

EDUCATION, LANGUAGE, AND IDENTITY: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY ON
PERSPECTIVES IN RURAL SOUTH AFRICA

by

Kristie O'Donnell, Ph.D.

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctorate of Philosophy
with a major in Developmental Education

August 2017

Committee Members:

Emily J. Summers, Co-chair

Lori Czop Assaf, Co-chair

Russ Hodges

Jodi Holschuh

COPYRIGHT

by

Kristie O'Donnell

2017

Fair Use and Author's Permission Statement

Fair Use

This work is protected by the Copyright law of the United States (Public Law 94-553, section 107). Consistent with fair use as defined in the Copyright Laws, brief quotations from this material are allowed with proper acknowledgement. Use of this material for financial gain without the author's express written permission is not allowed.

Duplication Permission

As the copyright holder of this work, I Kristie O'Donnell, authorize duplication of this work, in whole or in part, for educational or scholarly purposes only.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Patrick. You are my sunshine.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I want to gratefully acknowledge the participants of this study. Their openness, authenticity, and willingness to let their stories be heard is the bedrock of this study. May you always know the power of your voice and your story.

Next, I want to thank and acknowledge all the people who have mentored me through this process. I have learned so much from each of you, I could never list it all here.

Lori, thank you for making a space for me and with me in South Africa. I would never have even gotten there without you. You invited me into a position when you barely knew me, and it changed my life. We are the party!

Emily, you have mentored me in every way possible – from challenging me on my ontological positionality to giving me protein snacks when my hands were shaking from the caffeine overload. I wanted to be a qualitative researcher, and I now know that I am. Still meditating on my fidget spinner.

Russ, to stand in awe and gratitude of your APA expertise wouldn't even cover all the knowledge and wisdom you've shared with me these last few years. Working with you has absolutely made me a better teacher and a better, far more detail-oriented researcher.

Jodi, I have enjoyed every minute of learning from you. Thank you for always encouraging my international research dreams, even when they were bouncing all over the globe. You provided just the right amount of enthusiastic support balanced with pragmatic perspective.

To my fellow doc students, who have been learning, writing, researching, and teaching alongside me: thank you. We're not in this alone. In particular, I want to acknowledge and thank Tami, Erika, and Ren. We've started being independent researchers together, and we'll get it all published one day!

And a grateful acknowledgement to the family who have supported me, cheered me on, and reminded me I was doing something worthwhile. You have celebrated every minute of this wild and wonderful time of my life, and I couldn't be more grateful.

And once more, I want to acknowledge Patrick. This would not have happened without you. Finally, I want to acknowledge the endless love and silliness of Charles D. Kat and Jackson Classroom, who always keep me company while napping during the writing process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	ix
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Background and Context	3
Pilot Study Findings and Implications	3
Rationale and Significance	4
Developmental Education	7
Research Questions	8
Ethical Considerations	9
Operational Definitions	9
Chapter Summary	11
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	13
Theoretical Frameworks for a Narrative Approach	13
Temporality	14
Sociality	16
Place	18
Social Discourses and Navigating Academic Language	20
South African Higher Education	23
South African Linguistic Hegemony	27
Chapter Summary	29
III. METHODOLOGY	30
Narrative Process: An Overview	32
Positionality	32
Data Collection and Analysis	33
Where I Was and How I Got There	36
The Storytellers	38
Ethical Reflections and Reminders	40
Chapter Summary	42

