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**“The language is weak”: Language ideologies and learner positioning in
a desegregated English medium suburban primary school**

Hannah Carrim

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award of the degree of Master of Development Studies

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DECLARATION

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

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Abstract

Despite the multilingual resources of the majority of South African learners, schools in South Africa have shown an increasing trend towards English medium of instruction from the onset of formal education. This trend has resulted in many learners being expected to access the curriculum through an additional language. Important questions are thus raised about how the multilingual resources of learners are viewed within the education system, and the discourses that are (re)produced about English language learners in English medium schools. This research therefore sets out as a small-scale case study to explore the language ideologies (Woolard 1992) in the foundation phase of a suburban, desegregated, English medium school, Southern Junior (SJ), attended by a majority of mother tongue Xhosa speaking learners. The data was collected over a one-month period and included interview material with eight members of teaching staff and field notes and video footage from ethnographic classroom observations of 'teaching as usual' (Davies & Hunt 1994). A particular focus was on the discursive practices of a teacher and language aide in a Grade 1 class. The data was then analysed with reference to post-structuralist discourse analysis (Baxter 2002).

Bourdieu (1977) and Blommaert (2010) were drawn on to explore the ways in which discourses about language are (re)produced and become (il)legitimate in this setting. Particularly, the focus of data analysis is on the power dimensions inherent in the language ideologies circulating at SJ, and the ways in which this environment enables and disables language resources in a context of multilingualism. In relation to this focus on language, I address questions about race, assimilation and the negotiation of difference in desegregated schooling (Soudien 2004; Sayed & Soudien 2003; McKinney 2007; Makoe 2007) and the ways in which teachers position learners in light of this (Davies & Hunt 1994). The study revealed the deficit positioning of learners by teachers in reference to monoglot English linguistic ideologies highly interlinked with racial stereotypes that privilege white ways of knowing and being. The data showed that English, and a particular variety of White South African English, is the linguistic capital at SJ while the mother tongue Xhosa linguistic repertoires that learners bring with them from home are devalued. The points of rupture to the dominant ideologies observed in the Grade 1 language aide's use of both English and Xhosa to facilitate learning were then analysed with reference to Gutierrez' (2008) theorisations of hybrid literacy practices and the 'third space' in classrooms.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANA- Annual National Assessment

BSAE- Black South African English

CFE- Cape Flats English

CAPS- Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

ELL- English Language Learner

FAL- First Additional Language

HL- Home Language

IQMS- Integrated Quality Management System

LiEP- Language in Education Policy

PRAESA- The Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa

SAL- Second Additional Language

SGB- School Governing Body

SJ- Southern Junior

WCED- Western Cape Education Department

WSAE- White South African English

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Chapter 1

Introduction:

1.1. Rationale and Research Aim

Despite the multilingual resources of the majority of South African learners, schools in South Africa have shown an increasing trend towards English medium of instruction from the onset of formal education. This trend has resulted in many learners being expected to access the curriculum through an additional language. Important questions are thus raised about how the multilingual resources of learners are viewed within the education system and what discourses are produced about language in school settings. Southern Junior (SJ)¹ a desegregated English medium former model C school² based in a suburban area of Cape Town provided the field for an exploration of these questions. Since the desegregation of the school in the early 1990s, SJ has experienced a change in demographics from white³ English home language learners and teachers living in the surrounding area to a majority of African mother tongue⁴ Xhosa/ English language learners (ELLs)⁵ travelling in from the surrounding townships. The teaching staff has remained fairly static throughout the changes in learner demographics and thus most teachers at SJ have little competency in the home language of their learners. Given this context, I wish to investigate the ways in which discourses about language are (re)produced and become (il)legitimate in this multilingual setting drawing on Bourdieu (1977;1991) and Blommaert (2010). In relation to this focus on language, I wish to address questions about race, assimilation and the negotiation of difference in desegregated schooling (Soudien 2004; Sayed & Soudien 2003; McKinney 2007; Makoe 2007) and

¹ The school, teachers and learners are given pseudonyms throughout.

² In 1992, all former white state schools were converted to model C schools.

³ It is important to note that I do not uphold the categorisation of people according to race as a 'natural' category, but use the terms African, Indian, coloured and white as a way of writing about race in post-Apartheid South Africa.

⁴ I use the term mother tongue to refer to the first language or language a child has learnt from birth for the sake of simplicity, however I acknowledge that this term is problematic in that it does not take account of the full linguistic repertoires a person may have.

⁵ I use the term ELLs as it denotes inclusivity whilst acknowledging that these are students learning English in school, however it is problematic in that it devalues other languages by putting English in a position of primacy (García et al. 2008, p. 7).

the ways in which teachers position learners in light of these issues (Davies & Hunt 1994). This research therefore sets out as a small-scale case study to explore the language ideologies⁶ in the foundation phase of an English medium school with a majority of mother tongue Xhosa speaking learners.

In order to clarify the scope and context for this study, in this chapter I will firstly offer a brief overview of the national policy and curriculum context (namely the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) and Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)) in which this research is situated. Secondly, I will provide an introduction to the research setting of SJ in which the fieldwork took place. Thirdly, informed by the discussion of the contextual factors, I will outline the central research questions as situated in this specific institution.

1.2. The South African language in education policy context

1.2.1 The Language in Education Policy (LiEP)

The medium of instruction in South African schools is officially mediated by the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) of 1997 (Department of Education). Central to this policy is the commitment to multilingualism through an additive bilingualism approach (the addition of another language and maintenance of the first/mother tongue language) as the desirable norm in South African schools and a commitment to first language (L1) medium of instruction. Significantly, however many of the multilingual ideals of this document are not legally binding and as the School Governing Bodies (SGBs) are tasked with developing internal school language policies (often choosing English) many of its ideals have not been realised. Further, a government issued report by the Presidents Education Initiative (PEI) in 1999 promoted a straight for English approach further indicating a lack of commitment to the LiEP (Taylor & Vinjevold 1999).

⁶ Language ideologies refer to “representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world” (Woolard 1992, p.3). See Chapter 2.2.1 for further explanation.

Numerous studies have shown that the aims of the LiEP have largely not been realised in schools and that the English approach to medium of instruction has become the standard despite a majority of mother tongue African language speakers in the system (Probyn 2005; Taylor & Vinjevold 1999; Heugh 2000; Alexander 2000). Most schools have chosen the option of offering mother tongue instruction from Grade 1 to Grade 3 with a switch to English in Grade 4, however, English from Grade 1 is an increasingly popular option (Banda 2000). In 2007, only 7% of learners were mother tongue English learners, while 79.1% of learners in Grade 4 were officially learning through English as the medium of instruction (Department of Basic Education 2010). The reality is, however, that the majority of these schools use code-switching⁷ between English and an African language as a practice for teaching (Probyn 2009). Suburban former model C schools, such as SJ, work as the exception to this standard generally offering monolingual English instruction (Soudien 2004; Makoe 2007; McKinney 2007).

There has been much political and academic debate over the failure of the LiEP and renewed calls to strengthen the additive bilingualism model and the ideals of this policy (Alexander 2000; Benson 2008; Heugh 2000; Brock-Utne et al. 2003). This research is, however, not directly concerned with debating the value of mother tongue instruction against English medium of instruction. Rather, I wish to draw attention to the growing phenomenon of learners accessing the curriculum in an additional language in English medium schools. This study is undertaken with a view to understanding the ways in which teachers position learners in this system. Linked to this, I wish to address how the continued privileging of English as the language of instruction, often linked to racialised and assimilationist ideologies in schools, works as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion (Soudien 2004; Alexander 2000) .

⁷ Code-switching refers to the concurrent use of more than one language, or language variety, in communication, see Chapter 2 for further discussion.

1.2.2 The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)

The Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS), announced in 2011, follows from the first education models of the new democracy, Outcomes Based Education (1997-2003) and the Revised National Curriculum Statement (2003-2011), both of which showed little integration with the multilingual objectives of the LiEP (Heugh 2000, p.6). The CAPS model offers a move away from an emphasis on outcomes, the basis of the former curriculum, by providing teachers with a single, comprehensive and concise Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) that specifies the content and standards for teaching and assessment (Department of Basic Education 2011a). This policy is accompanied by government issued workbooks in school subjects that set the direction for teaching. In line with CAPS, there are two central assessment and accountability mechanisms addressing performance: the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) for teachers and the Annual National Assessments (ANAs) for learners (Department of Education 2011). In 2012, the first phase of the implementation of CAPS was phased in to the foundation phase. Thus this study takes place at a moment of change in policy.

The manner in which language is conceived in CAPS suggests the continuation of the trend away from the multilingualism envisioned in the LiEP and towards the encouragement of a single language (English) as medium of instruction in schools. Despite a curriculum statement offered in each of the eleven official languages, a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) related to CAPS listed on the Department of Basic Education's website offers some insight into the manner in which language is conceived in this policy (Department of Basic Education 2011b). Here it states a preference for mother tongue instruction in the foundation phase, although it is acknowledged to often not be the case. Where there is a medium of instruction other than English by Grade 4 schools are encouraged to change to English instruction. This change in Grade 4 rests on the assumption that "learners (in Grade 1-3) learn English as a subject to develop basic language competence in English and so increase its utility as a language of learning and teaching (LoLT) later on (from Grade 4)" (Department of Basic Education 2011a). First Additional Language (FAL) is

however only allocated 2-3 hours a week in the prescribed timetable, while the Home Language (HL) is given 7-8 hours a week (mathematics is 7 hours and life skills is 6 hours). The time allocated to FAL provides a limited base from which to prepare learners for a total shift to English in Grade 4. It also shows that additional languages are marginalised in the timetable. The curriculum policy for the foundation phase thus assumes that a learner is either a mother tongue English speaker/ English proficient and in the English Home Language system or a mother tongue Afrikaans/African language speaker accessing the curriculum in this language, whilst learning English in preparation for the shift to English Home Language in Grade 4.

The English centred approach of CAPS creates a tension in that the majority of learners in the education system are African language speakers. There is neither provision in the CAPS policy, as in OBE and the RNCS, for the financial and material support for extended mother tongue instruction or support for learners being taught in English as an additional language (McKinney 2013). There is therefore a lack of provision in the policy that acknowledges that within the straight for English system, particularly between Grade 1 and Grade 3, there may be a difference in proficiency between mother tongue English learners and mother tongue Afrikaans or African language speaking ELLs who are beginning their schooling in English. Learners with a home language other than English in the foundation phase in the English medium system are thus seen as invisible in terms of the directives of the Department of Basic Education. At SJ, learners are thus experiencing the 'gap' in how the policy conceives of language, particularly so, given that teachers at the school, with the exception of language aides, are not able to employ code-switching where there are discrepancies in understanding. I now turn my attention to the research field in which these issues around language are explored.

1.3. Introduction to the field site:

1.3.1 The School

The school is a co-educational, desegregated public primary school located in a suburban area in Cape Town. It was first opened in the 1930s as a single-sex girls'

school and then in 1980 became co-educational. Until the early 1990s, the school catered to predominantly middle class, white mother tongue English speaking children from the area. In the years after the school was desegregated, the student intake has changed drastically and around 90% of the 628 learners currently enrolled are African, mother tongue Xhosa speaking children (Interview Principal Mrs Donnell 24/08/12). The remainder of students are 'coloured' Afrikaans and English speakers and immigrants from other African countries speaking a variety of languages including French, Shona and Swahili. Changes in staff have been less dramatic and within a teaching body of twenty, eighteen are white, English and English/Afrikaans bilingual teachers and only two are African English/Xhosa bilingual teachers. There are a further three language aides bilingual in English/Xhosa in the Grade R and Grade 1 classes. Three English/Xhosa bilingual teachers left the foundation phase in the previous year (2011), however the reasons for their departures are unclear. The learner to teacher ratios at the school are high at 43:1 compared to the national average for all educators at ordinary public schools of 30.4:1 (Department of Basic Education 2012). SJ is currently undergoing Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) interventions due to poor maths and literacy results in the Annual National Assessments (ANAs).

The school is categorised as a Quintile 5 School, along with several other former model C schools in the surrounding suburbs, however its school fees are lower than many at R 2450 a year as compared to R 16 440 at Grove Primary, R 10 415 at Pinelands North Primary and R 7100 at Rosebank Junior (WCED 2012). The SGB subsidises the salaries of several teachers including the two Grade R teachers, three language aides, a computer teacher as well as cleaners and caretakers. While the school fees are relatively low in comparison to surrounding schools the additional costs incurred by parents through stationery lists, transport, school fundraising and other expenses require that they have a level of financial buoyancy to send their children to SJ. This is further seen in the low number of learners that have their school fees waived, described as "only a handful" by the school accountant. As one teacher Mrs West noted, "I send the parents a list of things for the beginning of the year, but I collect them and put them in the

cupboard... we find that most of the parents pay (fees) and most send everything on the list" (Fieldnotes 07/08/12).

According to the school's language policy, "the school serves a culturally diverse community, with the majority speaking isiXhosa at home" (Southern Junior 2007). English is the medium of instruction from Grade R to Grade 7 with Xhosa as the FAL and Afrikaans as the Second Additional Language (SAL), although the FAL is set to change to Afrikaans in the coming year (2013). In terms of its language policy, the principal argues that the school works on the theory that the learners benefit from learning English from their entry into schooling in Grade R if there is a bilingual language aide in the class in Grade R and Grade 1 (Interview Mrs Donnell 24/08/12). The Grade R and Grade 1 classrooms are therefore unique in the school setting as sites in which there is officially a degree of translation and bilingual language usage.

Given the research setting, the complexities in understanding the dynamics of a straight for English school with a majority of ELLs came to the fore. Significantly, this was a school previously homogenous in terms of language and race that has since become increasingly multilingual and racially and culturally diverse, raising some important questions about how the school addresses 'difference' in this context. In research into former Model C schools, McKinney (2009) has argued that such schools are "perceived as the 'shining lights' in an otherwise failing system" and "remain largely uninterrogated spaces" (p.2). I therefore wish to explore linguistic ideologies working to identify those that are (de)valued and (il)legitimated in light of the school's context as a desegregated school.

1.3.2 The case and its participants

Within SJ, I chose to focus on the foundation phase as the first tier of socialisation processes in the school. The research took place over a month long period of fieldwork at the school, which I spent building up a sense of its institutional ethos and finding patterns in how discourses about language as well as race are (re)produced in this setting. This involved attending assemblies, observing learners

during breaks, spending time in the staff room, interviewing teachers and two weeks of daily observations inside a Grade 1 classroom and several hours in both Grade R classrooms. The key participants were teachers working in the foundation phase (including the principal, four teachers and three language aides) and learners in Grade 1W. As actors working at the ground level, an analysis of the views about learners produced by teachers in interviews seemed valuable in understanding linguistic ideologies in the institution while questioning how such ideologies link to discourses about race. Beyond this however, I wished to understand discursive practices inside a classroom and for this I spent time in Mrs West's 1W classroom. Here I focused on how discourses about language were (re)produced in the microcosm of a classroom. In this class, a central focus became the different orientations and discursive constructions of language of Mrs West an English/Afrikaans bilingual teacher and Mrs Khumalo an English/Xhosa bilingual language aide.

1.4. Research question

In the previous sections I have presented the policy background to the case study, the specific institutional context of the school and one specific classroom within it. Drawing on Bourdieu (1977) I take a view of the school as a site of production for particular linguistic ideologies interlinked with broader societal trajectories. I argue that the complex linguistic interactions between students and teachers “reflect and shape the linguistic hierarchies that are essential components in broad social, political and economic systems of equality and inequality” (Tollefson 2002, p.ix). Informed by the discussions of the sections above and centrally linked to SJ's context as an English medium school with a majority of mother tongue Xhosa speaking ELLs, the central research question is outlined as follows:

- **Central Question**

What discourses about language are (re)produced in the foundation phase at SJ?

- **Sub questions**

1. What discourses and orientations to English and Xhosa are (re)produced in the teaching space of a Grade 1 classroom at SJ?
2. What discourses about language and race are (re)produced by teachers in the foundation phase at SJ?

Through this formulation of the central research question and sub-questions, I wish to reflect the complexities related to an analysis of language ideologies in a school institution. This focus raises questions about equality and educational access in desegregated schooling and how diversity and difference are dealt with in multilingual settings. Importantly, the aim of this research is not to make prescriptions regarding medium of instruction as part of a broader ideological debate, but rather to show how discourses and ideologies of language are (re)produced in a school such as SJ. To this end, in Chapter 2 I offer an overview of the conceptual framework that informed my understanding and analysis of the research data. In Chapter 3 I set out the methodological framework that bounded this research. Chapter 4 and 5 present the findings of this inquiry in relation to the central research questions. Lastly, I provide an overview of the central findings in the conclusion in Chapter 6.

Chapter 2:

The Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

In the following chapter I will outline the conceptual underpinnings of this study. Firstly, this involves an account of the central theories that have informed my viewpoint on the nature of language in society and the power relations inherent in how language is practiced. Secondly, I outline the frameworks in which to theorise which languages 'count' and the positioning and assimilation of English language learners (ELLs) into the ethos of a straight for English schooling system. Thirdly, I offer a theorisation of race in schooling as an integral aspect of an analysis of issues of power and inequality related to language in desegregated schools. Fourthly, I discuss concepts that provide insight into the positioning of learners through classroom discursive practices. Fifthly, I present an overview of the sets of ideas that informed an analysis of the counter currents to dominant discursive systems in the school. This multilayered approach to theory goes some way to understanding the complexities in how linguistic ideologies are (re)produced in an education institution.

