As such, it assumes that the learning of more than one language should be general practice and principle in our society. That is to say, being multilingual should be a defining characteristic of being South African. It is constructed also to counter any particularistic ethnic chauvinism or separatism through mutual understanding.
5.A wide spectrum of opinions exists as to the locally viable approaches towards multilingual education, ranging from arguments in favour of the cognitive benefits and cost-effectiveness of teaching through one medium (home language) and learning additional language(s) as subjects, to those drawing on comparative international experience demonstrating that, under appropriate conditions, most learners benefit cognitively and emotionally from the type of structured bilingual education found in dual-medium (also known as two-way immersion) programmes. Whichever route is followed, the underlying principle is to maintain home language(s) while providing access to and the effective acquisition of additional language(s). Hence, the Department's position that an additive approach to bilingualism is to be seen as the normal orientation of our language-in-education policy. With regard to the delivery system, policy will progressively be guided by the results of comparative research, both locally and internationally.
6.The right to choose the language of learning and teaching is vested in the individual. This right has, however, to be exercised within the overall framework of the obligation on the education system to promote multilingualism.

3.This paradigm also presupposes a more fluid relationship between languages and culture than is generally understood in the Eurocentric model which we have inherited in South Africa. It accepts a priori that there is no contradiction in a multicultural society between a core of common cultural traits, beliefs, practices, etc., and particular sectional or communal cultures. Indeed, the relationship between the two can and should be mutually reinforcing and, if properly managed, should give rise to and sustain genuine respect for the variability of the communities that constitute our emerging nation. 4.AIMS
5.The main aims of the Ministry of Education's policy for language in education are:

1.to promote full participation in society and the economy through equitable and meaningful access to education;
2.to pursue the language policy most supportive of general conceptual growth amongst learners, and hence to establish additive multilingualism as an approach to language in education;
3.to promote and develop all the official languages;
4.to support the teaching and learning of all other languages required by learners or used by communities in South Africa, including languages used for religious purposes, languages which are important for international trade and communication, and South African Sign Language, as well as Alternative and Augmentative Communication;
5.to counter disadvantages resulting from different kinds of mismatches between home languages and languages of learning and teaching;
6.to develop programmes for the redress of previously disadvantaged languages.

6.POLICY: LANGUAGES AS SUBJECTS
7.
1.All learners shall offer at least one approved language as a subject in Grade 1 and Grade 2.
2.From Grade 3 (Std 1) onwards, all learners shall offer their language of learning and teaching and at least one additional approved language as subjects.
3.All language subjects shall receive equitable time and resource allocation.
4.The following promotion requirements apply to language subjects:
5.
1.In Grade 1 to Grade 4 (Std 2) promotion is based on performance in one language and Mathematics.
2.From Grade 5 (Std 3) onwards, one language must be passed.
3.From Grade 10 to Grade 12 two languages must be passed, one on first language level, and the other on at least second language level. At least one of these languages must be an official language.
4.Subject to national norms and standards as determined by the Minister of Education, the level of achievement required for promotion shall be determined by the provincial education departments.

8.POLICY: LANGUAGE OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The language(s) of learning and teaching in a public school must be (an) official language(s).

6.NORMS AND STANDARDS REGARDING LANGUAGE POLICY PUBLISHED IN TERMS OF SECTION 6(1) OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT, 1996
7.
1.INTRODUCTION
2.
1.AIM OF THESE NORMS AND STANDARDS
2.
1.Recognising that diversity is a valuable asset, which the state is required to respect, the aim of these norms and standards is the promotion, fulfilment and development of the state's overarching language goals in school education in compliance with the Constitution, namely:
2.
1.the protection, promotion, fulfilment and extension of the individual's language rights and means of communication in education; and
2.the facilitation of national and international communication through promotion of bi- or multilingualism through cost-efficient and effective mechanisms,
3.to redress the neglect of the historically disadvantaged languages in school education.

3.DEFINITIONS
4.In these norms and standards, unless the context otherwise indicates, words and expressions contained in the definitions in the Act shall have corresponding meanings; and the following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

1."the Act" means the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996
2."the Constitution" means the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996

3."school district" means a geographical unit as determined by the relevant provincial legislation, or prevailing provincial practice
4."language" means all official languages recognised in the Constitution, and also South African Sign Language, as well as Alternative and Augmentative Communication.