IV. FINDINGS.....	44
Lisolethu	47
The Story Begins.....	48
Going Further.....	50
Making Connections	51
What Makes the Struggle Worth It	52
Kwezi	54
The Story Begins.....	55
Language Values.....	55
Struggles: National and Personal	56
Going Further.....	57
Connections, Intersections, and Where Next.....	58
Noxie.....	59
The Story Begins: In the Midst of Struggle,	
Persistence.....	60
Going Further.....	61
Linguistic Navigations	62
Accessing Connections	63
Cultural Comparisons	66
National Struggles.....	66
Language Values: When the Struggle to Learn	
Pays Off	67
Deeper Connections	69
Misconceptions and Re-conceptions.....	71
Negotiating Identity	72
Shaun.....	73
Starting from Struggle.....	74
Persisting and (Re)Connecting	74
Going Further.....	75
Language Values.....	76
Seeing and Making Connections	78
Why the Connections are Needed.....	79
Summary of Individual Stories	80
Narrative Understandings and Insights.....	81
Struggles and Motivations to Keep On.....	81
Movement through Time and Space.....	83
Cultural Connections through Language	85
Language Domains: Overlapping Social Constructions of	
Languages, Places, and Ideologies.....	87

English and isiXhosa: Getting In and Getting Out of School.....	89
Chapter Summary	90
V. DISCUSSION	92
Language.....	93
Place.....	94
Ideology	95
Identity	97
(E)mergent Identities: Locating and (Re)Constructing Identities in Context.....	99
Supporting (E)mergent Linguistic Identities for Educational Success.....	100
(Post)Colonial Considerations	102
Theoretical Consideration for Breaking Down Colonial Perspectives through Narratives	104
Why It Matters: Chapter Summary.....	104
Implications for Future Research and Practice	106
APPENDIX SECTION.....	109
REFERENCES	119

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study takes a narrative approach to inquiring into the lived experiences of linguistically diverse students. As students are often placed into developmental education courses due to factors that point back to their linguistic diversity, scholarly literature demonstrates a need for inquiry that informs both research and practice. My research is timely and relevant to the field as it brings to bear both theoretical and pedagogical information for the field of developmental education and college literacy. This study sits at an intersection of many theories and pedagogies. The narratives presented in this dissertation illuminate the socially constructed experiences of the participants as linguistically diverse students. Language, in tandem with social context, place, and systems of belief must be considered when questioning the nature of students' experiences.

I. INTRODUCTION

Scholars in fields of developmental and higher education have long been concerned with linguistic diversity (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1974; de Kleine & Lawton, 2015; Hull & Rose, 1989). Teachers, administrators, and testing evaluators in academia often judge the literacy of students based on notions of conformity to correctness in a so-called standard variety of English (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1974; Hull & Rose, 1989). Failure to conform to expected language and literacy standards often leaves students in non-credit bearing courses. Non-credit bearing courses frequently bear the label of “developmental education” education, and these courses are often historically framed to leave students in a stigmatized position as, very often, poor study habits, lack of basic skill, and academic as well as financial poverty are blamed for students’ placement; however, this highly deficit-oriented perspective can be challenged by re-framing the conversation about college literacy and competence to diversity in language and literacy, appreciating the cultures and languages that students bring with them to higher education (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1974; Hull & Rose, 1989). Indeed, studies in developmental education call for this sort of re-framing the conversations regarding supportive and developmental coursework in the face of stigma throughout a long history of learning support (Boylan & Bonham, 2007; Cassaza, 1999).

While maintaining a strengths-based rather than a deficit-based perspective does not dismiss the reality that there are real systemic issues regarding access and success for students from diverse backgrounds, teachers and scholars in higher education may focus on meeting the needs and realities of linguistically diverse students as they are. de Kleine

and Lawton (2015) described linguistically diverse students from the U.S. as (a) speakers of English in addition to other languages; (b) those who may be students studying internationally and speak their own dialect of English; (c) immigrants, or children of immigrants to the country; and (d) citizens who speak under-privileged versions of English such as African-American Vernacular English. Each of these groups face unique challenges in college (de Kleine & Lawton, 2015). From the institutional to the personal, there are many ways to understand, teach, research, and support students with linguistically diverse backgrounds that are culturally responsive and not deficit-oriented. Throughout the world, the developmental and contextual nature of language and literacy learning shapes educational realities.