2.2 Language in Society

2.2.1 Definitions

Language ideologies defined

This research broadly focuses on understanding the language (or linguistic) ideologies in an English medium primary school with a majority of mother tongue Xhosa speaking learners. Language ideology refers to "representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world" (Woolard 1992, p.3). Language ideology is the bridge between linguistic and social theory providing a framework for linking communicative action with considerations of power and social inequality as well as broader constraints on language behaviour, while relating discourse to lived experiences (Schieffelin, Woolard & Kroskrity 1998, p.v) . Language ideologies in local settings can be seen as

contextual sets of beliefs about language. Importantly, multiple linguistic ideologies can coexist in a single social formation and thus can take account of the multiplicity in social settings. Using the concept, one is able to encompass social interaction on the one hand as well as broader social processes on the other with language ideologies as “verbalized, thematised discussion and as the implicit understandings and unspoken assumptions embedded and reproduced in the structure of institutions and their everyday practices” (Gal 1998, p.319). In this way, linguistic ideologies provide an important link between human acts and institutions (Makoni & Pennycook 2007).

This conception of language in society provides the broad framework through which my research data is theorised. Linguistic ideologies as used in my research connect the micro level discourses and practices of teachers and learners in the school and in the classroom with broader questions about the role of language in a multilingual society. This set of ideas works as the thread that binds the research focus on an analysis of discourses related to language, as interlinked with racial ideologies, in Chapter 4 with the attention to classroom discursive practices and orientations to language teaching in Chapter 5.

Discourse defined

This dissertation is focused on how discourses are (re)produced in the school setting thus a definition of the term ‘discourse’ is valuable. The following definition by Kress (1989) drawing on Foucault, is worth quoting at length as it focuses on how discourses are central to understanding institutions:

Discourses are systematically-organised sets of statements which give expression to the meaning and values of an institution. Beyond that, they define, describe and delimit what is possible to say and not possible to say (and by extension- what it is possible to do or not to do) with respect to the area of concern of that institution, whether marginally or centrally. A discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organises and gives structure to the manner in which a

particular topic, object, process is to be talked about in that it provides descriptions, rules, permissions, prohibitions of social and individual actions (p.7).

Importantly, Kress further points out that “Discourses do not exist in isolation but within a larger system of sometimes opposing, contradictory, contending, or merely different discourses” (1989, p.7). This definition thus offers a framework for understanding the complexities of the research setting of SJ and the multiple layers at which discourses operate in the school. The thesis does not offer a single narrative of how English and Xhosa are positioned in the school, but rather looks at the intricate web of discourses (re)produced within this institution as related to the views and practices of teaching staff and learners.

Language defined

In this research I take the view that languages are inseparable from the social settings in which they are spoken and are inscribed with dimensions of power. While the aim of this dissertation is not to go into depth in sociolinguistic theory, a brief definition of language frames the discussion from this perspective. Language is the “medium by and through which individuals define and inhabit their own identities and in the process assess and ascribe the identities of others” (Ricento 2006, p. 231). Complicating ‘traditional’ views of language as a code with various forms, functions and values with particular material and non-material qualities, I take the view that language should be seen in terms of ‘discourses’ that may be shared by overlapping communities of speakers (Ricento 2006). Halliday (1978) offers a significant contribution with the conception of language as a ‘social semiotic’ that humans use as a resource for building meaning in the social world. In this way, language is “centrally involved in the processes by which human beings negotiate, construct and change the nature of social experience” (Kress 1989, p.v). Language is not only a part of experience, but defines the ways in which we construct and organise our experience.

I take the view that languages are not separate bounded entities (Gal 1998; Canagarajah 2007; Makoni & Pennycook 2007; Prinsloo 2012). It is oversimplifying to speak about English as a single code shared by millions across the world, rather one should refer to “‘Englishes’ as hybrids reflecting complex processes of borrowing, mixing and styling with other language varieties (discourses)” (Ricento 2006, p.4). As a result, language policies should move beyond the “hermetic sealing of languages” towards frameworks that describe the “the use of vernaculars that leak into one another to understand the social realities of their users” (Creese & Blackledge 2010, p.106). Through a conceptualisation of language in this manner, it is possible to work towards an understanding of the complexities in how language is discursively constructed in the context of SJ in which ELLs are learning through the English Home Language model.

From the definitions offered above it can be seen that understanding the social functions of language is central to taking account of language as it is framed in policies and implemented in schools. The multilingual context of South Africa brings an additional dimension to debates about how language/s are defined. In this country, medium of instruction in schools and languages of learning and teaching (LOLTs) are delineated into Home Language and Additional Language time allocations in the classroom limiting the possibilities for a meaningful engagement with the multilingual realities and repertoires of the majority of learners. The manner in which the LOLTs have been defined in the national language policies presents medium of instruction as a “clear cut choice” between languages implying the assumption that they cannot be used together and that ultimately only one language should be used (Dalvit, Murray & Terzoli 2009, p.36). As De Klerk argues, even in the progressive ideal of additive bilingualism of the LiEP, “there is the echo of a compartmentalized view of language” that could be enriched by debates about the meaning of being a multilingual in a new democracy as opposed to belonging to an ethnic group inside South Africa (De Klerk 2002, p.43). Research has shown that actual classroom language practices show a spectrum of ‘Englishes’ spoken in South African schools that is at odds with how language is conceived in the national policy (Blommaert et al. 2006; Prinsloo 2012). Prinsloo argues that the definitions of

language in policies such as the LiEP are based on “popularised but essentialised and reified constructs of language” as bounded and autonomous (Prinsloo 2012, p.24). The ways in which such discourses about multilingualism are understood in the particular institution of SJ as a multilingual environment are thus of central significance in my research.

Given this compartmentalisation of language as seen in the formulation of policies, language usage can be contextualised in reference to several ways in which distinct and separate social functions for languages have been labelled (Creese & Blackledge 2010). Such situations have been labelled ‘parallel monolingualism’, ‘bilingualism with diglossia’, ‘separate bilingualism’, ‘bilingualism through monolingualism’ in which “each term describes the boundaries put up around languages that language varieties must conform to prescriptive norms and represents a view of the multilingual/bilingual student/teacher as ‘two monolinguals in one body’” (Creese & Blackledge 2010, p.105). Makoni and Pennycook argue that the manner in which languages are conceived as discrete entities leads to a view of multilingualism as “pluralisation of monolingualism” (Makoni & Pennycook 2007, p.22).

2.2.2 Language and Power

The research presented in this dissertation draws on the growing body of work that addresses the power dimensions to language, and its role in the production, exercise and contestations of power at all levels of society (Ricento 2006). Key to this approach is the work of the French sociologist, Bourdieu (1977; 1991) and his economic model of language in society in which language is seen as an instrument of power embedded in social institutions. Bourdieu offers a key conceptual framework and terminologies through which to understand the linguistic ideologies at SJ. It is important to note that Bourdieu’s writing is in the context of French society, however his ideas have been applied in a multitude of contexts including South African research into language in schools (see Benson 2008; McKinney 2010; Makoe 2007; Jansen 2002)

For Bourdieu, linguistic exchange is more than a communicative relation between a sender and receiver, but further “an economic exchange that is established within a particular symbolic relation of power between a producer endowed with a certain linguistic capital and a consumer (or a market) and which is capable of procuring certain material or symbolic profit” (Bourdieu 1991, p.66). The value of people’s words depends on the relations of power between them as part of a socially constructed capital that reproduces inequality. Discourses are produced within a particular market place and what is acceptable and sanctioned within this market place creates their legitimacy. Competence is thus related to which language usage has become socially acceptable in situ and knowing the place one occupies in the social space determines the value of one’s own linguistic products (Bourdieu 1991, p508). Important to this theory is the notion of ‘habitus’ as the set of behavioural dispositions arising from a person’s history and the “capacity to use the possibilities offered by language and to assess practically the moments to use them” (Bourdieu 1977, p.662).

Bourdieu offers a framework for understanding how particular named languages come to be hegemonic in society and its institutions. He argues that, “When one language dominates the market, it becomes the norm against which the process of the other modes of expression, and with them the values of the various competences, are defined” (Bourdieu 1977, p.652). These ideas allow for analysis of the ways in which languages come to have legitimacy and are inscribed with symbolic value through successive reinforcement and refutation within the market place of the school, as well as how this maintains the prevailing linguistic habitus. Such views are highly relevant in attempting to understand the values attached to English competencies in a school such as SJ where the English medium of instruction differs from the Xhosa home language of the learners. While Bourdieu has been criticised for offering an overly deterministic argument about power, there is space within the framework he offers for a reading of resistance and agency in South African contexts (Makoe 2009, p. 67) . Even within the spaces of reproduction of dominant discourses in schools there are countercurrents within these systems as the findings in Chapter 5 will indicate.

There is a significant body of research that addresses the power dimensions implicit in language use in schools in South Africa (Alexander 2000; Benson 2008; Makoe 2007; McKinney 2007; Brock-Utne et al. 2003). Much of the research has looked at the unassailable position of English as hegemonic in South Africa and the ways in which it is perceived as “the gate-keeper to academic knowledge” (Brock-Utne et al. 2003 p.10). The high status of English in South African society has led to a growing number of learners being taught in English as the language associated with socioeconomic access and mobility while these factors have been disassociated with African languages (Mda 2004; Alexander 2003; Taylor & Vinjevold 1999; Probyn et al. 2002; Blommaert et al. 2006; Fataar 2009). With an increase in English medium of instruction across the board in South African schools, there has also been the phenomenon of black learners moving towards former white schools (Soudien 2004). This has been associated with a better quality of education and English medium of instruction and has largely been characterised by assimilationist tendencies as discussed in later sections (Soudien 2004; Sayed & Soudien 2003). Beyond this, studies have shown a lack of political will or commitment to policy implementation to meaningfully promote multilingualism in schools (Brock-Utne et al. 2003; De Klerk 2002). Research has shown that when SGBs make decisions about medium of instruction, often the ‘economic’ considerations for learning English override the promotion of multilingualism and the additive bilingualism of the LiEP (Probyn et al. 2002 p.29).

Makoe (2007; 2009) in particular looks at the applicability of Bourdieu’s framework in South African schools. Her research offers a case study of the institutional discourses about language in a primary school in Johannesburg. Her aim is to show how English has been discursively constructed in everyday classroom life, focusing on why particular discourses have come to dominate and which knowledge hierarchies are endorsed. She argues that language politics are central to understanding the dynamics within multilingual classrooms. In the school in which her research took place, English was discursively constructed as indispensable and the only medium of education. It is argued that children were socialised into a

worldview of English as the natural order and a means of gaining a higher status (2009, p.68). In this way, “social institutions such as desegregated schools in South Africa in their symbolic and material existence, serve to cement the existing hegemony of English in education and marginalise ‘otherness’ that does not seem to fit in with the natural order of things (ideologies)”(Makoe 2009 p.29).

2.3 Which languages ‘count’: Multilingual settings

I now turn the attention to the ways in which languages are legitimated in the school system. The positioning of language in schools brings to light some important questions regarding the discourses about language (re)produced within educational institutions. Bourdieu applies his ideas about the symbolic power of languages to the school setting: “...the school, which imposes the legitimate forms of discourse and the idea that a discourse should be recognized if and only if it conforms to legitimate norms” (Bourdieu 1977, p.650). I take the view that children learn the distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate discourses in the school system as part of a set of ‘basic skills’. In this way, “they learn what to reveal about their lives; which language counts, and which does not; and they learn to find ways of coping with this knowledge, of living with dignity” (Bourne 2001, p.104). In thinking about the (il)legitimacy of language in multilingual settings, I draw on Blommaert, Collins & Slembrouck’s (2005) argument that, “Multilingualism is not what individuals have or lack, but what the environment, as structured determination and interactional emergence, enables and disables them to deploy” (p.213). Thus what ‘counts’ as competency is situated in the context of real environments. This can be better understood with reference to research into language in desegregated schools in South Africa.

Research into South African schools such as Makoe (2007), Soudien (2004), Mda (2004) and McKinney (2007) has shown that while former model C schools have become increasingly linguistically diverse, many having multilingual school language policies, this has often not translated in *de facto* practices regarding the promotion of multilingualism. Mda (2004) has argued that former model C schools largely

“remain monocultural, ethno- centric and monolingual” (p.172). Thus for many learners in South Africa, their proficiency in the medium of instruction, particularly English, defines the access they have to the curriculum (Soudien 2004, p.110). In a similar manner Heugh (1999) has argued, the majority of learners in SA are “linguistically excluded from meaningful access to learning” (Heugh 1999, p.309). In light of the above, it is possible to identify a trend in which ELLs are in many cases excluded from a meaningful engagement with the curriculum, raising questions about access at SJ.

2.4 Questions of Race

The relationship between race and language emerged as an important aspect in relation to inequality and access at SJ as it is a previously white desegregated school, or resegregated (Orfield 2004) school given that there are no longer white students attending in any significant numbers. As McKinney (2013) argues, addressing language orientations can tell us about macro social practices including the (re)constitution of race in South Africa. A brief discussion of theories of race as a set of fully formed social relations frames this discussion (McCarthy & Crichlow 1993; Omi & Winant 1986; 1993; Donald & Rattansi 1992). While race is no longer recognised as an essentialist and natural category and rejected on scientific grounds, this has not undermined its persistence as an ideology with symbolic and social effectuality in everyday life and experiences (Omi & Winant 1986 p.13). Following Omi and Winant (1986), I take a view of a race as a “socio-historical concept, given concrete expression by the specific social relations and historical context in which they (racial categories) are embedded” (p.11). Race is therefore not a stable category, rather contingent and historical within which labels such as ‘black’ should be seen as politically and culturally constructed categories (Hall 1992). In relation to this, I draw on Frankenberg’s (1997) theorisation of ‘whiteness’ and the ways in which the category of ‘whiteness’ operates in particular locales and web of social relations as the assertion of universal and unmarked norms (p.3). Looking at the discourses produced at SJ, I wish to understand the ways in which “whiteness makes itself invisible precisely by asserting its normalcy, its transparency, in contrast to the

marking of others on which its transparency depends” (Frankenberg 1997, p.6). With reference to the ideas discussed above, I wish to offer a more complex account of race in the educational context of SJ as a discursive category.

In South African schools, and more broadly in society, race is a highly contested concept that is pervasive in everyday discourses (Soudien 2007; McKinney 2013). The racialised dimension to the desegregation of South African schooling can be understood in reference to assimilation as the most critical outcome of such processes (Soudien 2004; Mda 2004; Johnson 2007; Sayed & Soudien 2003). Soudien (2004) has defined this as a process, with race as a central defining aspect, in which:

subordinate groups or elements of subordinate groups have been recruited or have promoted themselves into the hegemonic social, cultural and economic regime at the cost of subordinate ways of being, speaking, and conducting their everyday lives (p.112).

In this way, black students in formerly white schools have been ‘assimilated’ into the dominant language and cultural patterns maintaining the status quo so that integration is seen as simply a process of accepting learners from other racial groups. There have been few moves to meaningfully turn diversity into a productive resource and desegregation has in many cases led to the structural exclusion of learners from these schools systems (Soudien 2004; Mda 2004; Johnson 2007; Sayed & Soudien 2003). This has created “asymmetric relations of ‘knowing’ between groups” and often the positioning of black learners in white schools as deficient subjects (Soudien 2007, p.439).

The links between race and language in South Africa are highly evident in reference to the historical classification of the varieties of South African English (SAE)⁸ and phonological⁹ markers of accent according to race (McKinney 2007, Mesthrie 2002).

⁸ Following Mesthrie (2002) I use South African English (SAE) as a cover term for the varieties of English spoken in South Africa

⁹ Phonology can be briefly defined as the patterned interaction of speech sounds

This has created the perception that people of the same race speak the same varieties of English, when language and race are contested and unstable categories (Lass 2002, p.104). The term White South African English (WSAE) is applied to the home language varieties of English spoken by White South Africans (Bowerman 2004, p.931). Black South African English (BSAE) covers the variety of English commonly used by home language speakers of South Africa's indigenous African languages (De Klerk & Gough 2002; Van Rooy 2004). Cape Flats English (CFE), sometimes referred to as Coloured English, originated in working class neighbourhoods in Cape Town, with most speakers now living in the area known as the Cape Flats (Finn 2004, p.964).

Significant in addressing the symbolic capital of English in South Africa, is that there is not one single version of English common across all South African schools, rather there are varieties of language (Blommaert et al. 2006; Prinsloo 2012; Makoe 2009; McKinney 2007). WSAE is associated with previously white schools and BSAE is associated with township schooling (McKinney 2007, p.15). Research in South African schools has indicated racial labelling of accents according to the phonological aspects of the varieties of English with WSAE seen as a form of cultural or linguistic capital (McKinney 2007, p.10). Concurrently, there is the stigmatisation of BSAE in desegregated schools in which WSAE is seen as the norm (De Klerk & Gough 2002; McKinney 2013, p.3). The prestige attached to white varieties of English contributes to "the ongoing normativity of whiteness and 'othering' of blackness in desegregated suburban schools" (McKinney 2013, p.3). I examine these issues in my research in relation to the discourses produced by teachers regarding the phonology of learner's speech and the teaching of pronunciation in classroom practices.

