

Gay Language in Cape Town:

A study of Gayle – attitudes, history and usage

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by

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the 'language' which emerged primarily from the white and coloured gay male populations of Cape Town during the apartheid years. With its roots in 'moffie' drag culture, the 'language' of Gayle, was last studied by Ken Cage in his 1999 MA dissertation for the Rand Afrikaans University, *An investigation into the form and function of language used by gay men in South Africa* which was the precursor to his 2003 book *Gayle: the language of kinks and queens: a history and dictionary of gay language in South Africa*, the only dictionary of Gayle.

Gayle's original function, to give white and coloured gay men a language of secrecy to be able to talk to one another in public without facing prosecution as well as to have an in-group language of belonging, is changing in post-apartheid South Africa. With LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intergender) rights improving in South Africa (same-sex marriages were legalised in 2006 making it the fifth country in the world and the first in Africa to do so), the original function of Gayle, for speakers to avoid prosecution, is no longer a legal threat. With more people openly sharing their sexual orientation and South African citizens in general becoming more educated and accepting of a variety of sexual orientations, Gayle continues to change.

Via a comprehensive literature review and a qualitative, quantitative questionnaire, my research discusses the history, attitudes and usage of Gayle by speakers in Cape Town.

This topic is important in sociolinguistics, particularly from a language and sexuality perspective as it will bring to light past and current attitudes and usages of gay language in Cape Town and South Africa. Gay rights are topical particularly with South Africa's legal advancements (compared with itself and other countries worldwide). With Cape Town being the 'gay capital of Africa', it is culturally important to document the gay community's 'language', which is reflective of other changes within the community.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	6
LIST OF TABLES	6
1. INTRODUCTION	7
1.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF GAY LANGUAGE	7
1.1.1 Gay Language in Cape Town	8
1.1.2 The Politics of Gay Language in South Africa	9
1.1.3 The Importance of a Current Day Study	11
1.2 LOCATING THE STUDY THEORETICALLY	12
1.2.1 Language and Gender	12
1.2.2 Sexuality and Performativity	12
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	14
2.1 THEORY	14
2.1.1 Lavender Linguistics and Queer Theory	14
2.1.2 Gendered Language and Performance	16
2.2 HISTORY	19
2.2.1 Moffie drag culture	21
2.2.2 Cruising in the early apartheid years	23
2.2.3 Lesbians in South Africa in the 1950s	24
2.2.4 Homosexuality and South African Law: black male homosexuality during apartheid – migrant workers in mining compounds	25
2.2.4.1 IsiNqumo: the ‘language’ of black migrant workers	26
2.2.5 Homosexuality and South African Law: white male homosexuality	27
2.2.6 Gay Geography	28
3. METHODOLOGY	30
3.1 COMPARATIVE RESEARCH ON THE TOPIC	30
3.1.1 Comparative research: Ken Cage	30
3.1.2 Comparative research: Stephanie Rudwick and Mduduzi Ntuli	31
3.2 MY RESEARCH DESIGN	32
3.3 QUESTIONNAIRE ON GAY LANGUAGE/SLANG IN CAPE TOWN	33

3.3.1	Questionnaire: Section 1: Attitudes	35
3.3.2	Questionnaire: Section 2: Definitions	37
3.3.3	Questionnaire: Section 3: Word list	42
3.4	FACEBOOK	43
3.4.1	Facebook: as a method for sharing questionnaires	44
4.	FINDINGS	45
4.1	FINDINGS: QUESTIONNAIRE ON GAY LANGUAGE/SLANG IN CAPE TOWN	46
4.1.1	Section 1: Participants' Opinions	50
4.1.2	Section 2: Participants' Definitions	63
4.1.3	Section 3: Word List Usage	72
5.	CONCLUSION	78
6.	REFERENCE LIST	80
7.	APPENDICES	86
7.1	APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANTS' DETAILS	86
7.2	APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY OF GAYLE TERMS	89
7.3	APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE ON GAY LANGUAGE/SLANG IN CAPE TOWN	97

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Age of participants	46
Figure 2: Province of birth of participants	47
Figure 3: Province of residence of participants	47
Figure 4: Home language of participants	48
Figure 5: Race of participants	49
Figure 6: Educational level of participants	49
Figure 7: Sexual orientation and gender of participants	50
Figure 8: Reasons for using gay language/slang	53
Figure 9: Where participants use gay language/slang	54
Figure 10: Well-known Gayle terms from Section 2	64
Figure 11: Matrix languages used by participants	75

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Gay clubs, bars, restaurants and events patronized by participants	57
Table 2: Most used words/phrases in Gayle	73
Table 3: Participants' home and matrix languages	76
Table 4: Participants' Details	86
Table 5: Glossary of Gayle terms	89

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of gay language (or Queer Linguistics, as it has more recently been termed) is a relatively new and topical area within Sociolinguistics, which focuses on the language of members of the LGBTI (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex) community, their various forms of communication and communicative practices, including the use of Lavender Lexicons, and how members of the community affirm their sexuality and gender through language. Queer Linguistics is thus established as a field connected to, yet distinct from Language and Gender. Due to heteronormative ideas of gender, sexuality and language, members of LGBTI communities worldwide, particularly gay men and lesbians, have “developed a Lavender Culture which includes the use of code switching in their spoken communication, and non-verbal paralinguistics which communicates to other gays and lesbians key information about the individual” (Cage, 2003, p. 1). It is this kind of communication, gay language, which this thesis aims to investigate on a local level.

1.1 A Brief History of Gay Language

The term ‘language’ here, is used not as a constructed language with its own grammar, syntax, morphology and phonology, but in the same way as linguists would discuss women’s language (Cage, 1999, p. 1), as a way of speaking, a kind of sociolect. Older studies in Queer Linguistics, such as Legman’s *The Language of Homosexuality: An American Glossary*, focussed purely on Lavender Lexicons in the form of a dictionary (Kulick, 2000, p. 247), rather than including a more holistic view which necessitates a simultaneous study of the gay culture in which the lexicon is being used. This is what this thesis will focus on, the local Cape Town variety and the culture from which it stemmed and is used.

Gay languages have been in existence in various areas around the world for quite some time. The United Kingdom’s ‘gay language’, Polari, originated around the time of the Industrial Revolution when the gay subculture came into contact with the underworld as people moved to the cities (Cage, 1999, p. 1). Much of its influence came from travelers, including Romany gypsies and circus performers, with borrowings from Cockney rhyming slang, Latin, Yiddish and thieves’ cant (Cage, 1999, p. 1). It became most popular amongst gay men in Britain in the 1960s as a means of concealing their sexual identity from heterosexual society while

revealing it to other gay men. The United States has its own indigenous form of gay language, ‘Gayspeak’ or ‘Queerspeak’, which developed from the 1950s in New York and San Francisco’s gay ghettos (Cage, 1999, p. 2). While Gayspeak was developing in the USA and Polari was at its height in the UK, white and coloured South African men were developing their own gay language – Gayle, from the lexical item in the ‘gay language’, *Gail*, meaning ‘chat’ (Cage, 1999, p. 2). Afrikaans and English-based Gayle originated in the Cape coloured drag queen culture in Cape Town and was transferred to white gay men despite the apartheid regime’s race and geographical divisions.

1.1.1 Gay Language in Cape Town

Gayle, the ‘secret language’ of Cape Town’s gay community, can be considered a Lavender Lexicon as it functions less like a language and more like a set of “coded” words with assigned meanings (Leap, 2004, p. 247). Gayle originated as ¹*Moffietaal* in the coloured gay drag culture of the Western Cape as a form of slang amongst Afrikaans-speakers (Cage, 2003, p. 4) which over time, grew into a stylect used by gay English and Afrikaans-speakers across South Africa. A stylect, combines “the two meanings of ‘style’ – linguistic and extra-linguistic” (Hurst, 2008, p. 199) and suggests that Gayle “is a lexicon (lect) inseparable from a discursive practice (style) which results in the construction of a relatively stable social identity and a relatively stable linguistic identity” (Hurst, 2008, p. 199). Gayle was used as a way for gay men to communicate with each other privately while avoiding punishment by law or being ostracised by members of the heterosexual community, and also as a way of recognising other gay men. Like Gayspeak and Polari, Gayle has evolved over time and incorporates similar linguistic forms. Thus gay argots usually arise for these reasons: “Halliday calls these argots the anti-languages of anti-societies” (Cage, 2003, p. 2). While Gayle has borrowed from Polari and Gayspeak, it has also developed in a purely South African context (Cage, 2003, p. 2).

Gayle developed completely separately from isiNgqumo, the Bantu-based ‘gay language’, which was developing almost simultaneously – due to the linguistic divide created by the apartheid regime’s race laws, with white English and Afrikaans speakers being in social contact with each other and Bantu language speakers segregated from them (Cage, 2003, p. 3). Gayle is based on western ideas of gay identity (Cage, 2003, p. 3) and developed in the

¹ *Moffietaal* n. (Afrikaans) literally translating as ‘gay language’ (Cage, 2003, p. 83)

coloured culture, spreading to white gay men. IsiNgqumo developed amongst black migrant workers with defined gender roles – *Mteto*, rules which govern the relationship between two men. One man takes on the ‘man’s role’ and the other takes on the ‘woman’s role’ in domestic and sexual activities. However, the relationship is not seen as homosexual but merely one of dominance and role-play (Cage, 2003, p. 3).

Gayle thus has a political history and formed part of the gay community's fight for equal rights, giving the members of the community a 'secret language' through which to communicate in order to avoid discrimination and punishment by law. The South African constitution now protects citizens against race, gender, sexual orientation, class and age discrimination (Morrell, 2005, p. 271). Gayle is thus an historical element of South Africa's gay culture, having developed out of the drag queen culture of the Cape Flats and is a big part of ‘camp’ performance (Cage, 2003, p. 4). Cage claims that ‘camp’ is from the French verb *camper* ‘to pose’ and that it can be best described as an exaggeration of gay language and behaviour (Cage, 1999, p. 10). Before the new South African LGBTI laws were passed, ‘camp’ offered the gay community group cohesion and a way of using humour to cope with the disempowerment of being excluded from mainstream society (Cage, 1999, p. 11), even though it did so via self-deprecating elements. Gayle's feminisation, gender parodies, creativity, exaggeration and wit are still very much part of ‘camp’, which could be a contributing factor to the changing use of Gayle in the present day.

Gayle also has a strongly historical aspect. However, as so much has changed for the gay community politically, so have their attitudes towards Gayle as well as how it is used. It is now contentious within the gay community because some see it as a means of creating solidarity within the group while others view it as a way of alienating the community further from the ‘mainstream’ heterosexual community. Research on Gayle is thus important not only culturally, but also historically and politically, as a way of discussing views on how the new laws (legalising gay relationships and legislating against gay discrimination) have affected the lives and speech of members of the gay community.

1.1.2 The Politics of Gay Language in South Africa

Gay white men are the focus of the majority of literature on South African gay language as they have fuelled the debates for a number of reasons, including the gap between ‘gay male identity’ and ‘situational male homosexuality’ (Elder, 1995, p. 57). ‘Situational male

homosexuality' refers to the sexual relationships in prisons, migrant worker compounds and military barracks between otherwise heterosexual males (Elder, 1995, p. 57), such as the group out of which the Bantu-based South African Lavender Lexicon, isiNgqumo, developed. 'Gay male identity', on the other hand, refers to those who identify themselves as gay.

Lavender Linguistics has a political history, particularly in South Africa. As part of the apartheid government's plans for white privilege and an essentialist society, high values were placed on marriage and reproduction between heterosexuals and homosexual relationships were thus made illegal (Leap, 2004, p. 138). However, with the post-apartheid government's new Bill of Rights emphasising freedom and equality, South Africa changed its legislation and became the first country in Africa to legalize same-sex marriage in 2006 and it was one of the first in the world to have a sexual orientation clause in its constitution in 1996 (Rudwick, 2010, p. 112). The South African constitution aims to compensate for the atrocities of apartheid by implementing laws to facilitate a tolerant society where there is respect for all people "including those whose sexual orientation is different than that of the 'norm'" (Rudwick, 2010, p. 113).

Certain laws governing sexuality were a means of controlling people during the apartheid government's period of office. The Immorality Act of 1957 made "carnal intercourse between white and coloured persons" (Elder, 1995, p. 56) illegal, but more than that, male homosexuality and male homosexual activities were "publically articulated and acted upon by the state" (Elder, 1995, p. 56). Black male homosexuals and lesbians have been further marginalised and little is documented about them from a South African perspective (Elder, 1995, p. 57). On the other hand, white and coloured gay male identity in Cape Town, is part of an ever-growing popular literature, focussing on "'coming out' in South African society, the increasing numbers of openly gay venues, pride parades, heightened levels of public visibility, as well as some significant political gains" (Elder, 1995, p. 57). These venues include clubs and restaurants in Cape Town's ²*gay village* of De Waterkant, an area dense with gay and gay-friendly clubs, restaurants and events such as the Cape Town Pride Parade, the Mother City Queer Project (MCQP) party and drag queen competitions. Thus, politics have affected the geography of gay language and the current culture.

² *Gay village* "noun: an informal name for an urban area in a city which contains a proportionally large number of gay-run, gay-owned or gay-friendly businesses or dwellings" (Baker, 2002, p. 131)

1.1.3 The Importance of a Current Day Study

Gay language in Cape Town has taken on a specific form – Gayle, an indigenous lavender lexicon with a rich history, met by controversial attitudes and changing usage. Due to its deeply political background and association with discrimination, a current study of Gayle can bring to light the local state of gay equality as shown through language. Many rights for the LGBTI community in South Africa have changed since the late 90s to mid 2000s, thus providing enough time for these rights to become ‘accepted’ by heteronormative society. Gayle was established and at its height during apartheid – a time of racial, political, class, religious, linguistic and sexuality-based discrimination and suppression. With the old laws now abolished and new ones in place (some allowing for more LGBTI equality than in many other countries in the world) and a few years since, the use of and attitudes towards Gayle have changed substantially since its conception, as too have ideas of gay culture and ‘camp’ identity which are expressed through language.

Delving into these topics can tell us where gay people stand now in terms of rights, discrimination and how they feel they fit into South Africa’s democracy after twenty years of freedom. The new gay ‘youth’ of twenty to thirty year olds were very young in the late 80s and early 90s when apartheid was coming to an end and so have little or no firsthand experience of apartheid. Their experience of discrimination then would be very different and less political than that of the participants in Cage’s 1999 study.

This minor dissertation will discuss current and past literature on Queer Linguistics with specific reference to Lavender Lexicons and Gayle, as well as how Gayle is used today and what it contributes to gay identity in Cape Town. Gayle, as a conveyor of Cape Town’s lavender linguistic history and gay rights, is of great importance to the field of Language and Gender as it brings to light many discussions of gender and sexuality. As a follow up of Ken Cage’s 1999 study of Gayle, a current day analysis of the attitudes and usage associated with gay language in Cape Town is necessary to create an understanding of this linguistic culture.

1.2 LOCATING THE STUDY THEORETICALLY

1.2.1 Language and Gender

The field of Language and Gender deals primarily with the study of heteronormativity in language - masculine and feminine language as binary opposites relating to the language-user's biological sex and complementary gender (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 2). In linguistic gender identity construction in Western culture, it is acceptable for women to perform typically male practices, but not for men to perform typically female ones (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 17). As Motschenbacher notes, "heteronormativity proposes gendered and sexual role scripts that favour not just heterosexual liaisons, but...gender polarity" (2010, p. 17), that is, the accepted rules for being a man or a woman. In the same way, masculine and feminine are presented as opposites in linguistic performances too. Queer Linguistics blurs the lines of traditional thought about gender, but in its own way also maintains such polarities.

Language and Gender, the area of linguistics which deals with norms of gendered language use, was spearheaded by Robin Lakoff's work on women's language in the 1970s and focussed on a dichotomy of men's language and its use (masculine) versus women's language and its use (feminine) and the 'dominance' and 'difference' models of speaking associated with them respectively. Queer Linguistics sprang from this kind of study (Cage, 2003, p. 1) and built on ideas from Queer Theory which emerged in the United States in the 1980s as a result of the gay rights movement. It examines ideas of sexual identity as separate from class, race or gender and deconstructs the binary relationships of male and female, and heterosexual and homosexual (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 6). The use of language to construct "oneself in a sexual way is often tantamount to constructing oneself in a gendered way and vice versa" (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 7).

1.2.2 Sexuality and Performativity

A theoretical debate within this area is that of sexuality and performativity, whether sexuality, which includes sexual orientation, identity and desire (Swann, 2010, p. 236), affects gender (and vice versa) and what kinds of language a person chooses to use – if they subscribe to masculine, feminine or other versions of gendered language. Gender is "something that is performed, or brought into being in the act of speaking" (Swann, 2010, p. 234). In this performativity which stemmed from J.L Austin and John Searle's work on speech act theory, language works as action; it performs an action by being uttered. Similarly,

performativity, as discussed by poststructural linguists, like Judith Butler, the ‘mother’ of Queer Theory (in the early 1990s), builds on feminist ideas of gender as an essential part of the self and treats gender as something fluid which constantly has to be reaffirmed (Swann, 2010, p. 234), and which is created through language and communication. Butler argues that recurring socially prescribed gender performances of men and women, aiming to adhere to heteronormativity, produce gender identity. Thus, one of the central aims of Queer Linguistics and Queer Theory is “critical heteronormativity research” (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 2).

A current day study of Gayle, the Cape Town gay culture and the people who identify themselves as part of it, is therefore a useful and necessary topic in South African Society. The differing viewpoints of members of Cape Town’s gay community on Gayle and gay language are also extremely important as they will indicate the current state of gay acceptance and integration in Cape Town as well as how this situation has changed since apartheid. In order to study gay language in Cape Town today, it is necessary to first look at the history of gay language and gendered talk. This research will focus on white gay men in the Cape Town area between the ages of twenty to thirty.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to properly study Gayle as a linguistic variety, it is necessary to undertake a review of the current literature surrounding Gayle. It is thus necessary to look at Lavender Linguistics and Queer Theory as well as the field of Language and Gender and how gender is performed. It is also important to discuss the history of Lavender Linguistics and of gay language in Cape Town specifically. The history of gay language in Cape Town will include a discussion of the Cape Maffie drag culture, cruising in the early apartheid years, South African lesbians in the 1950s, gay geography and homosexuality and the law.

2.1 THEORY

2.1.1 Lavender Linguistics and Queer Theory

Lavender (Queer) Linguistics is a subsection of Sociolinguistics which has built on ideas from Queer Studies, that sexual and gender identities are constructed. More so, Lavender Linguistics is based on Queer Theory, the philosophical analytical viewpoint which questions all sexual and gender identity labels, whether biological or socially constructed (Butler, 2004, p. 7). Lavender Linguistics, notably led by William Leap's work on the subject, is the study of the communicative practices and 'language' of the LGBTI community (Rudwick, 2010, p. 128), with the term 'lavender' emerging as a name for this group because of its being a colour associated with LGBTI rights (Cage, 2003, p. 1). 'Queer', originally an abusive term when used to indicate "non-heterosexual people from a heteronormative perspective" (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 5) is now an accepted term within the community.

A contention within the area of Lavender Linguistics is how to refer to members of the LGBTI community collectively and whether or not a group term for their sexual identification can be used. 'Homosexual' cannot be applied as it does not necessarily include bisexuals, transgendered people or intergender people and some scholars note that the use of such terms denotes a way of classifying people according only to sexual acts rather than how they identify themselves or including any aspects of culture. 'Gay' has previously been used to refer to homosexual men and while it can include ideas of 'camp' performance and culture, again it cannot be applied to all members of the LGBTI community as 'gay' generally excludes women (Kulick, 2000, p. 243). Instead, the term 'queer' is used as an umbrella term

to apply to all members of the LGBTI community and it “seeks to radically shift away from fixed notions of identification which position people’s sexuality on the basis of sexual practices or some perceived or constructed gender identification” (Msibi, 2012, p. 516). Hence, referring to LGBTI people as ‘queer’ is a way of avoiding identification labels which put people in a specific group (Msibi, 2012, p. 516), and this follows ideas of Queer Theory, that gender and sexual identity is fluid, that is, a person’s “sense of identification ranges between sexual practices and their own sense of sexual identification or both” (Msibi, 2012, p. 516). By using the term ‘queer’, we are acknowledging that the people to which it refers are sexualised, yet this sexuality is fluid and can exist in different forms depending on different social interactions (Msibi, 2012, p. 516).

Sexual categories alone have very little meaning because gender identification is a social construct (Msibi, 2012, p. 517), sexual identification on the other hand, has a lot to do with how people see themselves, which is important. Sexuality is often viewed as representing oneself rather than a person’s actions and people generally do not view themselves as fluid in gender or sexuality even though their behaviour might seem so (Msibi, 2012, p. 517). Thus, the limitations of Queer Theory are that it doesn’t completely consider “the structural restrictions that limit agency” (Msibi, 2012, p. 517). People label themselves because speech and society forces that upon them (Msibi, 2012, p. 517).

Cameron and Kulick define the field of Language and Sexuality as “an inquiry into the role played by language in producing and organizing sex as a meaningful domain of human experience” (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 1), that is, the relationship of sex to language, identity, gender, power and agency. They focus on the term *sexuality* in relation to language, meaning being sexual by the act of having sex, but more specifically, the “general quality or capacity of human beings to behave, feel and think in sexual ways” (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 2) which separates it from the animal act. *Sexuality* then, refers to human behaviour, qualities and emotions of a sexual nature. The term *sexual identity* refers specifically to a person’s sexual ‘orientation’ or ‘preference’ (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 3). Someone’s ‘sexual identity’, that is, being heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual etc., is thought of in the same way as a person’s culture and gender. It is something which is part of their identity as a human and not just their sexual behaviour (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 3). The main emphasis is on one’s preference of the gender of one’s sexual partner – ‘hetero versus homo’,

so much so that less emphasis is placed on bisexuals and individuals with different kinds of sexual preferences (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 3).

The authors note that the current Western view of sexual identity is based on the binary idea of heterosexuality/homosexuality as unmarked/marked (following Jakobson's markedness theory) with homosexuality as the 'irregular' variant (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 3). Sociolinguistics then in relation to Language and Sexuality and the 'hetero/homo' distinction, follows the idea that language use is a form of identity, a way for speakers to signal their identification with a particular social group and their distinction from others (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 3). Sex itself is universal, but the way in which it is understood differs cross-culturally and historically (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 3). Thus 'hetero/homo' is not always a clear distinction. Homosexuality was created as a category in the 19th century as a scientific term while the act of sodomy was punishable, but did not dictate a particular type of person (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 4). More recently, homosexual relationships are being thought of within a heterosexual framework, with gay and lesbian relationships being comprised of one partner who takes on the male (dominant) role and one partner who takes on the female (submissive) role, that is, a masculine man and an effeminate man and a 'butch' woman and a feminine woman (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 4). Sex then is variable and so too is language and sexuality.