My study contributes to the literature in the fields of postsecondary education, and in particular developmental education and higher education, as well as literacy with information regarding students from South Africa who, for a variety of factors, face institutional and educational challenges. My research is a useful contribution to postsecondary education because there is a need to gain deeper understanding of how language diversity and students' ideologies impact access to and success. I am particularly interested in how adult students from this rural, coastal community in the Eastern Cape of South Africa perceive connections between their schooling and their languages, and further, how language, school experiences, and the places in which all of these things exist inform implicit or explicit ideologies. Throughout this first chapter, I will provide an overview and rationale for research into language and ideology that informs literacy and language studies in higher education from an international

perspective. I will address some of the research, theory, and rationale relevant among U.S. and South African contexts.

Background and Context

In this study, I focused on participants in various stages of education in a rural village in South Africa. Prefacing my current study, results of my pilot study indicate that participants held competing beliefs and values about language and school success. For example, several participants attributed success to individual perseverance, but at the same time, they recognized cultural and socioeconomic systems working against them. During my pilot study, I conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews and analyzed them using cross-comparative, emergent coding techniques (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The themes of my pilot study provided a strong place to continue to pursue a narrative research agenda. Information from the pilot study illustrated that context, enhanced the data set, and helped to validate findings in the dissertation data. While the focus of the pilot study was geared towards understanding what goes into the educational experiences of participants, the goal of this dissertation was oriented towards better understanding certain aspects of the participants' experiences, such as identities, ideologies, languages, places, and how participants attribute successes.

Pilot Study Findings and Implications

The findings from my pilot study provided insight into how language and place are socially constructed together for the participants. When analyzed through a theoretical lens focused on the social construction of space (Soja, 1989), the socially-constructed connection between language and place stands out. In my pilot study data, the languages that the participants identified and discussed in most detail were isiXhosa, Afrikaans, and

English. Discussions about these three different languages revealed that each language was connected to different types of places. When participants discussed isiXhosa, they discussed the language as one tied to their cultural and personal identities, and further, the places in which those identities developed. When discussing Afrikaans, participants related stories and places of complex barriers. Finally, participants talked about the English language and places where English is used as directly connected to educational and economic opportunity. These findings helped to identify which factors and types of questions would be worth re-addressing in subsequent research. While I did ask the participants to re-story their general experiences regarding their languages and educations, I more directly explored in this study how participants' language diversity impacted their perceptions of access and success in educational settings, and how navigation of their different languages related to identity (re)formation.

Rationale and Significance

Places and the social meanings of places have particular socio-historical meanings in post-Apartheid South Africa. Though it has been over two decades since the start of the dismantling of Apartheid legislation. Informants in the area described the spaces of that legislation remain in the physical geography of the cities and provinces, but the legacy remains psychologically in the minds of the people as well (Prinsloo & Janks, 2002). While legislative barriers may no longer physically block people from traversing the country of South Africa, those who inhabit the places of Afrikaans often maintain the barriers between the homes of amaXhosa people and the world of opportunity, and systemic social forces such as poverty, education, and racism work to maintain the Apartheid power structure in education (Anderson, 2003). One way to gain insight into

these forces is through understanding the stories of people who live this reality. Stories and narratives people tell reveal how those participants perceive themselves and their interactions with language, place, and educational systems (Clandinin, 2013; Spigelman, 2004).

The education, research, and theory implications of this study are many. For now, I will address some of the specific issues that directly inform this study. Educational theory provides an access point for the results of this study to impact students and teachers more globally. How does language diversity impact how students form ideologies and perspectives on access and success in education? Greenfield (2010) conducted a qualitative study amongst South African students enrolled in university, and results implied major tensions for students from non-traditionally-privileged language backgrounds. My study looks at current students and former students from outside the traditional university to understand their perspectives as well.

Further research is also needed to understand how students perceive language diversity and the different places where different languages are used and how they navigate multiple language and social power structures. Literacy scholars have connected academic literacy acculturation to engagement, identity, and agency within the specific contexts of higher education (e.g. Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Pawan & Honeyford, 2009). Scholars in South African contexts have connected enacting different agencies and ideologies in different geographic regions (e.g. Bank, 2011; Deumart, 2013). In this study, I intentionally connected the ideas of academic identity and language negotiation with encountering different ideologies in various spaces. I started to explore these factors in my pilot study, which indicated that in South Africa, some people choose to speak

English but not Afrikaans. These speakers separated a language with global power from a more directly oppressive language, despite a broader scholarly awareness that English is indeed a colonizing language.