2.5 Positioning of learners

In light of the above, I now turn to ways of understanding the positioning of learners through discursive practices more specifically rooted in the classroom. Deficit theories offer a model for understanding how learners are positioned in relation to a perceived lack in competency in the legitimate language (Bourdieu 1977). I will use

such theories of deficit positioning to interrogate the construction of language ideologies about English and Xhosa. The work of McDermott (2001) on schooling in the United States offers a framework in this regard in reference to ‘special needs’ or ‘learning disorder’ discourses that can be applied to contexts where language competence is positioned in reference to a deficit. Deficits can be described as such, “The deficit theory assumes that language and culture are storehouses from which children acquire their competence. Some children get more and some get less” (McDermott 2001 p.64). In this way the proficiency of learners in languages of teaching and learning become a “problem to be solved” by teachers (Bailey et al. 2008, p.609). Research into racial integration in South African primary and high schools has shown that most schools do not see multilingualism and language diversity as a resource but rather a deficiency (Vally & Dalamba 1999; Chick & McKay 2004; Soudien 2004)

Working from a post structuralist discourse analysis framework, Davies and Hunt (1994) offer a framework for understanding how positioning happens in classrooms. They offer a conceptualisation that disrupts the binary logic of categories of powerful/powerless and teacher/student, white/black and competent/incompetent student (Davies & Hunt 1994). They argue that within the binary pairs of subject categories such as white/black, male/female, teacher/student, heterosexual/homosexual, adult/child, the tendency is for the former to become the privileged terms related with ‘normality’ while the latter are seen in terms of a difference and understood in terms of a deviance from the former. Such positions are more readily visible from marked category positions “whereas those who are habitually positioned in unmarked categories, such as male, white, heterosexual, and the ruling class, often manage to generate an illusion of positionless speaking” (Davies & Hunt 1994, p.391). Through this approach it is possible to analyse subject positions in the classroom and those that are made available to and taken up by less privileged members in the classroom. This allows for an understanding of how success and failure are achieved in the classroom. In the South African context, one can look to the powers of teachers in establishing such categories. Mda (2004) has referred to situations in which white, Indian and coloured teachers establish an

authority of ‘truth’ in the class in reference to “being a member of, or participating in, the culture of power, by virtue of their position, their numbers, or access to the particular code (language) of power” (p.181).

My research builds on the theories of positioning and the marked categories of learners and teachers to deconstruct the assumptions teachers have about their learners in terms of language and the ways in which these have been associated with race and culture. In the South African context, these ideas about deficit positioning in classrooms are highly relevant where competency is often equated with English proficiency (Makoe, 2007). In the context of South African schools in which “beliefs about language (English and African languages), in society and at the local level of the school often work to position learners with limited proficiency in English as deficient” such investigations are important (McKinney & Soudien 2010, p.12)

2.6 Alternative ways of understanding language in multilingual settings

2.6.1 Repertoire, Voice and Scales

Given the research setting, I would expect to find complexity and I have worked to identify the multiple discourses (re)produced in the school setting. This section is thus concerned with understanding the complex ways in which language usage can be conceived in multilingual settings. I drew of the work of Blommaert (2005; 2008; 2010; 2011) in analysing the research data, particularly the concepts of ‘repertoire’, ‘voice’ and ‘scales’.

The concept of repertoires in contexts of ‘superdiversity’ is a valuable tool in the multilingual context. Blommaert et al (2005) and Blommaert and Backus (2011) write in the context of superdiversity as a product of globalisation and in light of immigration and diaspora communities in the North. However their ideas have value in multilingual contexts such as South Africa and the schools within it. Expanding on the term ‘repertoire’ used traditionally in sociolinguistics to represent the total complexity of communicative resources used by subjects, they look at repertoire to aid an understanding of the contemporary processes of language in society

(Blommaert et al. 2005, p.213). Repertoire conceived in this way refers to the plurality in individuals' use of language as differentially shared styles, registers and genres that accord to "biological trajectories that develop in actual histories and topographies" (Blommaert & Backus 2011, p.17). The forms of language learning can be either highly formal such as patterned language or informal and ephemeral encounters and this results in different forms of knowledge of language.

As opposed to stable communities of language usage there are rather fluid networks, knowledge communities and communities of practice in which the modes of language learning are dynamic and adaptive. Environments are seen to be polycentric, and individuals always have to orient to multiple centers of indexicality such as authoritative individuals or institutions including schools, the church or government, as well as within a single institution (Blommaert et al. 2005, p.200). In a school for example, there will be different orientations between learners, between learners and language aides and between learners and teachers.

Blommaert provides a valuable framework for understanding language and inequality in relation to this with the concepts of space and scales. For Blommaert et al (2005), language use is negotiated across multiple levels with spaces organising regimes of language (p.198). These spaces can be understood in terms of scale, which offers a vertical conception of spaces as "stratified" (Blommaert 2001, p.4). People draw on a specific habitus according to different scales and have a capacity to shift in and out of "scaled habituses". Scales are seen as a metaphor for the move of people or messages through spaces filled with "codes, norms and expectations" (Blommaert 2010, p.32). Blommaert et al argue that "The notion of scale precisely emphasises the idea that spaces are ordered and organised in relation to one another, stratified, layered, with processes belonging to one scale entering processes at another scale" (2005, p.203). There is mobility between scales such as the global and the local as well as between the urban and rural or township and suburbs and within a single institution itself. For example, the Xhosa spoken by a teenager to her peers in a township in Cape Town may be recognised fairly highly at

that scale level, but when transferred to a rural village in the Eastern Cape it may be valued lower down on the hierarchy of valued linguistic resources.

Linked to the notions of 'repertoire' and 'scale', 'voice' looks at the capacities of people's linguistic resources to be heard in different contexts and socio-cultural spaces. Blommaert's concept of voice offers a 'praxis' for how meaning is mediated on the basis of ideological patterns of normativity. People have different potentials for voice based on their linguistic repertoires and the conditions under which these are given power. Voice is situated, socially determined and institutionally organised (Blommaert 2008, p.448). Linguistic products can be "silenced and made invisible" when language is narrowed into a normative set of functions which create the boundaries for which voices are heard and which are excluded in a society (Blommaert 2008, p.447). These are 'institutional language regimes' that afford and constrain voice in relation to social, historical and cultural conditions (Blommaert 2008, p.428). Framing language usage in reference to voice is important in looking at the extent to which the learners (drawing on their) multilingual repertoires have and are given voice in the institutional context of SJ.

2.6.2 Third Space and hybrid discursive practices

The following section offers a framework for conceptualising counter discourses to the dominant hegemonies in the complex institutional context of a school such as SJ. The ideas presented here offer ways in which to understand the 'third space' that straddles the border between the official discourses constructed in the formal space and the social discourses produced in the informal space of the school.

I offer an alternative framework for understanding multilingual classroom settings drawing on Gutierrez, Rymes & Larson (1995) Gutierrez, Baquedano-López & Tejeda (1999) and Gutierrez's (2008) theory of hybrid discursive practices and the notion of a 'third space'. This space is characterised by vertical and horizontal forms of expertise "where teacher and student scripts—the formal and informal, the official and unofficial spaces of the learning environment—intersect, creating the potential

for authentic interaction and a shift in the social organization of learning and what counts as knowledge” (Gutiérrez 2008, p.152). Through this framework of hybrid literacy practices, classrooms are viewed as complex and layered systems with various interconnections between activity systems. Through making use of the multiple linguistic codes and registers within diverse environments, literacy and meaning making are promoted. While Gutiérrez’s research is situated in California with a focus on Latina students it offers a valuable framework for understanding hybridity in classrooms characterized by language diversity and how hybrid language practices can create new opportunities for learning for ELLs. Makoe and McKinney (2009) draw on Gutiérrez in the context of a South African primary school to show how a particular learner in a Grade 1 classroom uses hybrid discursive practices including English and African languages to cross boundaries including “adult-child; teacher-learner; peer/friend-teacher; English-proficient-multilingual” (p.80).

In looking at alternative ways in which multilingualism is harnessed to promote meaning making, I refer to processes by which bilingual participants in complementary schools¹⁰ in the UK “encompass socially meaningful forms in both bilingual and monolingual talk” (Creese & Blackledge 2010, p.103). ‘Flexible bilingualism’ describes the practices used by teachers to “make links for classroom participants between the social, cultural, community, and linguistic domains of their lives” (Creese & Blackledge 2010). Such a theorisation offers an analysis of how bilingualism is used as a resource to add value and the ways in which this becomes legitimate and accepted by participants. Relevant research in the South African context, has addressed the ways in which ‘black’ school girls in a formerly ‘white’ school subvert the largely assimilationist tendencies of a school institution (McKinney 2010). McKinney (2010) outlines the ways in which “learners use a range of semiotic resources (including linguistic) not valued in official school discourses to subvert their positioning” in a view that situates these school girls as mobile points

¹⁰ Complementary schools are schools operated on a part-time basis by voluntary organisations representing minority ethnic, linguistic and cultural communities. They provide education in a variety of areas, mainly community languages, religious studies, cultural studies and curriculum learning related to the community’s country of origin.

of resistance (p.191). Thus, there are simultaneously repressive and liberatory processes at work within an institution.

In theorising alternative ways of thinking about language in multilingual settings and the discursive practices of the Xhosa/English bilingual language aide, research into the use of more than one language in the classroom setting is relevant. Research in South African schools has shown the use of code-switching in classrooms with teachers switching between languages as a very common practice (Probyn 2009). This method is often associated with the poor quality of township and rural schools and research has shown that many teachers regard code-switching as illicit rather than as a valid strategy (Probyn 2005; Dalvit et al. 2009).

In contrast to the negative connotations associated with code-switching as portraying a deficiency in linguistic competence, there is a growing body of research that points to productive uses of multiple languages in school settings. I refer here to Gutierrez (2008), Creese and Blackledge (2010) and Michael-Luna and Cangarajah (2008) who distance themselves from the term code-switching, which is seen as an alternation between distinct and functionally separated language codes and spaces that multilinguals move between. This disassociation should be viewed in reference to the discussion in 2.2.1 that represented language not as separate and bounded entities, but rather fluid networks. In contrast to definitions of code-switching, Michael-Luna and Cangarajah (2008) acknowledge “an active web of local discourses” with the term ‘code meshing’ which offers a multilayered approach in which knowledge and linguistic resources are not only integrated but also hybridised (p.58). This is seen as a “conscious rhetorical and ideological communicative device” involving the “resistance, reappropriation and/or transformation of the academic discourse” (Michael-Luna & Canagarajah 2008, p.56).

Building on Williams’ (1994) and Garcia’s (2009) conception of translanguaging in which more than one language is used in a dynamic and functionally integrated manner to aid understanding, speaking, literacy and learning, Creese and Blackledge (2010) wish to show settings in which bilingualism is used as part of an integrated

approach in meaning making. There is further the concept of hybrid literacy practices as “more a systematic, strategic, affiliative, and sense making process among those who share the code as they strive to achieve mutual understanding” (Gutierrez et al. 1999, p.288). Other research in the context of a South African university has shown situations of the appropriation of English by ELL students through the ‘Xhosalising’ of English words, such as *i-understanding* and *yedeficit*, as a way to negotiate meaning, identity and status (Paxton & Tyam 2010). The ideas discussed above provided an alternative framework for understanding how the integration of multiple codes of languages can be used as a resource to promote learning and meaning making.

The complexities in the ways in which language may be constructed in contexts of multilingualism presented above are drawn on to show the ways in which dominant and monolithic discourses about language can be reconceptualised and challenged. Alongside the official discourses of the school, it is possible to shed light on the moments in which learners find agency (McKinney 2010). I argue that equally important as identifying the dominant language ideologies in the school has been to theorise the opportunities for points of rupture to hegemonic linguistic ideologies. There is a constant process of dialogue whereby languages are open to change and modification, so that the individual language user is not passive and impotent in the face of a monolithic language system, but is rather constantly engaged in its reconstitution and change (Kress 1989, p.3). In exploring language in the school setting it can be seen that, “languages in the everyday lives of students and teachers both inside and outside of the classroom do not exist in neat, discrete categories, but in fact are used in fluid, creative, intertwined ways” (Lin & Martin 2005, p.10).

2.7. Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the key conceptual resources underlying this study, including theories related to language and power, race, learner positioning and alternative ways of understanding multilingual linguistic resources. In the following chapters I show how these theoretical tools can shed light on the particular aspects

of the research setting, particularly related to how linguistic ideologies have been formed in the context of ELLs attending an English medium school. In the Chapter 3, I go on to offer an overview of the methodology that linked the conceptual framework outlined in this chapter to the data collection and analysis process, before presenting the findings in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 drawing on the theoretical framework constructed in this chapter.

University of Cape Town

Chapter 3:

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

Having outlined my research aims as well as the theoretical resources I have drawn on, I now turn to an overview of the methodology for this study. Firstly, this involves a description of the research design linking the process of data collection to the research aims, followed by an account of which data was selected for detailed analysis and the reasons for this. Lastly I shall outline the methodology for how this data was analysed.

3.2 Research design

Given the research aims, institutional context and the four-week time frame for research, I chose a qualitative approach with a case study design. A case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin 2008, p.18). Framing this research as a small-case study, I was able to investigate language ideologies in education within the bounded context of one primary school, but in an in depth manner.

As stated in the introductory chapter, the aim of this research is to explore the complexities and the tensions in how language is understood and practiced within a school institution. Using the conception of language ideology, discussed in Chapter 2, as a basis, the aim was to identify how discourses about language, linked to ideologies of race, speak through an institution and the individual teachers who in turn (re)produce discourses within the space of a classroom. More specifically, the research investigates language ideologies in an English medium school with a majority of mother tongue Xhosa speaking learners. Given links to questions around how institutions socialise learners, I chose to focus on the foundation phase as an

initial point of socialisation into the institutional ethos and a Grade 1 classroom as an entry point to this.

In designing the study I chose to draw on techniques from critical ethnography as a basis for understanding the research context. Critical ethnography involves a “thick description of concrete details and narratives...enabling readers to see language practices in all their contextuality and variability” whilst also acknowledging the power dimensions embedded in the context, the personal bias of the researchers and the influence of their behaviours on the situation (Canagarajah 2006, p.156). This allows for a better understanding of how language comes into play in people’s everyday lives directly affected by overt or covert language policies or regimes. Using these methods “focuses the lens on the interpersonal relationships, conversations and everyday life of the micro-level” and is thus valuable for understanding discourses about language as produced by teaching staff in the foundation phase of SJ and more specifically in a single classroom (Ricento 2006, p. 131). While ethnography is generally associated with deep and extended immersion which is not a feature of this research, the techniques are valuable for working towards an ‘insider’s view’ with a focus on the setting in trying to understand how languages are understood at SJ.

3.3 Data Collection

Having chosen SJ as a school in my local area with a mismatch between the medium of instruction (English) and the mother tongue (Xhosa) of the majority of learners, I met with the principal, Mrs Donnell, and explained the nature of my research. I requested permission to spend a month long period at the school, interview teachers and observe two weeks of classroom practices in Grade 1 (initially planned as a study of both classes, but later limited to Grade 1W - see challenges in data collection below). In the process, I assured her of the anonymity of school, teachers and learners as an ethical consideration in an education environment (see Appendix 1: School- Letter of Permission). With the principal’s agreement to proceed with

fieldwork at SJ, I applied for permission to conduct research in the school from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED).

The primary means of data collection focused on audio-recorded semi structured interviews and observations recorded in fieldnotes and through selected video footage. Semi structured interviews are those that have a set of questions and themes to be covered but are flexible in allowing new questions in light of the responses of the interviewee allowing space for discussion (May 2011, p.135). This provided a method for gaining in-depth information about people's beliefs and interpretations of the world (Green & Browne 2007, p.54). I interviewed a number of social actors including the principal, four teachers and three language aides, so as to take account of a range of discourses produced (May 2011, p.135). The interviews exposed additional lines of inquiry to those revealed in classroom practices, particularly the centrality of race and culture in discourses about language. I used the following transcription conventions in this research:

(.)	Pause
(...)	Description of context or additional information
...	Omitted and inaudible materials
'...'	Speaker quotes or uses words of others
...	Speech is given emphasis
<i>italics</i>	Speech in Xhosa
[...]	English translations of Xhosa after the clause
/	Overlapping speech

The observation component involved observing language practices more generally in the school, including assemblies, breaks, and in the staffroom to build up an understanding of the schools' institutional structure and ethos. This was used to contextualise the discourses produced about language that are disseminated as part of the school culture. More specifically, observations took place in the Grade 1W classroom with the aim of looking at how English and Xhosa were positioned in discursive practices as seen through an analysis of "teaching-as-usual" (Davies &

Hunt 1994, p.389). I met with Mrs West, the teacher, to explain the research and my position in her class as an observer in a preliminary interview prior to entry into the classroom. I chose the position of non-participant observation as I wished to take note of the unfolding of classroom discourses in an unobtrusive manner. I introduced myself to the learners as a researcher interested in the languages spoken at school. However, my position was not entirely neutral in the class and learners would often engage me in conversation or ask for help with their work (Swann 1994). Further, Mrs West would at times give me commentary on her practices or on specific learners during a lesson, a practice I tried to discourage. In addition, four days were spent observing in Grade R to examine whether some of the discourses about language produced in 1W were rooted in the previous years teaching practices and perhaps indicative of broader trends in the foundation phase.

<u>Process of Data collection/ Sources of data</u>
<p><u>Observations:</u></p> <p>-4 week period between August 2012 and September 2012</p> <p><u>Observation of whole school ethos</u></p> <p>-1 week period waiting for permission from WCED: Observed a foundation phase assembly, spent several break times inside the staffroom and on the playground</p> <p>-4 week period in Grade 1W and conducting interviews at SJ: Observed two foundation phase assemblies, learner's break time activities, staff room interactions, etc.</p> <p>-Accessed the schools 2007 language policy (prescribed by the LiEP)</p> <p><u>Classroom Observations in Grade 1W</u></p> <p>-9 full days over a 3 week period (due to a long weekend): observed classroom discursive practices of teacher Mrs West, language aide Mrs Khumalo and learners</p> <p>-Observed for the duration of the school day from learners lining up outside the classroom at 7.45 to the end of class at 13.20 (on certain days Mrs West appeared stressed by my presence, particularly on days when she had trouble maintaining</p>

discipline and I used my discretion by leaving early or taking a break at these times)

- I wrote detailed and extensive field notes of all the activities observed during the day

: recorded dialogue from classroom interactions

: particularly noted key discursive episodes¹¹ linked to the positioning and construction of ideologies of English and Xhosa.

Classroom Observations in Grade R

-Observed 2 days in Grade R E for the duration of the school day from 7.45 to 12.30

-Observed 2 days in Grade R S for the duration of the school day from 7.45 to 12.30

Video Footage

-4 hours of video footage¹² from Grade 1W

- Video included: a Xhosa lesson conducted by Mrs Khumalo,

: an English lesson conducted by Mrs West with Mrs Khumalo assisting as the language aide

: a break period with the learners inside the classroom

: a lesson conducted by Mrs West without Mrs Khumalo present.