Language use is not only a way of creating and maintaining identity and in so doing, marking "sexual identities" like the 'homo/hetero' binary relationship, but also a form of representation. In discourse, "we organize our understandings of sex and what it means, elaborating and disseminating definitions, distinctions, classifications and value judgements" (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 5), thus making language useful in political sexuality struggles such as reclaiming hate speech terms like *dyke* and *queer* (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 5). This research seeks to find out if there is indeed a difference between heterosexual and homosexual speech, and what gay male language is.

2.1.2 Gendered Language and Performance

Queer Theory and Lavender Linguistics aim to challenge heteronormativity as it was set up in the field of Language and Gender which was established in the 1970s. One of the most pertinent works was Lakoff's *Language and Woman's Place* (1975), in which Lakoff discussed 'weakness' speech acts which women perform, such as tag questions, hedges and

minimal responses which have caused women's speech to be seen as 'deficient' when compared with men's speech. Later, theorists like Coates suggested a 'dominance model', that gender differences in society are reflected in gendered language. Tannen proposed a 'difference model' of equality, in which men and woman are viewed as being from two distinctive groups which were socialised separately and therefore learnt to communicate differently, men 'reporting' on incidents and events, women 'rapport-ing' so as to foster conversation (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 1). These studies raised the topics of power in language and gender, and difference (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 1). Similarly, for feminist, Judith Butler, gender is created by means of continuous social performances (Butler, 1990, p. 141). She says that gender is "the repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural kind of being" (Butler, 1990, p. 33). Hence, for poststructuralists like Butler, gender is unclear – it is something fluid and changeable but which has to constantly be performed and upheld in order to exist.

Cameron's work supports this idea of gender as being performed. She says that speech is part of style in language – masculine and feminine ways of speaking which are the result of repeated linguistic and social acts by people who wish to be perceived as "proper' men and women" (Cameron, 1997, p. 49). Cameron adds that while some theorists may follow the line of thinking that "people talk the way they do because of who they (already) are, the postmodernist approach suggests that people are who they are because of (among other things) the way they talk" (Cameron, 1997, p. 49), thus language creates gender performance. Joan Swann and Janet Maybin correct this overstatement by saying that speakers bring previous genderings to any act of speaking, while being open to change (Swann & Maybin, 2010, p. 6). This idea can be applied to gendered language.

Until the 1970s, gendered language was discussed as either *women's language* or *men's language* and the two were placed as binaries, with *women's language* being the focus of most discussions thus establishing *men's language* as the norm. Gender was used as the main reason for these differences, ignoring the effects of race, age, class and context (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 45). Even though certain linguistic features may seem gender-specific, these features may also be used by the 'other' gender in particular situations (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 45) and thus these features are stereotypes and perhaps need to be further categorised.

The *genderlect* concept was proposed by Glück (1979) as a way of describing gendered ways of communicating which included but was not limited to *women's language* and *men's language* (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 46). This concept was set up in a similar way to “other ‘-lects’, such as dialect, sociolect, idiolect” as a language variety which is used principally by one specific gender (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 46). However, Motschenbacher claims that the concept of *genderlect* is not dissimilar from Tannen's concept of *difference*. Both are problematic because the idea of men and women growing up in gendered groups with no interaction with the opposite gender and using gender-specific language does not apply to many societies (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 46). Therefore, gendered variation is not the same as other kinds of variation within subcultures where the language which subcultures are communicating in may not be intelligible to people outside that group (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 46). Motschenbacher highlights that dialects and sociolects are usually a result of regional and social differences based on distance, whereas gendered variation is based on social constructions (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 46). Early childhood socialisation is likely to be regionally and socially (class) defined, but gender mixing is usually encouraged from a young age (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 47). Additionally, genderlects are not stable and there is no context-independent stable female or male language variety (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 47). Gendered speech examples need to be situated in context as speakers who are biologically male or female do not necessarily speak as ‘men’ or ‘women’ in all contexts (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 47). Therefore, sociolinguists prefer to study the vernacular as a basic, early learned style. Vernacular groups need to be carefully defined in terms of race, class, gender and region if gender is to be considered a big factor in their language use (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 47).

Opposing the binary gender model of masculine versus feminine as a natural and constant language feature, “performative approaches no longer treat gender as a characteristic a person has, but as an activity a person *does* (‘doing gender’)” (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 47).

Genderlect as a notion can still be useful for the role it plays in “the performative construction of gender” (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 49) as long as it is analysed in conjunction with context and other kinds of variations of the speakers are considered too. While people from a defined area may want to speak in a particular way to be identified as belonging to a particular place, others may not. Perhaps one should consider the notion of a gendered register instead, where speakers use that particular language form to perform gender

(Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 50) or perhaps even more appropriately, style: “style is an appropriate starting point for the description of linguistic gendering as a process of identity construction that may exhibit context-dependant intra-gender, and even intra-individual, diversity” (Motschenbacher, 2010, p. 50), continuing the debate of the “existence and distinctive features” of gay language (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 18).

2.2 HISTORY

In order to undertake a study of gay language in Cape Town, it is necessary to enter into a discussion of the history of gay language.

From the 1940s-1970s, homosexuality was widely viewed as a social problem and sometimes homosexual acts were criminalised (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 15). The way gay language is treated, reflects these historical aspects of its formation. Gay argots are what Halliday referred to as ‘anti-languages’ – coded ways of using words, many of which have other assigned meanings, to exclude those not in that particular group (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 15). Anti-languages usually emerge from stigmatized subgroups which have a need for discretion so as to avoid discrimination and who therefore have a desire to create a social group in defiance of mainstream society (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 15). A Lavender Culture has developed in South Africa over the past three decades. As a marginalised group, this co-culture needed a way of communicating with each other, especially in times of heightened discrimination. Writers emerged in the 1960s as part of this subgroup, aiming to confront the idea of homosexuality as a deviant societal problem by using the established ideas of homosexual argots such as in-group lexicons and feminisation (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 15).

Olivier states that a ‘gay language’ or ‘gay sociolect’ exists in South Africa (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 219). However, many gay men do not use it and some are actively against using it (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 219). A discussion of ‘gay language’, might assume that “gays themselves form a clearly identifiable and homogeneous group in society” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 219), which is not likely. As Cameron and Kulick note, there is a difference between the language of gay men who are ‘out’ and those ‘still in the closet’ as

well as those who identify more with femininity and effeminacy than those who are more masculine (Cameron & Kulick, 2006, p. 18).

In order for a gay lexicon to develop into a language, the community would have to be isolated for a long time or actively work at the development of one (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 220), which is very difficult to do as most gay people interact with other people from a variety of different backgrounds and sexual preferences on a daily basis. Many do, however, have big social groups of gay friends and there have been claims that gays were able to speak to each other in the 'gay language' without using any English words. However, as Olivier states, 'gay language' is limited to certain fields relating to gay social and sexual interactions and "the use of these words do not have a marked effect on areas of language beyond vocabulary" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 220). Gay language doesn't affect the grammar or syntax of English or Afrikaans as a matrix language.

Olivier gives names for gay men within the vocabulary (see Appendix B: Glossary of Gayle terms): "*bit, bunny, faggot, fairy, moffie, pouf or poefter, queen, queer and trassie*" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 220) and he says that "one could talk about someone being part of the *family* or one of the *sisters*" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 220). "*Sisters*" can also be used to refer to lesbians, along with "*dykes, letties, lettuce leaves or letty bags*" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 220). Many of these terms originated as pejoratives for gay men used by members of the heterosexual community. Therefore they do not have fixed meanings among gay speakers as although some terms have been re-appropriated and are now seen as positive, they still have negative connotations (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 220). Many of the words are words for gay sexual practices, preferences and body parts (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 220) or like "*belenia, divine, nommer or number, piece or stuk* refer to sexually attractive men" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 220). These terms would possibly not be known by people outside of the gay community.

One of the most unique features of gay language is the use of women's names "for a range of activities, personal characteristics and objects" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 221). The use of female names such as *Dora*, may have different grammatical functions (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 222). The root *Dora*, meaning 'drink', can be used as a noun or verb: "Whether one has too many *Doras* (*N*), or *Doras* (*V*) heavily, the end result of becoming or being *Dora'd* is the same" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 222). These names have an

alliterative aspect: “*Cilla* for cigarette, *Wendy* for white” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 222) and “*Zelda Zulu* and *Nora No-Brains*” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 222) which gives ‘gay language’ a playful element, much like the way that rhyming slang works as a language game. The use of such female names occurs mostly in the Cape coloured community (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 223), which is why Gayle primarily had an Afrikaans base. The vocabulary, however, “cuts across the divide between the two languages, making it equally accessible to Afrikaans and English speakers” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 223).

The attitudes of speakers are a necessary element in establishing the function of gay language (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 223). Some functions include concealment, revealing and identifying, solidarity and unity (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 223). While gay language may allow someone to enter the gay community, it may also segregate speakers from the mainstream society thus creating a “ghetto existence” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 223). This is a reason for the gay community’s mixed feelings towards gay language. The re-appropriation of previously pejorative terms alleviates their negativity and can allow the gay community to use them in a positive way. However, even using such words ironically, “may help to maintain exactly those stereotypical images that society has about gays” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 223). Words can also become re-stigmatised (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 223) and thus there is a self-deprecating element of gay language (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 224).

The use of female names for personal names for males is prevalent across gay language. It can be seen as playful and a kind of affirmation by gay men of their femininity (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 224) or as a kind of role-play which can be understood within a heterosexual framework. This establishes gay language within “a mixture of dependence and revulsion, it embodies a constant reaction to the dominant heterosexual culture while emulating that same culture” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 224). Gay language therefore exists within the parameters of the society which dominates over the gay community and which they are fighting against the heteronormativity of, and at the same time, trying to be part of. Gay language is therefore not fixed, but likely to change with time.

2.2.1 Moffie drag culture

Homosexuals in South Africa are often stereotyped and in the 1950s the public idea of homosexuals was that they were either paedophiles or drag queens (Gevisser & Cameron,

1994, p. 18). Homosexuality was frowned upon by religions and illegalised by the state, and so gay men began to use humour as a way of rebutting negative perceptions and making light of awkward situations. The drag culture, out of which Gayle arose, was popular within the Cape coloured community for a number of reasons (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 18). Traditions such as the Cape Coon Carnival gave gay men the chance to perform certain personas which would usually be seen as unacceptable, making light of and challenging gender and sexuality conventions (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 117) as part of the performance. In a hybrid community like that of the Cape coloureds, there is more tolerance than in the strongly patriarchal black African and Afrikaner white nationalist groups (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 28). This tradition is perhaps a reason why Cape Town is seen as a more accepting gay city. As Chetty notes, “style and images of the self have always been crucial aspects of gay and lesbian life” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 121) as that is how one represents oneself physically, a linguistic performance in appearance. Watching or being drag queens in drag shows is still a big part of gay life for many gay men.³ ‘Moffie’ was a derisive equivalent to ‘queer’ but it has been re-appropriated by the coloured gay community of the Western Cape and is now used as a self-identifying term (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 127). These moffie queens create a fantasy image of desire and joviality in the way that they dress and impersonate the opposite of their ‘biological gender’ therefore seemingly defying the limits of their own body with a kind of androgynous effect. Drag queens express a certain identity, “a kind of humanity and desire that is grotesque, unspeakable – and titillating” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 115) and therefore also humorous and empowering.

The Cape Coon Carnival wasn’t the only gay display for the drag scene. *Golden City Post*’s “Moffie Queen competition at the Kismet Theatre in Athlone” in the 50s and early 60s was described as “the ultimate moffie spectacle” with “gay men living out their fantasies of femininity in public” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 119). These kinds of drag queen beauty pageants provided the contestants with the chance to perform for an accepting and appreciative audience who valued their performances (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 120). The use of clothing, make-up, wigs and drag queen names for their drag alter-egos are all part of drag performance and they enable these men to present themselves outside the confines of heteronormative society (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 121). However, this is ambiguous.

³ Moffie “n. (Afrikaans) gay man” (Cage, 2003, p. 82)

Through cross-dressing they are still adhering to gender binaries of masculine men and feminine women such as the convention at the ‘drags’ at Madame Costellos where only men who were dressed as ‘men’ would dance with ‘women’ (drag queens) dressed as women (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 121).

Coloured gay men in Hanover Street in District Six in the 50s and early 60s went on ‘salon crawls’ where they would visit “the many gay hairdressing salons” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 27) in the area as a way of meeting other gays. Unlike gay white men, gay coloured men were part of the working class and drag was their way of bonding (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 27). Hosts would have ‘drags’ where female impersonators would perform and they were ritualised in a heteronormative way, with some men dressed as ‘men’ and some dressed in drag (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 27). In the 1960s dressing in drag was considered to be criminal intent and “there was a high level of crime and alcoholism within and around the moffie community” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 122). The moffie community was also involved in gang culture and “it was not uncommon for gang members to demand sex from gay men, and in exchange for their favours, gay men were inducted into a network of protection and patronage” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 122).

2.2.2 Cruising in the early apartheid years

In Cape Town, “gay men found public space within the quayside subculture that blossomed around docked warships” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 18) and this is presumably where slang sailing terms in Gayle like *docking* “verb: placing the foreskin of an uncircumcised penis over the head of another man’s penis” (Baker, 2002, p. 110) and *cruise* “v. go out looking for sex” (Cage, 2003, p. 63) originated. The end of the Second World War resulted in the formation of a self-identifiable gay community (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 18). Far more single people moved away from their families and cruising areas developed due to their nearness to men in uniform without female contact (soldiers and sailors) in such areas as the Sea Point Promenade and Gardens in Cape Town (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 19). For gay men, there were outdoor cruising areas, bars and parties at people’s houses (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 22). Although the venues at the time weren’t all owned by gays, the establishments’ owners saw them as a “lucrative and dependable clientele” drinking more expensive drinks and descending *en masse* (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 22).

Cape Town's Grand Hotel had exclusively gay Friday and Saturday nights between certain times, the Delmonico on Riebeeck Street, Darryl's or the "Navigator's Den down by the docks" were all popular gay venues in the 1960s (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 23). The dock area was appealing as it was secretive. The 'cruising scene' was also where men who participated in sexual activities with other men, but who did not identify themselves as gay, could join the gay community (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 25) and express their sexuality freely.

Cape Town *rent* boys, "working-class Afrikaner boys" and "coloured sex-workers" were hired by white, black and coloured men and mostly operated in the Burg Street area, which was also a gay meeting area even if one wasn't looking to pay for sex (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 26). Other than that, there was very little interaction between coloured and white gay groups during apartheid (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 27). Before the enactment of the 1960s homophobic laws, there was however some interaction as "the moffietaal slang of the coloured community became the accepted lingo of white gay people too in the 1950s" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 27). This began in Cape Town and later was transferred to white gays across the country. The Atlantic Seaboard area in Cape Town was the most populous white male gay area (Bantry Bay and Sea Point) in the 1950s due to the nearby 'cruising scene'. Whole blocks of flats became gay residences such as the block called "Peps (now the very upmarket Bantry Court)" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 27). Historical public cruising suburbs are still gay-friendly spots today making up the current 'gaybourhood' area.

2.2.3 Lesbians in South Africa in the 1950s

Being a lesbian in 1950s South Africa was difficult as while gay men would meet via cruising spots, there wasn't that option for lesbians (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 19). Women could only enter into certain careers and they earned significantly less than men, so they struggled to support themselves without a husband to rely on (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 22). Instead, they had to meet through cliques linked to their professions via word of mouth (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 19) and their social gatherings were private parties in other lesbians' homes (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 20). At these parties, the partygoers would participate in 'gendered rituals', where the *butches* "n. a masculine lesbian" (Cage, 2003, p. 60), wore trousers, had short hair and "were expected to get drunk" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 21), while the *femmes* "noun: a feminine lesbian" (Baker, 2002, p. 28) "wore dresses, bobbed their hair, and were in great demand" (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 21). In

this way, their gender rituals echo those of the all-male gay coloured ‘drags’. Thus, there were lesbian communities at the time, but they were even more secretive than the gay male versions (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. 21) and this is why they are not a historical focus of Gayle, even though Gayle might have extended to lesbian communities for in-group purposes now.

2.2.4 Homosexuality and South African Law: black male homosexuality during apartheid – migrant workers in mining compounds

In South African mining compounds during apartheid, each house had a *xibonda*, a mine-working man who “was head of the living quarters, he had authority and was known as a counsellor” (Elder, 1995, p. 58). The *xibonda* would chose a ‘boy’ (a young miner) for himself as his ‘wife’, thus fulfilling such wifely duties as doing the dishes, keeping the house clean, making food and having sexual intercourse with the *xibonda* (Elder, 1995, p. 59). Spurlin notes that the actual sexual act between the man and his mining ‘wife’ was “exterior coitus whereby penetration and ejaculation occur between the thighs” (Spurlin, 2006, p. 41) (as it would with heterosexual sex between unmarried heterosexual couples so that the woman would not lose her virginity and therefore be worth a lower bride price). In return, the *xibonda* would buy gifts for his ‘wife’ – a bicycle, clothing and blankets (Elder, 1995, p. 59). Once they had accumulated enough material goods from being a mining ‘wife’, the ‘boys’ would go home to their own female wives or parents and the *xibonda* would do the same (Elder, 1995, p. 59).

These mine ‘marriages’ helped the ‘wife’ to learn to be a man in heterosexual society as they were modelled on heterosexual marriages. The payment that a mining ‘wife’ received from the *xibonda*, allowed the ‘wife’ to “earn *lobola* (bride wealth)” (Spurlin, 2006, p. 38) so that he could afford to marry a woman and therefore become a ‘real’ man when he went back home.

These relationships were acknowledged by the miners and their employers and they were understood to be situational, with “the demand for domestic service within hostels, as well as the lack of women” being the main reasons resulting in these relationships (Elder, 1995, p. 59). There were concerns about these relationships and their long-term consequences by religious groups, calling it “male prostitution and sodomy” (Elder, 1995, p. 60). However, these homosexual acts were viewed by mining companies and the state as a ‘necessary evil’

enabling the sustainability of the exploitative migrant labour system (Elder, 1995, p. 59). Elder suggests that this is because the mining compound was a controlled space and therefore such practices were not threatening to apartheid's essentialist ideas (Elder, 1995, p. 60), nor were these relations inter-racial. This form of controlling black male homosexuality, "served to contain the homoerotic threat and grudging respect that mine officials and the apartheid state held for the strength and power of black labour" (Elder, 1995, p. 60) and kept black miners' families out of the urban white areas.

Thus, the black male homosexuality which occurred in mining compounds was tolerated as a way of containing this threat and it also curbed the demand from black mine workers to bring their families to the mining compounds which would have required higher wages (Elder, 1995, p. 60). However, some "loving sustained relationships between men did develop within the ugly edifices of racial capitalism like mining compounds" (Elder, 1995, p. 60). The South African prison system has similar accounts of male homosexuality (Elder, 1995, p. 60), but these events usually involved sexual assault and violence, thus creating them in a different light to the mining compound relationships.

2.2.4.1 IsiNgqumo: the 'language' of black migrant workers

Rudwick and Ntuli in their 2008 paper, *IsiNgqumo – Introducing a gay Black South African linguistic variety*, focus on the Zulu-based version of Gayle (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 445), IsiNgqumo is the 'language' which originated in mining compounds used by mining 'husbands' and their 'boy-wives'. The authors argue that "from a sociological perspective it constitutes a 'language' for most of its speakers" (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 445), which is the opposite of what I shall argue for Gayle.

Rudwick and Ntuli's research questions how isiNgquomo should be classified and how it is used. As gays in South Africa no longer fear legal action due to the post-apartheid laws legalizing homosexuality, gay languages are no longer functioning as 'secret codes' and thus they are being used less. However, due to Zulu patriarchy and most words in isiNgqumo being Zulu-based, there is still a need for some speakers to keep their gay identity secret for fear of punishment and rejection from Zulu society (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 447) and therefore speakers argue that isiNgqumo's demise is unlikely. IsiNgqumo acts as a secret way of communicating, providing identity and belonging to speakers in the same way that Gayle does. Speakers say that if they wanted to discuss an attractive man in a bar without that

person knowing that he was being spoken about, they would code-switch to isiNgqumo for privacy and expressiveness. Affluent isiZulu speakers use English instead as the matrix language because isiNgqumo is spoken mainly by people living in the townships and is a carrier of social status. IsiNgqumo originated from the mining compounds during the apartheid years when many black men had to migrate from rural areas to the cities for work (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 448), thus spreading the variety this way. For some, this was purely ‘circumstantial homosexuality’ while for others, it was a way for them to ⁴‘come out’.

As with most ‘gay languages’, the lexicon is the most distinct feature and if a speaker has a very comprehensive knowledge of this lexicon, that can make him seem more proficient in the variety. Those speakers who know more isiNgqumo words will speak less isiZulu or less of their Nguni-based mother-tongue (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 448), making isiNgqumo sometimes resemble a language rather than a vocabulary. Most isiNgqumo words are nouns with adjectives and verbs used mostly to refer to sexual acts and “no distinct prepositions, adverbs or pronouns” (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 449) because those come from isiZulu. Many speakers of isiNgqumo demand that it is a language so much so that some want it to be South Africa’s 12th official language as they feel that it encapsulates their identity by acknowledging their ethnicity and sexual orientation. One could argue that “a linguistic variety turns into a language when the people who speak the variety understand it as such” (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 450). Some speakers say that isiZulu and isiNgqumo aren’t always mutually intelligible as with Polari and English, but that doesn’t mean that absolutely anything can be said in either of these varieties (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 451). IsiNgqumo is therefore a sociolect “the speech characteristic for a particular social group” (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 451), an ethnolect because it is spoken by black isiZulu mother-tongue speakers in Kwa-Zulu Natal as well as a genderlect because it is spoken primarily by gay males.

2.2.5 Homosexuality and South African Law: white male homosexuality

South African common law was based on Roman-Dutch and English law and therefore legislated against ‘unnatural offences’ which included sodomy and bestiality (Elder, 1995, p. 61). English law in the 1960s, decriminalised consensual sexual activities between men in private while in South Africa at the same time, the apartheid government began to criminalise

⁴ *come out* “v. to acknowledge one’s homosexuality publically” (Cage, 2003, p. 63)

such relations (Elder, 1995, p. 61). At this time, there was already a history and acknowledgement of black homosexual activity in South Africa which was therefore tolerated, while white homosexuality was seen as more of a threat to white essentialism and therefore came under scrutiny (Elder, 1995, p. 62).