3.THE PROTECTION OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS
4.
1.The parent exercises the minor learner's language rights on behalf of the minor learner. Learners who come of age, are hereafter referred to as the learner, which concept will include also the parent in the case of minor learners.
2.The learner must choose the language of teaching upon application for admission to a particular school.
3.Where a school uses the language of learning and teaching chosen by the learner, and where there is a place available in the relevant grade, the school must admit the learner.
4.Where no school in a school district offers the desired language as a medium of learning and teaching, the learner may request the provincial education department to make provision for instruction in the chosen language, and section 5.3.2 must apply. The provincial education department must make copies of the request available to all schools in the relevant school district.

5.THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL
6.
1.Subject to any law dealing with language in education and the Constitutional rights of learners, in determining the language policy of the school, the governing body must stipulate how the school will promote multilingualism through using more than one language of learning and teaching, and/or by offering additional languages as fully-fledged subjects, and/or applying special immersion or language maintenance programmes, or through other means approved by the head of the provincial education department. (This does not apply to learners who are seriously challenged with regard to language development, intellectual development, as determined by the provincial department of education.)
2.Where there are less than 40 requests in Grades 1 to 6, or less than 35 requests in Grades 7 to 12 for instruction in a language in a given grade not already offered by a school in a particular school district, the head of the provincial department of education will determine how the needs of those learners will be met, taking into account
3.
1.the duty of the state and the right of the learners in terms of the Constitution, including
2.the need to achieve equity,
3.the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices,
4.practicability, and
5.the advice of the governing bodies and principals of the public schools concerned.

7.THE RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS
8.
1.The provincial education department must keep a register of requests by learners for teaching in a language medium which cannot be accommodated by schools.
2.In the case of a new school, the governing body of the school in consultation with the relevant provincial authority determines the language policy of the new school in accordance with the regulations promulgated in terms of section 6(1) of the South African Schools Act, 1996.
3.It is reasonably practicable to provide education in a particular language of learning and teaching if at least 40 in Grades 1 to 6 or 35 in Grades 7 to 12 learners in a particular grade request it in a particular school.
4.The provincial department must explore ways and means of sharing scarce human resources. It must also explore ways and means of providing alternative language maintenance programmes in schools and or school districts which cannot be provided with and or offer additional languages of teaching in the home language(s) of learners.

9.FURTHER STEPS
10.
1.Any interested learner, or governing body that is dissatisfied with any decision by the head of the provincial department of education, may appeal to the MEC within a period of 60 days.
2.Any interested learner, or governing body that is dissatisfied with any decision by the MEC, may approach

the Pan South African Language Board to give advice on the constitutionality and/or legality of the decision taken, or may dispute the MEC's decision by referring the matter to the Arbitration Foundation of South Africa.
3.A dispute referred to the Arbitration Foundation of South Africa must be finally resolved in accordance with the Rules of the Arbitration Foundation of Southern Africa by an arbitrator or arbitrators appointed by the Foundation.

4

Appendix 3: Research Invitation

Dear Prospective Research Participants

This upcoming research project will focus on language use at the University of Cape Town.

I am conducting in-depth interviews with students and staff at UCT to deepen understanding of their experiences of language use at the institution, and would greatly appreciate your participation. This is a qualitative research study based in the department of Social Anthropology at UCT.

The goal of the research is to assess how students/staff experience institutional culture with regards to language use, both inside and outside of the classroom, as well as to explore possibilities offered by multilingualism for decolonial teaching and learning practices.

All registered UCT students/staff members are invited to take part in the study, but especially those with a keen interest in language and decolonisation initiatives are encouraged.

Any personal identifiers and information will be kept strictly confidential where the participant desires. Participation is completely voluntary and you are welcome to retract participation at any time. Most interviews will be a once-off commitment, except where participant and researcher alike agree that additional interviews will be beneficial. Interviews will take place virtually on either Microsoft Teams or Zoom, or via written correspondence, depending on the participants' preference. Interviews will be recorded and these recordings will be used solely for the intended research project.

A small reward will be gifted for your time.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact me for more details at BTSING001@myuct.ac.za

Thank you for your consideration.

Enkosi.

Dankie

Inge Botes - Researcher BTSING001@myuct.ac.za