-Key episodes transcribed

-Xhosa episodes translated by a Xhosa-English bilingual assistant

Semi-Structured interviews

-8 in depth, semi-structured interviews with eight members of staff in the foundation phase: Grade R teacher Mrs Ester (Grade R teacher Mrs Johnson was unavailable)

: Grade R language aides, Mrs Silo and Mrs Williams

: Grade 1 teachers, Mrs West (interviewed twice) and Mrs

¹¹ I wished to focus on key episodes as “bonded unit(s) roughly correlating with a single teaching activity with certain linguistic and non-linguistic features” to identify discursive practices related to language ideologies (Gibbons 2006, p. 95)

¹² Video footage filmed with consent from the learners’ parents (see Appendix 2: Letter of Permission). All of the letters sent to parents were returned with signed consent except for two learners that did not return the letters and they were accordingly excluded from analysis of the video.

Edwards

: Grade 1 language aide, Mrs Khumalo

: Foundation phase Head of Department (H.O.D), Mrs Moore

: School principal, Mrs Donnell

-Interviews conducted over 30 minutes to 1 hour

-Recorded on an audio recorder and later transcribed

My research design thus involved three tiers of data collection: observations, video footage and interviews. The rationale behind collecting these tiers of data was to reflect the complexities in how linguistic ideologies operate in a single institution. These multiple sources offer “converging lines of inquiry” in investigating the central research question (Yin 2008, p.15).

3.4 Challenges in data collection

A challenge to data collection was posed by my limited knowledge of Xhosa. While my understanding was sufficient to understand the basic content of Xhosa communications in class, I was not able to transcribe Xhosa based interactions in my field notes. I had to rely on the video footage of interactions in Xhosa, that had been translated and transcribed by an assistant, for an in depth analysis of discourses in Xhosa. In connection with this, it would have been preferable to have footage from several days of schooling, however Mrs West appeared reluctant to have the video camera in class for more than this one occasion.

Further, initially I had planned to observe in both Grade 1 classes. However, in a preliminary introduction to one of the classes, the teacher introduced me to the learners as an ‘inspector’ who would be monitoring their behaviour and deciding which learners would progress to Grade 2. In consultation with my supervisor I decided to withdraw from observation in this class on the grounds that in addition to the ethical dilemmas this posed, it could alter the classroom dynamics and data collected. I then reframed my research with a focus primarily on discursive practices

and orientations to language in Mrs West's 1W classroom, including classroom interaction with language aide Mrs Khumalo. While this refocus limited the scope of the inquiry, when I started to analyse the data I realised that I would have to limit it further, so that much of the interview data and time spent in Grade R was excluded from this analysis. However data collected but not presented in this dissertation served an important purpose in contextualising the issues in the school and in refining the research questions and may form the basis of further research.

3.5 Reflexivity and the role of the researcher

I take the view that the orientations of social research are not isolated from the socio-historical context of the researcher (May 2011, p.171). In line with the critical ethnography framework, I was aware of the importance of reflecting on my own subjectivities in the research setting and how these impacted on my findings. At times, I felt the white and coloured teachers identified with me as an English speaker and would reveal beliefs about the hegemony of English (often linked to racial and cultural stereotypes) at odds with my own commitment to social justice in education. In many ways it appeared that their candidness was based on a perceived common identification of middle class white values attached to notions of the cultural capital of English that they seemed to feel we shared (Frankenberg 1997). This presented a tension in my research in that I wished to create a space for engaging with the discourses of teachers in a non-evaluative way, while often finding their views offensive and wishing to challenge them.

3.6 Methods of data analysis

Working from the research question, and in light of the specific institutional context of SJ, particularly related to the fact that these are English Language Learners (ELLs) in an English home language system, I identified two key themes: firstly related to the interlinking of language, race and culture in institutional discourses, and secondly to the understandings and differing orientations to language at the level of

classroom discursive practices of a teacher and language aide in Grade 1¹³. The data collected was analysed to identify the dominant discourses, patterns and themes, as well as the alternative and competing discourses that showed moments of rupture, in how teachers speak about language in interviews and in classroom practice (Davies & Hunt 1994). I noted key episodes from the interview transcripts, field notes and video footage which exemplified the patterns in how language ideologies were formed and how issues around power related to language use operated within this localised setting through discourse. A central focus was how the power relations in classrooms unfold in the everyday of routine activity, and while often the highlighted episodes were banal they were chosen as ubiquitous in the ideologies circulating in the school (Gutierrez et al. 1995; McKinney 2009). In this way I was interested in uncovering the ‘voices’ of teaching staff and learners and the “identifications and interests in the classroom (that) are (un)authorized, (il)legitimated and (un)marked” (Juffermans & Van der Aa 2010, p.2)

Discourse analysis of the dominant discourses and counter discourses forming linguistic ideologies offered a framework for understanding the central issues of the research question. Rex and Green (2010) argue that discourse analysis can show, “How ways of knowing, being and doing are constructed in the classroom” (p.576). It can further illuminate the ways in which people position themselves in and through their discourses and the “patterns, messages and meaning in their talk that they use to characterise the institution” (Makoe 2009 , p.123). In this way, discourse analysis allows for the denaturalisation of everyday ways of speaking and patterns of talk as units of analysis (Luke 1997, p.12).

In particular, I have chosen to work with a post-structuralist discourse analytic (PDA) approach that allows me to make sense of the “complexities and ambiguities” of classroom discourse (Baxter 2007, Davies & Hunt 1994). PDA works to highlight the

¹³ It is important to note that many more issues arose related to the institutional discourses around gender, religion, class, geographical and spatial divides and classroom pedagogies among others. While it was beyond the bounds of this thesis to address many of these in detail it opens up the possibility for further research along these trajectories.

power dimensions in who speaks and which of a multiple of voices are heard from the perspective of many subject positions within a classroom. Such an analysis is based on face-to-face and moment-by-moment interactions between teachers and students (Baxter 2007, p.77). PDA is valuable as it has the “facility to create a multi-faceted interpretation of spoken interactions in educational and classroom contexts that reveals, rather than suppresses, the discursive struggles to fix meaning according to different and competing interests” (Baxter 2007, p.77). This framework enabled me to think about what constituted knowledge of language in school and classroom discourse and interactions.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the research design for my study and have shown the value of a small-scale case study using techniques from ethnography and discourse analysis to account for the complexities of how language is understood at SJ. I now go on to show the particular manner in which these methodologies have informed the analysis of data. Chapter 4 deals with the questions around how discourses about language are produced in relation to ideas about race and culture and Chapter 5 addresses the ways in which language ideologies are constructed through teaching practices and orientations to language inside a classroom.

Chapter 4:

Intersections of Language and Race

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to identify the dominant language ideologies in the foundation phase at SJ in relation to its context as a desegregated former model C English medium school with a large majority of mother tongue Xhosa speaking English language learners (ELLs). I do so through an analysis of the discursive construction of language, particularly addressing the intersections with racial ideologies, as seen through school policies, interview data with staff (the principal, teachers and language aides) and observations of school and classroom practices. Primarily, this chapter presents an analysis of how teachers position the learners that attend school at SJ, often in terms of a deficit (Davies & Hunt 1994; McDermott 2001; Makoe 2007).

In the context of desegregated schools in South Africa, Soudien (2007) has argued that racial integration in schools (and elsewhere in society) has been characterised by an asymmetry of the positioning of 'white' people "as the bearers of preferred knowledge and 'black' people, by contrast, as the embodiment of inferior understandings of the world" (p.443). It emerged from my observations that there was the (re)production of such discourses at SJ, particularly in reference to the dominant linguistic ideologies as seen through the discursive positioning of learners by teachers. In analysing such ideologies I draw on Bourdieu's (1977) frameworks for understanding the power dimensions implicit in the construction of particular forms of language in which languages become legitimate and inscribed with symbolic capital. I further draw on Blommaert et al (2005) with the view that language competence should be seen in its social context and language usage as a function of what is socially acceptable in a given field.

In the first section of this chapter I offer an analysis of the school's language policy that sets out a *de jure* framework for promoting multilingualism in the school. The

second section moves to an analysis of the *de facto* discourses and practices that construct language ideologies in the institution and works to make visible those aspects that have become implicit and invisible (Baxter 2002; Davies & Hunt 1994). The data shows that the institutional framework of the school, as seen through the discourses produced by teachers, promotes monoglot English linguistic ideologies as the vector of learning in the school. Interlinked with such ideologies is the conflation of language with race and culture, with learners at the school positioned in opposition to a view of normality linked to a particular notion of white, English speaking, middle class family values. In the process of analysis I particularly identify the binaries embedded in teachers' speech between "us" and "them" which go beyond the dichotomies of teacher/learner and have come to signify the ideological associations between language and race. In this way, I analyse the privileging of varieties of White South African English (WSAE) (Bowerman 2004) over Black South African English (BSAE) (van Rooy 2004) as well as white ways of knowing and being (Soudien 2004).

It is important to note that there is not one, single discourse about language produced and reproduced in the school (Kress 1989). Whilst acknowledging the complexity of linguistic ideologies, my focus is on several key trends in how teachers speak about learners also identifying certain points at which these assumptions were deconstructed by particular interviewees. This chapter raises important questions about how issues around multilingualism and 'difference' are negotiated in the school setting. It further forms the basis of understanding for the following chapter, which looks more specifically at discursive orientations to language inside the classroom.

4.2 Language policies in the school

4.4.1 The school's language policy: "SJ is an English medium school"

Firstly, looking at the school's language policy document provides an insight into how SJ has officially approached the issue of multilingualism. An analysis of this document creates a reference point for analysing the *de facto* discourses about

language produced in the school. In 1997, in line with the prescriptions of the Language in Education Policy (LiEP), the School Governing Body (SGB) at SJ developed a language policy setting out the guidelines for medium of instruction with aims to develop multilingualism in the school. This policy was developed through a series of workshops with the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA), a multilingual education research and development organisation. I therefore wish to analyse the extent to which language ideologies that promote multilingualism are facilitated through this policy. The following table offers a comparison between several key guidelines of the school's language policy and the actual practices in the school, particularly those related to the foundation phase.

<u>School's Language Policy 2007</u>	<u>Actual Practices 2012</u>
SJ is an English medium school	SJ is an English medium school
"Xhosa and Afrikaans receive equal attention as additional languages" (no differentiation between a First Additional Language (FAL) and a Second Additional Language (SAL))	Xhosa is the First Additional Language at the school Afrikaans is the Second Additional Language
"Xhosa and Afrikaans are taught from Grade 3 for two hours a week each"	Xhosa as the FAL taught for two hours per week from Grade 1. Afrikaans is taught for one hour per week from Grade 4
"There is a full time language aid(e) for Grade 1,2 and 3s" paid for by the SGB	There are two language aides in Grade R and one language aid for both Grade 1 classes paid for by the SGB and no language aides in Grade 2 and 3.
"The two Grade 1 educators are Xhosa speaking. They translate as the need arises into Xhosa"	Both teachers in Grade 1 are English speaking with limited or no competence in Xhosa.
The school plans to promote multilingualism, through literature, music, cultural days etc.	Unable to assess this through limited data collection period, but little evidence of the promotion of multilingualism across the

	school. (See chapter 5 for a full discussion of orientations to language in Grade 1W)
“The policy will be reassessed each year”	There has been no reassessment of the policy since 2007

In looking at the table above, it can be seen that many of the *de facto* policies in the school do not reflect the statements in the policy, and many of the provisions have become outdated. The fact of its existence, when many schools have not formulated a language policy at all is significant (Probyn et al. 2002; Probyn 2005), however it has not been reviewed and appears to no longer represent school practices. The language aide system, which has been extended to three full time aides but limited to Grade R and Grade 1, is an aspect that is further explored in Chapter 5. The key principle of English medium of instruction is the only fully corresponding link between the policy and actual practices, creating a context in which English is seen as the ‘legitimate language’ (Bourdieu 1977). It can be seen that the central ways in which multilingualism is supposed to be promoted in this policy have altered dramatically in the five years since its formulation. This raises questions about how multilingualism is viewed more broadly in the institution.

In reference to the issues related to medium of instruction, I wish to reiterate (see Chapter 1) that the existing national policy and curriculum frameworks as seen in the lack of implementation of the Language in Education Policy (LiEP) and the roll out of the new Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) serve to delineate languages in the school system with English promoted as the preferred language of instruction (Dalvit et al. 2009; Alexander 2000; Probyn 2005). Further, the English Home Language curriculum of CAPS for the foundation phase is designed for learners already fluent in English and thus does not take account of learners who access the curriculum in English as an additional language. In this way ELLs, such as those at SJ, have become ‘invisible’ in the national framework. As I show in Chapter 5, this results in classroom literacy becoming a space for English language learning as well as the space for learning to read and write school texts. The failure of the school’s policy in its core directives as a meaningful document to facilitate multilingualism

can thus be seen in reference to the broader political discourses of the entrenchment of the hegemony of English in national policies.

4.4.2: Additional languages

Looking then at the school's policy on additional languages further gives an insight into which linguistic resources have 'symbolic value' (Bourdieu 1977) in the school. Currently the practice is to offer Xhosa as the FAL at the school, however, this is set to change from Xhosa to Afrikaans in the coming year (2013), given the approval of the SGB. There is a question over whether Xhosa will then be offered as SAL, for which additional hours would need to be added to the school day or removed from the school timetable. The reasons given for this proposed change by the principal and teachers are that most high schools in the surrounding suburbs offer Afrikaans as the FAL and therefore learners from SJ are disadvantaged when they move up through the education system. The principal stated the reason as such¹⁴:

Excerpt 1 (Interview with Mrs Donnell 24/08/12):

Mrs Donnell: because when they go to these schools (high schools in the area), like I said, or when they go to tertiary institutions there's no Xhosa so that is why we need to prepare them in that direction.

Attributing this decision to the practices of high schools and tertiary institutions allows the school and principal to avoid taking accountability for a decision that further removes Xhosa from the formal domain of schooling in a school with mostly mother tongue Xhosa speaking learners. This echoes research at a comparable primary school in Johannesburg where Afrikaans was chosen as FAL, which Dixon and Peake (2008) describe as enabling the school "to give up any agency in creating a policy that works to serve the interests of its children by 'shifting' some of this decision onto local high schools" (p.80). Research has shown the broader trend of

¹⁴ As a methodological point it should be noted that while I acknowledge that the researcher questions have shaped the responses of the interviewees, the semi-structured nature of interviews resulted in responses that were not always directly linked to the question and in such cases I have attempted to give the context if not the specific question. Further I have omitted certain parts of excerpts with the convention '...' where these were non-relevant to the data analysis.

suburban high schools and primary schools in South Africa holding each other to blame for the lack of African languages offered (McKinney & Soudien 2010). This decision should further be viewed in the context of the lack of 'symbolic capital' (Bourdieu 1977) of African languages in the education system and more broadly in South African society (Alexander 2000; Soudien 2007; McKinney 2009; Makoe 2007).

Given that the majority of learners are mother tongue Xhosa speakers, this change to the FAL will relegate their Xhosa linguistic resources to a very limited formal space in the classroom as SAL, if it is given time allocation in the timetable at all. The decision signifies a turn away from the value placed on Xhosa as an additional language with Afrikaans displacing Xhosa in this regard. This change to Afrikaans raises important questions around the extent to which the Xhosa 'linguistic repertoires' (Blommaert & Backus 2011) of learners are valued in the school, which is a trend explored further in the following sections.

Looking at the language policy, it is possible to see that the policy framework for achieving multilingualism in the school is largely redundant. If a school's language policy is the central way in which multilingualism in the school setting is supposed to be addressed, a review of the policy at this school shows its failure to meaningfully promote multilingualism through these policy guidelines. Further, the move to Afrikaans as FAL signals a lack of acknowledgement in the policy of the value of the Xhosa 'linguistic repertoires' that learners bring with them to the classroom, which are a central aspect of the multilingual landscape that characterises this school. School language policies are, however often not the primary means through which discourses are articulated, and I now turn to how multilingual learners are positioned in teachers' discourses. The following analyses show that the trends suggested above of the valuing of English and the correspondent devaluing of Xhosa are central linguistic ideologies circulating in the school. Just as the school's language policy document has fallen aside as a framework for promoting multilingualism in the school, an analysis of teachers' discourses suggests that English is the hegemonic standard for learning, intricately tied to racialised ideologies of language.

4.3 How teachers speak about learners at SJ

When one language dominates the market, it becomes the norm against which the process of the other modes of expression, and with them the values of the various competences, are defined (Bourdieu 1977, p.652)

Drawing on Bourdieu's conception of a linguistic market, I now turn to an analysis of how members of the teaching staff speak about language and position learners in relation to this. Firstly, I look at the discourses produced about why learners attend SJ, showing that the perceived value and symbolic capital attached to the school is strongly linked to its status as an English medium and formerly white school. Secondly, I view the linguistic ideologies in the school through an analysis of the perceptions about language as related to the national assessment standards of the Annual National Assessments (ANAs) and the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). Through this analysis it is possible to note that running through these discourses are links with race and culture, thus I thirdly make explicit these connections through addressing the normalising discourses of teachers.

In an analysis of the discourses at SJ, I draw on Kress' definition of 'subject positions' as "sets of statements which describe and prescribe a range of actions, modes of thinking and being, for an individual, compatible with the demands of a discourse" (Kress 1989, p.37). These discourses are evident in the ways in which teachers position their learners as 'subjects' inside and outside of the classroom (Davies & Hunt 1994). I therefore wish to follow the implications of the assumptions made by teachers about learners and make 'visible' the discursive context in which ELLs in a former model C setting are schooled.