This threat led to an amendment of the Immorality Act in 1969, Section 20A, known as the 'men at a party' clause, which was prompted by a police raid on a gay party in the suburb of Forest Town in Johannesburg. The law criminalised "any male person who commits with another male person at a party any act which is calculated to stimulate sexual passion or to give sexual gratification" (Elder, 1995, p. 62) and the definition of 'a party' in this amendment was any situation where more than two people were present. This law was specifically aimed at white middle class sexual encounters (Elder, 1995, p. 62). White male homosexuality was a threat to apartheid because it was not geographically contained like the black relationships in the mining compounds. Homosexuality was believed to be transferrable between men with "a conspiratorial intent to overthrow the 'moral order' of apartheid" (Elder, 1995, p. 63). Beliefs that homosexual men were part of a cult and went through a metamorphosis and a "twilight zone of lust" (Elder, 1995, p. 63), served to strengthen the argument for legislation against them as a way of marginalising them and protecting white masculinity. White male homosexuals became associated with promiscuity, prostitution and extra-marital intercourse thus upsetting the 'natural moral order' and the ideals of apartheid (Elder, 1995, p. 64).

Apartheid was thus not just a form of racial discrimination but also "an essentialising process of state control and regulation of daily life" (Elder, 1995, p. 58) attempting to regulate people's sexual preferences and identities too.

2.2.6 Gay Geography

In 2006, South Africa legalised gay marriages which has been the most prominent example of South Africa's departure from apartheid in recent years (Tucker, 2009, p. 1). In only two decades, South Africa law has changed from prosecuting members of the LGBTI community to enabling them to marry, adopt children and legally change their sexual assignment (Tucker, 2009, p. 1). However, these new laws do not mean that all queer South Africans are receiving respect and tolerance as a result (Tucker, 2009, p. 2). As communities differ geographically, "an attempt to understand any local queer community therefore

requires a detailed exploration of the many issues that have affected, and continue to affect, it” (Tucker, 2009, p. 2).

South Africa is particularly interesting as groups have historically been geographically separated and defined by the government on ‘race’ lines and therefore, gay communities are still affected by the regulating systems of apartheid (Tucker, 2009, p. 2). Apartheid’s race segregations, separated the gay community too and still “it is difficult to gain entrance and acceptance within communities historically segregated within the urban environment” (Tucker, 2009, p. 2). Tucker suggests that the apartheid race groups ‘white’, ‘coloured’, and ‘black’ represent queer sexuality very differently due to the categories and special designations by the apartheid government as the end of apartheid has not necessarily ensured an end to discrimination (Tucker, 2009, p. 3). Queer visibility is thus not just a case of being ‘out’ in society (which is still dangerous for some men) (Tucker, 2009, p. 3), but how gays view themselves, one another, their place in society and their own community. It is thus necessary to locate gay communities geographically as this can have profound effects on their language use.

3. METHODOLOGY

In this section, I shall discuss the methods and previous research done by other academics on the topic, and also present and discuss the tools and methods which I used in my study. The previous research discussion will look at Ken Cage's work on Gayle, his 1999 MA thesis and his 2003 book, and Stephanie Rudwick and Mduduzi Ntuli's 2008 paper on isiNggumo, the Zulu-based gay language. My research tools are based on those used in Cage's work as my study is predominantly a follow-up of his work in the current day.

3.1 COMPARATIVE RESEARCH ON THE TOPIC

3.1.1 Comparative research: Ken Cage

Ken Cage's 1999 MA dissertation which was submitted to the Department of Applied Linguistics and Literary Theory at the Rand Afrikaans University is the only other MA study of Gayle. Cage's 2003 book remains the only comprehensive dictionary of Gayle and gay South African language to date.

Cage conducted his research via two questionnaires – one focusing on qualitative questions about speakers' attitudes and the other with questions seeking quantitative results to do with speakers' knowledge of lexical items in Gayle. Cage's qualitative questionnaire only had 27 respondents and he claimed that some of the questions were too difficult for respondents and therefore were not properly answered. However, he stated that it was useful in devising the second questionnaire which he made more specific. His quantitative questionnaire used 650 terms from Gayle to test speakers' knowledge of lexical items, but he did not ask them what individual terms meant, just if they knew the meaning of them (assuming that all of the speakers understood the meaning of the terms to be the same). Through this research, Cage was able to list the top 50 lexical items of his 84 participants from the quantitative questionnaire, according to **age groups** (20-30 year olds, 30-40 year olds, 40-50 year olds, 50-60 year olds and 60+ year olds), **educational level** (less than Matric, Matric and Post Matric), **regions** (Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape) and **home language** (English and Afrikaans), giving him 14 different word lists in order of how well

known the terms were to the participants according to each demographic. This helped Cage to compile a dictionary of Gayle and to ascertain the attitudes of its users in the late 90s.

Now, fifteen years later, I would like to use Cage's research as a base and reference for a present-day study. As Cage has published a comprehensive dictionary of Gayle, it does not make sense for this to be one of the aims of my study. Instead, I focused on particular lexical items and asked participants how many terms they knew as well as for some basic definitions in order to ascertain if and how (meanings and) usage and attitudes have changed.

Cage commented that non-gay researchers focussing on gay language as a research topic will struggle to be objective and to not involve their own prejudices and preconceptions. The only way to avoid this and "in order for linguistic studies of gay phenomena to be credible, gay voices must be part of the discourse and not merely the object of such discourse" (Cage, 1999, p. 9). This is why I believe it is important to include qualitative questions.

3.1.2 Comparative research: Stephanie Rudwick and Mduduzi Ntuli

Rudwick and Ntuli's research consisted of an extensive literature review as well as qualitative interviews with 28 black gay members of the eThekweni area of KwaZulu-Natal who know isiNqummo (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 446). Rudwick and Ntuli admit that this was a preliminary study that needs to be done on a larger scale which will lead to the creation of a dictionary of isiNqummo, which to date, does not exist (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 453). For future studies of isiNqummo, the authors suggested participant observation in gay venues because "speech situations and speech events should be observed and analysed in terms of how, when and why individuals decide to use isiNqummo rather than their mother tongue" (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 452). The problem with this is the sensitive nature of the topic and the 'insider/outsider' debate, whether researchers should be part of the culture that they are studying or not (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 452). Both kinds of researchers have advantages and disadvantages as 'insiders' must place enough distance between themselves and the participants while 'outsiders' may struggle to fit into the community (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, pp. 452-453). Rudwick and Ntuli say: "we would like to self-reflectively admit that the lead author's personal background as a white, non-South African, heterosexual female does not provide an ideal combination for successful data collection in this field, but may equip her with the necessary distance from the subjects in order to evaluate subjectively elicited data" (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 454) which is also what I hoped to achieve.

3.2 MY RESEARCH DESIGN

My research aims to discover the history of Gayle via a comprehensive literature review, and how attitudes and usage of Gayle have changed in the 20 years since apartheid and the 15 years since Ken Cage's initial study. My methodology is such that it is in many ways a present-day study of Cage's previous research, but due to the integration of races, sexual orientations etc. since apartheid, language groups have also merged and are now organised more on socio-economic lines. My hypothesis is that Gayle is now spoken by an integrated group of people (and not just white and coloured gay men).

My methodology consists of a questionnaire which is an amalgamation of Cage's two questionnaires with some added, more topical questions, both quantitative and qualitative. The qualitative questions aim to elicit current attitudes and knowledge of Gayle and the quantitative questions aim to track usage changes. The quantitative section has a list of the most popular Gayle words of 1999 according to Cage's MA study and my aim is to see how many of these words are still in use.

I further hypothesise that a number of words are now out of use as they are seen as pejorative terms or are no longer necessary (if they were used for secrecy) and that Gayle is instead either used for humour or that for some people it is seen as a remnant of apartheid's harsh laws against gays and therefore something which they, as a member of the gay community, now seek to avoid. As with all language varieties, Gayle is also inclined towards foreign influences via the media and gay icons. In particular, trends like drag queen RuPaul's television show, *RuPaul's Drag Race* (aired on American cable channel LogoTV since 2009 and South African DSTV channel VUZU since 2011) which has its own slang terms. These trends play a part in the changing vocabulary of 'gay language'.

3.3 QUESTIONNAIRE ON GAY LANGUAGE/SLANG IN CAPE TOWN

My main research tool for this study is the *Questionnaire on gay language/slang in Cape Town* (see Appendix C).

My questionnaire consists of 5 web pages – an explanation of the project, questions about the participant's demographic details and 3 sections of questions:

Section 1 – Qualitative questions about the participant's opinions of gay 'language'

Section 2 – Questions asking participants to provide their own definitions for various terms

Section 3 – Word list where participants had to tick the terms that they use

I have combined both qualitative and quantitative questions into one questionnaire so that I can gather both kinds of information from the same set of participants, hopefully giving a more holistic view of their attitudes and usage of Gayle. The qualitative section is more open-ended while the sections to do with Gayle terms are more quantitative and thus more specific. I tried to provide as much space for qualitative answers as possible as I feel these will be the most helpful to this study. Quantitative numbers may be helpful to show initial trends, but I do not believe that they will be as clear as they perhaps were in the 90s.

The questionnaire was set up in *Google Drive* as a 'form' which participants were able to access via a link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1GJOypnlqYSH2jQYroUWdr86BIpD07zpFAwh9RiKPQp8/viewform> and fill in. Some of the questions were required, that is, participants could not progress to the next section if they had yet to fill in those questions marked with a red star. If a participant felt that a required question with a text box did not pertain to him/her, he/she could simply put N/A and move on, but if the question was a list of choices, he/she had to select at least one.

I called the questionnaire *Questionnaire on gay language/slang in Cape Town* because I wanted mainly Cape Town participants, but I did not want them to have a preconceived notion of what I meant by gay language/slang. I didn't want to call it Gayle in case speakers had not heard it called that and so I avoided it just as Cage did (Cage, 1999, p. 120). In the explanation of the questionnaire, I told participants that I was doing a Linguistics study about attitudes on gay language/slang and culture and that it was based on Cage's previous

research. The questionnaire was worded mainly for a gay male audience as that is the group Cage designated as Gayle speakers, but I encouraged people of all genders and sexual orientations to fill it in for comparative purposes. For ethical reasons, the questionnaire had to promise confidentiality and I only asked participants for their first names (which have been replaced by pseudonyms in this study). I apologized for having to ask participants to give their age, race, gender and sexual orientation in case this offended anyone, but explained that it was for academic demographic purposes.

The section of demographic questions allowed participants to answer potentially sensitive questions in their own words – I did not give them a list to choose from, thereby allowing them to describe their sexuality etc. in their own words. While race, sexuality and gender are all controversial topics and sometimes classifications which people feel awkward to answer or to categorise themselves into, they are necessary for this research as they provide historical information or ideally should show trends in geographic, economic and therefore linguistic changes. Demographic questions included the province that participants were born in; the province that they are currently living in as well as the number of years they've been living there (to see if they've been living in Cape Town long enough to have picked up Gayle); their home language; age; race; gender; sexual orientation; educational level; their profession and an email address if they wanted to know more about the study. The focus of my study is on English and Afrikaans speaking white gay men as this was the group identified by Cage as the predominant Gayle speakers of the 90s. I received too few responses from coloured participants despite sharing the questionnaire on predominantly coloured gay groups on *Facebook* (mostly drag queen groups). The few coloured participants in my study were mainly English L1 speakers and therefore not necessarily an accurate representative of the coloured 'moffie' culture.

Responses from other groups are interesting for comparative purposes, to see how much is shared between supposedly different groups. Lesbians have been included as participants to see how much Gayle they use and what their attitudes are towards it. However, a focus on lesbian slang, which some respondents have said exists although they couldn't provide examples, was unfortunately not possible. Due to a severe lack of literature, it would be very difficult to do as a preliminary study on this kind of scale. Responses from black gay male speakers of isiNgqumo, were included as they could be useful because while the variety developed separately from Gayle (Cage, 2003, p. 3) and thus has a different history and

speakers will be likely to have different attitudes towards it, there might be some mixing of terms due to language spread and change. According to Rudwick and Ntuli's research, isiNgqumo is still relatively geographically contained in KwaZulu-Natal and prevalent amongst black gay males (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 447) even though there is generally more mobility in language varieties these days. I included some isiNgqumo words in my word list to see if perhaps they have spread to speakers in Cape Town. However, the only two L1 Zulu respondents from my questionnaire live in Kwa-Zulu Natal and learnt isiNgqumo words there and not in Cape Town, so this was not possible to discern.

One of the main challenges that I faced in this research, was the challenge of being an 'outsider'. As a heterosexual female, I do not have the same access to gay male venues nor do respondents treat me as they would their contemporaries. This has made the collection of data difficult and I have had to be very careful not to offend people. This is why I opted for an online survey which offers more anonymity (although those who saw my posts on *Facebook* could then see my profile and learn that I am a heterosexual female). In a way then, I am a Facebook 'insider' and form part of the same group as my participants, but from demographic perspectives I may be viewed as an 'outsider'. Asking people to specify their race, gender and sexual orientation in such a questionnaire can make them feel as if they must classify themselves and is therefore offensive when coming from an 'outsider'. I do still, however, feel that this research is important and that it can be carried out by someone who is an 'outsider' as many linguistic studies are (Rudwick & Ntuli, 2008, p. 452). The *Facebook* dynamic and the 'insider'/'outsider' paradigm has affected the numbers and kinds of responses that I have collected.

3.3.1 Questionnaire: Section 1: Attitudes

The first section of the questionnaire I called "Your opinions" and I stressed that there was no correct answer. Questions in this section included asking participants what gay language/slang is and allowing them the space to provide their own understanding of it. They were then asked if they use it and why. The 'why' question had a variety of checkboxes for participants to select one or many of – these options were inspired by Cage's quantitative questionnaire (Cage, 1999, p. 129), although I offered fewer choices as well as an 'other' box which if selected required participants to provide their own reasoning. The section goes on to ask where participants use gay language/slang and here I provided checkboxes again where participants could select one option or many. These options were taken from Cage's question

(Cage, 1999, p. 130). An optional question asking how the participant learned the gay language/slang was included at this point. Participants were also asked in this section what year and age they ‘came out’. This can apply to many sexual orientations. The next question asked how long the participant has been part of Cape Town’s ⁵‘gay scene’ followed by which gay clubs, bars, restaurants and events the participant enjoys attending and why. These questions will provide insight as to how involved the participant is in gay culture which should be an indicator of the participant’s Gayle proficiency.

The questions then go back to a history of Gayle, asking participants what they think its origin is and why it exists as well as what they would call the language if they had to give it a name. This question was asked to see if participants are aware of being speakers of a variety like most isiNqumo speakers seem to be. Then, participants were asked if and why they thought it was good to have a gay language/slang and if they have any friends who know about it but refuse to use it. These questions will share attitudes about the nature of gay language/slang as viewed by its speakers and whether they are proud of it or trying to avoid the variety. This section also asked participants if they have seen gay language/slang used on social media platforms etc. and when and where that was, showing if gay language/slang extends to computer-mediated-communications.

Participants were asked what their attitude is towards gay language; if it plays a role in gay culture; their views on South African laws for LGBTI members showing how accepted they feel in society. They were also asked if they have non-verbal cues to show their relationship status and sexual preferences such as the ‘hanky-code’ that Cage describes where one displays “a coloured bandanna in either the right or left back pocket of one’s jeans to indicate one’s sexual preferences to would-be partners” (Cage, 2003, p. 41) or having a specific ear pierced or wearing other symbols. For some, this could hint at body language which leads into the next question about the participant’s feelings towards ‘camp’ and drag queens.

The reason for asking this question is that for some people ‘camp’ and drag queens represent similar things, while for others they are very different. Cage defines *camp* as “a form of humour popular among gay people, using satire and sometimes downright mean” (Cage, 2003, p. 61) often used to “mimic the opposite sex” (Cage, 2003, p. 61), which is also

⁵ *scene* “n. the gay world of bars, clubs and private relationships” (Cage, 2003, p. 93)

characteristic of a *drag queen*, “noun: a gay man who dresses as a woman, and often flamboyantly exaggerates female mannerisms” (Baker, 2002, p. 112). The satire of ‘camp’ and drag is based on over-dramatising characteristics of the opposite sex. Drag does not just refer to clothing, it “reflects a mental, emotional or sexual state of being” (Baker, 2002, p. 112), thus offering gays a kind of empowerment in its performance. Baker (2002, p. 94) quotes Long (1993) saying that camp is a ‘moral activity’ “for gay men who have been ridiculed because of their sexuality, their tragedy becomes trivial. Camp allows them to respond by taking the trivial seriously, ‘parodying the forces of oppression’”. They find power in being what society expects them to be – the opposite sex, just as they find power in reclaiming pejorative words like ‘moffie’ and ‘bitch’. Drag goes further than this, by pushing ‘camp’ to the extremes and not only being satirical in voice and in body language, but in dress, which for the gay community carries so much meaning. Gayle is also said to have originated in the Cape coloured drag culture but to have been transferred to the white gay community. If the drag scene is popular with white gay men then it shows this transfer. Gay culture and camp identity attitude changes would be shown in language use.

The last question of the section asks participants if they have any gay icons as this could link with their views on ‘camp’ and drag queens because many gay icons are drag queens or actors who portray ideas of camp. According to Baker, a *gay icon* is:

noun: 1. Any person or thing who represents an aspect or aesthetic of homosexuality in some way e.g. Quentin Crisp, RuPaul, the rainbow flag. 2. An object of gay male lust e.g. Robbie Williams, Ricky Martin, Matt Dillon. 3. A diva or other famous woman such as Bette Davis, Joan Crawford or more recently Patsy and Edina from *Absolutely Fabulous* who are worshipped for being excessive, stylish, melodramatic, camp, strong and bitchy (2002, p. 130).

All of these characteristics are seen as appealing and liberating to gay life. Similarly, a *dykon* is “noun: a *lesbian icon*, specifically people or things who are admired by or representative of gay women e.g. k.d. lang, Ellen Degeneres, Jodie Foster” (Baker, 2002, p. 114). Cinema and popular culture have also had an effect on gay life in Cape Town, and resulted in many gay icons – people or characters which the gay community see as role models with qualities worth aspiring to.

3.3.2 Questionnaire: Section 2: Definitions

The purpose of this section was to discover participants’ attitudes towards potentially offensive terms or terms which could have been re-appropriated by the gay community and to

establish if participants have a similar understanding of those terms to each other and to the literature, as well as which terms they do not know at all. There were various reasons for choosing these particular words.

Cage classified Gayle terms in particular categories (Cage, 1999, pp. 134-135) and so I made sure that I included at least one term from each of his twelve categories (some terms can be considered part of more than one category). The categories are listed under each **term** and followed by the term's "definition":

AC/DC

Abbreviation

"adj. bisexual" (Cage, 2003, p. 52)

Auntie Aida

Disease

"n. AIDS" (Cage, 2003, p. 54)

Bear

Words indicating physical attractiveness

"n. heavy set, large, hairy man, usually over 30, usually with substantial body hair" (Cage, 2003, p. 56)

Beulah

Words indicating physical attractiveness

"adj. beautiful" (Cage, 2003, p. 56)

Bitch

Forms of address

"n. unpleasant person, also used as a form of address to insult or for fun" (Cage, 2003, p. 58)

Camp

Words for sexual practices/preferences and relationships

"adj. 1. enjoyable, causing laughter. 2. outrageous. n. a form of humour popular among gay people, using satire and sometimes downright mean. v. 1. solicit for sexual purposes. 2.

mimic the opposite sex. 3. to be witty and clever. 4. mix with gay people" (Cage, 2003, p. 61)

Dora

Names for drugs and booze; Words derived from women's names

"adj. Drunk n. 1. alcoholic drink. 2. alcoholic person. v. drink alcohol" (Cage, 2003, p. 66)

Drag

Clothing and accessories

"n. 1. women's clothing. 2. Party. v. to dress in clothing of the opposite sex" (Cage, 2003, p. 67)

Fag/faggot

Synonyms for gay

"n. gay man" (Cage, 2003, p. 69)

Glory hole

Places frequented by gays

"n. hole between cubicles in a public lavatory which is big enough for a man to insert his penis through and have it sucked anonymously by the man in the cubicle next door" (Cage, 2003, p. 72)

Lunch/Lunchbox

Parts of body

"n. male genitals" (Cage, 2003, p. 80)

Moffie

Synonyms for gay

"n. 1. gay man. 2. effeminate gay man - generally with pejorative connotations" (Cage, 2003, p. 82)

Queen

Names for people

"n. 1. a gay man who is extremely effeminate. 2. designation among gay men for one another. 3. used with another noun to indicate place of residence, profession or personality" (Cage, 2003, p. 90)

Skomoro/a

Words for sexual practices

"v. (Zulu) masturbate" (Cage, 2003, p. 95)

Twink

Words indicating physical attractiveness

"n. attractive young gay man" (Cage, 2003, p. 100)

My reasons for choosing these particular words were not only due to these categories but also due to their popularity according to Cage's 14 lists of "the fifty most well-known words of Gayle according to demographics" (Cage, 1999, p. 113). From his 14 lists, I compiled the 106 terms which would have been the most popular terms in Cage's study (out of his full list of 650 terms which he asked participants to look at) as they appeared once or more in his demographic lists. These words made up the bulk of the word list which I included in section 3 of the questionnaire and I selected fifteen of those words for participants to define in section 2 so that they could show their own understandings and attitudes.

I chose to ask participants to define *AC/DC* because it is a term that I have heard in common use to refer to bisexuals and it was the most common abbreviated term from Cage's top 106 words other than *S&M*. *S&M* is an abbreviated term for "sodomasochism" (Cage, 2003, p. 93) which does not pertain directly to the LGBTI community, but to a sexual fetish entered into by a people from a variety of sexual orientations. Thus *S&M* would show knowledge of a fetish rather than gay language specifically. *Fag/faggot* is "usually derogatory" (Baker, 2002, p. 117), although Cage does not note this so perhaps it is no longer considered to be derogatory amongst members of the South African gay community. It possibly originally referred to "a bundle of sticks or twigs tied together for use as fuel" for "burning heretics or 'sodomites' alive at the stake" and later became a word for a cigarette (Baker, 2002, p. 117) and then a derogatory term for a gay man. *Moffie* can also be a controversial synonym for 'gay' and it is more specifically South African and therefore part of Gayle, usually meaning 'male homosexual' but also used to mean 'transvestite' in the Cape coloured community

(Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. x). *Moffie* is usually used in slang and possibly originated from sea slang or the Dutch *mofrodiet* for ‘hermaphrodite’. *Moffie* is also used to mark male effeminacy and may do so without necessarily designating male homosexual desire as well, if “individuals appear to fall short of a more aggressive, masculine ideal” (Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003, p. 406). *Moffie* often has derogatory connotations and like *fag/faggot*, is used by heterosexual men to affirm their masculinity and sexual orientation. This is achieved by using the terms to insult one another as a way of establishing their masculinity and sexual orientation against that of gays, in so doing, winning approval from their heterosexual male social group even though the group may not be specifically homophobic or anti-homosexual (Burn, 2008, p. 1). Despite this, some consider *moffie* to have been re-appropriated by gays and transvestites as a way of referring to themselves in an “ironic, camp tradition containing elements of self-mockery, and partly a political statement” (Gevisser & Cameron, 1994, p. x). This acts as a way of regaining power from a word which disempowered them. However, with all such terms, “the connotation is in the mouth of the speaker” and while gays may use these terms to speak of themselves and one another, they might not be happy for straight people to use them and might find them offensive. Both *fag/faggot* and *moffie* appeared in all 14 of Cage’s top lists of words making them two of the most popular terms.