In this dissertation, I question how students narrate both perceived social power structures and their own identity. Wei (2016) surveyed students in China about their beliefs about English language learning and how that connected to a broader global power dynamic. My study adds to the research by providing another context to add to these questions, and also gaining depth into people's perspectives. All of these questions beg further research into the lived experiences of those who tacitly navigate social structures of language, ideology, and identity in their educational pursuits.

For those in the U.S., this research posits the question, how can educators and scholars break down the differences between oppression, privilege, and identity in the same language? The profound importance of the language-place connection is not so apparent in a country that privileges one language, such as English in the U.S. The nature of the argument surrounding English-only language use in the U.S. is a representation of the very essence of language privilege and hegemony. Though there are truly many languages, many dialects of languages, including dialects of English, and rich social and cultural histories attached to these multiple languages, they are often undervalued or dismissed by educational systems and even sometimes educators (Zisselsberger & Collins, 2016). The systemic way in which educational institutions value certain languages and dialects impacts access and success for students who are not part of the privileged language system. There is an ideological mismatch.

In terms of academic acculturation, there is inequity. People from privileged backgrounds often begin their studies with a closer cultural match to normalized academic discourses. Traditionally marginalized people, however, need to learn and gain access to privileged discourses to reach places of privilege. Because social power is maintained through self-perpetuating social structures and norms (Gee, 2013), people in power (tacitly or explicitly) want to maintain the power of their language, because the language is inherently tied to the power they possess. With this invisible linguistic power struggle in mind, I want to explore how stories of language diversity shape/are shaped by socially constructed ideologies, and how this dynamic impacts access and success of students.

Developmental Education

Research into ideologies that surround access to and success in educational systems will benefit the field of developmental education (Boylan & Bonham, 2014; de Klein & Lawton, 2015; Perna & Jones, 2013). Developmental literacy is concerned with the language and literacy challenges students face when transitioning between and among social discourse communities (de Klein & Lawton, 2015; Kucer, 2014). Language displays and maintains power as an ideological force. Students who populate developmental education courses can be defined by their diversity in language status, nationality, and race, thus, diversity in research informing the field of developmental education is essential. de Klein and Lawton (2015) stated “that the success of linguistically diverse students at the college level is an understudied area that warrants more research and attention” (p. 2). As assessments continue to place students into developmental education courses due to factors that point back to their linguistic

diversity, there is a need for inquiry that informs both research and practice. My research is timely and relevant to the field as it brings to bear both theoretical and pedagogical information for the field of developmental education and college literacy.

Research Questions

In this study, I followed the premise that language, society, space, ideology, and identity are connected in fundamental ways. For my dissertation, I asked people from a rural village in South Africa to tell me the stories of their education. My findings addressed the following research questions:

1. How do participants narrate their various languages? What factors affect that narration?
2. How do participants' stories reflect overlapping social constructions of languages, places, and ideologies?
3. How do participants narrate their identities within their social contexts?
4. How do participants' stories reflect their beliefs about success in school and also about access to school?

I collected archival data in South Africa in 2015 and subsequently used that for analysis in the pilot study. For this dissertation, I used the pilot study data as it confirmed new findings, provided additional context for understanding the stories, and as a form of confirming with participants what meanings they intended to convey. During my dissertation analysis, I focused my analysis in this dissertation on the ideologies the participants articulated. Furthermore, I paid close attention to the languages and places with which the value statements they made are associated. Based on the literature described above, I wanted to understand how participants' conceptions of themselves—

who they are as students and who they are as citizens—connected to the language and social discourses that overlap or do not overlap with academic languages and social discourses that prove to be gatekeeping forces to academia. I took a narrative approach (Clandinin, 2013) to data collection and analysis focusing on the social construction of language and place.