4.3.1 Why Learners are sent to SJ:

Excerpt 2 (Interview with Mrs Mbaso 22/08/12):

Mrs Mbaso (Grade R Language Aide): Some of the parents they told their friends, 'oh SJ is a good school', so they also get interested to bring their children here".

In addressing the positioning of language in the school, I wish to start by looking at the discourses produced by the teachers and language aides related to why parents send their children to SJ, as opposed to schools more local to their homes (mostly in Khayelitsha). The teachers at the school offer an array of reasons for the influx of children from the townships to the school, primarily articulated as a growing number of parents wanting their children to learn in English, but also linked to the resources the school is able to offer, the poor quality and larger classes of township education and the fear of gangs at township schools. The following section explores the conception of a “good” school, that Mrs Mbsa speaks of above, through an analysis of responses of teachers to the question, ‘why do parents send their children to Southern Junior?’:

Excerpt 3 (Interview with Mrs West 15/08/12):

Mrs West (Grade 1 teacher): I think there’s more the fact that English is an international language, a lot of the parents are or do go overseas, they have broadened their horizons and do see the need. What I can tell you, when I was teaching Grade 3 at this school, I have had a parent say to me towards the end of the year, “please don’t put my child in that class”, because it was a Xhosa speaking teacher. They want the learner in an English speaking teacher’s class. We don’t find that very often, but you do find the parents who make those requests.

Excerpt 4 (Interview with Mrs Geldenhuys 24/08/12):

Mrs Geldenhuys (Grade R teacher): Like I said, they need to go out one day, English is the main language that needs to be spoken if you apply for a job and even now the Xhosa becomes now important on your CV. But at the end of the day, I personally feel because the parent is now at a job where she feel English is a necessity, that language is a necessity, so she start with her little ones, but the preparation they lack in that area, you understand?

Excerpt 5 (Interview with Mrs Rogers 24/08/12):

Mrs Rogers (Foundation Phase H.O.D): Well it’s sort of regarded as an ex-model C, they (parents) regard it as a better education. And they think that, and it’s a terrible

thing to say, but they think that if they have a European teacher, I suppose you could call it that, or an English speaking teacher, they'll get a far better education than they would in the township schools.

The following table offers an overview analysis of the discourses produced in Excerpts 3-5 representing the key themes in how English and Xhosa are discursively constructed at SJ.

Table 1: "Why do parents send their children to SJ?"

<u>Speech from Excerpts</u>	<u>Implications of speech</u>
<p><u>English:</u> "English is an international language" "They (parents) have broadened their horizons and do see the need" "English is the main language that needs to be spoken if you apply for a job" "The parent is now at a job where she feel English is a necessity, that language is a necessity" "an ex-model C, they regard it as a better education...they (parents) think that if they have a European teacher(...)/English speaking teacher, they'll get a far better education than they would in the township schools"</p>	<p><u>English:</u> The prestige attached to 'English' is a central discourse in Excerpts 1-3. Variously described as "international", "main language", "the language", "a necessity", "broadened horizons", English is discursively constructed as having symbolic value as the legitimate language for schooling at SJ (Bourdieu 1977). English is portrayed as the vehicle for social and economic upward mobility An explicit racialised ideology is seen in comparison of "European" or "English speaking" (white) teachers to their (black) counterparts in (black) townships schools. This referencing draws on the ethnolinguistic repertoire of a variety of White South African English (WSAE) of the "European/English speaking teacher" set against a variety of Black South African</p>

<p>“but the preparation they lack in that area (English proficiency)”</p> <p><u>Xhosa:</u></p> <p>“even now the Xhosa becomes now important on your CV”</p> <p>“I have had a parent say to me ..., “please don’t put my child in that class”, because it was a Xhosa speaking teacher”</p>	<p>English (BSAE) of “township schools”. The associations of SJ as an ex-model C are both as having greater access to resources, but also its status as a formerly white school which are then linked to a “better” education</p> <p>Learners are positioned in terms of the deficit (“preparation they lack”) of their proficiency in English</p> <p><u>Xhosa:</u></p> <p>While there is some acknowledgement of the value of Xhosa, there is the subtle implication in “<i>even now</i> the Xhosa” that this is secondary to the prestige of English</p> <p>A Xhosa speaking teacher at SJ refers to an Xhosa/English bilingual teacher instructing learners through English, thus the variety of language (most likely to be BSAE of Xhosa/English bilingual teachers) is the significant factor of deficit positioning referred to here</p>
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The table above indicates three key themes that are expanded upon in this chapter of the prestige attached to: English in general, a particular variety of WSAE, and ‘whiteness’. In reference to the analysis above it is possible to see the ways in which for teachers at SJ, English (or a particular version of it) is the marker of success and offers the potential for social and economic mobility. Extracts 3-5 signify the association between the “good” and “better” quality of the school and its status as an English medium former model C school. This signals Bourdieu’s (1977) notion that discourse is a symbolic asset. Here we see English portrayed as worldly with the implication that African languages offer narrow scope for upward mobility, strongly

echoing broader societal discourses on the symbolic power of English (Alexander 2000; Dalvit et al. 2009; Benson 2008; Makoe 2007). Coupled with these monoglot English linguistic ideologies is the deficit associated with a lesser proficiency in English, which is a theme that runs through the following sections. The deficit positioning of learners goes beyond a correlation between English proficiency and educational ability to the prestige attached to a specific variety of White South African English (WSAE). Echoing research by McKinney (2007; 2013), such discourses show the invisibility of how white ways of speaking are privileged by teachers.

Significantly in the excerpts above, and in further data, the terms 'English speaking' and 'Xhosa speaking' are used to differentiate on a racial basis, since Xhosa speaking teachers are also fluent in English and teaching through this medium. Perhaps in a context where explicitly racist stereotypes are no longer acceptable, language has become the vehicle through which such sentiments are expressed. In this context, "good" or "better" teaching has become correlated to 'whiteness' continuing the historical trajectory of Apartheid education systems that created these binaries. As Frankenberg argues, "whiteness makes itself invisible precisely by asserting its normalcy, its transparency, in contrast to the marking of others on which its transparency depends" (Frankenberg 1997, p.6). This discussion points to the discourses about language and its association with racial ideologies that are seen across the data analysis.

The manner in which teachers produce these discourses often attributes them to the parents, ("*they* regard it as", "I have had a parent say", "*they* want", "*she* feels"). By assigning such views to the parents there is suggestion that the teachers are no longer culpable for the racial implications of their speech as these are referenced to parents. This is supported in later sections where the teachers produced similar views about race, culture and language assigned to themselves. I now go on to address such discursive constructions in relation to assessment standards at SJ.

4.3.2. ANAs and IQMS: The language is "weak"

The school is currently undergoing a whole school evaluation and development, including teacher assessments, as part of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). This intervention is due to poor performance in literacy and maths in the Annual National Assessments (ANAs). Analysing the teacher's discourses about assessment standards is a further way to understand the linguistic ideologies at the school and the prestige attached to English competency at SJ. For this analysis, I take the view that competence is about being positioned, not about general or open-ended potential (Blommaert et al. 2005, p.211). I wish to make clear that this is an analysis of the perceptions about language embedded in these discourses rather than the value of the testing mechanisms themselves¹⁵.

The IQMS is "aimed at enhancing and monitoring performance of the education system" involving peer assessments of the teachers, and departmental advisers observing classes and checking paperwork (Department of Basic Education 2009, p.10). The following excerpts highlight a tendency to position the English proficiency of ELLs at SJ in terms of a deficit. These are responses to questions about the role of the provincial department advisors in the classroom:

Excerpt 6 (Interview Mrs Geldenhuys 21/08/12) :

Mrs Geldenhuys (Grade R teacher): They will go through your planning, assessments, intervention and stuff and they will check if you are on par, where they can assist you, so we get lots of support from them. But the language is the main issue in this class I would say.

Researcher: And are they aware of that?

Mrs Geldenhuys: They are aware of that because we have spoken to them already, but nothing has been done, because they set the standard for each and everyone, right throughout.

¹⁵ While this research does not set out to explicitly address the implications of the move towards testing and accountability measures at SJ, it is important to note that such mechanisms have been widely criticised (see Gee 2003; Broadfoot 1996; Christie & Gilmour 2012). While not fully expanded here, my preliminary findings suggested that there is a strong feeling of alienation of teachers as a result of these policies highlighted with Mrs Roger's assertion, "We're just teaching to assess" (Interview Mrs Rogers 22/08/12).

Excerpt 7 (Interview Mrs Rogers 22/08/12):

Mrs Rogers (foundation phase H.O.D): So they come in and they're sort of guiding us, but we all know what to do, it's just that the language is weak. It's to build up the language and that is smaller classes, more individual attention, extra work after school, which we can't give them because they have to go home.

In Excerpts 6 and 7, language is synonymous with English through references to “the language” representing the hegemony that English has as the legitimate language of education for these teachers (Bourdieu 1977). Further, the lack of the possessive pronoun in “the language” implies that there is no possession by learners of their linguistic resources. In the excerpts, the interventions of the IQMS are referenced against learners’ English language proficiency. In excerpt 1 Mrs Ester says “the language” is the central “issue” in the class with standards, presumably language standards, set “right throughout”(the school system) implying that the these are too high for learners at SJ. Mrs Moore also speaks about the IQMS with a focus on the deficits of learners’ with “the language” positioned as “weak”, while she argues “we (teachers) know what to do”. In this way problems related to institutional performance are displaced onto the competency of learners in the dominant language. Such deficit positioning results in the languages of teaching and learning becoming a “problem to be solved” by teachers (Bailey et al. 2008, p.609). Correspondingly, the description of “weak” language and “the language” when referring to the English language results in learners’ other available linguistic resources (largely the Xhosa linguistic resources of ELLs) becoming invisible, so that the full language repertoires of learners are not acknowledged. The learners are thus declared ‘language-less’ with their intricate multilingual repertoires going unrecognised, so that language and writing need to be learned from scratch (Blommaert 2008, p.445). Through an analysis of these discourses it is possible to see that not only is English the aspirational standard for these teachers, but that ELLs with a lower competency in English are positioned in terms of a deficit. At the same time learners’ Xhosa resources become invisible through their positioning as having “weak language”. These findings strongly echo Makoe’s (2007) research on the symbolic power of English in a similar primary school in Johannesburg.

In relation to the poor ANA results, the perception of the teachers is that the learners struggle with the ANAs because the “standard” of English in the tests, particularly the vocabulary, is too high for the learners at SJ. In the following excerpts it is possible to analyse the way that ideologies about language are interlinked with those related to race and culture, showing the complex context in which discourses about language are produced. Excerpts 8 and 9 are responses to questions about the impact of assessments at SJ:

Excerpt 8 (Interview Mrs Donnell 24/08/12):

Mrs Donnell (principal): The language is set at such a high level and what happens is the children are thrown out by the ‘vocab’, because they’re Xhosa speaking children, so we have to set it at a level that children of all races can understand. I know our children are well prepared for systemic, but then the question paper throws them out because of the ‘vocab’ that is used

Excerpt 9 (Interview Mrs Geldenhuys 21/08/12):

Mrs Geldenhuys (Grade R teacher): ...And the amount of assessments and things that need to be done on these little ones, its crazy. Honestly. Like I say maybe if it was a language that was not foreign to them, then maybe yes. That’s why I say they really need to look at the culture that comes into a school. Or work out an assessment for those particular type of learners and then maybe for the English speaking children that attend there now work out something for them, because the language can go on a higher level, but here, although we break it down in order for that child, I still feel it’s too much for them.

Excerpts 8 and 9 highlight two central themes; firstly the idea that language proficiency is linked to race and culture and a “type” of learner, and secondly that assessment standards should be linked to such factors. Importantly, the discourses characterise a learner as either a Xhosa speaker or an English speaker, both as homogenous entities, allowing little space for an understanding of the multiplicity in a person’s linguistic repertoire and the fluid networks of language usage (Blommaert 2001). In Excerpt 6, the poor ANA results at SJ are related to a ‘deficit’ in the English

language proficiency of learners as they “are thrown out by the ‘vocab’, because they’re Xhosa speaking children”. This is then linked to an idea that “levels” for standardised testing should be set for “all races”, suggesting lower standards are necessary at SJ. While this could be linked to the lack of provision in the curriculum for ELLs in the Home Language English curriculum, the racialised dimension of her assertion on standards as dependant on race is significant. In this sense then, language has come to equate to race. Such racialised ideologies embedded in teachers’ discourses at SJ are seen again in Excerpt 9. With a “particular type” and “culture” of learners (African, mother tongue Xhosa ELLs) that are “here” referenced against the binary of “English speaking children” that are “there”, Mrs Ester suggests a link between a higher level or quality of work possible for the “English speaking children” and thus white children. These racialised accounts and intersections of ideologies of race and language support those identified in McKinney’s (2007; 2013) research in desegregated South African schools.

A focus on the teachers’ discourses about the IQMS and ANAs highlight the language ideologies that equate English proficiency with educational ability and intelligence (Makoe 2007; McKinney 2009). English is thus constructed as having symbolic power (Bourdieu 1977) and as the ‘norm’ or standard with the concordant subordination of other languages. However such ideologies are not monolithic and Mrs Khumalo, the Grade 1 language aide, offers a counterpoint to such thinking in the following excerpt when asked about the relationship between English and Xhosa in her teaching:

Excerpt 10 (Interview Mrs Khumalo 13/08/12)

Mrs Khumalo: ... I always tell them, don’t undermine the language (Xhosa), even if you are going to a school that teaches English and Afrikaans, don’t undermine the language, because its going to open the doors, wherever you are going. If you have a school that you want to choose English and Xhosa, its up to you, but you mustn’t take one up and let the other one go down, they must grow together, that was my belief when I came here. That they must grow together. I mustn’t boost Xhosa only, I must boost both of them.

In contrast to Excerpts 4 and 5, here “the language” refers to Xhosa, positioning Xhosa as having value for education at SJ. In the context of linguistic ideologies that promote English as the language of prestige, Mrs Khumalo produces a discourse of Xhosa and English “grow(ing) together” and “I must boost both” suggesting a more hybridised (Gutierrez 2008) approach to language. While hers is just one identifiable voice producing this discourse, it suggests that there is complexity in how language is understood in the school, a theme developed in Chapter 5 in looking at Mrs. Khumalo’s orientations to language inside the classroom.

4.3.3. Normative discourses: “but often they don’t get the sort of support at home that a normal child would”

I now wish to show more explicitly how teachers’ perceptions about language are highly interlinked with ideas and stereotypes about race and culture. This can be seen through the positioning of learners in reference to normalising discourses about learners’ family backgrounds. Drawing on Bourdieu (1977) I take the view that knowing the place one occupies in the social space determines the value of one’s own linguistic products, and thus the legitimacy of language is situated in its social context and embedded within relations of power. The following excerpts make explicit the links between how language is understood in relation to discourses about “normal” families. Excerpts 11-13 were the responses of teachers to questions regarding the challenges to teaching that they face:

Excerpt 11 (Mrs Johnson Interview 23/08/12):

Mrs Edwards (Grade 1 teacher): I love my job. I want to make a difference. I want to help the kids; I’ve had a fortunate upbringing, I went to an affluent school and I have a nuclear family.

Excerpt 12 (Interview Mrs Geldenhuys 21/08/12):

Mrs Geldenhuys (Grade R teacher): Yes I do enjoy this job, but it would be so much better if the child was English speaking. The first term, the second term, that is very

hectic for us and like I said, some of the parents doesn't even support the child at home...But yes the ones that get the extra support at home they are still very lucky you know. But there are many of them that don't even get that extra support at home.

Excerpt 13 (Interview Mrs Rogers 22/08/12):

Mrs Rogers (Foundation phase H.O.D): ...Granny might be bringing them up and she might not have had the chance to go to school, which is not her fault at all, so she might not be completely literate in that sort of thing. There *are* parents who can help them and who *do* help them, but often they don't get the sort of support at home that a normal child would... They (parents) don't read to them like we used to, well some of them do, but not many and they don't have the time to work with the children. That's not all of them, there are those that do and you can see it, it makes a huge difference when they work with them and help them.

Excerpts 11-13 create deficit portraits of home life as the context in which the linguistic repertoires of learners are developed. These can be identified through the binaries constructed by teachers between learners at SJ and their perception of an ideal learner. These norms of idealised learners and parents are variously described (in terms of a presence or absence) as follows: in Excerpt 11 as having a "fortunate upbringing" with "affluent school(ing)" and a "nuclear family"; in Excerpt 12 as "English speaking" (ie home language English speaking), "extra support at home"; and in excerpt 13 as having "had the chance to go to school", "literate", "have time to work with the children" and giving "the support at home that a normal child would". In this way, the teachers present their own "internalised cultural discourses" (Gutierrez et al. 1995, p.455) as basis for knowledge of the world. To highlight Excerpt 12, once again there is the assertion of the value of English, "it would be so much better if the child was English speaking". Interestingly, Mrs Geldenhuys' (Afrikaans/English bilingual) English is not the variety of WSAE that is positioned as prestigious at SJ as seen in her use of "doesn't get" and is closer to a variety of Cape Flats English (CFE) (Finn 2004) yet throughout her interview there was an emphasis on English as a monolithic standard. Such views of language as homogenous undermine the different forms of knowledge of language a person may

have (Blommaert & Backus 2011). It is further possible to discern a racialised dimension in such discourses seen in the binaries of 'us' and 'them' in "they don't read like we used to". The "we" here appears to refer to white, mother tongue English speakers and "they" refers to African, mother tongue Xhosa speakers. Such discourses can be seen as constructing essentialist racial categories according to the binaries of 'white' and 'African' culture.