Auntie Aida was the most popular term for a disease that was specifically a Gayle term as opposed to *crabs* which is a common term for “pubic lice” (Cage, 2003, p. 63) used in popular culture. *Bear* was not on Cage’s list of 650 words. I added it and *twink* to the list because *twink* is commonly understood as “the stereotypical standard of westernized gay male beauty” (Baker, 2002, p. 206) while “Bear culture is...a reaction against the dominant twentieth century ideal of gay male beauty as a twink” (Baker, 2002, p. 79), thus positioning them as opposites. *Beaulah* is also the name of a lesbian and gay club in the *gay village* of De Waterkant which is a popular ‘cruising’ spot. *Bitch* was the most popular form of address and it was originally used to refer “to a female dog, and started being applied to women in about the fifteenth century” (Baker, 2002, p. 83). Thus is also a term which when used by a gay man to refer to another gay man, gives him feminine qualities in the same way that referring to another gay man as ‘she’ does (Cage, 2003, p. 94). *Camp* is difficult to define, but it is important to ask for a definition of it and *drag* due to the previous section’s question about people’s opinions of the two ideas. *Camp* was the most popular word for the category of “sexual practises/preferences and relationships” from Cage’s top 106 words and *drag* was the most popular word for the category of “clothing and accessories” (Cage, 1999, p. 135).

Dora was the most popular word for the “drugs or booze” category as well as for the category of “terms which were derived from women’s names”. Terms derived from women’s names are possibly what Gayle is best known for and one of its most distinctive features, at least historically (Baker, 2002, p. 130).

Glory hole was the most popular term for a place frequented by gays. Its origin is attributed to the navy, where a *glory hole* was “any of the various compartments on a ship, or one or more rooms used as sleeping quarters for stewards (of whom a significant proportion were homosexual, at least in the merchant navy)” (Baker, 2002, p. 31). *Lunch/lunchbox* was more popular than other similar terms. *Queen* was also by far one of the most popular terms and it probably originated from a combination of the Medieval ‘quean’ “a woman, especially one who was ill-behaved, a jade, a hussy, a harlot or strumpet” (Baker, 2002, p. 49) which was eventually applied to gay men and “one whose rank or pre-eminence (often in a specified sphere) was comparable to that of a queen” (Baker, 2002, p. 49) in the royal sense, that is a gay man who was best at or known for having a certain trait like a *Drag Queen* (Baker, 2002, p. 112) or a *dream queen*, “n. a man who looks like a GQ magazine model” (Cage, 2003, p. 67). I wanted to include an isiNgcqumo word because I felt that it was important to see if participants could define an isiNgcqumo word. I asked participants to define *skomoro/a* as this term is the closest isiNgcqumo word to another Gayle term, being similar to *skommel* (Afrikaans) and both meaning “to masturbate” (Cage, 2003, p. 95).

The terms which participants were asked to define were therefore terms which were popular in 1999 and which should therefore be well known now or likely to stir opinions.

3.3.3 Questionnaire: Section 3: Word list

As my aim is not to compile a dictionary, I provided participants with a much shorter word list, only 130 terms as opposed to Cage’s 650 terms. I thought that 650 terms would be too many terms for participants to go through, possibly causing them to lose interest and not complete the questionnaire. As my questionnaire is a combination of Cage’s qualitative and quantitative questionnaires with additional topical questions, there was a greater need to keep this section short. My word list consists of Cage’s 106 most popular terms as used by various education level, regional, mother-tongue and age groups, according to his 1999 questionnaires (Cage, 1999, p. 113). I added a further 24 words on advice from my gay friends as well as my own readings and knowledge. The words that I added were: *Wendy*

(Western Cape), *Varda* (British Polari), *Twink* (American Gayspeak), *Top* (American Gayspeak), *Stuk* (Afrikaans), *Stabane* (Zulu), *Skomoro* (Zulu), *Skesana* (Zulu), *Six pack*, *Sheila*, *Moffietaal* (Afrikaans), *Manvrou* (Afrikaans), *Kassie Trassie* (Afrikaans), *isiNgqumo* (Zulu), *Gail/Gayle* (Western Cape), *Gadar/Gaydar* (American Gayspeak), *Elsie Geselsie* (Afrikaans), *Dorothy (Friend of)*, *Camp names*, *Bottom* (American Gayspeak), *Boner*, *Bag* and *Aerie Faerie*. These terms were all part of Cage's initial list of 650 terms that he used in his quantitative questionnaire. I decided to include these words, even though they weren't in his top 106 terms because of my familiarity with them and therefore believe that they might be gaining popularity. I also added *Bear* because it is the opposite of *twink* (Baker, 2002, p. 79). All of these terms are in Cage's published 2003 dictionary. The potential problem with this section of my questionnaire is that I am assuming that everyone who says they use a particular term uses it in the same way, which perhaps is a problematic assumption. Unfortunately there is not time to ask participants for all meanings. As this method worked for Cage in creating his dictionary, it should also be sufficient here.

I asked participants to select as many terms as they use, not simply terms which they know, as knowledge need not imply usage. Usage is more important for the purposes of this study because while some words may be known to speakers, speakers may avoid using them due to their pejorative connotations or because the term is seen as old fashioned or no longer needed for secrecy purposes. Participants were also asked which language they use as a base when they use these gay language/slang terms as well as if there are any words which they refuse to use because they find them offensive. There was also space provided for participants to make comments on the questionnaire and the research.

The questionnaire was thus fairly extensive and elicited attitudes and usage of Gayle speakers.

3.4 FACEBOOK

The social networking site, *Facebook*, which was launched in 2004 (Lee, 2011, p. 48) is now used by approximately 1.19 billion users worldwide and it is one of the biggest, most active and most popular social networking sites as well as one of the most accessible. Social networking and in particular, the structure of *Facebook*, such as status updates and comments

have particular parameters in which they work and an etiquette which users generally adhere to (Lee, 2011, p. 45). While it can be argued that such language is too constructed to be of use in a linguistic study, it has been noted that these ‘new media’ have become entrenched in everyday life (Lee, 2011, p. 110) and thus are becoming more ‘natural’.

The area of *Facebook* which is most useful to linguists is the area of status updates. The ‘publisher box’ can be found near the top of a user’s profile (called a ‘wall’ which other people who are *Facebook* ‘friends’ with the user can also post on, depending on the user’s privacy settings) and their homepage. *Facebook* status updates were originally intended to be a way of publically reporting about oneself, but have become far more interactive since the addition of the ‘comment’ and the ‘like’ functions (Lee, 2011, p. 112) whereby friends of a user may post a response to the user’s status update or show agreement with it. *Facebook* statuses can have over 60,000 characters, which is far more than SMS text messaging or *Twitter* allow for (Lee, 2011, p. 112). *Facebook* also allows for users to post multimedia content in their status updates, such as videos, photos and web links, making *Facebook* multimodal, with examples of intertextuality and the ability to access various web spaces on one platform (Lee, 2011, p. 112). Lee calls the kind of communication in *Facebook* statuses ‘microblogging’ and defines it as “the writing of short messages on the web designed for self-reporting about what one is doing, thinking, or feeling at any moment” (Lee, 2011, p. 111). Users create such microblogs to prompt discussions, share information and interact with friends in an online community (Lee, 2011, p. 111).

3.4.1 *Facebook*: as a method for sharing questionnaires

I used *Facebook* as a research platform in this study. I sent the link to the questionnaire to my friends and asked them to send it on to their friends, many of whom did (some via email too). I also posted the link as part of my *Facebook status* with the plea “Hi friends! I need your help to collect responses for my thesis. My topic is gay language/slang. Please fill in this form or share the link with your friends” which many of my friends shared on their *Facebook* profiles so that it would be seen by their friends. The majority of respondents are likely to be friends with each other or friends of friends as *Facebook* works by such degrees of separation. This is why I also posted a similar message to the *Facebook* pages of gay venues and events as well as gay rights groups so that people who have ‘liked’ their page would be able to complete the questionnaire and this would incorporate a wider group. This means that

all of my respondents needed to have access to *Facebook* or emails and a computer, which is likely to put them in a particular access/economic bracket.

4. FINDINGS

The findings from this study come predominantly from the *Questionnaire on gay language/slang in Cape Town* (see Appendix C) and the comprehensive literature review (chapter 2). The literature review explained Gayle's history, while the questionnaire's findings show attitudes and current day usage.

The questionnaire received 48 responses. By comparison, Cage's response total was 111 (27 from his first questionnaire (qualitative) and 84 from his second questionnaire (quantitative)). It will be necessary to analyse participants' responses according to the same categories as Cage did in his questionnaires. From a historical perspective, these categories are still applicable, as even though the apartheid laws have dissolved and people are more integrated "social contact responds to economic or political forces and has a tendency to spread across provincial, national and even ethnic borders" (Cage, 1999, p. 17). Most of my respondents are white, L1 English-speaking, gay men (see figures 4, 5 and 7). The majority are students at tertiary institutions or young professionals with tertiary qualifications between the ages of 20-30. This group would have been minors in 1999 when Cage produced his study. Their social worlds would therefore be much changed, since they have had very little or no experience of apartheid. Most respondents were my friends on *Facebook* or friends of my friends as they felt the most obliged to co-operate. This is probably a reason why my participants were of a similar age, gender, race, home language, education level etc. and is a possible limitation of online methodology and of this study, that is, the sample does not claim representation beyond a narrow pool of respondents. Due to the changing racial-class status of South Africans within the country and the upwardly economic black community, race is no longer necessarily a determiner of accent, education or language use. There is therefore likely to be more mixing and borrowings between racial groups post-apartheid. However, due to the lack of racial diversity in my responses, I can neither prove nor disprove this. This would perhaps be useful in a future study as would respondents of more varied ages and home languages, but this is beyond the scope of this study.

4.1 FINDINGS: QUESTIONNAIRE ON GAY LANGUAGE/SLANG IN CAPE TOWN

My questionnaire on gay language/slang in Cape Town received 48 responses, predominantly from white, tertiary-educated English L1 gay males between the ages of 20-30, who were born and raised in Cape Town, Western Cape (see ⁶Appendix A: Participants' Details). Demographically, this is quite a homogeneous sample which is helpful in comparing attitudes and usage as there should theoretically be similarities between participants. This is the group selected by Cage as the most prominent English-Gayle speakers. As all of the participants are beyond the age of majority, they are likely to have an established sexuality and sexual orientation as opposed to younger people who might not have discovered this yet. The age of participants is given in the figure below:

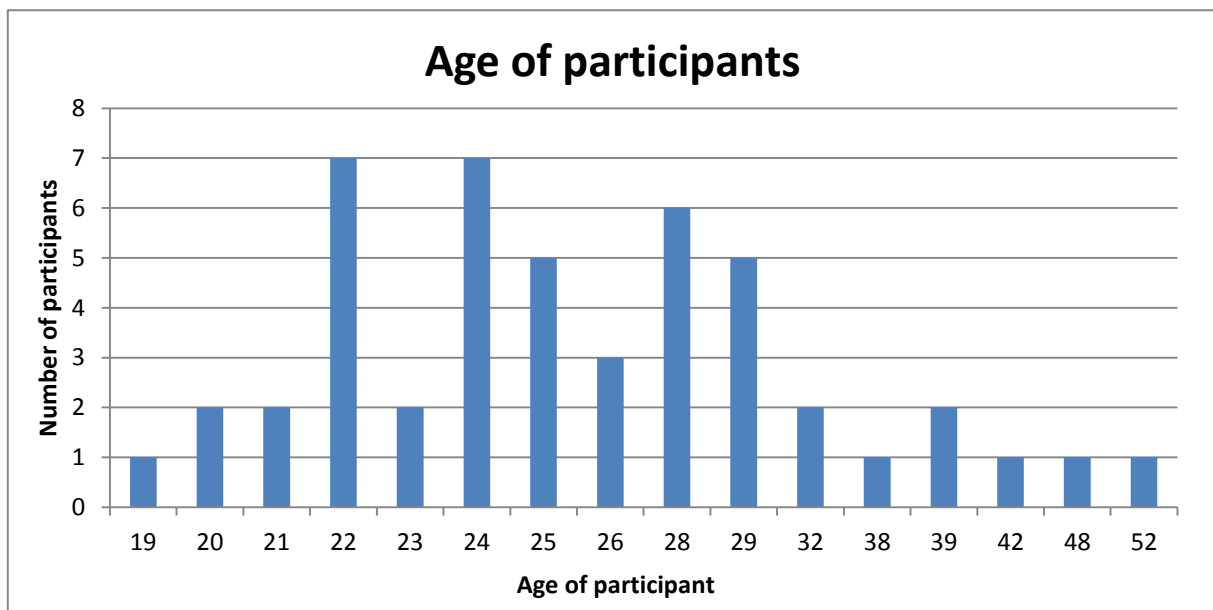


Figure 1: Age of participants

Of those 48 participants, 25 were born in the Western Cape, 4 in the Eastern Cape, 3 in Gauteng, 8 in KwaZulu-Natal, 1 in Mpumalanga, 1 in the North West Province, 1 in the Northern Cape and 5 from outside South Africa (2 in Zimbabwe and 3 in the United Kingdom).

⁶ Appendix A: Participants' Details – pseudonyms have been used for participants for ethical reasons in this table and throughout this dissertation

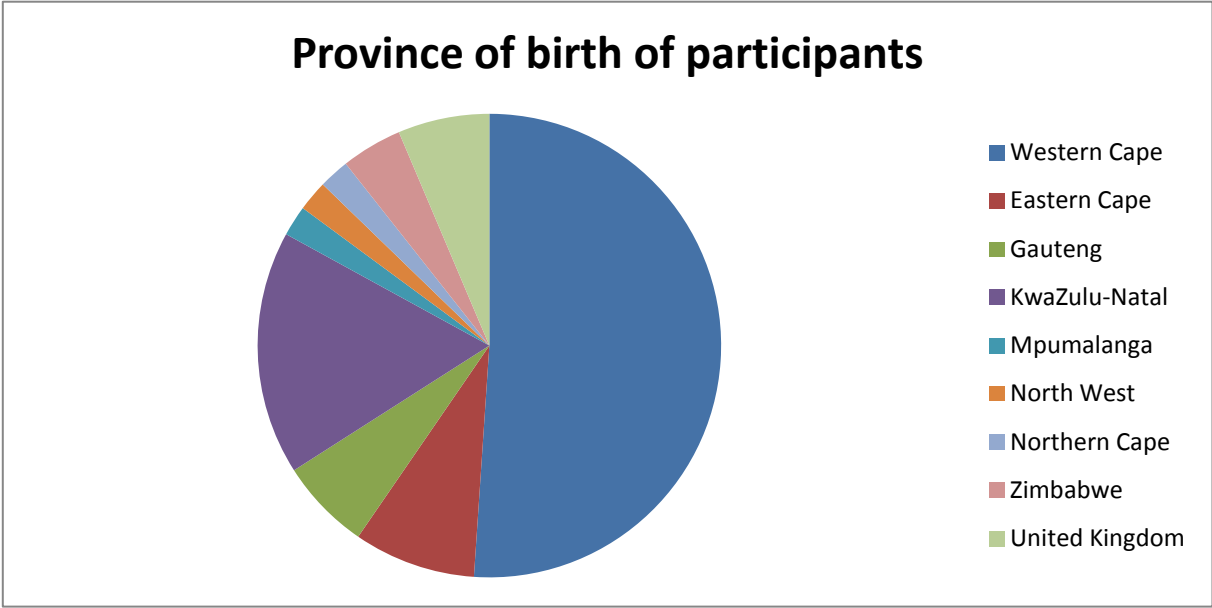


Figure 2: Province of birth of participants

42 participants are currently living in the Western Cape, 1 in the Eastern Cape, 1 in Gauteng, 3 in KwaZulu-Natal and 1 in South Korea.

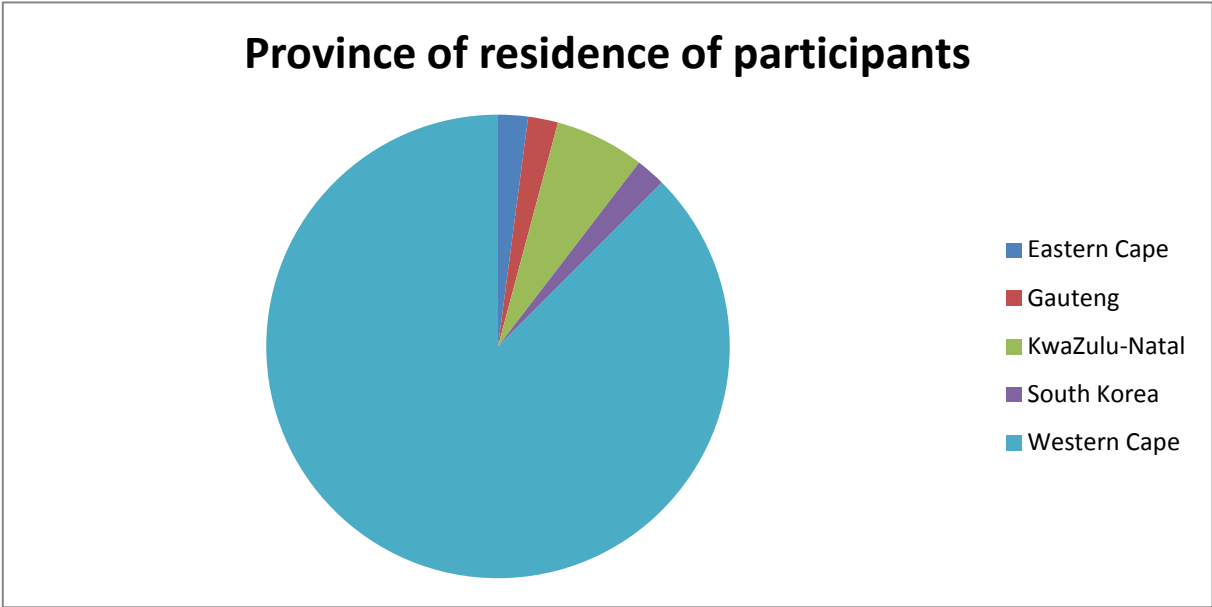


Figure 3: Province of residence of participants

Participants also provided the number of years that they have lived in their current province of residence (see Appendix A: Participants' Details).

2 participants were neither born nor have lived in the Western Cape (Steve and Gary) and thus they act as a control. Calvin (21 year old, English L1, white, gay male) and Hope (22 year old, isiZulu L1, Black, gay male) who both live in KwaZulu-Natal, are currently students at UCT in their fourth year and hence would have been able to spend time in the Cape Town gay community where they could have picked up Gayle. All other participants have lived in the Western Cape for enough time to have been exposed to the gay community and to have picked up Gayle/gay language depending on their social interactions.

36 participants are English L1 speakers, 7 are Afrikaans L1 speakers, 1 participant is an English and Afrikaans L1 speaker, 1 participant is an isiXhosa L1 speaker and 2 participants are isiZulu L1 speakers. 1 participant did not list her home language. This is therefore not a very linguistically diverse group. However, the L1s will be useful to compare with the matrix language that the participants use when speaking in the 'gay language' (see question 2 of section 3 of the questionnaire).

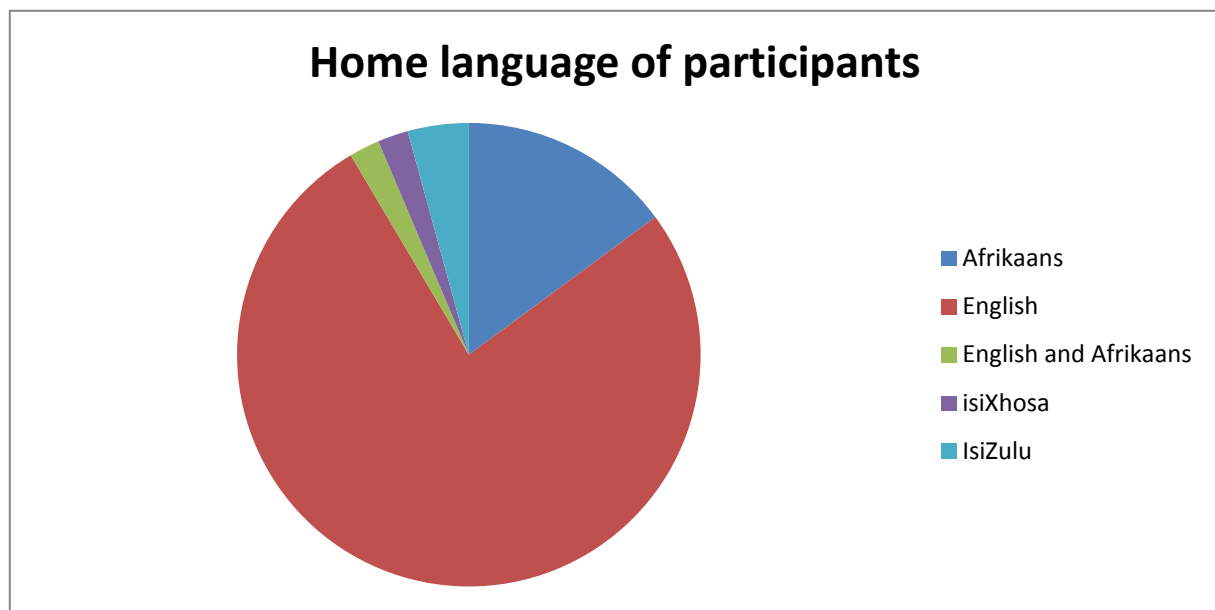


Figure 4: Home language of participants

35 participants classified themselves as white, 8 as coloured, 3 as black and 2 as Indian. The sample was thus mainly white and does not allow for a great comparison across races. However, with the 20-30 age group, racial differences are less likely to affect language use. Language use is defined more by social groups which would be constructed via the ages, locations and educational levels of the participants.

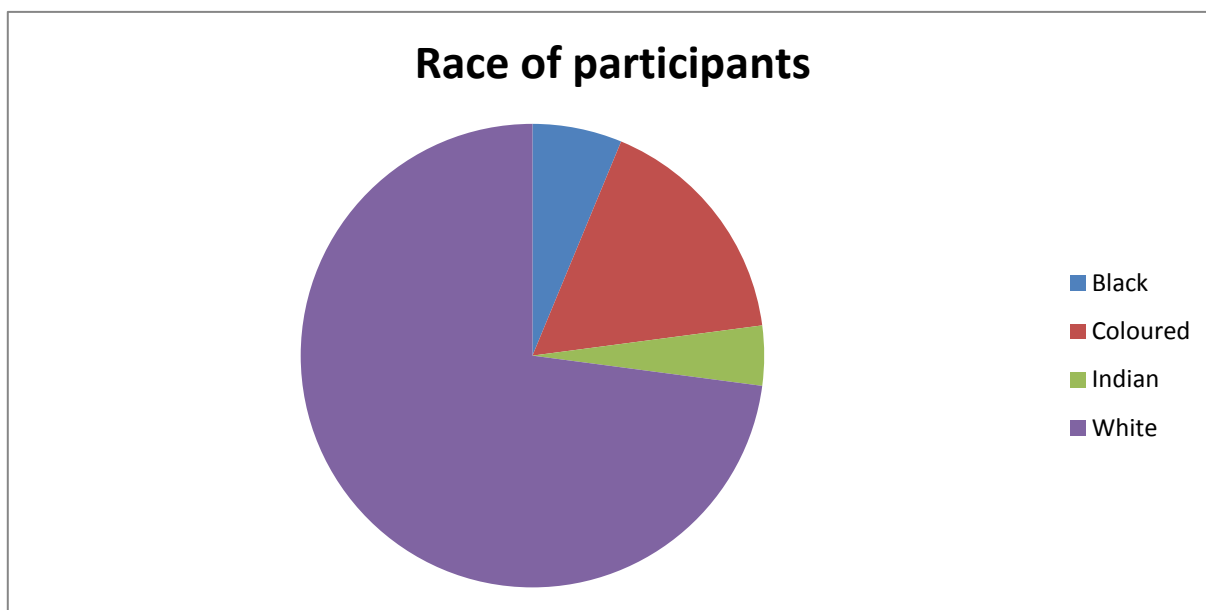


Figure 5: Race of participants

20 participants have tertiary education and 8 have Matric level education. They had all finished high school and are therefore part of an educated social group.

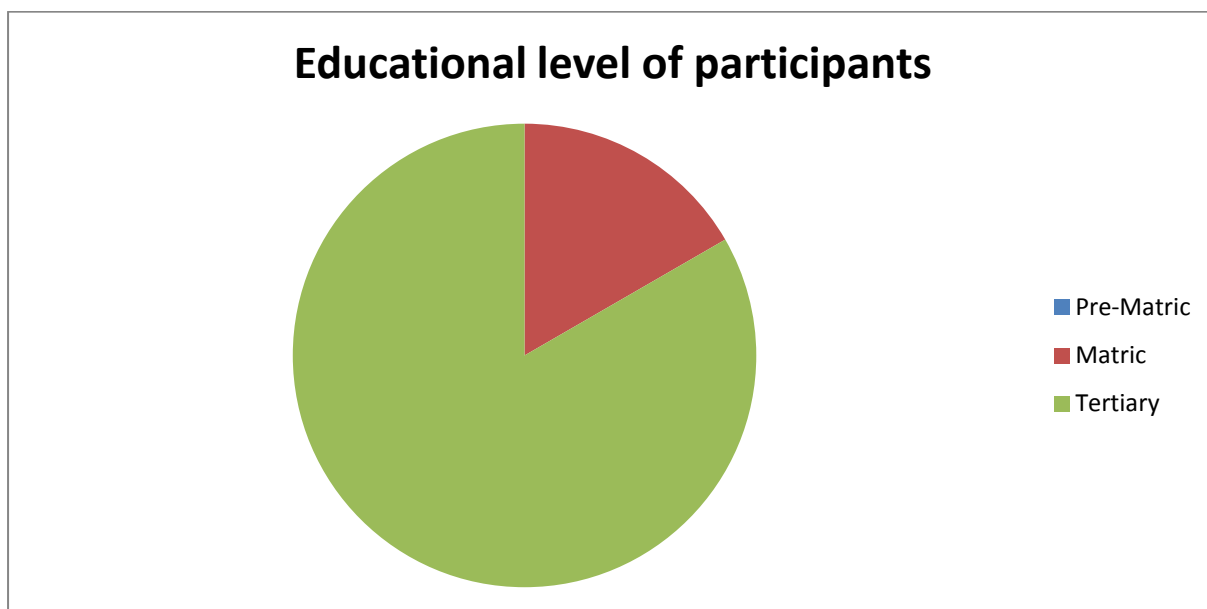


Figure 6: Educational level of participants

32 participants are males and 16 are females. Of those, 27 are gay male participants, 4 lesbian female participants, 4 bisexual participants (2 males, 2 females), 11 straight participants (8

females, 3 males), 1 straight and ⁷‘bi-sensual’ participant and 1 participant who did not provide her sexual orientation. The majority of respondents therefore formed part of the focal sexual orientation and gender group (gay males) of the study and the responses of participants representing other sexual orientation and gender groups were useful in comparison.

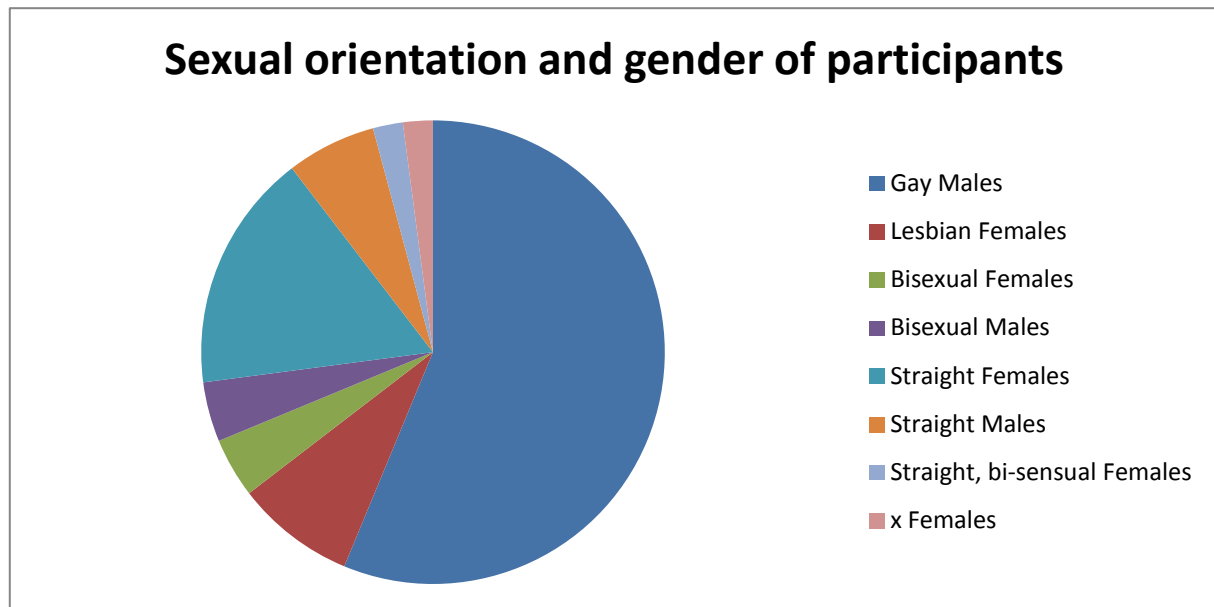


Figure 7: Sexual orientation and gender of participants

4.1.1 Section 1: Participants' Opinions

The first question “**1. What is gay language/slang?**” was met by very different responses from the participants. Most respondents acknowledged that it was neither an actual language nor slang to them (although slang was more accepted), but rather a set of words or phrases perhaps even extending to include a “set of behaviours/expressions” (Calvin, 21 year old, English L1, white, gay male) and “non-verbal forms of language. These include special types of hugs, kisses, hand gestural greetings and mostly imitations of gay icons/singers” (Julian, 22 year old, Afrikaans L1, coloured, gay male), introducing the topics of camp and drag queens which were questioned explicitly later in the questionnaire. Some respondents stated that gay language/slang could refer to two different things: 1. An in-group form of communication used by the gay community designed to foster group solidarity and inclusion which is what most respondents understood it as; or 2. Terms used by heterosexuals which are potentially harmful to members of the LGBTI community, that is, language choices

⁷ The participant defined ‘bi-sensual’ as “find women aesthetically and occasionally sexually pleasing” (Bronwyn, 26 year old, English L1, straight and bi-sensual female).

embedded in popular culture and expression that many people are becoming de-sensitised to despite being “hateful and harmful. eg. "fag" or "dyke"” (Lauren, 25 year old, English L1, white, bisexual female). As a response, the latter tended to come from straight people who viewed it as a homophobic vocabulary rather than those who identify themselves as part of the LGBTI community who mostly saw it as fun.

One respondent identified Polari as “an actual gay language” but considered gay slang to be “the use of ‘feminine’ pronouns or nouns (she, girls, doll, lady etc.) by gay men to describe other gay men” (Jack, 19 year old, English L1, white, gay male). Another respondent assumed that I was referring to Gayle and said that it is part of the subculture and “replaces words with names essentially” (Michael, 28 year old, English L1, coloured, gay male), mostly female names to describe certain words such as “*Nancy* [which] means no” (Dale, 28 year old, English L1, Indian, gay male). One participant considered ‘gay language/slang’ to be “drag queen slang, which is close to African American black girl slang” (Jake, 20 year old, English L1, white, gay male). Thus, some particular kinds of ‘gay language/slang’ were identified by participants showing that they are aware of different types.

The majority of respondents described ‘gay language/slang’ as a set of words or phrases. One respondent noted that they are usually “similarly themed words (for example words associated with women, hair, beauty and ethnicity)” and that the words often have established meanings but are assigned other meanings as part of the lavender lexicon (Jacques, 21 year old, English L1, white, gay male). These words are culturally significant to people in the LGBTI community (Caryn, 23 year old, English L1, white, lesbian female), mostly used by people within the community, particularly gay males, with “gay male "lingo" like "Mildred", "Beulah" and so on” (Renée, 32 year old, English L1, white, lesbian female). Some participants limited its use to LGBTI community members while others said that it could also be used by people who believe in the empowerment and identification of the gay community (Julian, 22 year old, Afrikaans L1, coloured, gay male) or people who have much interaction with the community and/or with LGBTI-related media (Chester, 42 year old, Afrikaans L1, white, gay male). Another respondent acknowledge the influence of international media, saying that there are certain words which are made popular by drag queen RuPaul which seem to influence a wider audience (Dale, 28 year old, English L1, Indian, gay male) and which are perhaps part of ‘mainstream’ popular culture and potentially becoming new words used as part of ‘gay speech’ by gay and straight people alike. *Fag hags* “n. single straight

woman who hangs around with gay men” (Cage, 2003, p. 69) was given as an example of the kind of person who has this interaction with the community. As one respondent said, “since they aren't gay then what are they speaking?” (Giles, 22 year old, English L1, white, gay male), which lead him to question the existence of a gay language as a construct. Other respondents similarly expressed their displeasure with it being given a label.

Its main function was given as a means of communication that people who identify as gay can use to speak to each other in, in the company of straight people, about any topic, without fear of being judged for being gay or for the content of their conversation (Roberto, 22 year old, English L1, coloured, gay male). The focus was on the idea of its use as a form of identification and “‘secret code’ or as a form of cultural humour” (Chester, 42 year old, Afrikaans L1, white, gay male). Another function was recognised as enabling members of the LGBTI community to talk about a certain person or situation who is within earshot without that person understanding what they are saying (Sebastian, 38 year old, English L1, white, gay male). The reasons that respondents gave for it being a ‘secret code’ was that it was “developed by gay people for gay people to help with their identity crisis in a time where homosexuality was condemned and not accepted in society” (Neville, 26 year old, Afrikaans L1, coloured, bisexual male), enabling communication within the community and known only to gay people so that ‘outsiders’ or straight people and police would not be able to ostracise or prosecute them. It thus created a bond between gays and therefore is still used today, even though the reason for its initial formation is no longer as great a threat to the community. The themes of this ‘gay language/slang’ were identified by participants as terms for “social things where the gay community would be interacting” such as names for sexual acts, flirting, gossip and drinking. One participant said, “I never came across a gay slang word for, say, going to work, or doing the dishes, or grocery shopping, or cleaning out my inbox” (Leigh, 23 year old, English L1, white, bisexual female), noting that ‘gay language/slang’ is limited to a particular set of nouns/adjectives. Participants also acknowledged that the terms can be described as “derogatory as well as friendly” (Claire, 29 year old, English L1, white, straight female) when used by both gay and straight people, due to their history and previous use as depreciatory terms.

While most of the respondents knew this ‘gay language/slang’ to be some kind of communication form connected to the LGBTI community, two straight respondents (1 male and 1 female), and 1 gay male said that they had no idea what it was. However, when those

respondents provided definitions for the given terms, it showed that they did have some knowledge of it.

The next part of the first question, **do you use it?**, in reference to the ‘gay language/slang’ was answered with 21 participants (43.75%) claiming that they do not use it and 27 participants (56.25%) claiming that they do use it. The reasons for using it can be seen in the figure below:

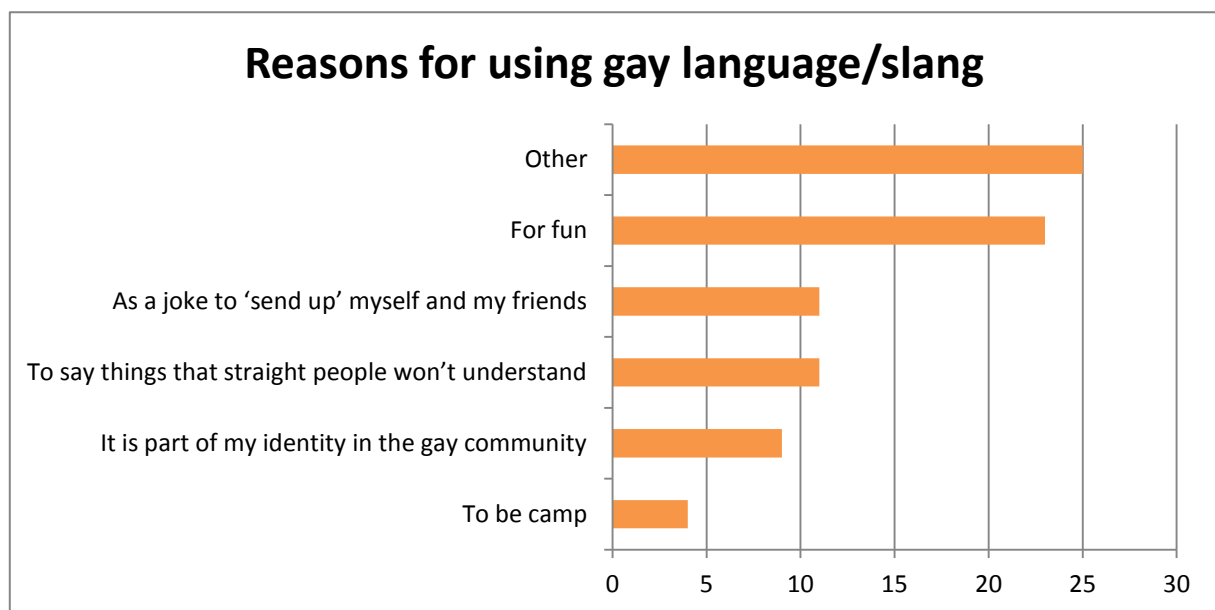


Figure 8: Reasons for using gay language/slang

Participants could select one or more option – 4 participants use it to be camp, 9 participants use gay language/slang because they feel that it is part of their identity in the gay community, 11 participants use it to say things that straight people won't understand, 11 participants use it as a joke to ‘*send up*’ “v. tease, put down” (Cage, 2003, p. 93) themselves and their friends, 23 participants use it for fun and 25 participants use it for other reasons, including adding character to a sentence (Dale, 28 year old, English L1, Indian, gay male), out of habit (Caryn, 23 year old, English L1, white, lesbian female), letting people know that they are comfortable in their own sexuality or making jokes about it (Jack, 19 year old, English L1, white, gay male) and to creatively express new kinds of humour (Jacques, 21 year old, English L1, white, gay male). Those participants who said that they don't use the ‘gay language/slang’ gave reasons which included that they felt it was only used by uneducated people (Laura, 25 year old, English L1, coloured, straight female) and that not using it showed respect for the

gay community (Bronwyn, 26 year old, English L1, white, straight and bi-sensual female). Many other respondents said that their vocabulary of the language/slang was very limited (Leigh, 23 year old, English L1, white, bisexual female) and that they didn't interact with people who spoke it often enough to use it themselves (Steve, 24 year old, English L1, white, gay male).

The following part of the first question, **where do you use it?**, refers to where participants use or do not use the 'gay language/slang'. This is expressed by the figure below:

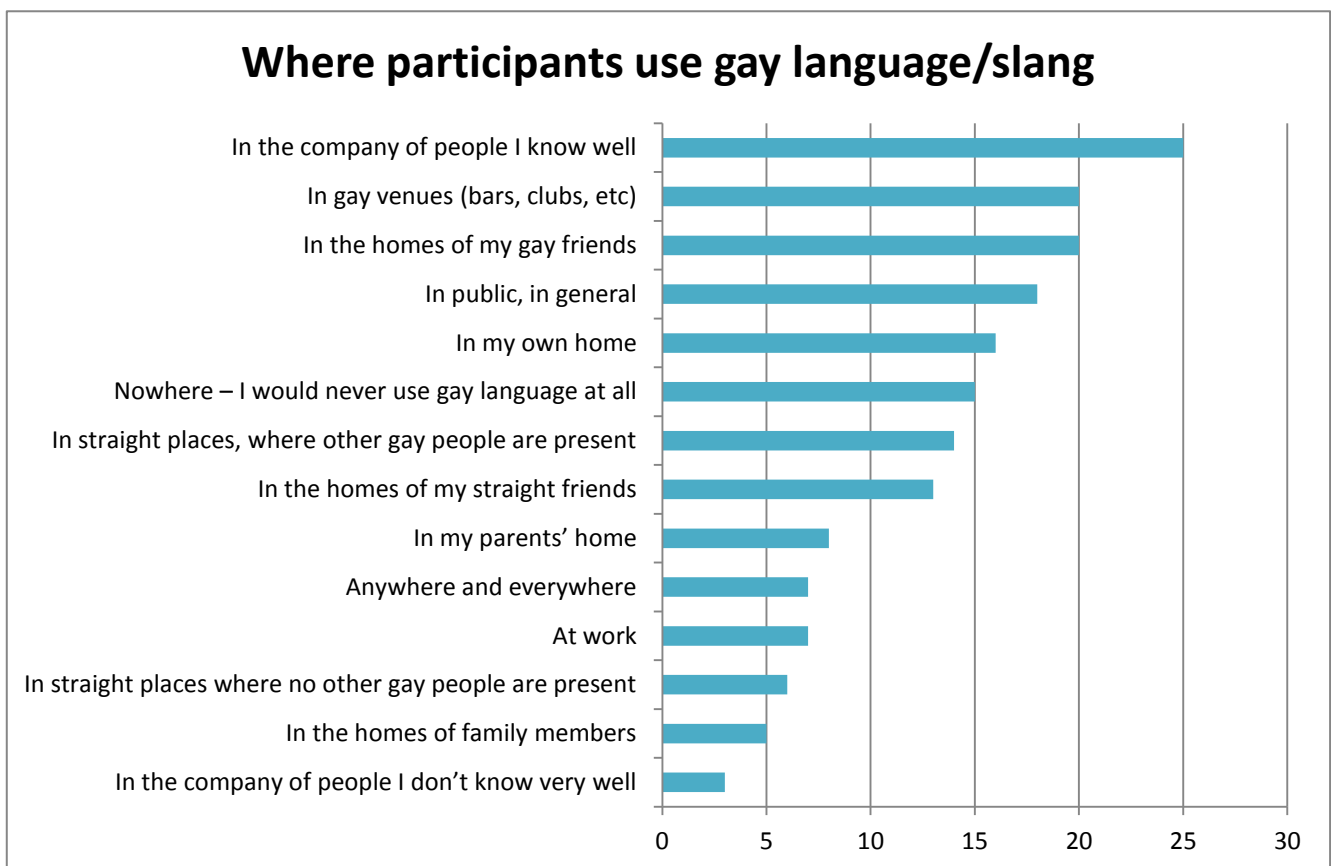


Figure 9: Where participants use gay language/slang

In this question, participants selected one or more options from a list. 25 participants said that they use it in the company of people that they know well, 20 respondents said that they use it in gay venues (bars, clubs, etc.) and 20 respondents said that they use it in the homes of their gay friends. These are all places where the participants would feel accepted, signalling that gay language/slang has some kind of stigma attached to it or that it is hard to tell which other people might speak it when meeting people for the first time. 18 respondents (the ones who

were more open about their sexual orientation), said that they use it in public in general, yet only 7 respondents said that they would use it anywhere and everywhere, possibly suggesting that they would not use it in front of certain family members or that they did not feel that it was appropriate for all contexts. 16 participants use it in their own homes, 14 use it in straight places where other gay people are present and 13 use it in the homes of their straight friends, all of which would be places showing acceptance to the speakers but perhaps to a lesser extent than the reasons given previously. Far fewer participants said that they would use it in their parents' home, in the homes of family members, at work, in straight places where no other gay people are present or in the company of people that they didn't know very well. These places would be the least appropriate for this kind of register with its jovial and sexualised nature or the least accepting of the participants' sexual orientation. 15 participants said that they did not use gay language at all anywhere, which means that some participants who said in the previous part of the question that they do not use the 'gay language/slang' do in fact use it in certain contexts. The places in which participants say that they use 'gay language/slang' therefore reflects that they are cautious of using it in front of people who might not be accepting of them for doing so or who might not be tolerant of their sexual orientation and therefore speakers prefer to reserve its use for places where they would feel safe doing so.

The last part of the first question, **how did you learn it?**, referring to how participants acquired the 'gay language/slang' was predominantly answered as being spread via gay friends within the community, by word of mouth. No speakers were formally schooled in it. Participants said that they had picked it up mostly from the gay *scene* as well as from gay media: literature, social media, television and TV series (Jake, 20 year old, English L1, white, gay male).