Excerpts 11-13 highlight the stereotypes embedded in how teachers speak about their learners and their families. Learners are positioned by teachers in light of a variety of perceived stereotypes related to language, race, culture and family structure. This asserts Gutierrez's argument that perceptions about the discontinuities between the home and school "reinscribe deficit portraits of home that compel educators to "fix" communities and their members so that they match normative views and practices without regard to students' existing repertoires of practice" (Gutiérrez 2008, p.151). While the assertions such as "I love my job" and "I do enjoy the job" were present across the interviews I conducted, the teachers showed an inability to take stock of how questions around 'difference' are negotiated in their relationships with learners.

Interestingly Mrs Khumalo, the Grade 1 language aide, offers a counter narrative to the role of parents in the school as seen in the following excerpt when speaking of workshops held at SJ by the Project for the Study of Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA, an organisation promoting the educational use of African languages, in the late 1990s:

Excerpt 14 (Interview Mrs Khumalo 13/08/12):

Mrs Khumalo: When they (PRAESA) ask teachers, why are parents not involved in school, I used to stand and challenge those teachers that when the parent is keen to help the child they must bring that parent closer. That parent can help other children, not her child or his child only, and must help other children as well. What I noticed was that when my child was struggling with the language there were other children struggling with the language, so I was willing to help the others as well.

Excerpt 14 highlights a rupture in the deficit discourses of teachers towards parents seen above. Starting out as a parent at the school before taking on a job as language aide, Mrs Khumalo implies that the lack of “support” that teachers express about parents could be linked to the teachers’ positioning of parents in this way. The idea that teachers should “bring that parent closer” suggests she believes a more inclusive approach to teacher/parent relations should be encouraged and the privileging of a discourse of community responsibility for all of the children over a nuclear ideal of each parent responsible for their own child. In identifying the counter narratives to dominant teacher ideologies, such as Excerpt 14, I wish to show the complexity in the production of institutional discourses. I now go on to address the discursive positioning of learners inside Mrs West’s 1W classroom in reference to the normalising discourses of teachers.

4.3.4: Positioning in Grade 1W

The deficit positioning of learners and normalising discourses of the institution discussed in previous sections are further evident in an analysis of classroom discursive practices in Mrs West’s Grade 1W classroom¹⁶. Mrs West is a white woman bilingual in English and Afrikaans and has been a teacher since 1972. Her experiences in teaching prior to 1994 were teaching white, mother tongue English speaking learners. She has been at SJ since 1998, initially as a Grade 3 teacher, but then moved to Grade 1 in 2008. The following excerpt from inside the classroom highlights the deficit portraits and racialised framework in which Mrs West at times perceives her class. On one occasion while taking out art materials from a cupboard Mrs West explained that:

Excerpt 15 (reconstructed from field notes 31/07/12):

Researcher: What role does Mrs Khumalo (the language aide) have in the classroom?

¹⁶ Mrs West’s discursive constructions of language and orientations to English and Xhosa are addressed in Chapter 5.

Mrs West: Mrs Khumalo is usually here as much for crowd control. I just can't cope without her. I'm getting too old for this. No, I'm not getting too old; it never used to be like this.

Researcher: Is that because there are more learners in the class?

Mrs West: Yes, and also before it was a Model C school and they were white kids and it was different. And also you can't leave anything, because they'll take it.

Firstly, remembering that these are six year old learners, it is possible to identify the way in which Mrs West positioned the learners in terms of the deficits of children in need of "crowd control" and likely to steal, "they'll take it". Such positioning is once again referential to race through the binary of a time "before" when "it was different"/"never used to be like this" and the learners were "white kids" and it was a "model C school" set against the present day of desegregated schooling and a majority of African learners at SJ. As the analyses of previous sections indicated, there is a strong privileging of white ways of knowing and being at the expense of engagements with issues of difference in desegregated schooling (Soudien 2007). Further, in the disclosure of the excerpt it is possible to note the way in which Mrs West positioned me as sharing her worldview in reference to a perception of the commonality of 'whiteness' (Frankenberg 2007). Mrs West's discourses on the family backgrounds of learners can be further understood in the following discussion we had while watching the learners' Physical Education class:

Excerpt 16 (reconstructed from field notes 31/07/12)

Researcher: could you tell me a bit more about the learner's parents?

Mrs West: I'm not a racist, at least I try not to be. I think the problem is that some of the parents are so young, and some have so many children. It relates to culture I think. Some men have many children with different mothers and they just accept it. The children even tell me they went to so and so's birthday and it is their (half) brother or sister. The mothers are even friends. We've even had teachers here with children with different fathers and they put up with it.

In the above excerpt the well known discursive strategy of "I'm not a racist [but]" frames a highly racialised understanding of the parents of Mrs West's learners and

other African teachers. Parents are positioned in deficit terms in reference to the “problem” of being “so young” and having “so many children” explained in reference to “culture”. Thus racialised assumptions and normalising views about family structure and its influence are conflated with “culture” and seen to have bearing on the education of learners at SJ. This links to discourses in the previous section on the “support” that parents offer to their children. Mrs West mentioned on three different occasions in the course of fieldwork that behavioural problems in the classroom should be seen as follows:

Excerpt 17 (reconstructed from fieldnotes 04/08/12)

Mrs West: The parents are so busy and they don't have time to listen to their children. They have feelings they need to let out and they have nowhere to vent them so they come out in class.

Such discourses echo research by Fataar on normative discourses in a former model C school in Cape Town in which teachers felt it “their morally ordained duty to educate for middle class civility” (Fataar 2009, p.7). The influences of such discourses are further visible in “teaching-as-usual” (Davies & Hunt 1994) interactions between Mrs West and learners in the class. Such discursive practices are particularly evident in Mrs West's questions and statements about learners' home lives. The excerpts below are from the following situations: in Excerpt 18 when Mrs West explains to the class about the public holidays; Excerpt 19 during ‘news time’; and Excerpt 20 after two learners hit each other during class:

Excerpt 18 (reconstructed from fieldnotes 06/08/12):

Mrs West (to Kapanga): And do you know that this week we have only three days, so we have to do all the week's work in three days ... What will you do at home?

Kapanga: I'm free at home

Mrs West: What do you mean?

Kapanga: I cook for myself

Mrs West: Is mommy not home?

Kapanga: I don't know

Excerpt 19 (reconstructed from fieldnotes 03/08/12):

Simon: I will go to my mommy's work and then I will go home

Mrs West: And where does mommy work?

Learner F: she works in a shop

Mrs West: Does she work for a long time? Is she at home when you finish school?

Simon: No

Mrs West: Who looks after you?

Simon: My brother

Mrs West: how old is he?

Simon: 18

Mrs West: are you good for him?

Simon: Yes

Mrs West: Is he nice to you?

Simon: Yes

Excerpt 20 (reconstructed from fieldnotes 13/08/12):

Mrs West: I know sometimes you see people hitting at home and I know these things happen and I know that sometimes I hear about mommies and daddies hitting each other, but then they are cowards.

The discourse of the 'absent' and 'unsupportive' parent is highly evident in the teacher's questions such as "is mommy not home" and "does she work for a long time" and "is he nice to you". Kapanga's response of "I don't know" and Simon's singular answers of "yes" imply a reluctance of these learners to talk about their families further with Mrs West. The manner in which Mrs West asks questions positioning her learners' families as deviant has closed down a space for meaningful dialogue about family life. Significantly, the instances highlighted above indicate the spectrum in which family life was discussed in class during the period of fieldwork, thus the absence of positive moments of interaction in this regard can further be seen as reinscribing deficit constructions of home life (Gutiérrez 2008). I further observed Mrs West check the learner's lunches; she later explained that she liked to do so twice a week and she could see which parents always gave "a sandwich, a yoghurt, a fruit and a juice" and which parents only did so sometimes. Thus parents

are judged on the contents of their children's lunchboxes with an association that more 'supportive' parents provide a fuller lunchbox more consistently.

In reflecting on the normalising discourses of Mrs West, as well as the teachers discussed in Section 4.3, it appears that there has not been any 'unlearning' of the racist ideologies of Apartheid that framed a considerable part of their careers as teachers. Teachers are thus both a product and producers of social discourses that embed such beliefs into the institutional ethos of the school. The problematic nature of such assumptions about race, as well as those related to language, for a meaningful engagement between teachers and learners highlights a need for a more serious interrogation of issues of difference and power in education policy.

4.4 Conclusion

A key finding of this chapter has been the absence of an engagement with issues of difference, power and inequality by teachers in the foundation phase at SJ. I have shown that overwhelmingly the institutional discourses at SJ (re)produce the legitimacy of English monoglot linguistic ideologies that intersect with racial stereotypes about learners and their families. Drawing on Bourdieu, it can be seen that in this context, English, as a particular prestige variety of WSAE, is the language of legitimacy at SJ, while the Xhosa linguistic repertoires that learners bring with them from home are positioned in terms of a deficit. The data analysis shows the ways in which linguistic products are "silenced and made invisible" when language is narrowed into a normative set of functions that create the boundaries for which 'voices' are heard and which are excluded in a society (Blommaert 2008, p.447). I have, however also attempted to convey the counter narratives to the hegemonic ideologies where these were apparent in order to represent the complexity in how language is understood at SJ. The following chapter looks to how such linguistic ideologies are (re)produced as well as reimagined through looking at the differing orientations to language in Grade 1W of teacher Mrs West and language aide Mrs Khumalo.

Chapter 5:

Teachers' Orientations to Language in Grade 1W

5.1 Introduction

What is important is to think of language always as a complex system, in movement, sometimes contradictory and sometimes in single direction (Kress 1985, 95).

This chapter looks at the linguistic ideologies in Grade 1W through an analysis of ethnographic observations of the discursive practices shaping understandings of the roles of English and Xhosa in the classroom. I have chosen to focus on the different orientations to language in the “teaching as usual” (Davies & Hunt 1994) of teacher Mrs West, and language aide, Mrs Khumalo. Here, I wish to study the “hidden curriculum” as the implicit social values and mores which shape what happens in the classroom seen through everyday interactions (McGroarty 2002, p.77). Through an analysis of classroom discursive practices I wish to portray the complexity in thinking about language as Kress identifies in the quote above. I foreground the complex web of interconnecting and, at times, conflicting discourses produced within a school or classroom. To this end, I take “a view of classrooms as having multiple, layered, and conflicting activity systems with various interconnections” (Gutiérrez 2008, p.152).

Drawing on Bourdieu (1977), I argue that acceptability in language usage is related to the linguistic “sense of place”, which sets the degree of constraint that a given field has on the production of discourse. Viewing language usage in this manner it is possible to see the clear boundaries between the (re)production of discourses about Xhosa and English in the school. In the first section of this chapter I situate the specific classroom context offering an overview of the daily classroom activities in Grade 1W. The second section looks at the ways in which Mrs West as teacher privileges English, and a variety of White South African English (Bowerman 2004) as the ‘legitimate’ (Bourdieu 1977) medium for learning and meaning making in the formal space of the classroom, and how learners have internalised such discourses. This is viewed in continuation with the dominant monoglot linguistic ideologies

discussed in the previous chapter. The third section of this chapter points to discourses counter to the dominant linguistic ideologies of the institution. This is done through an analysis of the 'hybridity' (Gutierrez et al. 1995;1999) in language aide, Mrs Khumalo's, use of English and Xhosa to facilitate learning in the classroom and through creating a 'third space' (Gutierrez et al. 1995;1999). Lastly I work to understand the discursive practices of Mrs West and Mrs Khumalo in reference to Blommaert's (2001) notions of 'scales'.

5.2 The classroom context

There are 45 learners in the class, 25 girls and 28 boys. The majority (42 learners) are mother tongue Xhosa speaking ELLs, thus the remaining three learners are two bilingual Afrikaans and English girls and one mother tongue English speaking girl. The classroom is a print rich environment, with literacy and numeracy posters up on the wall as well as several boxes of books. The classroom is arranged into six groups of tables, with six to eight learners at each, arranged around a large mat. The class has periods allocated to English, Mathematics, Life Skills, Xhosa and Physical Education in a timetable according to the prescriptions of CAPS, however Mrs West will often alternate between Mathematics and English according to her own schedule. I did not identify specific lessons allocated for Life Skills. Xhosa classes are taught by Mrs Khumalo and take place twice weekly. Physical Education classes also take place twice a week with an outside instructor but attended by Mrs West.

As language aide, Mrs Khumalo was present for two to three hours over the course of the school day, according to her timetable split with the other Grade 1 class. During Mrs Khumalo's time in class, she would walk around explaining instructions to specific learners or groups in Xhosa and English, as well as instructing the learners to behave well and work quietly. The following table offers a breakdown of a typical day in Grade 1W, although the activities would vary daily. It should be noted however that this table represents an idealised day in which everything ran according to Mrs West's plans. At many points during the fieldwork, particularly when Mrs Khumalo was not present in class, I observed that Mrs West would

struggle to maintain discipline. In such cases it could take up to 20 minutes to settle the class before work would commence and certain activities, such as reading a story, were cut short when the class misbehaved.

A typical school day in Grade 1W

07.45-08.00: LINE UP - Learners line up outside the classroom. Separate rows of girls and boys

08.00-08.10: ENTRANCE - Mrs West opens the classroom, girls enter followed by boys. The learners put down their bags and are seated on the mat.

08.10-08.15: PRAYERS - The learners say a Christian prayer and hymn led by Mrs West.

08.30-08.50: SONGS - The learners sing songs in English followed by Xhosa, e.g. 'the Brother Peter', 'Two Little Dickie Birds', 'I'm A Little Teapot'

08.50-09.10: STORIES - Mrs West reads a story to the class in English and asks questions related to the narrative.

09.10-10.20: ENGLISH - (Mrs Khumalo present between 9.30 and 10.30) The learners have an English period copying exercises that Mrs West writes on the board e.g.

cccccccccc

Chad won a

gold medal for

swimming

Mrs West and Mrs Khumalo walk around the class assisting learners

10.20-10.30: PRAYERS- Learners told to get their lunch and sit on mat. Learners say 'Grace'.

10.30-10.50: FIRST BREAK - Learners take their lunch to the playground

10.50-11.50: XHOSA - Xhosa class with Mrs Khumalo, learners sing songs in Xhosa.

Mrs Khumalo reads a story in Xhosa translating into English

11.50-12.40: MATHS- The learners have a Mathematics period and work on basic sums in their Government issue workbooks. Mrs West takes a first and then second group of ten learners of mixed ability for group work on the mat using abaci.

12.40-12.50: PRAYERS - Learners told to get their lunch and sit on mat. Learners say 'Grace'.

12.50-13.10: SECOND BREAK - Learners take their lunch to the playground

13.10-13.50: ENGLISH - (Mrs Khumalo present between 13.10-13.50) The learners have an English period copying exercises written on the board by Mrs West. Mrs West takes a first and then second group of ten learners of mixed ability for group work on the mat with flashcards of words such as 'cat', 'boy', 'is'.

13.50 HOME TIME - School day ends. Some learners line up for aftercare but most wait in the classroom for 'transport' to fetch them at 14.30

5.3 Mrs West's orientations to language

5.3.1 The discursive construction of language in the formal space

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Mrs West is a white woman bilingual in English and Afrikaans and has been a teacher since 1972. She has been at SJ since 1998 and teaching Grade 1 since 2008. Her espoused views on language can be seen in the following interview excerpt when asked about how English and Xhosa are used in class:

Excerpt 21 (Interview Mrs West 15/08/12):


Researcher: Is there a balance between them (learners) speaking English to the teacher and Xhosa otherwise? What do you think about this?

Mrs West: There is a balance. I think there has to be a balance, I don't think that you can cut out the home language at all. There are some schools that don't allow the children to speak their language, at break or in the classroom or whatever, but I personally don't think that is right, because if I have a child who is in class that can't understand the work that is being done, I will use then the cooperative learning system and then get another learner to explain to the child what has to be done, or I will get Mrs Khumalo to explain...If they know that they are being taught in a certain language they must get used to using that in the classroom, but I will definitely not stop a child speaking his language to his or her friends. I couldn't do that.

This excerpt highlights Mrs West's view of the role of English and Xhosa in the school that was produced throughout the period of fieldwork and in classroom discursive practices. The "balance" in her view is that Xhosa is designated to an informal space "at break", "in the classroom" and "with friends" while English is the language of the formal space that "they are taught in". This represents a view of English and Xhosa in the classroom as a 'parallel monolingualism' (Creese & Blackledge 2010, p.105) with these two languages operating side by side, but having distinct social and academic functions. English is thus positioned as the 'legitimate' language of the classroom and conversely the Xhosa linguistic repertoires that learners bring from home are given legitimacy only as a function of the social space. While I did note that Xhosa songs were sung in class (many of these versions having been taught to Mrs West by learners) this was the only time at which Xhosa was present in the formal space of Mrs West's teaching suggesting a 'tokenism' (Makoe 2009, p.118) of Xhosa in the classroom. Further, I did not observe Mrs West employ the cooperative learning system or specific instances of Mrs Khumalo explaining to a child for her. Observing her teaching the class, I was not clear how she could identify if specific learners were having difficulties in understanding.

I now move to an analysis of Mrs West's everyday practices that entrench the linguistic ideologies of 'parallel monolingualism' and privilege monoglot English as the vehicle for learning. In the following excerpt, Mrs West indicated to me, speaking across the learners sitting on the mat, that she was asking two particular learners to tell their news in front of the class in order to show me an example of their "improvement" in English:

Excerpt 22 (reconstructed from field notes 03/08/12)

Mrs West, This is one who couldn't [hand movement of 'speaking' ] anything

Sipho: Yesterday my mommy went to the Spur

Mrs West says to me: It's an improvement (his English). This is another one (Mrs West calls up another learner to the front)

Bonginkosi: me and mommy/

Mrs West: /Mommy and I

Bonginkosi: Mommy and I buy a chocolate

In this excerpt, English is constructed as having symbolic value as the language of legitimacy through Siphos improvement in English proficiency referenced against a time when he “couldn’t [gesture for speaking] anything”. Here not speaking English is equated with not speaking anything, so that ELLs are positioned as entering the school system with no linguistic resources at all, echoing research by Makoe (2007). According to Mrs West, learners have ‘voice’ (Blommaert 2008) and can ‘speak’ only when they can use English proficiently. Significant here is the public display, in front of the class, of these interactions, so the value attached to the ability to express oneself in English is imprinted as an aspect of the “hidden curriculum” (McGroarty 2002). Bonginkosi, also identified in terms of the deficit of not having had “anything” is then interrupted by Mrs West asking him to correct the phrase “me and my mommy” with “mommy and I”, privileging a particular usage of English. In many instances, Mrs West would correct phrases such as “mommy and I” in interactions with the learners creating a perception that only a specific form of English is legitimate, a theme I pick up on in reference to the teaching of pronunciation analysed below. Drawing on Bourdieu, I argue that it is through such systems of positive and negative reinforcements in the linguistic market of the classroom that languages are legitimated (Bourdieu 1977, p.654).