Question 2. When did you come out?, asked participants to give the year that they 'came out' and their age then. 27 participants responded with various ages ranging from 13-26 with most people 'coming out' between 18-21, that is, most people acknowledging their sexuality publically when they finished high school - "I suppose I only embraced my sexuality since varsity, being away from small narrow-minded communities" (Julian, 22 year old, Afrikaans L1, coloured, gay male). The years which people 'came out' ranged from 1987-2012 with most people coming out between 2006 and 2012. 2006 was the year that same-sex marriages were legalised in South Africa and in 2007 the age of consent for homosexual acts (it was 19)

was equalised with that for heterosexual acts and the age of consent for any sexual orientation became 16. These new laws may have made participants feel more comfortable with their sexual orientation, but the trend seems to follow age rather than the new political changes and this was also when most participants reached the age of majority and either began working or started their tertiary education. Some participants said that they only ‘came out’ to their close friends and that they had not yet ‘come out’ to their parents, particularly their mothers (Bongi, 22 year old, isiZulu L1, black, gay male) and that they were not planning on doing so (Roux, 32 year old, Afrikaans L1, white, gay male) although they were sure that their families knew. Many other respondents said that they had always been ‘out’, some remembering it so clearly that they knew the exact date (Calvin, 21 year old, English L1, white, gay male) or that they have always been themselves - “I’ve always lived my life the way it is, I didn’t feel there is the need to tell people I’m gay” (Hope, 22 year old, isiZulu L1, black, gay male).

The second part of the second question, **how long have you been part of the gay scene in Cape Town?**, asked participants to provide the number of years that they have been ‘out’. Some respondents found this question difficult to answer because they do not consider themselves to be part of the Cape Town gay *scene* as such, as they seldom visit gay clubs/venues or go to gay events (Rhys, 29 year old, English L1, white, gay male). One respondent said that he believes that the gay *scene* “misrepresents what LGBT people are as a whole” (Jack, 19 year old, English L1, white, gay male). The majority of respondents gave the number of years that they have been ‘out’, showing that they have actively been part of the gay *scene* since ‘coming out’ which for the 20-30 year old partygoers, seems likely.

Question 3. **What gay clubs, bars, restaurants and events do you like to go to?**, had many different responses, but most venues and events that were mentioned, are those which are LGBTI recognised and in the area of Cape Town’s *gay village* of De Waterkant. These are shown in the table below:

Table 1: Gay clubs, bars, restaurants and events patronized by participants

<u>Gay venue/event</u>	<u>Number of participants</u>
Crew	22
Beulah	10
Beefcakes	12
Café Manhattan	8
MCQP (Mother City Queer Party)	6
Cape Town Pride Festival	6
Zer021	4
Stargazers	3
Bronx	2
Piano Bar	2

Crew was by far the most popular venue with 22 participants mentioning it, then Beulah with 10, Beefcakes with 12 and Café Manhattan with 8, followed by MCQP (the Mother City Queer Party) and Cape Town Pride. Crew (Napier Street) and Beulah (Somerset Road) are the two most popular dance clubs, with Crew known for being more for gay males and Beulah for lesbian females, while Beefcakes (Somerset Road) and Manhattans (Waterkant Street) are both restaurant/bars. MCQP is Cape Town’s biggest (costume) party and Cape Town Pride is the annual gay rights march. De Waterkant/Greenpoint was singled out as the main area that participants like to visit and other places including Hot House, Sky Bar, Bubbles Bar, Babylon Bar/Action Club and Amsterdam Action Bar, Rainbow UCT events, Beauty pageants, OIA Film Festival and Burlesque shows (lesbian *scene*) were mentioned by one respondent each. Many participants said they do not like clubs but prefer going to drag shows and karaoke nights at gay-friendly restaurants.

When asked **What do they offer you and your friends?**, the responses were that participants liked being able to go to venues where they would see people they know but also not be judged for expressing their sexual orientation in public – this comment was made by both gay and straight respondents: “I feel that I can be more open and relaxed with my wife (I am married). I do not feel like people are looking at us if I hold her hand or act affectionately” (Renée, 32 year old, English L1, white, lesbian female). They also said that these places offer “a good meal, fun entertainment, and a chance to 'flex one's gay muscle', so

to speak, and indulge in a bit of very camp fun without worrying too much about judgement and promiscuity” (Jack, 19 year old, English L1, white, gay male). The dance clubs “offer frivolous time spent with friends and watching eye candy” and the chance to cruise while the restaurants are “for close friends to catch up” (Dale, 28 year old, English L1, Indian, gay male). Other respondents said that they were no different from straight venues as many straight venues are becoming more accepting. Drag shows and venues seemed to be popular with most respondents, offering “enjoyment and a crowd which is LGBTI mostly but comes together for reasons other than getting lucky” (Caryn, 23 year old, English L1, white, lesbian female). Cape Town Pride was described as “a chance to celebrate diversity within the LGBTI community and to protest homophobic laws and speak out against oppression and other forms of bigotry” (Adrian, 24 year old, English L1, white, gay male).

Many respondents answered question 4. **Where do you think it came from and why do you think it exists?**, saying that “it came from the older gays in the community - born out of necessity in a time when it wasn’t ok to be gay” (Roberto, 22 year old, English L1, coloured, gay male), when it was illegal and there was a necessity to be able to linguistically “determine friend from foe” (Michael, 28 year old, English L1, coloured, gay male) and have a language that the oppressors didn’t understand (Jack, 19 year old, English L1, white, gay male). It was used by “a generation who felt the need to belong to a community when they felt sidelined from society as a whole” (Rhys, 29 year old, English L1, white, gay male), thus serving as a form of identity and group cohesion. Some respondents stated that it began in the 1950/60s in the coloured community (Julian, 22 year old, Afrikaans L1, coloured, gay male) where ‘moffietaal’ was spoken at drag queen pageants. Other respondents acknowledged foreign influences and said that gay language was formed by a combination of global media and local need, “as separate gay communities established their own codes for communication, they eventually merged into each other and became understood by many heterosexual people” (Gary, 24 year old, English L1, white, gay male). Today, gay slang develops in much the same way as other kinds of slang: through avenues like pop culture, the internet, general social interaction, etc. (Calvin, 21 year old, English L1, white, gay male).

Question 5. If you had to give a name to gay language/slang in Cape Town, what would it be?, was met with multiple responses, perhaps because of the way that the question was worded. It should have read ‘what name(s) do you know for gay language in Cape Town?’ rather than being ambiguous, which lead some participants to coin their own terms. Only 10

participants said that it is *Gayle*, 1 participant suggested that *Gayle* is a portmanteau of ‘gay language’ (Roberto, 22 year old, English L1, coloured, gay male). 3 participants said they would call it *Gaylic*, 2 called it *Gaylish* and another 2 called it *Gayla/h*. Other suggestions included *Gay talk*, *Gayling*, *Fabulous*, *Gaytaal*, *Twang*, *Mollas*, *Slangay*, *Familia*, *Cape Town Talk*, *Gaynese*, *Talking?*, *Mogosi* “gossiping woman”, *Queer*, *Cape Gay*, *Gaytia* and *Moffietaal*, many of which seem to have been invented by the participants, thus showing that most did not know an established name for it.

When asked **6. Do you think that it is good to have a gay language/slang?**, 36 (75%) participants said “yes” and 12 (25%) participants said “no”, even though their reasons **Why?** seemed to incorporate both sides of the argument. Some respondents argued that it excludes too many people “even though its purpose is/was to unite” (Giles, 22 year old, English L1, white, gay male) and it adds to the idea of someone’s sexual orientation defining who they are. There needs to be integration for gays in ‘mainstream’ society and such words must therefore be used by straights too in order for this to happen (Adrian 24 year old, English L1, white, gay male) as “it draws unnecessary attention and feeds a stigma and right now, that’s completely unnecessary” (Roberto, 22 year old, English L1, coloured, gay male). On the other hand, “anything that provides someone with a sense of security and belonging is a good thing” (Rhys, 28 year old, English L1, white, gay male) and that is what it does, providing identity, fun, creativity, bonding and representing struggles which have been overcome (Michael, 28 year old, English L1, coloured, gay male). Even though same-sex relationships are now legal, there are still many people who are homophobic (Marcus, 28 year old, Afrikaans L1, white, gay male) and the gay community needs a way to speak freely and something to call their own (Renée, 32 year old, English L1, white, lesbian female). It also acts as a ‘gay radar’ or *gaydar* for speakers (Amy, 20 year old, English L1, white, lesbian female) and a way of advertising the gay community “because when there is a language, there is culture” (Walter, 25 year old, isiXhosa L1, black, gay male).

15 (31.25%) participants said “yes” to question **7. Do you have any gay friends who know about this gay language/slang, but refuse to use it?** and 33 said “no” (68.75%). When asked **Why?**, participants answered that it was (a) due to a fear of seeming effeminate/camp (Michael, 28 year old, English L1, coloured, gay male), or (b) because the person was not ‘out’, or (c) they felt it was a method of segregation and they wanted fit into ‘mainstream’

society or (d) because most respondents have a mix of gay and straight friends and therefore cannot use the 'gay language'.

31 (64.58%) respondents said "yes" to Question **8. Have you ever seen or used gay language/slang on Facebook, Twitter, emails, smses, in print media etc?**, and 17 (35.42%) respondents said "no". To answer **When and where?**, 12 respondents said they had seen or used it on the social networking site *Facebook*, 5 in smses, 4 on the micro-blogging platform *Twitter*, 3 on *Whatsapp* and 2 on the photo-sharing social network *Instagram*. The instant-messenger system BlackBerry Messenger, print media, online dating sites (*Grindr*) and TV series were also mentioned here.

Question **9. What is your attitude towards gay language?**, was met with a mix of responses. Many respondents said that they were indifferent to it, some said they were open to it for reasons of group cohesion and being "pro everything that screams gay" (Bongi, 22 year old, isiZulu mother L1, black, gay male). Some respondents said that they had negative attitudes towards it commenting that they don't like the aspects that are crude, that objectify people or describe sex "in unnecessarily disgusting ways" (Leigh, 23 year old, English L1, white, bisexual female) and that it segregates gays more from the society that they are trying to fit into - "We actually want to make them realise we are not "freaks" and we are just like any other person living our lives. So I think gay slang and marches like Cape Town Pride sometimes have the opposite effect of what is hoped for" (Tiaan, 26 year old, Afrikaans L1, white, gay male). This question didn't receive as many responses as some previous questions, as many participants had already shared their attitudes in earlier answers.

26 respondents said "yes" to question **10. In your opinion, does gay language/slang play a role in gay culture?**, 13 respondents said "no" and 9 were indifferent or felt that they weren't adequately equipped to answer the question as they did not feel that they knew enough about gay culture to comment. Among those who said yes, a common idea was that language plays a key role in most cultures and therefore it is the same for the gay community (Victor, 22 year old, Afrikaans L1, white, gay male), enabling group identity and belonging. Those who said "no" or who were indifferent agreed that it is not "central to one's own "gayness" or "queerdom"", but rather something which they felt people who were not yet comfortable with their identities as members of the LGBTI community would look to for justification (Jack, 19 years old, English L1, white, gay male).

Question 11. What are your views on gay rights in Cape Town? What would you like changed?, was mostly answered positively as most respondents said that they felt that Cape Town was one of the most accepting cities in South Africa and that the country was quite progressive in its LGBTI rights. The only rights which people said should be corrected were that men who have sex with men still cannot donate blood (Roux, 32 year old, Afrikaans L1, white, gay male) and that sexual orientation is not a focus in the business world: “prevention of bias toward pregnant woman and race when hiring is the biggest focus, as this contributes directly to a company’s BEE scorecard. However, I think gay education is required as part of social wellness, as we still have prejudice which is perpetuated at work although subtle” (Dale, 28 year old, English L1, Indian, gay male). Many other respondents commented that LGBTI education should be introduced in schools: “The only reason I didn’t come out sooner (even though I knew I was gay a long time before I did) was because it wasn’t accepted. For many young kids, this can be so dangerous if they see that who they are is wrong” (Bruce, 29 year old, English L1, white, gay male). 4 respondents also highlighted that “township corrective rape must end” (Sadie, 24 year old, English L1, coloured, lesbian female). This raised the point made by most respondents in this section, that it is people’s personal beliefs which need to change (Roberto, 22 year old, English L1, coloured, gay male) but this is something which cannot be enforced by law and something which is not easy to do when there are “residual conservative attitudes” (Calvin, 21 year old, English L1, white, gay male). Ultimately changing the laws is effective only if people adopt tolerance at the same time, as “society can only change itself through the combined realisations of many” and “education can only reach those with open minds, and at the moment, many of them are closed in South Africa” (Jack, 19 year old, English L1, white, gay male).

Question 12. How do you signal to other gays that you are gay and available? Do you use any non-verbal cues?, showed that this aspect has changed since Cage’s work in the late 90s. No respondents mentioned the ‘hanky code’ (Cage, 2003, p. 41) or any similar display of sexual orientation and preferences via specific ‘gay’ clothing symbols. Some respondents did say that clothing in general (Sadie, 24 year old, English L1, coloured, lesbian female) could make someone seem more or less gay, but mannerisms (Bruce, 29 year old, English L1, white gay male), body language and eye contact (Amy, 20 year old, English L1, white, lesbian female) were more a sign of someone being gay and available, in the same way as straight people flirt and signal interest in other people (Renée, 32 year old, English L1, white, lesbian

female). Some respondents said that they made use of social networking sites and online dating sites like *Grindr* to show their sexual orientation and relationship status while others said that they would state in conversation that they are gay and see how the other person reacts. Some participants said that they have a “sixth sense called one's ⁸gaydar” (Sebastian, 38 year old, English L1, white, gay male) so they just know when others are also gay. Many respondents jokingly said that their *gaydars* weren't very accurate and that they sometimes struggled to show that they are gay and single (Roux, 32 year old, Afrikaans L1, white, gay male), but that most people who go ‘cruising’ at gay clubs are single.

When asked question **13. How do you feel about ‘camp’ and drag queens?**, many respondents drew a distinction between the two. When asked **Why?**, many respondents said that camp refers to accent and mannerisms which they find bitchy and annoying (Bronwyn, 26 year old, English L1, white, straight and bi-sensual female). Some respondents said they looked up to ‘camp’ gays because they are “incredibly strong individuals who bear the brunt of society's homophobia” as they are more openly gay, in the way that they act than ‘butch’-acting gays. There was also a feeling from many gay male respondents that they were not completely tolerant of ‘camp’ gays themselves. However, they thought they should be more accepting of people within their own sexual orientation, even if ‘camp’ is a sub-culture within it (Adrian, 24 year old, English L1, white, gay male). Many respondents found ‘camp’ to be amusing (Raymond, 28 year old, English L1, white, gay male) or were completely indifferent to it. Drag was described by many as an art form “not a by-product of being gay” while being ‘camp’ was described as “someone’s way of being their truest self” (Claire, 29 year old, English L1, straight, white female). Drag is therefore viewed as a performance and usually something which is showcased at drag clubs for entertainment purposes and which most respondents said they enjoyed watching. Other respondents saw drag as more than just entertainment, as “a testament to the fact that gender is a construct” (Caryn, 23 year old, English L1, white, lesbian female) or that wearing clothing associated with the opposite of one’s biological sex is something which makes certain people feel more comfortable and which they therefore should not be judged for doing (Hope, 22 year old, isiZulu L1, black, gay male). One respondent said that “every gay person has to put on heels and a wig once in their life...it’s a rite of passage” (Dale, 28 year old, English L1, Indian, gay male).

⁸ Baker claims that people of any sexual orientation can have a *gaydar*, but that people who spend more time within the gay community will have a more attuned one. Members of the LGBTI community have the best *gaydars* due to the “*interested eye phenomenon* – the ability to perceive things that interest the observer, even though other people are trying to be discreet” (Baker, 2002, p. 129).

The last question in the first section of the questionnaire, **14. Do you have any gay icons?**, received a variety of responses, with the most popular being American comedian and talk show host Ellen DeGeneres (8 participants), followed by American actor Neil Patrick Harris (6 participants) who portrays a popular womanising character on the TV series *How I Met Your Mother*, American pop singer and LGBTI activist Lady Gaga (5 participants) whose songs have LGBTI topics, American drag queen RuPaul (4 participants) who hosts the popular reality TV show, *RuPaul's Drag Race*, which is responsible for many new gay slang terms (Giles, 22 year old, English L1, white, gay male) and who “found an opportunity within media to promote the lives of drag queens and educate a larger audience as to the normalcy of being gay” (Dale, 28 year old, English L1, Indian, gay male), American singer Cher (4 participants) who became an advocator of LGBTI rights when her son ‘came out’ as transgender, British singer-songwriter Sir Elton John (2 participants), American actor Matt Bomer (2 participants) from the TV series *Chuck*, British Olympic diver Tom Daly and British TV personality Stephen Fry. Ellen DeGeneres, Neil Patrick Harris, RuPaul, Sir Elton John, Matt Bomer, Tom Daly and Stephen Fry are all openly gay and are admired for showing “the world that it is okay to live a normal, balanced life without letting being gay be the only thing that people identify you with” (Bruce, 29 year old, English L1, white, gay male). Some of the icons mentioned were married with children, which many respondents aspire to (Dale, 28 year old, English L1, Indian, gay male).

This predominantly qualitative section of the questionnaire therefore showed many different current attitudes towards ‘gay language’ in Cape Town from gay and straight respondents, thus showing that speakers do know about Gayle and that for some, ‘gay language’ is part of being gay. Actual usage of words will be investigated in the next two sections of the questionnaire.

4.1.2 Section 2: Participants’ Definitions

The second section of the questionnaire asked participants to provide their own definitions of certain terms even if they did not use the particular word, but knew its meaning. Some words were known by most respondents while others had very different descriptions. The figure below shows how many participants knew each term:

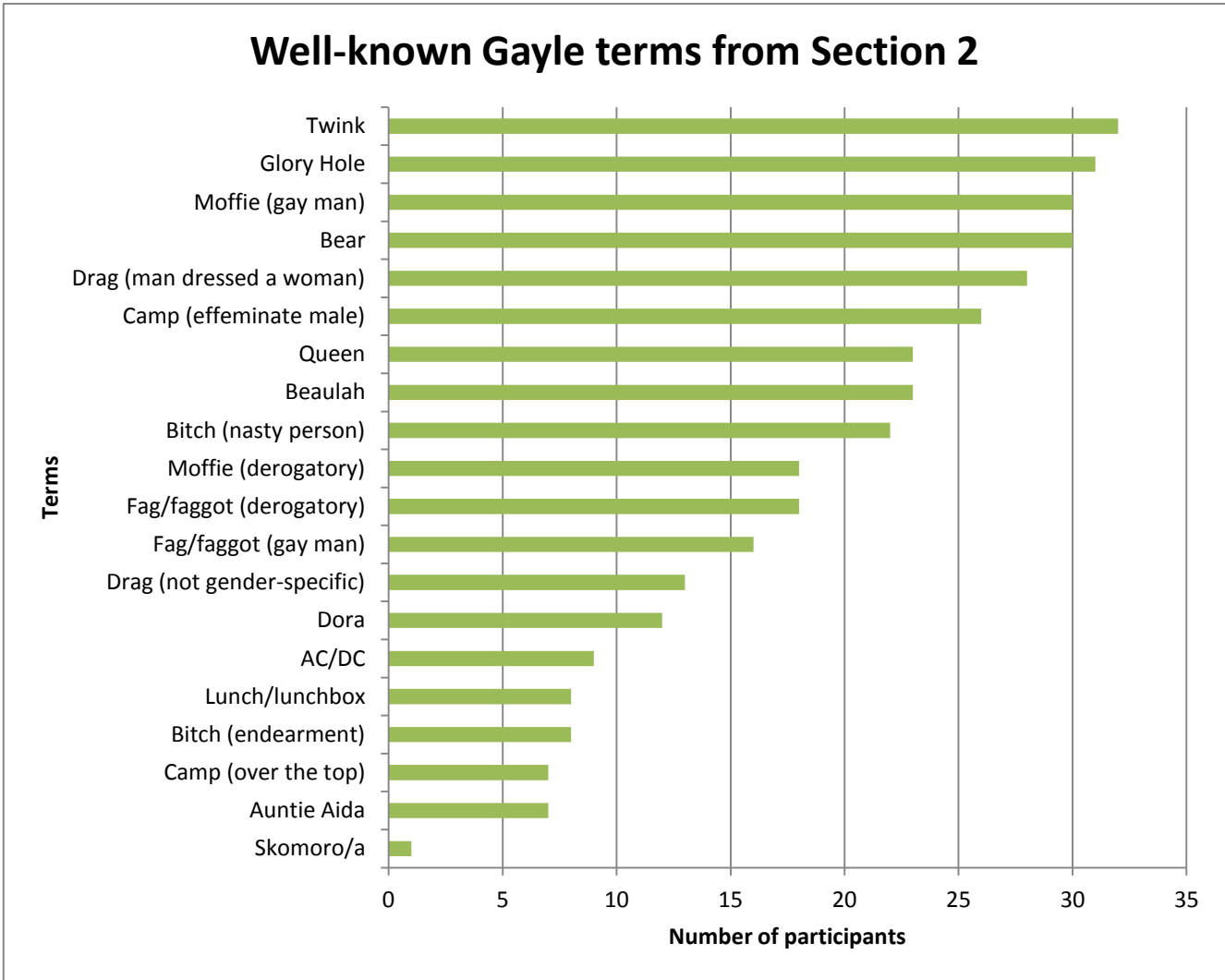


Figure 10: Well-known Gayle terms from Section 2

The “definitions” are given below the **terms** as well as the (N =) number of respondents who gave that or a similar definition:

AC/DC

- a) “someone who is bi-sexual”
N = 9
- b) “the rock band”
N = 8
- c) “versatile”
N = 3
- d) “someone who was both dominant and submissive (a top and a bottom) in sexual intercourse”

N = 2

e) “electrical current”

N = 2

f) “someone without a sexual orientation”

N = 1

g) “someone who is gay but not ‘out’”

N = 1

h) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 22

Response (a) defines the term as Cage does (2003, p. 52). Responses like (b) and (e) were given throughout this section despite the context of the questionnaire – respondents were either being trying to provide humour, ignorant or giving the only definitions that they knew and disregarding the context. Response (c) could be referring to someone who is sexually versatile and therefore be the same as (d). (f) and (g) were given by participants who were not entirely sure, but who wanted to give an answer anyway, as these are nonstandard answers, but still within the context.

Auntie Aida

(a) “AIDS”

N = 7

(b) “old gay man”

N = 1

(c) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 40

Definition (a) matches Cage’s definition (2003, p. 54) and (b) is Cage’s description of the term *auntie* (2003, p. 54) so description (b) is thus not out of context. *Auntie Aida* was known by very few participants and is therefore potentially falling out of use.

Bear

(a) “a big, hairy, gay man”

N = 16

(b) “an older, big, hairy, gay man”

N = 6

(c) “an older, hairy, gay man”

N = 4

(d) “a big, gay man”

N = 3

(e) “a hairy, gay man”

N = 1

(f) “an older gay man”

N = 1

(g) “a gay man”

N = 1

(h) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 16

30 respondents (a)-(e) understood bear to be a hairy and/or big, older gay man. 3 respondents also noted in their definition that *bears* usually wear leather and 1 respondent said that *bears* are also a gay sub-culture. Most responses therefore defined bears by one or more of the term’s elements. (b) is closest to Cage’s definition (2003, p. 56), but (a) was given as a definition by more participants, perhaps signalling that age has less to do with being a *bear* than it did previously. As Baker states, there is no age limit to being a bear, but they are usually older than *twinks* (2002, p. 79).