Discursive practices such as those presented above show that the language of value in the formal space of the classroom is English, and beyond this that Mrs West privileges a certain variety of White South African English (WSAE) (Bowerman 2004). This can be seen in her emphasis on the phonological features of language in learners’ pronunciation and accent. Mrs West presents the focus on pronunciation as part of an institutional discourse coming from the Principal:

Excerpt 23 (Interview Mrs West 15/08/12)

Researcher: In your class I’ve noticed quite an emphasis on pronunciation/

Mrs West: /I try to get them to pronounce the words properly because we have been asked by our headmistress to see that the children don't have the incorrect pronunciation. And I just feel that it's better for them for when they're learning their phonics. If they can pronounce their words correctly, then they can spell, then they can use the phonics.

Mrs West places the emphasis on learners pronouncing words "properly" and "correctly" as "better for them", signalling a value attached to the phonological features of a specific variety of English, WSAE, that is spoken by herself. In this way, Mrs West constructs WSAE as the language of prestige. The variety of English (including phonological features) of learners is closer to a variety of Black South African English (BSAE)(De Klerk & Gough 2002; Van Rooy 2004). BSAE is positioned in terms of the deficit of being "incorrect" and not the "proper(ly)" variety, and thus discursively constructed in terms of a stigma and as a deviation from the 'norm' of WSAE, resonating with research by Mesthrie (2002) and McKinney (2007). Further, the pedagogical associations Mrs West makes between pronunciation, spelling and phonics is inconsistent with orthodox English orthography that has shown spellings are often not phonetic and that there is often not a direct relation between letter and sound (Schane 1970, p.137). The manner in which such discourses were played out is highly evident in an analysis of classroom practices as seen below.

Mrs West would often ask the learners to repeat words until their pronunciation was acceptable in her view; the following episodes represent this trend:

Excerpt 24 (reconstructed from fieldnotes 02/08):

Mrs West to the class: Say **seventy** ['e' as in 'bed', with emphasis on first syllable WSAE] again, say **fifty** ['f' as in 'sit', WSAE] again, **seventy seventy seventy fifty fifty fifty**

[bold=International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) transcription]

Excerpt 25 (reconstructed from fieldnotes 13/08):

Mrs West to the class: shIp shIp [shIp- 'I' as in 'sit', WSAE] 'S' 'H' 'I' 'P'. Listen to teacher, it's not sheep [shēp-'ē' as in 'see', WSAE]. I'm going to write sheep (writes 'sheep' on the board), say ship [shIp], say sheep [shēp], say ship [shIp].

(bold=IPA)

Excerpt 26 (reconstructed from fieldnotes 14/08):

Mrs West to the class: Who can tell me what the date is today? Put up your hands and don't shout out

Fihle: It is the two of August

Mrs West to the class: No, not the two, the second. Ok, remember lets count in ordinal numbers; first, second, third

Fihle: first, second, third, fourth, fifth ['i' as in 'see', BSAE], sixth ['i' as in 'see', BSAE] seventh ('e' as in 'bed', emphasis on second syllable)/

Mrs West: /Ok, lets try that again. Fihle, tell them to me. Look at my lips and repeat after me, sIxth ['I' as in 'sit', WSAE pronunciation], seventh ['e' as in 'bed', emphasis on first syllable, WSAE]

Mrs West to the researcher: The learners have trouble pronouncing these words

(bold=IPA)

Looking at Excerpts 24-26 it is possible to see the strong emphasis Mrs West places on pronunciation in the classroom. What 'counts' as "proper" and "correct" is related to the phonological features of the variety of English that approximates to WSAE. By asking learners to repeat words until they produce the prestige variety, the learners are discursively constructed as deficient in their current pronunciation, which is closer to a variety of BSAE. At the same time, Fihle's accurate knowledge of ordinal numbers draws no comment. Such discursive practices work to reinscribe the value of 'white' ways of speaking. Learners are taught that WSAE is the language that 'counts' as the linguistic capital and to assimilate to this norm. In this way, the boundaries for which voices are heard and which are excluded are created with "correct" pronunciation enabling access into the academic world. Blommaert speaks of the dangers of "the belief that meanings can only be produced in grammatically

well-formed sentences, spoken in the right accent or written in the right orthographic code” (Blommaert 2008, p.447).

Interestingly, Mrs West’s concern for the importance of correct pronunciation goes beyond the learners’ pronunciation to the teachers’. She relayed the following story in different situations to me three times during the course of the fieldwork:

Excerpt 27 (Interview Mrs West 15/08/12):

Mrs West...And also, at some stage during the years we had Xhosa speaking teachers inside the class teaching the children, which was of course fine, but then you get the teachers coming, perhaps to the H.O.D, this did happen, and she’ll ask for an ‘e’ worksheet, phonics, I told you about that, and you say, ‘e’ for egg? No I want the ‘e’ for apple. So you also get problems with that as well.

In Excerpt 27, once again BSAE is positioned in terms of a deficit with the pronunciation of the “Xhosa speaking”(i.e African, bilingual Xhosa/English) teacher seen as a linguistic “problem”. Effective teaching thus becomes about speaking the prestige variety of English and not the use of the bilingual linguistic resources of the Xhosa/English bilingual teacher. Thus mother tongue Xhosa speaking teachers are “of course fine”, but a “problem” due to their pronunciation. It is this feature of their speech that apparently makes them less able to teach effectively. Mrs West further told me that she had been asked to move from Grade 3 to Grade 1 by the previous principal several years before, “so that there would be an English speaking teacher in Grade 1 to boost the phonics and to boost the English (and) Maths” (Interview Mrs West 15/08/12). In this way, mother tongue English speaking teachers are portrayed as being able to “boost” learning where the mother tongue Xhosa speaking teachers are not. Mrs West’s value is thus represented as a ‘model’ to teach learners the phonological aspects of the prestige variety of English, which are conflated with “boost(ing)” English proficiency in general. One can question why the inability of Mrs West to speak Xhosa is not positioned as a “problem” in teaching mother tongue Xhosa speaking ELLs.

The tensions and disparities in language usage between learners in 1W and their teacher are evident in the following excerpt, which shows the complexities in how Mrs West understands language in this setting:

Excerpt 28 (follows from Excerpt 21 above. Interview Mrs West 15/08/12):

Mrs West: ...And I try and understand it (Xhosa), I'll ask them the meanings of the words and I'll ask them what certain words are, so I've built up quite a, not quite a wide vocabulary, but I have built up a vocabulary

Researcher: So you can understand/

Mrs West: /Understanding is even more. But you remember I have been here fourteen years, I suppose I should be speaking it by now

Researcher: I wonder if it would make things easier if you could?

Mrs West: I don't know. Well, I was telling Mrs Ester, the Grade R teacher, when I walk past the little Grade Rs and they all greet me in the morning and this morning I said, "*Molweni abantwana*" (Hello children) and they thought it was hysterical, that this teacher is talking Xhosa to them, so.

Researcher: I would think, uh, it shouldn't be hysterical

Mrs West: They shouldn't really, but they thought it was hilariously funny because this white teacher was talking Xhosa to them

Firstly, it is possible to note that Mrs West refers to Xhosa as "it", having previously described it as "the home language" (see Excerpt 21), thus Xhosa is positioned as having less legitimacy than English. There is the suggestion that Mrs West is aware of the limitations of her lack of Xhosa proficiency with "I suppose I should be speaking it by now", however she is unwilling to commit to the idea that Xhosa proficiency "would make things easier" in class with "I don't know". Further, that her attempts at basic communications in Xhosa are met with laughter from learners is indicative of the broader context in which white teachers, and white South Africans more broadly in South African society, have made few attempts to communicate in Xhosa, rather prioritising English as the language of communications (Alexander 2003; Mda 2004; Soudien 2007). The laughter suggests that Mrs West's identity as a white teacher is incongruous with speaking Xhosa in the minds of learners, (re)producing the perception that English is the language of 'everyone' where Xhosa is for African

speakers 'only'. I now go on to show how the language ideologies that privilege English as discussed above are reproduced in learners' discourses.

5.3.2 Internalisation of the dominant linguistic ideologies: "I want to speak English too much"

As Bourdieu reminds us, linguistic strategies are determined by the chances of being listened to, believed, obeyed as well as the chances of profit for the particular speaker (Bourdieu 1977, p.654). The data shows that learners have internalised the symbolic value attached to English, as seen in the following; Excerpt 29 from during break time interaction, and Excerpt 30 from a question asked to a learner during class. At the end of break one day three learners came over to talk to me, one of them, Nosipho called me "he" and the following exchange transpired:

Excerpt 29 (reconstructed from field notes 31/07/12):

Mandla (to researcher): She (Nosipho) doesn't speak English

Nosipho: I can speak (shouting)

Ayabonga: I speak English too much

Excerpt 30 (reconstructed from field notes 06/08/12):

Researcher: Do you like learning in Xhosa more or English more?

Sihle: I want to learn English more

Researcher: Why?

Sihle: So I can speak to my teacher properly

It can be seen that the deficit attached to a lesser proficiency in English as seen in the discursive practices of teachers is reflected in Nosipho's response to Mandla that "she doesn't speak English". Nosipho's anger at being told this results in her vehement response that "I can speak" wishing to resist the deficit positioning by Mandla. Ayabonga then confirms the association of English with value by proudly asserting that he speaks "English too much" meaning "well". Importantly, this was in a context in which it appeared they wished to impress me, and English proficiency

seemed to be the manner in which this took place, perhaps due to their association of my presence with the formal space of the classroom as well as a speaker of WSAE and thus likely to share the teacher's view. In Excerpt 30, Sihle shows an acceptance of English as the legitimate language of the academic world, as he identifies a desire to "learn English more" as associated with "proper" communications with his teacher, Mrs West. English is thus valued as the language that gives learners 'voice' in this formal space. Excerpt 29 and 30 show that the learners are being assimilated into the dominant English centred monoglot linguistic ideologies in the formal teaching spaces of the school.

It should be noted, however that learners speak to each other both in the classroom and outside the classroom in Xhosa. In the informal and unregulated spaces of social interactions, the data I collected shows learners prefer communicating in their mother tongue. The three learners in the class not from a Xhosa speaking background appeared to have picked up enough Xhosa for basic communication in social interactions dominated by Xhosa speech. Although beyond the bounds of this analysis, further research into how learners use Xhosa socially could enrich an understanding of this context. In the following section, I go on to present data showing how Mrs Khumalo creates an alternative 'space', in which both English and Xhosa are used in the classroom to facilitate learning.

5.4 Mrs Khumalo's orientations to language

5.4.1 The discursive construction of language in the 'third space': English and Xhosa "they must grow together"

The Grade 1W language aide, Mrs Khumalo, is an African woman bilingual in English and Xhosa. She was the first language aide employed at the school and integral in setting up the system. Initially involved in the school as a parent, she has worked as a language aide both inside the classroom and with groups of learners outside the classroom in a formal capacity since 1996. She is now working as language aide for both Grade 1 classes splitting her time between them and teaching Xhosa to the Grade 1 and Grade 2 classes. She also has links to the Project for the Study of

Alternative Education in South Africa (PRAESA), having been involved in numerous workshops and research with the organisation in the late 1990s. She has further had some training in Montessori teaching. Her mandate as the language aide is to translate from English to Xhosa for learners when there is a disconnection in understanding between the teacher and the learners. The data, however, suggests she has created a space that moves beyond such activities, facilitating learning in both English and Xhosa. In addressing such discursive practices I wish to express the complexity in how languages can be understood in a single space. Here I look to the ways in which Xhosa is utilised for meaning making in a largely assimilationist monoglot English institutional setting. I draw on Gutierrez' (2008) conceptualisation of the 'third space' as follows:

Where teacher and student scripts—the formal and informal, the official and unofficial spaces of the learning environment—intersect, creating the potential for authentic interaction and a shift in the social organization of learning and what counts as knowledge (p.152)

I further reference Gutierrez et al (1999) with the term 'hybridity' as literacy practices that are "a systematic, strategic, affiliative, and sense making process(es) among those who share the code as they strive to achieve mutual understanding" (p.288). In addition, I draw on Makoe and McKinney's (2009) application of such ideas to a learner in a multilingual Grade 1 classroom in Johannesburg. It is important to note, that I came to theorise Mrs Khumalo's discursive practices in reference to 'hybridity' and the notion of a 'third space' when I realised that Mrs Khumalo was facilitating a different kind of learning to that taking place in the formal space of Mrs West's teaching. I drew on such ideas as a way to make sense of Mrs Khumalo's teaching practices, however these are not neatly aligned with the original formulation of the 'third space'. This analysis should further be seen in a context in which there has been little research undertaken in South African classrooms on the role of language aides.

Firstly, I present to Mrs Khumalo's espoused views about language. Mrs Khumalo often spoke of the importance of using Xhosa for learning in class as seen in the following excerpts:

Excerpt 31 (Interview Mrs Khumalo 13/08/12):

Mrs Khumalo: Yes, most of us we believe, because it is easy for these children to learn English because they are starting in Xhosa. So, like if they don't know the English name for the table, it's easy to ask the children. If the child is making a sentence or maybe reading a book then I will ask, "what do you say this in Xhosa?". And then the child will remember it is a table in English. Then the child will know that word. If it is a chair I will say, "what do you know *isistulo* in English?". Then the child will remember that's a chair and the window, I will say it in Xhosa and if he or she doesn't know I will say it.

Excerpt 32 (see full Excerpt 10 in Chapter 4. Interview Mrs Khumalo 13/08/12):

Mrs Khumalo: ...They (English and Xhosa) must grow together, that was my belief when I came here. That they must grow together. I mustn't boost Xhosa only, I must boost both of them

In Excerpts 31 and 32, counter to the dominant language ideologies of English as the legitimate language of learning in the school, Mrs Khumalo sees Xhosa as the basis for learning in English. She claims, "It is easy for these children to learn English because they are starting in Xhosa" thus she refers to using their existing knowledge base in Xhosa to facilitate learning in English. She further highlights the idea that both languages "grow together" and that one should "boost both" suggesting an approach closer to the additive bilingualism of the Language in Education Policy (Department of Education 1997) that proposes the addition of another language and maintenance of the mother tongue. These excerpts appear in stark contrast to Mrs West's, "if they know that they are being taught in a certain language they must get used to using that in the classroom". Mrs Khumalo's reference to "us" in "most of us we believe" is further interesting as one can question whether she refers to teachers at the school (unlikely given Mrs West's practices) or whether she means language aides or perhaps mother tongue Xhosa speaking parents. She thus speaks as part of

a community that holds such beliefs about the role of Xhosa in teaching. I now move from Mrs Khumalo's espoused practices to her actual practices to show the hybridity in her teaching practices.

When Mrs West is teaching the class Mrs Khumalo will walk between the tables explaining and elaborating on Mrs West's instructions, primarily in Xhosa, often standing in front of the board in front of several learners to do so. When left to teach the class alone in certain instances she uses Xhosa and English. The learners speak to Mrs Khumalo in Xhosa during and outside the classroom and often refer to her to settle disputes about issues such as the theft of lunches and pencil crayons. She further plays an important role in disciplining the class, speaking in Xhosa to do so. Mrs Khumalo's discursive practices were particularly evident in her teaching on a day that Mrs West was absent. The following is an excerpt from this day when telling the learners they were in trouble for not completing their worksheets:

Excerpt 33 (reconstructed from fieldnotes 07/08/12):

Mrs Khumalo: So if you want to go to Grade 2 you must do your work. Teacher (I) explained before and explained again, in English and Xhosa, but some of you take everything for granted as if you are here to play. You are cheating yourself and then you'll have to come back and finish the work you didn't, will that be nice?

In excerpt 33, while chastising learners for not doing their work, she references the fact that she has explained in English and Xhosa as a reason they should have completed their work. She therefore acknowledges to the learners that the issue of learners' levels of English proficiency is related to performance in class and that bilingual language usage can further understanding and learning. The following is an excerpt from Mrs Khumalo's Xhosa class whilst reading a story book that highlights this 'hybridity' (Gutiérrez et al 1999) in her use of Xhosa and English in a systematic manner to promote mutual understanding.

Excerpt 34 (reconstructed from fieldnotes 14/08/12)

Mrs Khumalo: *Mamelani ke* (You (plural) listen here)

Ntoni ibali ngeEnglish qala? (What is 'a story' in English first?)

Odwa: Story

Mrs Khumalo: Story. *Sinamabali ethu awohlukahlukileyo* (We've got our stories, our different stories)

We've got our different stories. We are rich in this class

Sityebile kuleklasi ngambali (we are rich in this class with stories)

Elinye ngamabali lithetha ngomnenga (One of our stories is about the whales)

One of our stories about whales

Babebangaphi aba mnenga? (How many whales were there?)

Nosipho: Three

Mrs Khumalo: *Uthree! Ngubani ke lowo?* (Three! Who (meaning 'what') is that?)

Babebathathu, babebathathu (It was three, it was three)

We have three whales ...

Babesuka kwenye indawo (They came from another place)

Bayaphi? (Where are they going?)

They travelled. Where did they go?

Bebesiza eKapa. eKapa ntoni iEnglish? (They came to eKapa. What is eKapa in English?)

Ondile: Cape Town

In Excerpt 34, it is possible to note two particular strategies in Mrs Khumalo's use of language to promote meaning. Firstly, it is possible to identify the mixing of language codes seen in the repetition of sentences in Xhosa and then in English and vice versa such as, "*Sinamabali ethu awohlukahlukileyo*" followed by "We've got our different stories". Further Mrs Khumalo asks questions in Xhosa requesting English answers asking, "*Ntoni ibali ngeEnglish qala?*" to which Nosipho replies in English, "three". The use of Xhosa and English in a dynamic and functionally integrated manner can be described as translanguaging (Creese & Blackledge 2010). Secondly, the data shows the 'Xhosalising' (Paxton & Tyam 2010) of words such as "ngeEnglish" and "uthree" showing a fluidity and 'hybridity' in how Xhosa and English are used simultaneously. It should be noted that the learners were animated and eager to respond to questions during this lesson. It is striking that Mrs Khumalo uses the Xhosa class to teach English, rather than to teach Xhosa. As a period where English

could legitimately be excluded from the classroom space, Mrs Khumalo integrates it into teaching suggesting that she believes any opportunity to learn English should be taken and that she is hybridising her role as language aide with that of Xhosa teacher.

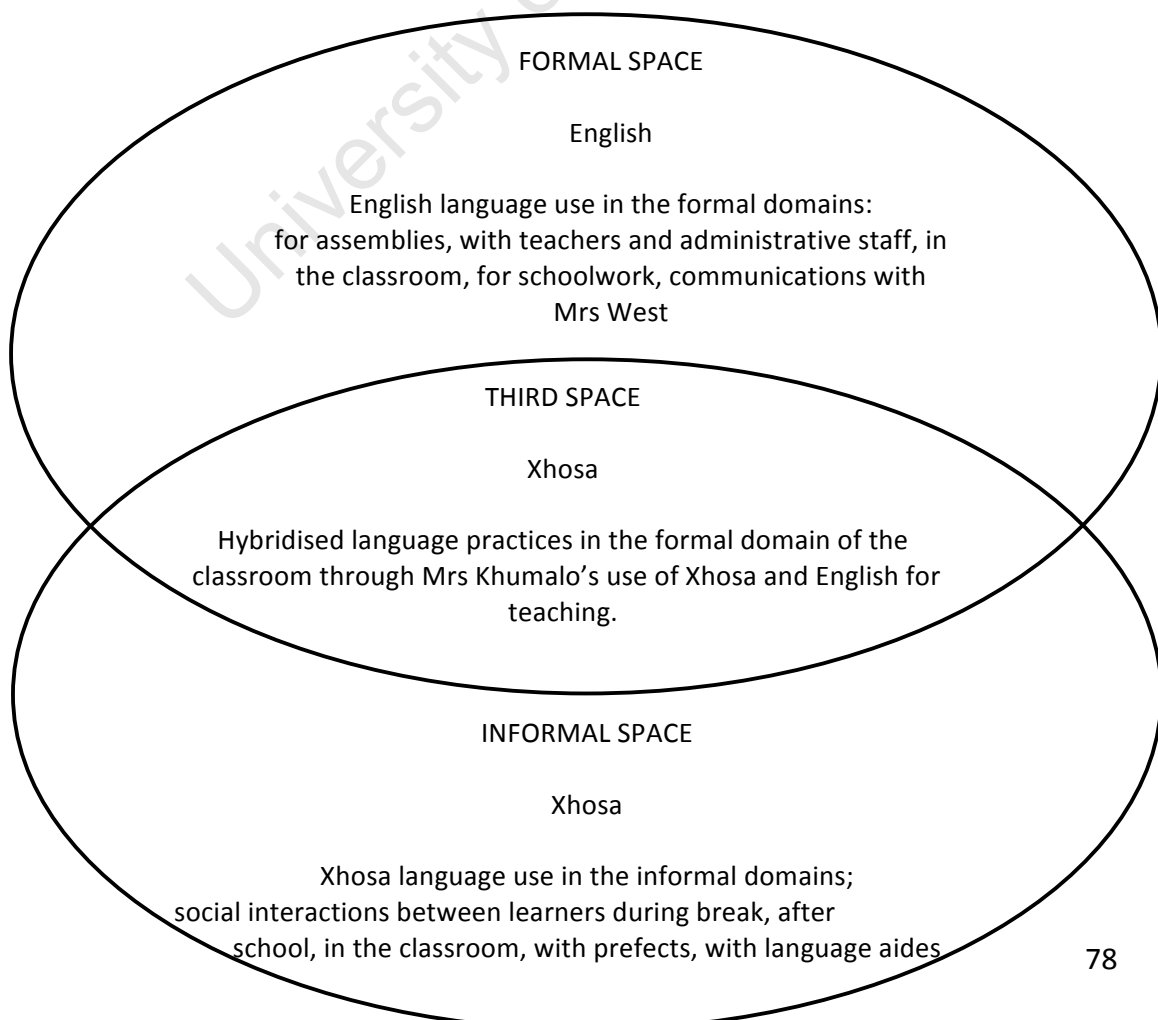
While Excerpt 34 was in the context of a Xhosa lesson, I noticed a similar practice on the third day of field work when Mrs Khumalo read an English story to the class taking over half way through for Mrs West when she was called to the office for administrative reasons (Fieldnotes 03/08/12). For the first half of the story, Mrs West read and asked questions in English with little response from the learners. For the second half of the story, when Mrs Khumalo took over, she read each line in English and translated into Xhosa while asking questions in both English and Xhosa. The learners gave animated responses to her questions. In this way, learners' Xhosa linguistic repertoires were employed to make sense of English literacies working to clarify meaning and provide a bridge to understanding (Paxton & Tyam 2010). The use of language in this manner shows a reflective and systematic use of bilingual practices as a sense making process in the literacy activity of story telling. This integrated approach shows the hybridity in her teaching practices through the creation of a 'third space' in the classroom, which expresses the legitimacy of both English and Xhosa as having a function for learning.

Mrs Khumalo offers a counterpoint to the data from Mrs West's teaching, analysed in 5.3, through interactions with learners and teaching practices that use bilingual methods for teaching formal learning content. The data shows that for learners in 1W, language usage is not characterised solely by the binaries of English as 'academic' and Xhosa as 'social' unlike my observations of the monolingualism in Grade R, in school assemblies, in the staff room, in the corridors of the school. Mrs Khumalo is thus acting counter to the hegemonic monolingual practices in the school, showing that there is space for agentive moments of rupture in the overarching discursive structures. In this way, Mrs Khumalo has created a 'third space' for learning in which Xhosa 'counts' as knowledge through hybridised

practices that refer to the Xhosa and English linguistic repertoires of learners as tools for meaning making.

5.5. 'Scales' of language use in the classroom

In this chapter I have shown how the differing orientations to language use of Mrs West and Mrs Khumalo are negotiated across multiple levels with these spaces organising the regimes of language (Blommaert et al. 2005, p.198). These can be understood in terms of a vertical conception of 'scales' as stratified with learners shifting between these in reference to sets of "codes, norms and expectations" (Blommaert 2010, p.32). The following table offers an overview of these orientations and language ideologies in reference to the three scales in which; at the highest scale level, English is constructed as the legitimate language of learning; lower down at mid-scale is the space where English and Xhosa are used to facilitate learning through the use of hybrid discursive practices; and at the lowest scale level is Xhosa, constructed as the language of the informal/social sphere.



5.6. Conclusion

Having worked to understand the linguistic ideologies circulating in a school, and a single classroom within it, I wish to reflect on the complexities in how discourses about language are (re)produced and (re)constructed, and learners positioned in light of this. It can be seen that the overarching discursive practices in the formal space of Mrs West's teaching point to 'parallel monolingualism' and the diglossic separation of Xhosa and English, with English (as a particular variety of WSAE) positioned as the legitimate language for 'knowledge' and as a form of cultural and linguistic capital. An analysis of Mrs Khumalo's teaching practices and her use of both English and Xhosa in a 'third space' offers a point of rupture to the dominant discourses and opens up the possibilities for understanding more hybridised language practices. It is important to reiterate that I do not wish to position Mrs West and Mrs Khumalo in terms of the binaries of objective pronouncements on the value of their teaching methods. Rather, it appears that there is a need for greater pedagogical support for teachers like Mrs West in contexts of language diversity and further research into strategies such as those of Mrs Khumalo for creating meaning in multilingual classrooms. Given the growing presence of ELLs in Home Language English schooling systems, this chapter has raised issues that need to be addressed of how learners linguistic repertoires are incorporated into learning in multilingual environments. I go on to offer an overview of the findings, further comments and recommendations in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6:

Conclusion

6.1 Overview of the study

This small-scale case study focused on linguistic ideologies in the foundation phase at Southern Junior; a desegregated English medium suburban primary school. The study revealed the deficit positioning of learners by teachers in reference to monoglot English linguistic ideologies highly interlinked with racial stereotypes that privilege white ways of 'knowing and being' (Soudien 2004). Significantly, this was a school previously homogenous in terms of race and language that has since become increasingly multilingual and racially and culturally diverse. An analysis of the discourses (re)produced by teachers revealed a lack of a meaningful negotiation of issues of 'difference' in the context of such diversity.

The fieldwork took place over a one-month period spent at SJ, during which time I endeavoured to understand the institutional ethos and language ideologies of the school. The key participants were eight members of the teaching staff working in the foundation phase, with a particular focus on the discursive practices of Mrs Khumalo and Mrs West in Grade 1W. The data set included interview material with teaching staff and field notes and video footage from ethnographic classroom observations of 'teaching as usual' (Davies & Hunt 1994). The data was analysed with reference to post-structuralist discourse analysis (Baxter 2002) which revealed the patterns in how discourses about language, as well as race, are (re)produced and at times ruptured in this setting.

Drawing on Bourdieu (1977; 1991) enabled a reading of the power dimensions inherent in the language ideologies circulating at SJ, whilst Blommaert's frameworks of 'linguistic repertoire', 'voice' and 'scales' provided a context for understanding multilingual competencies and the ways in which environments such as SJ enable and disable language resources. Gutierrez (2008) and Gutierrez et al (1995;1999) provided the theoretical tools for understanding the moments of rupture to the

dominant ideologies and the use of more hybridised approaches to language in the classroom. Situating this dissertation in relation to South African research in desegregated schooling has both provided a context as well as highlighted commonalities in the findings in how teachers discursively construct the learning environment. This shared basis of knowledge is seen particularly in relation to the racialised 'assimilationist' discourses identified by Soudien (2004), Makoe's (2007) research on monoglot ideologies and McKinney's (2007) work on the intersections between race and language.

6.2 Reflections on the findings

In reference to the broader issues of policy, the data shows that as mother tongue Xhosa speakers in the straight for English system, the learners at SJ experience the 'gap' in a curriculum that has been developed for English proficient learners. CAPS for the foundation phase assumes that a learner is either a mother tongue English speaker/ English proficient and in the English Home Language system or a mother tongue Afrikaans or African language speaker accessing the curriculum in the mother tongue whilst learning English in preparation for the shift to English Home Language in Grade 4. Learners at SJ fit into neither of these categories and this research highlights the systemic 'invisibility' of ELLS in terms of their ability to access a curriculum that takes account of their learning needs.

At a more localised level, the findings reveal overwhelmingly that the institutional ethos in the foundation phase at SJ (re)produces the legitimacy of English monoglot linguistic ideologies that overlap with racial stereotypes about learners and their families. This trend is seen through a detailed analysis of the discourses produced by teachers, and particularly the discursive practices of Mrs West in Grade 1W. At SJ, English, and a particular prestige variety of WSAE, is the language of legitimacy for educational purposes and conversely, the Xhosa linguistic repertoires that learners bring with them from home, and a variety of BSAE, are positioned in terms of a deficit. This reminds us that "multilingualism is not what individuals have or lack, but what the environment, as structured determination and interactional emergence,

enables and disables them to deploy” (Blommaert et al. 2005, p.213). The racialised dimension to the discourses (re)produced by teachers further reflect the ways in which the ideologies of Apartheid still exist in post-Apartheid schooling. This signals the lack of a meaningful engagement with ‘difference’ in contexts such as desegregated schools.

Importantly, as Kress (1989) reminds us, institutional contexts are complex, with “opposing, contradictory, contending, or merely different discourses” (p.7). Such processes are seen in the teaching practices of Mrs Khumalo where it is possible to identify a different kind of engagement with language. This is evident through her more hybridised practices that engage English and Xhosa to facilitate learning, which I argue works to create a ‘third space’ (Gutierrez 2008). An analysis of such discursive practices opens up the possibilities for alternative understandings of language in multilingual contexts, such as SJ, that draw on the existing linguistic repertoires of ELLS.

6.3 Recommendations

Further research is required into language ideologies in the multilingual learning environments of desegregated schools in South Africa. In the context of discourses that privilege monoglot English teaching practices, Makoe and McKinney (2009) have argued, “attention needs to be given to ways and means that learners’ resources may be utilised to enhance teaching and learning in multilingual contexts” (p.93). To this end, research into practices that engage the multilingual linguistic repertoires of learners, such as Mrs Khumalo’s, should be explored further. Investigations into the role of language aides in classrooms would greatly enrich the debate, particularly given the limited research in this field.

It is further important to make language ideologies explicit in the learning environment. To this end, teachers would benefit from further education in how to work in environments of linguistic diversity and meaningfully engage the multilingual linguistic repertoires of learners. Teachers could then include learners in discussions

about language and the role of multilingualism in society. In line with such measures there is a need to reengage with the questions around language in education and the policy guidelines of the LiEP. Further, greater attention should be paid to the situation of ELLs accessing the CAPS curriculum through the straight for English system with a need for greater advocacy to change this in order to make these learners visible and to meet their right to a quality basic education

Given the persistence of racialised accounts of learners produced by teachers there is a need to further understand issues of difference and diversity in desegregated schooling. As such, there is a need for forums for the unlearning of the racial ideologies of Apartheid and policy measures that provide a platform for meaningful engagements with such issues. In line with this, further collaborative research is needed into how teachers engage with learners in contexts of diversity and the ways in which learners respond to deficit positioning in the classroom; as Comber and Kamler argue “disrupting deficit discourses and re-designing new pedagogical repertoires to reconnect with children's lifeworlds is a long-term project that can best be achieved in reciprocal research relationships with teachers”(Comber & Kamler 2004, p.293). Lastly, research in schools such as SJ would be greatly enriched by further exploration of the identity construction of learners in such environments and how learners deploy their social and linguistic resources in response to these.

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University of Cape Town

Appendix 1: School – Letter of Permission

18 July 2012

Dear Mrs Donnell,

Request for permission to conduct research in Observatory Junior School

I am writing to you as a Masters student from UCT working on a minor dissertation in Development Studies under the supervision of Dr. Carolyn McKinney of the Faculty of Education. The aim of this research is to investigate language policy in schools attended by multilingual learners. The central research question will look at how Language in Education Policies are perceived and practised in a Grade 1 classroom, particularly in reference to the new CAPS policy. The aim of the investigation is to shed light on the challenges faced by teachers in multilingual classrooms and the strategies they employ to enable learning in the foundation stage. I would like permission to conduct this research in your school.

The research will involve observations within the school, such as sitting in on school assemblies and break time activities to build a sense of the school's culture of learning. In the classroom setting, this research will observe the language practices of the teacher and learners in a Grade 1 classroom by sitting in on several classes each week over a period of one month at your discretion. Thus the research will not make any changes to the existing school day programme and activities.

As part of the project, I would like to video record some of the classes to be observed, given the permission of the learner's guardians. This would be arranged with the teacher to find out when is suitable for him/her. The data collected will be discussed with the teacher. At no stage in the research will the identity or location of the school, the identities of its staff and the identities of any learners be identified. The school and any research subjects referred to will be given pseudonyms. Video footage will not be shown in any public forum. It will be used entirely for research purposes and viewed only by my supervisor and myself.

I would be happy to answer any questions relating to the proposed research project and to address the SGB if necessary. Any further queries related to the project can be addressed to my supervisor by email Carolyn.McKinney@uct.ac.za or telephone (021) 650 2757.

If you are willing to grant permission for the research to be conducted in your school, please sign in the space below.

Your sincerely,

.....

Hannah Carrim

The signature below grants permission for the abovementioned research to be carried out at Southern Junior School

.....

Principal

.....

Date

University of Cape Town

Appendix 2: Parents – Letter of Permission

18 July 2012

Dear Parent/Guardian

Request for permission to video-record your child in Grade 1

I am Hannah Carrim and am writing to you as a student from the University of Cape Town working on a research project looking at language policy and learning in the classroom. I would like permission to video-record your child in grade 1.

The aim of the investigation is to look at the practices of teachers in multilingual classrooms and the strategies they employ to enable learning in the foundation stage as well as how learners respond to these.

I will spend several days at the school observing the school and classroom practices. The normal school day activities will not be interrupted in any way. The time will be spent sitting at the back of the classroom observing what goes on. On some occasions the class will be video-recorded. These recordings will only be used for research purposes and will not be viewed by anybody apart from my supervisor and myself.

Participation is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish your child to participate he/she will not be disadvantaged in any way. I will not look at his/her language use for the research. If you do allow your child to participate you may withdraw at any point.

The name of your child will not be recorded or used in any way. S/he will be given a false name (pseudonym) in the research.

I would be happy to answer any further questions regarding the proposed research project or refer you to my supervisor Dr. Carolyn McKinney.

Please sign below to indicate whether you grant permission or not.

I, (full name) *give* permission for my child
..... to be video-recorded as part of the research project

Signature

Date

I, (full name) *do not give* permission for my child
..... to be video-recorded as part of the research project

Signature

Date

Yours Sincerely,

.....

Hannah Carrim

University of Cape Town