Beulah

(a) “beautiful/pretty”

N = 23

(b) “a lesbian club in Greenpoint”

N = 8

(c) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 17

Cage defined Beulah as “beautiful” (2003, p. 56) so (a) shows that this word is still in use and has kept its meaning. As (b) describes, there is a club on Somerset Road in Greenpoint called *Beulah* which is aimed mainly at lesbians. Both of these responses are therefore current, but some respondents did not know that the name of the club had a specific meaning.

Bitch

(a) “a nasty person”

N = 22

- (b) “someone who is sexually submissive”
N = 9
- (c) “a term of endearment used to refer to friends”
N = 8
- (d) “a sassy gay man such as a drag queen”
N = 4
- (e) “a female dog”
N = 2
- (f) participant did not know or gave no response
N = 7

Both of Cage’s definitions, “an unpleasant person” and a term of endearment (2003, p. 58) were popular definitions ((a) and (c) respectively). Baker’s description of the term includes “someone who is a *bottom* sexually” (2002, p. 83) which matches definition (b). The term is more specifically a ‘gay language’ term when used as a term of endearment because *bitch* can also be used to refer specifically to a nasty ⁹woman, as 5 participants noted. From its feminine use, *bitch* was later applied to gay men in the same way as many other feminine terms are. Baker also noted that the term originally meant “female dog” (2002, p. 83) and so while the respondents who provided (e) may have been ignorant/ironic, they were not completely out of context. (d) was not noted by Cage or Baker as part of their definitions and thus could be a present-day re-appropriation of the term and a combination of (a) and (c) – ‘a nasty friend’ which is how drag queens have been described.

Camp

- (a) “an effeminate gay man”
N = 26
- (b) “a gay man who is over the top”
N = 7
- (c) “the stereotypical way of acting gay”
N = 3
- (d) “a tent and fire”
N = 4
- (e) participant did not know or gave no response

⁹ Baker states that historically, the term was used to refer specifically to women from the fifteenth century onward (2002, p. 83)

N = 8

Definition (a) forms part of Baker's definition of the term (2002, p. 94), as does (b) if 'over the top' is taken to mean 'flamboyant' (2002, p. 93) or 'outrageous' (Cage, 2003, p. 61). For some people, it is a stereotype of gays. (d) was perhaps given ironically as a 'camp' response in that the participants were providing the obvious and humorous answer. This clearly is not a definition in the context of the questionnaire and using satire, humour and wit are all elements of 'camp' (Cage, 2003, p. 61).

Dora

(a) "an alcoholic drink or being drunk"

N = 12

(b) "Dora the Explorer"

N = 3

(c) "a friend"

N = 2

(d) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 31

As a noun, Cage describes *Dora* as either an 'alcoholic drink' or an 'alcoholic person', or as a verb, to 'drink alcohol' (2003, p. 66) which follows the definition (a). (b) refers to an American children's educational television programme (2000-present) aired on Nickelodeon (also available in South Africa on DSTV) which was turned into an online video series by the comedy website, *CollegeHumor*. The 2 respondents who provided (c) could possibly be referring to *friend of Dorothy*, which means 'gay man'. This comes from actress Judy Garland's character, Dorothy, in 1939 film version of *The Wizard of Oz* (Baker, 2002, p. 124): "Dorothy had unusual and strange friends – the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion and the scarecrow" (Cage, 2003, p. 67) and thus similarities have been drawn between gays and these characters with both Dorothy and Judy Garland seen as gay icons.

Drag

(a) "a man dressed as a woman, usually for performance purposes"

N = 28

(b) "cross-dressing" (not specifically done by men)

N = 13

(c) "a drag queen"

N = 3

(d) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 4

Definition (a) is perhaps from an association with the noun *drag* as “women’s clothing” (Cage, 2003, p. 67) and that a *drag queen* is “a man who dresses in women’s clothing” (Cage, 2003, p. 67) as opposed to a drag king “a woman who dresses in men’s clothing” (Cage, 2003, p. 67). However, Cage’s definition of the verb *drag* is “to dress in clothing of the opposite sex”, which refers to (b) and is not gender or sex-specific.

Fag/faggot

(a) “a derogatory term for a gay man”

N = 18

(b) “a gay man”

N = 16

(c) “a cigarette”

N = 5

(d) “wood”

N = 4

(e) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 5

Cage’s definition of *faggot* does not specify that it is a derogatory term just like (b), but it does include the connotation of gay men as wood (d) used in kindling a fire: “when witches were burned in the 16th century, gay boys were burned with them” (2003, p. 69). This is why it has a derogatory history and connotations (a), although it may have been re-appropriated as an in-group term. The term therefore also refers to a cigarette (Baker, 2002, p. 117).

Glory Hole

(a) “a hole between cubicles in a public toilet used for fellatio”

N = 31

(b) “anus”

N = 2

(c) “penis”

N = 1

(d) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 14

Definition (a) is very similar to Cage's definition although Cage highlights that a glory hole allows for anonymous sex (Cage, 2003, p. 72). The participants who gave (b) and (c) said that they were not certain of the term's meaning.

Lunch/Lunchbox

(a) "a penis"

N = 8

(b) "food/a box for food"

N = 8

(c) "a ¹⁰quickie at break time"

N = 1

(d) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 31

Cage describes *lunch/lunchbox* as "male genitals" (2003, p. 80) which is the same as (a). (b) is the 'mainstream' non-sexualised meaning which participants gave perhaps as it was the only meaning for the term that they knew. (c) is a non-standard meaning but not out of context.

Moffie

(a) "a gay man"

N = 30

(b) "a derogatory term for a gay man"

N = 18

All participants gave a meaning for this term, defining it as "a gay man". Cage suggests that it is only pejorative when there are connotations of effeminacy as it comes from the sailor slang (1929) word 'morphy' which was used derisively to refer to effeminate men (2003, p. 82). The word has become known as an Afrikaans term (Cage, 2003, p. 82).

Queen

(a) "a very camp man"

¹⁰ *Quickie*: "n. brief sexual liaison" (Cage, 2003, p. 90)

N = 23

(b) “a drag queen”

N = 15

(c) “gay person”

N = 3

(d) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 7

Response (a) is similar to Cage’s definition (2003, p. 90) and it can just be a synonym for ‘gay’ (c). Cage also includes the use of *drag* “with another noun to indicate place of residence, profession or personality” in referring to drag queens (b), a Cape Town queen etc.

Skomoro/a

(a) “to masturbate”

N = 1

(b) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 47

The only participant who knew this word is 1 of 2 sisZulu L1 and isiNgqumo-speaking participants who grew up in KwaZulu-Natal. None of the other respondents knew this term which perhaps suggests that isiNgqumo hasn’t spread to the Western Cape.

Twink

(a) “a young, gay male”

N = 9

(b) “a young, thin, gay male”

N = 6

(c) “a young, thin, hairless, gay male”

N = 6

(d) “a young, attractive, gay male”

N = 6

(e) “a young, hairless, gay male”

N = 5

(f) “opposite of a bear”

N = 3

(g) participant did not know or gave no response

N = 13

32 participants identified a *twink* as a young, gay male (a)-(e). Many participants included other *twink* elements such as being attractive, thin and hairless (referring to body hair) which is essentially the opposite of a *bear*, although the participants who provided (f) did not say so explicitly. Cage only defines a *twink* as being young and attractive (2003, p. 100) and Baker mentions that they usually do not have body hair (2002, p. 206). The thin attribute is thus a result of being contrasted with the term, *bear*.

Some terms therefore seem to be falling out of use or changing in meaning slightly while others are still popular. *Twink* is the best known term (32 respondents), followed by *Glory Hole* (31 respondents). *Moffie* (a gay man, not necessarily derogatory) and *Bear* were the next best known terms (30 respondents), followed by *drag* (man dressed as a woman – 28 respondents) and *camp* (effeminate man – 26 respondents), which shows that the more stereotypical definitions are still prevalent. With the exception of *Twink* and *Bear*, one could argue that the other best known words are words which are not specifically part of the Gayle lexicon (*Queen, Bitch, Fag/Faggot*), but words which are used in ‘mainstream’ society and are hence well known as well as derogatory or previously derogatory words for gay people. Words like *Twink* and *Bear* are likely to be gaining popularity due to the influence of the (gay) media on a broader audience. Although participants provided these definitions, many of them do not necessarily use the words which they defined. Actual word usage will be discussed in the next section.

4.1.3 Section 3: Word List Usage

The third section of the questionnaire was predominantly quantitative and to do with speakers’ word usage. Speakers were asked to select as many terms from the list as they use in a gay context.

Question 1, the word list, was very enlightening as there were 27 words which no participants said that they used: *AC/DC, Auntie Aida, Auntie Poppie, Bella, Betty Bangles, BM, Bolla, Bolla klits, Camp names, Cottage Queen, Divine, Dorothy (friend of), Drop one’s ovaries, Elsie Geselsie, Gil, isiGqumo, Kassie Trassie, Lily Lospoes, Lunch/lunchbox, Miss Priss, Rent piece, Rough trade, send up, Skesana, Skomoro/a, Tea, Coffee or Me?, Varda*, thus suggesting that these words are either not being used as much as they were in 1999 or that they are not being used at all anymore.

The following table shows the words from the wordlist on the left with the number of participants who said that they used the word on the right. The 103 terms are given in order of popularity:

Table 2: Most used words/phrases in Gayle

Drag Queen	37	Rim	23	Doll	12
Come out	36	Sleep around	23	Dora	11
Blow job	34	Gay bashing	22	Have/had	11
Straight	34	Have the hots for	22	Mince	11
Cum	33	Well endowed	22	Slap and tickle	11
Threesome	33	Well hung	22	Manvrou	10
Boyfriend	32	Cock tease	21	Moffietaal	10
Drama Queen	32	Hung	21	Skeef	10
Butch	31	Twink	21	Affair	9
Gaydar/Gadar	31	Wham, bam, thank you ma'am	21	Fish	9
Slut	31	Beulah	20	Koekstamp en giggel	9
Top	31	Fem(me)	20	Pink Rand	9
Bottom	30	Gang Bang	20	Bag	8
Queen	30	Glory hole	19	Diesel dyke	8
Camp	29	Toyboy	19	Kamp	8
Closet	29	Screw around	18	Rent	8
Drag	29	Cruise	17	Camp it up	7
Swing both ways	29	Jail bait	17	Clora	7
Fag Hag	28	Stunning	17	Easy meat	7
Wank	28	Fag/faggot	16	Hilda	7
One night stand	27	Golden shower	16	Stuk	7
Six pack	27	Meat	16	Trick	7
Girlfriend	26	Active	15	Lettie/Lettiebag	6
Bitch	25	Passive	15	On the side	6
Moffie	25	Score	15	Sheila	6
Queer	25	Crabs	14	Stabane	6
Sixty-nine	25	Dyke	14	Wendy	6
Bear	24	Fist fuck/fisting	14	Bliss	5
Closet Queen	24	Gayle/Gail	14	Cilla	5
Poppers	24	Limp wristed	14	Dizzy	5
S&M	24	Pomp	14	Groepswoeps	5
Scene	24	Rent boy	14	Nora	5
Boner	23	Family	13	IsiNgqumo/isiGqumo	2
Cradle snatching	23	Koffie Moffie	13		
Fairy	23	Aerie Faerie	12		

Many of the most used terms are terms from 'mainstream' society which do not necessarily refer to the gay community such as *blow job, cum, threesome, wank, one night stand, sixty-nine, S&M, boner, sleep around, have the hots for, gang bang, screw around, golden shower, score, fist fucking/fisting, glory hole, cruise, cock tease, wham, bam, thank you Ma'am, have/had, slap and tickle, pomp, stuk, meat, affair* and *on the side* are all terms for sexual acts or preferences and relationships which do not necessarily signify gay relationships and which are used equally by straight people. *Crabs* is the common name for the sexually transmitted disease, pubic lice, and *poppers* is the common name for the drug, again not specifically with reference to the gay community. *Straight, boyfriend, girlfriend, cradle snatching* and *toyboy* equally refer to straight relationships and *butch, well endowed, well hung, hung, six pack* are all used to describe straight men too. *Slut* and *bitch* were originally terms for females and are also terms which straight women use to refer to each other as terms of endearment in the same way as they are used in gay language. *Stunning* and *drama queen* are often used by straight females too. Hence, these words are all regularly used by straight people without direct reference to the gay community.

Moffie, Manvrou, fag/faggot, fairy, dyke, Queen, queer, camp and *limp wristed* are words which are generally used by the straight community to refer to gays, often in a demeaning manor. Recently, straight males (mostly the youth) have been using these kinds of terms with reference to each other as a way of insulting one another and affirming their own masculinity and sexuality (Burn, 2008, p. 1).

This leaves very few terms which are used exclusively by gays or to refer to gays, but even that is hard to determine. *Drag Queen, come out, top, bottom, closet, drag, swing both ways, Fag Hag, Bear, Closet Queen, Scene, Rim, gay bashing, Twink, Beaulah, Fem(me), jail bait, active, passive, Gayle/Gail, rent boy, family, Aerie Faerie, doll, mince, fish, bag, Diesel Dyke, gaydar, Pink Rand, rent, camp it up, easy meat, trick, bliss* and *dizzy* are words which usually refer directly to gays and the gay community.

Dora was the most used term derived from a woman's name (11 participants), followed by *Hilda* (7 participants), *Clora* (7 participants), *Lettie/lettiebag* (6 participants), *Sheila* (6 participants), *Wendy* (6 participants), *Cilla* (5 participants) and *Nora* (5 participants). This shows that words derived from women's names are being used less. This was a focal element of Gayle in Cage's study.

Pomp (14 participants), *Koffie Moffie* (13 participants), *Manvrou* (10 participants), *Moffietaal* (10 participants), *Skeef* (10 participants), *Koekstmp en giggel* (9 participants), *Kamp* (8 participants) and *Groepswoeps* (5 participants) are terms with Afrikaans origins. These terms also seem to be falling out of use or perhaps they were used less by the participants in this study because only 8 participants are Afrikaans L1 speakers, 4 speakers use Afrikaans as the matrix language when speaking Gayle/‘gay language’ and 10 speakers say that they mix English and Afrikaans as the base.

Stabane (6 participants) and *isiNgqumo* (2 participants) are the only isiNgqumo words which were used by participants. Only 2 participants in my study, who are isiZulu speakers from KwaZulu-Natal, said that they speak some isiNgqumo. This perhaps shows that isiNgqumo has remained contained in the KwaZulu-Natal area as Rudwick and Ntuli suggested, and it has not had much influence on Gayle or Cape Town gay slang. These terms would perhaps be better known in a city like Johannesburg where there are larger numbers of isiZulu speakers.

Question 2, when you use these words/phrases, what language do you use as a base?, was answered with 33 participants selecting English, Afrikaans (4 participants), isiXhosa (1 participant) and 10 participants mixing English and Afrikaans. This is shown in the figure below:

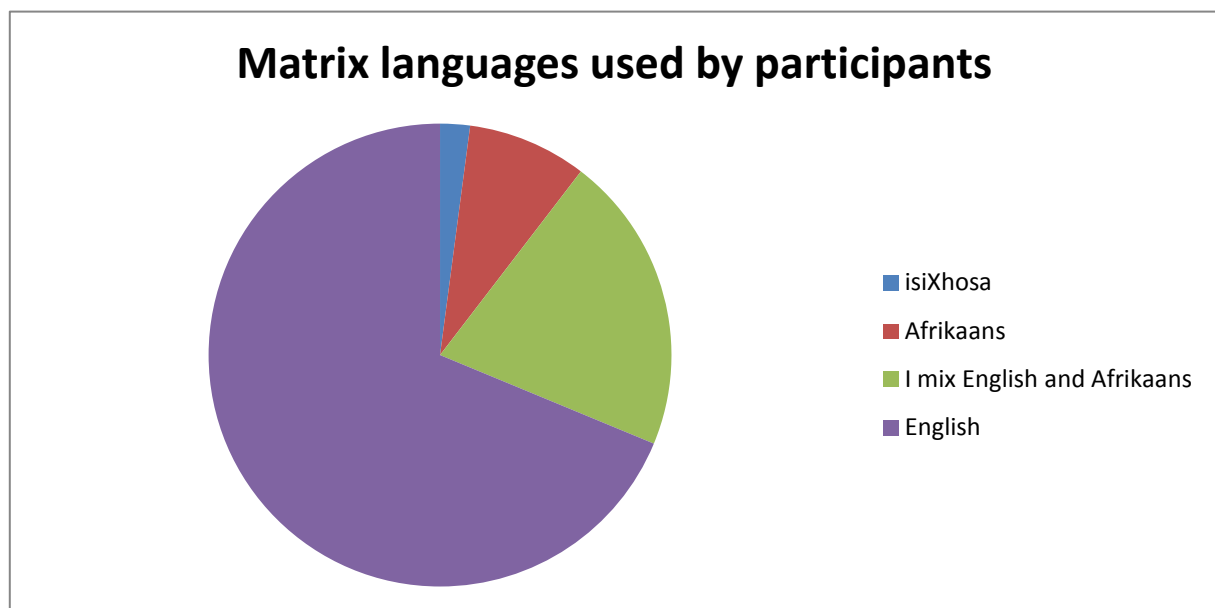


Figure 11: Matrix languages used by participants

The following table gives participants' home and matrix languages (see Table 3). This shows just how linguistically homogeneous the sample is as 30 participants use English as a base when using 'gay language' and it is also their L1. Only 5 English L1s use English and Afrikaans as a base and 5 Afrikaans L1s do the same. The isiZulu L1s use English as the matrix language when using these terms because the terms are from Gayle and not isiNggumo, which would mean that they would use isiZulu as the matrix (Bongi, 22 year old, isiZulu L1, black, gay male).

Table 3: Participants' home and matrix languages

<u>Home Language</u>	<u>Matrix Language</u>	<u>Number of Participants</u>
English L1	English	30
English L1	mix English and Afrikaans	5
Afrikaans L1	mix English and Afrikaans	5
Afrikaans L1	Afrikaans	2
isiZulu L1	English	2
English L1	Afrikaans	1
English L1	Afrikaans or English	1
English and Afrikaans L1	mix English and Afrikaans	1
isiXhosa L1	isiXhosa	1

In **Question 3**, participants listed words which they found offensive. Many participants said that the words they found offensive were the words that they did not select in the previous question. Participants said that most words referring to gay men/women were derogatory and they therefore avoided them as well as crude sexual terms. 14 participants said that *fag/faggot* was offensive, 6 said *dyke* was offensive, 7 said *moffie* was offensive, 2 said *fairy* was offensive and 2 said *cunt* was offensive even though it was not on the list provided. Other terms which were mentioned as being offensive were *cruise*, *Queer*, *fag hag*, *limp wristed* and *homosexual* which one participant said was only used by homophobes to describe gays (Adrian, 24 year old, English L1, white, gay male), *Diesel Dyke*, *Manvrou*, *bitch*, *slut*, *rug muncher* (also not on the list provided) and *Inkonkoni* "hermaphrodite' used by illiterate people" (Bongi, 22 year old, isiZulu L1, black, gay male). 7 participants said that they did not find any words offensive.

Any comments:

In the comments section, participants said that they had enjoyed the questionnaire, they thought it was well-structured and liked the open-ended questions which had caused them to think about their own lives (Bongi, 22 year old, isiZulu L1, gay male). Many thanked me for doing this study and said that they thought it was very important for the gay community. One participant highlighted the generational difference in the gay community. Unfortunately this was not well reflected in my findings as the participants whom my questionnaire reached were younger. A future study would do well to compare the generations.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, gay language is still very much in existence in Cape Town although it is perpetuated in many different ways. How much of it is Gayle as Ken Cage described and defined it in his 1999 study and 2003 dictionary is unclear and debatable, but ultimately it is the property of the speakers who have expressed concern at attempts to label it at all.

Gay language's main form in the current day can best be described as a set of words and phrases used predominantly by members of the LGBTI community and those who interact closely with them. The spread of these terms has been attributed to the growing global gay media, gay references in global media as well as in local media and computer-mediated communications. Changes in South Africa's laws since apartheid have also had an effect on the political and geographical segregations which affected the participants in Cage's study. Participants are affected by current day economic and educational segregations which lead to the formation of different social groups.

The focus group of this study was predominantly white, middle-class, English L1 gay men between the ages of 20-30 born and raised in Cape Town, Western Cape, who are students at tertiary institutions or young professionals holding tertiary qualifications. This is a social group with much interaction via social networking channels and in the area of Cape Town's *gay village* of De Waterkant, where they can interact in a safe and accepting environment.

Although it is likely that there are stark generational differences (which were not a focus of this study), Gayle, its functions and history, are still known by this group of young gay men and still used in some forms. Various terms seem to be falling out of use, mostly those which are viewed as pejorative such as *fag/faggot* and *moffie*, or which have a derogatory history as well as those which are crude and therefore offensive. Many of these terms, however, are being incorporated more and more into 'mainstream' society and so they have lost their 'secret code' appeal (some of them lost this appeal when the new laws came into being). This has created a niche for new gay slang terms like those which are used in various television shows popular among the gay community, such as "hunty or queef" (Giles, 22 year old, English L1, white, gay male) made popular by *RuPaul's Drag Show*.

Many members of the LGBTI community and straight people too, commented that while South Africa has such a progressive constitution and Cape Town is one of the more tolerant cities, if not the most tolerant in Africa, they still feel that more needs to be done, especially in terms of LGBTI education. While laws can be changed and enforced, peoples' attitudes cannot be controlled in the same way.

Thus, gay language in Cape Town is still part of the gay community for those who embrace it as a way of making light of past atrocities and their own sexuality, using it now for entertainment and humour purposes as well as a form of group cohesion and solidarity. There are also those who actively avoid it, out of respect for the gay community or because they feel it separates them further from the 'mainstream' society, which they have worked to be integrated into and thus acts as a form of self-exclusion.

The lines between language and Gayle/'gay language' have blurred over time and so much is becoming part of 'mainstream' society that it is difficult to say where Gayle/'gay language' starts and ends. Gayle is therefore not a language in the traditional sense, but a lavender lexicon, a status which could be diminishing in the current climate.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1 APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANTS' DETAILS

Table 4: Participants' Details

	<u>Name</u> (pseudonyms have been used for ethical reasons)	<u>Where you were born</u> (province)	<u>Where you live now and how long you have lived there</u> (province and years)	<u>Home language</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Sexual orientation</u>	<u>Educational level</u>
1	Giles	KwaZulu-Natal	Western Cape - 1 year	English	22	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
2	Yusuf	KwaZulu-Natal	Western Cape - 23 years	English and Afrikaans	24	Coloured	Male	Bisexual	Tertiary
3	Roux	Western Cape	Western Cape - 32 years	Afrikaans	32	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
4	Dale	Eastern Cape	Western Cape - 27 years	English	28	Indian	Male	Gay	Tertiary
5	Jake	Western Cape	Western Cape - 20 years	English	20	White	male	Gay	Tertiary
6	Raymond	Mpumalanga	Western Cape - 2 months	English	28	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
7	Kevin	KwaZulu-Natal	Western Cape - 8 years	English	29	Indian	Male	Gay	Tertiary
8	Laura	Western Cape	Western Cape - 25 years	English	25	Coloured	Female	Straight	Tertiary
9	Rebecca	Western Cape	Western Cape	x	25	White	Female	x	Tertiary
10	Bronwyn	Western Cape	Western Cape - 26 years	English	26	White	Female	Straight, bi-sensual (find women aesthetically and	Tertiary

								occasionally sexually pleasing)	
11	Leigh	Western Cape	Western Cape - 18 years Eastern Cape - (4 years while studying) Western Cape - 1 year now	English	23	White	Female	Bisexual	Tertiary
12	Samantha	KwaZulu-Natal	Western Cape - 20 years	English	28	White	Female	Straight	Tertiary
13	Claire	United Kingdom	Western Cape - 21 years	English	29	White	Female	Straight	Tertiary
14	Lauren	Western Cape	Western Cape - 8 years Mauritius - 12 years Eastern Cape - 6 years (while studying) Western Cape - 9 months now	English	25	White	Female	Bisexual	Tertiary
15	Caryn	Western Cape	Western Cape - 18 years Eastern Cape - 4 years (while studying) Western Cape - 1 year now	English	23	White	Female	Lesbian	Tertiary
16	Andrea	Gauteng	Western Cape - 16 years	English	48	White	Female	Straight	Tertiary
17	Bruce	Zimbabwe	Western Cape - 19 years	English	29	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
18	Greg	Eastern Cape	Western Cape - 2 years	English	39	White	Male	Straight	Tertiary
19	Victor	Western Cape	Western Cape - 22 years	Afrikaans	22	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
20	Renée	Western Cape	Western Cape - 32 years	English	32	White	Female	Lesbian	Tertiary
21	Josie	KwaZulu-Natal	Western Cape - 4 years	English	22	White	Female	Straight	Tertiary
22	Roger	United Kingdom	Western Cape - 4 years	English	39	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
23	Jack	Western Cape	Western Cape - 19 years	English	19	White	Male	Gay	Matric
24	Marius	Western Cape	South Korea - 1,5 years	English	24	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary

25	Steve	North West	Gauteng - 19 years	English	24	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
26	Molly	Western Cape	Western Cape - 25 years	English	52	White	female	Straight	Tertiary
27	Gary	Zimbabwe	Eastern Cape - 5 years	English	24	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
28	Bryan	KwaZulu-Natal	Western Cape - 10 years	English	28	White	Male	Straight	Tertiary
29	Calvin	United Kingdom	KwaZulu-Natal - 9 years Studying at UCT (4 th year)	English	21	White	Male	Gay	Matric
30	Julian	Northern Cape	Western Cape - 3 years	Afrikaans	22	Coloured	Male	Gay	Tertiary
31	Amy	Western Cape	Western Cape	English	20	White	Female	Lesbian	Matric
32	Sebastian	Western Cape	Western Cape - 20 years	English	38	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
33	Sam	KwaZulu-Natal	Western Cape - 2 years	English	29	White	Male	Straight	Tertiary
34	Hope	KwaZulu-Natal	KwaZulu-Natal - 22 years Studying at UCT (4 th year)	IsiZulu	22	Black	Male	Gay	Matric
35	Adrian	Western Cape	Western Cape - 24 years	English	24	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
36	Jacques	Gauteng	Western Cape - 3 years	English	21	White	Male	Gay	Matric
37	Bongi	KwaZulu-Natal	Western Cape - 5 years	isiZulu	22	Black	Male	Gay	Tertiary
38	Marcus	Western Cape	Western Cape - 28 years	Afrikaans	28	White	Male	Gay	Matric
39	Walter	Western Cape	Western Cape - 25 years	isiXhosa	25	Black	Male	Gay	Tertiary
40	Sadie	Western Cape	Western Cape - 24 years	English	24	Coloured	Female	Lesbian	Tertiary
41	Tara	Western Cape	Western Cape - 25 years	English	25	Coloured	Female	Straight	Tertiary
42	Chester	Eastern Cape	Western Cape - 25 years	Afrikaans	42	White	Male	Gay	Matric
43	Tiaan	Eastern Cape	Western Cape - 5 years	Afrikaans	26	White	Male	Gay	Tertiary
44	Kerry	Gauteng	Western Cape - 19 years KwaZulu-Natal - 5 years now	English	24	White	Female	Straight	Tertiary
45	Roberto	Western Cape	Western Cape - 22 years	English	22	Coloured	Male	Gay	Tertiary
46	Neville	Western Cape	Western Cape - 26 years	Afrikaans	26	Coloured	Male	Bisexual	Tertiary

47	Michael	Western Cape	Western Cape - 28 years	English	28	Coloured	Male	Gay	Tertiary
48	Rhys	Western Cape	Western Cape - 29 years	English	29	White	Male	Gay	Matric

7.2 APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY OF GAYLE TERMS

Table 5: Glossary of Gayle terms

<u>Word/phrase</u>	<u>Definition</u>	<u>Reference</u>
<i>AC/DC</i>	“adj. bisexual” [American Gayspeak of the 1960s]	(Cage, 2003, p. 52)
<i>Active</i>	“adj. person who prefers the role of penetrator during sexual intercourse”	(Cage, 2003, p. 52)
<i>Aerie Faerie</i>	“n. SAA flight steward” [South African Airways, 1970s]	(Cage, 2003, p. 52)
<i>Affair</i>	“n. 1. gay relationship, usually of less than one month’s duration 2. gay lover” [Dutch gay slang]	(Cage, 2003, p. 52)
<i>Auntie Aida</i>	“n. AIDS”	(Cage, 2003, p. 54)
<i>Auntie Poppie</i>	“n. poppers, amyl nitrate”	(Cage, 2003, p. 54)
<i>Bag</i>	“n. 1. a butch man 2. one’s lover”	(Cage, 2003, p. 55)
<i>Bear</i>	“n. heavy set, large, hairy man, usually over 30, usually with substantial body hair” [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 55)
<i>Beulah</i>	“adj. beautiful”	(Cage, 2003, p. 56)
<i>Belenia</i>	“n. attractive man”	(Cage, 2003, p. 57)
<i>Bella</i>	“adj. violent v. hit, beat up, assault”	(Cage, 2003, p. 57)
<i>Betty Bangles</i>	“n. 1. handcuffs 2. policeman ”	(Cage, 2003, p. 57)
<i>Bit</i>	“n. a gay man” [Western Cape]	(Cage, 2003, p. 58)
<i>Bitch</i>	“n. unpleasant person, also used as a form of address to insult or for fun”	(Cage, 2003, p. 58)
<i>Blow job</i>	"n. the act of fellatio/sucking another man's penis"	(Cage, 2003, p. 58)
<i>BM</i>	“n. 1. heterosexual person (abbr. of Baby Maker 2. heterosexual male (abbr. of Bloody Male)”	(Cage, 2003, p. 55)
<i>Bolla</i>	“n. 1. hair 2. hairstyle” [Afrikaans]	(Cage, 2003, p. 58)
<i>Bolla klits</i>	“v. style/comb the hair” [Afrikaans]	(Cage, 2003, p. 58)
<i>Boner</i>	“n. erection”	(Cage, 2003, p. 58)
<i>Bottom</i>	“n. man who enjoys being	(Cage, 2003, p. 59)

	penetrated during sexual intercourse” [American Gayspeak]	
<i>Boyfriend</i>	“n. lover”	(Cage, 2003, p. 59)
<i>Bunny</i>	“noun: twentieth century pejorative slang for an effeminate gay man”	(Baker, 2002, p. 118)
<i>Butch</i>	"adj. very masculine n. masculine lesbian"	(Cage, 2003, p. 60)
<i>Camp</i>	"adj. 1. enjoyable, causing laughter 2. outrageous n. a form of humour popular among gay people, using satire and sometimes downright mean v. 1. solicit for sexual purposes 2. mimic the opposite sex 3. to be witty and clever 4. mix with gay people"	(Cage, 2003, p. 61)
<i>Camp it up</i>	“v. overact in an affected and exaggerated manner”	(Cage, 2003, p. 61)
<i>Camp names</i>	“n. girl’s names exchanged for boys names, usually alliterative, but also used to indicate personality traits”	(Cage, 2003, p. 61)
<i>Cilla</i>	“n. cigarette”	(Cage, 2003, p. 62)
<i>Clora</i>	“n. coloured person” [Western Cape]	(Cage, 2003, p. 61)
<i>Closet</i>	"noun: the status of a gay man or lesbian who is yet to declare their sexuality"	(Baker, 2002, p. 99)
<i>Closet Queen</i>	"n. person who has or is suspected of having homosexual tendencies, but who has not acknowledged them publically"	(Cage, 2003, p. 62)
<i>Cock tease</i>	"n. a male homosexual who arouses a man sexually, and then refuses gratification"	(Cage, 2003, p. 63)
<i>Come out</i>	"v. to acknowledge one's homosexuality publically"	(Cage, 2003, p. 63)
<i>Cottage Queen</i>	“n. someone who frequents public toilets for anonymous sex”	(Cage, 2003, p. 63)
<i>Crabs</i>	“n. an infection of pubic lice”	(Cage, 2003, p. 63)
<i>Cradle snatching</i>	<i>cradle snatcher</i> : “n. someone who dates a man much younger than himself” (also: cradle snatching) [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 63)
<i>Cruise</i>	“v. go out looking for sex” [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 63)
<i>Cum</i>	"n. semen v. ejaculate" [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 63)
<i>Diesel dyke</i>	“n. butch, masculine lesbian”	(Cage, 2003, p. 66)

<i>Divine</i>	“adj. beautiful, lovely”	(Cage, 2003, p. 66)
<i>Dizzy</i>	“adj. stupid, unreliable, scatter-brained”	(Cage, 2003, p. 66)
<i>Divine</i>	“adj. beautiful, lovely”	(Cage, 2003, p. 66)
<i>Doll</i>	“n. 1. desirable man 2. term of endearment” [Western Cape]	(Cage, 2003, p. 66)
<i>Dora</i>	"adj. drunk n. 1. alcoholic drink [Western Cape] 2. alcoholic person v. drink alcohol"	(Cage, 2003, p. 66)
<i>Dorothy (a friend of)</i>	“n. gay man” [from Dorothy Gale in <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> . Dorothy had unusual and strange friends – the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion and the Scarecrow]	(Cage, 2003, pp. 66-67)
<i>Drag</i>	“n. 1. Women’s clothing [British Polari] 2. Party [Western Cape, 1950s] v. to dress in clothing of the opposite sex”	(Cage, 2003, p. 67)
<i>Drag Queen</i>	"n. a man who dresses in women's clothing"	(Cage, 2003, p. 67)
<i>Drama Queen</i>	"noun: anybody (but especially a gay man) whose emotional response tends to be exaggerated in every situation"	(Baker, 2002, p. 113)
<i>Drop one's ovaries</i>	“v. 1. be besotted by a particular man 2. get a fright”	(Cage, 2003, p. 67)
<i>Dyke</i>	"butch lesbian"	(Cage, 2003, p. 67)
<i>Easy meat</i>	“n. a man who is easily persuaded to participate in a homosexual act” [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 68)
<i>Elsie Geselsie</i>	“n. (Afr.) (lit = Elsie, little chatterer) chatterbox, someone who talks constantly” [Western Cape]	(Cage, 2003, p. 68)
<i>Fag Hag</i>	“n. single straight women who hangs around with gay men”	(Cage, 2003, p. 69)
<i>Fag/faggot</i>	"n. gay man"	(Cage, 2003, p. 68)
<i>Fairy</i>	"n. effeminate homosexual man"	(Cage, 2003, p. 68)
<i>Family</i>	"adj. gay"	(Cage, 2003, p. 68)
<i>Fem(me)</i>	“adj. effeminate, feminine”	(Cage, 2003, p. 70)
<i>Fish</i>	n. a female “	(Cage, 2003, p. 70)
<i>Fist fuck/fisting</i>	“n. the placing of (or the attempt at placing) the whole hand, or even both hands, into the rectum of	(Cage, 2003, p. 70)

	vagina”	
<i>Gang Bang</i>	"n. 1. orgy 2. gang rape"	(Cage, 2003, p. 71)
<i>Gay bashing</i>	"n. assaulting of gay men by homophobic heterosexual men"	(Cage, 2003, p. 71)
<i>Gaydar/Gadar</i>	“n. the ability of one gay person to recognise another gay person” [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 71)
<i>Gayle/Gail</i>	“v. chat” [Western Cape]	(Cage, 2003, p. 71)
<i>Gil</i>	“adj. fun (lit. = shriek) n. group of gay men v.1. enjoy oneself 2. be loud”	(Cage, 2003, p. 72)
<i>Girlfriend</i>	“n. 1. lesbian lover 2. male gay friend” [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 71)
<i>Glory hole</i>	“n. hole between cubicles in a public lavatory which is big enough for a man to insert his penis through and have it sucked anonymously by the man in the cubicle next door”	(Cage, 2003, p. 72)
<i>Goensch</i>	“v. to have sexual relations” [Zimbabwe]	(Cage, 2003, p. 72)
<i>Golden shower</i>	“n. stream of urine urinated onto the body for sexual pleasure adj. golden shower queen, someone who is a urine fetishist”	(Cage, 2003, p. 72)
<i>Groepswoeps</i>	“n. (Afr) lit. = group bounce) orgy”	(Cage, 2003, p. 73)
<i>Have the hots for</i>	“v. desire someone sexually”	(Cage, 2003, p. 74)
<i>Have/had</i>	“v. to have sex with someone”	(Cage, 2003, p. 74)
<i>Hilda</i>	"adj. ugly"	(Cage, 2003, p. 75)
<i>Hung</i>	“adj. having a large penis” [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 75)
<i>IsiGqumo/isiNgqumo</i>	“n. (Zulu) gay township slang”	(Cage, 2003, p. 76)
<i>Jail bait</i>	“n. boy under the legal age of consent”	(Cage, 2003, p. 77)
<i>Kamp</i>	(Afr.) “camp”	(Cage, 2003, p. 78)
<i>Kassie Trassie</i>	“n. (Afr.) closet queen”	(Cage, 2003, p. 78)
<i>Koekstamp en giggel</i>	"v. (Afr.) (lit. = bang fannies together and giggle) sexual contact between two women, two passive gay men, or a gay man and a woman"	(Cage, 2003, p. 78)
<i>Koffie Moffie</i>	"n. (Afr.) (lit. = coffee queer) South African Airways flight steward"	(Cage, 2003, p. 78)
<i>Lettie/Lettiebag</i>	“n. lesbian”	(Cage, 2003, p. 79)

<i>Lily Lospoes</i>	“n. (Afr.) (lit. = Lily loose cunt) a promiscuous gay man”	(Cage, 2003, p. 80)
<i>Limp wristed</i>	“noun: one of the stereotypical characteristics of a gay man”	(Baker, 2002, p. 158)
<i>Lunch/lunchbox</i>	“n. male genitals”	(Cage, 2003, p. 80)
<i>Manvrou</i>	“n. (Afr.) (lit. = man-woman) butch lesbian” [Western Cape]	(Cage, 2003, p. 81)
<i>Meat</i>	“n. penis”	(Cage, 2003, p. 82)
<i>Mildred (Milly)</i>	“adj. dizzy, mad”	(Cage, 2003, p. 82)
<i>Mince</i>	“v. sashay while walking” [Standard English]	(Cage, 2003, p. 82)
<i>Miss Priss</i>	“n. arrogant, self-opinionated gay man”	(Cage, 2003, p. 82)
<i>Moffie</i>	"n. (Afr.) 1. gay man 2. effeminate gay man - generally with pejorative connotations"	(Cage, 2003, p. 82)
<i>Moffietaal</i>	“n. (Afr.) (lit. = gay language) Cape gay slang spoken by the coloureds in the 1950s” [Western Cape]	(Cage, 2003, p. 83)
<i>Nommer</i>	“n. (Afr.) (lit. = number)” see <i>number</i>	(Cage, 2003, p. 84)
<i>Nora</i>	“adj. stupid” [Unlike most of the female names in Gayle which are alliterative, this word is probably from igNORAnt]	(Cage, 2003, p. 84)
<i>Number</i>	“n. person with whom one is involved/sleeping with, someone to whom one is attracted, generally indicating a transient relationship”	(Cage, 2003, p. 85)
<i>On the side</i>	“adj. additional or extra sex outside one’s relationship”	(Cage, 2003, p. 86)
<i>One night stand</i>	"n. a one-off sexual encounter with someone"	(Cage, 2003, p. 86)
<i>Passive</i>	"n. passive partner during anal intercourse"	(Cage, 2003, p. 87)
<i>Pink Rand</i>	“n. South African version of the British Pink Pound and the American Pink Dollar – used to show the economic power of gay spending and how gay money contributes to the country’s economy”	(Cage, 2003, p. 88)
<i>Pomp</i>	“n. (Afr.) (lit. = pump) person you are currently sleeping with – generally indicative of a transient relationship v. (Afr.) have sex”	(Cage, 2003, p. 89)
<i>Poppers</i>	“n. amyl nitrate”	(Cage, 2003, p. 88)

<i>Pouf/Poufter</i>	“noun: homosexual man”	(Baker, 2002, p. 48)
<i>Queen</i>	"n. 1. a gay man who is extremely effeminate 2. designation among gay men for one another 3. used with another noun to indicate place of residence, profession or personality" [British Polari]	(Cage, 2003, p. 90)
<i>Queer</i>	"adj. be gay n. a gay man [Adopted by militant and radical gays in the 1990s as a preferable, and more confrontational alternative to gay]"	(Cage, 2003, p. 90)
<i>Rent</i>	"n. male prostitute who is not usually gay himself, but is prepared to have sex with a man in return for money [British Polari] v. to prostitute oneself for the pleasure of gay men"	(Cage, 2003, p. 91)
<i>Rent boy</i>	“noun: a male prostitute”	(Baker, 2002, p. 149)
<i>Rent piece</i>	See <i>rent. piece</i> : “n. person with whom one is involved, someone to whom one is attracted”	(Cage, 2003, p. 88)
<i>Rim</i>	“v. stick tongue into or lick the anus adj. rim queen, man who enjoys rimming as part of his sexual activity” [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 91)
<i>Rough trade</i>	“n. rent boys from working class backgrounds, usually Afrikaans-speaking, often not gay themselves, but dependent on male prostitution to make extra pocket money”	(Cage, 2003, p. 92)
<i>S&M</i>	"n. (abbr.) sadomasochism v. Stand and Model, referring to men who pose in public places"	(Cage, 2003, p. 93)
<i>Scene</i>	“n. 1. The gay world of bars, clubs and private relationships 2. a sexual encounter”	(Cage, 2003, p. 93)
<i>Score</i>	“n. 1. to achieve a liaison with a sexually desirable person 2. to have sex”	(Cage, 2003, p. 93)
<i>Screw around</i>	“v. be sexually promiscuous”	(Cage, 2003, p. 93)
<i>Send up</i>	"v. tease, put down"	(Cage, 2003, p. 93)
<i>Sheila</i>	“n. faeces v. defecate”	(Cage, 2003, p. 94)
<i>Sister</i>	“n. gay male friend”	(Cage, 2003, p. 94)

<i>Six pack</i>	"n. well-developed abdominal muscles which resemble a six-pack of beer"	(Cage, 2003, p. 94)
<i>Sixty-nine</i>	"v. perform mutual fellatio between two persons, suck each other's penises at the same time"	(Cage, 2003, p. 94)
<i>Skeef</i>	"adj. (Afr.) (lit. = skew) gay" [Western Cape]	(Cage, 2003, p. 94)
<i>Skesana</i>	n. (Zulu) man who plays a passive role in anal intercourse [South African township gay slang]	(Cage, 2003, p. 94)
<i>Skomoro/a</i>	"v. (Zulu) masturbate" [South African township gay slang]	(Cage, 2003, p. 95)
<i>Slap and tickle</i>	"n. a light-hearted sexual liaison"	(Cage, 2003, p. 95)
<i>Sleep around</i>	"v. be sexually promiscuous"	(Cage, 2003, p. 95)
<i>Slut</i>	"n. sexually promiscuous person"	(Cage, 2003, p. 95)
<i>Stabane</i>	"n. (Zulu) gay man" [South African township gay slang]	(Cage, 2003, p. 96)
<i>Straight</i>	"adj. Heterosexual n. heterosexual person"	(Cage, 2003, p. 96)
<i>Stuk</i>	"n. (Afr.) (lit. = piece)" see <i>piece</i>	(Cage, 2003, p. 96)
<i>Stunning</i>	"adj. fabulous"	(Cage, 2003, p. 96)
<i>Swing both ways</i>	"adj. be bisexual"	(Cage, 2003, p. 97)
<i>Tea, Coffee or me?</i>	"n. South African Airways flight steward"	(Cage, 2003, p. 98)
<i>Threesome</i>	"n. a sexual act involving three people at the same time"	(Cage, 2003, p. 98)
<i>Top</i>	"n. gay man who prefers to penetrate his partner during anal intercourse" [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 99)
<i>Toyboy</i>	"n. a younger male lover, who is usually supported by an older man"	(Cage, 2003, p. 99)
<i>Trick</i>	"n. a casual sexual partner, usually a male prostitute v. to have a passing sexual liaison, usually with a male prostitute" [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 99)
<i>Twink</i>	"n. attractive young gay man" [American Gayspeak, from the sponge cake, Twinkie, which is soft, brown and filled with cream. The South African equivalent of the Twinkie is the Tinkie]	(Cage, 2003, p. 100)
<i>Varda</i>	"v. look at, see" [British Polari]	(Cage, 2003, p. 102)
<i>Wank</i>	"v. masturbate" [British Polari]	(Cage, 2003, p. 103)
<i>Well endowed</i>	See <i>well hung</i>	(Cage, 2003, p. 103)
<i>Well hung</i>	"adj. Well-endowed, having a large penis"	(Cage, 2003, p. 103)

<i>Wendy</i>	“n. 1. gay white man [Western Cape] 2. cry baby”	(Cage, 2003, p. 103)
<i>Wham, bam, thank you ma'am</i>	"n. quick sexual act with little or no tenderness" [American Gayspeak]	(Cage, 2003, p. 103)
<i>Zelda</i>	“n. Zulu homosexual”	(Cage, 2003, p. 105)

**7.3 APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE ON GAY LANGUAGE/SLANG IN CAPE
TOWN**