Ethical Considerations

Ironically, my study on language power is limited by language power. As a researcher from the U.S. and a native speaker of English with limited knowledge of isiXhosa and less of Afrikaans, I was not able to engage participants on a research level in languages other than English. In essence, I did not have first-hand access to the ideological linguistic tenants of other languages potentially under discussion. I carefully worked to maintain vigilance on my own language and ideologies while interviewing and analyzing data. Similarly, as an outsider to the community, people willing to talk to me were more often than not those people who are pre-disposed towards friendliness to outsiders and those who are able to converse in English in somewhat abstract terms. Throughout the interview process and through following up on key findings, I confirmed with participants throughout the narrative process in order to maintain authentic meanings and interpretations. I also maintained my own linguistic reflections as part of my research process.

Operational Definitions

Apartheid — the forced segregation of Black people from White people in South Africa that benefitted a powerful minority of White people and severely oppressed the majority of Black people and other people of color. Apartheid legislation can be traced

from 1948 to 1994, but attitudes surrounding the creation and enforcement of Apartheid are more difficult to trace along a timeline (Anderson, 2003).

Discourse/social discourse — ideologically-laden communication (Fairclough, 2013; Gee, 2013). I will use the phrase social discourse to make the connections to social aspects of ideology more explicit. While the word in common usage may be synonymous with such words as communication or conversation, the use of the word in my research implies values, beliefs, and social and systemic power embedded in language and upheld by social norms, including many form of communication and conversation.

Ideology — system of beliefs that each person holds that is shaped by their life experiences, not only personally, but also socially, culturally, politically, linguistically, and geographically. Ideology is associated with beliefs and values held by individuals that shape actions in virtually every aspect of life from eating, to speaking, to learning, and many other functions (Fairclough, 2013; van Dijk, 2006).

Language — communication between and among people, often tied to geographic and national locations. This may be one of the more obvious definitions at face value, but I want to call attention to the connection (or lack of connection) to geography and national identity. Beyond communication, language use and language education implies personal and social identity and power (Bank, 2011; Deumart, 2013).

Literacy — the ability to effectively consume and produce messages in a particular medium. This may be a broader definition for this term, especially for those who prefer to limit definitions of literacy to traditional reading and writing. However, reading and writing are also amorphous terms; digital, pictorial, musical, and other forms of literacy, may be considered in a broad and more holistic definition. I discuss literacy as

connected with language, and thus with ideology in a meaningful way. The ability to produce and consume messages is bound by a person's life context (Smagorinsky, 2001) and ability to work effectively within the constraints of a discourse community (Gee, 2013).

Place/space — place and space are used to indicate both a geographical location and attention to the implied ideologies formed and normed within and among particular languages and places/spaces. Norms in the discipline of geography generally use place to refer to specific areas, while space is generally used to indicate a more abstract notion of an area. However, in much of my theoretical texts outside of the discipline of geography, space is the dominant term used regardless (Soja, 1989). In this study, place will be used as a specific location, while space will be used as a term implying more general geographic ideas.

Chapter Summary

Within this chapter, I introduced the subject and rationale for my research. Building on the implications of my pilot study, I conducted a narrative inquiry to uncover participants' perspectives on language, space, and education. Intersections of socially constructed languages, places, and ideologies impact students' access to and success within higher education. My research helps fill the gap needed for further research on the experiences and realities of students who are linguistically diverse and how that linguistic diversity impacts their educational experiences. Language, culture, ideology, and identity are interconnected in important ways. How students negotiate these factors contributes to how well they will perform in educational settings, and in postsecondary education in particular. It is important to understand the experiences of people who come from less

privileged backgrounds and whose first language is not the language they believe is most important to their educational and professional success. Thus, my study provides a rich insight into the lived experiences of people from a historically marginalized rural community. Through reading and understanding these stories, educators may gain a richer understanding of the effects and contexts of language policies and practices in lived experience.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, I review several bodies of literature relating to the study of language, education, and social power structures in South Africa. In building this literature review, I paid particular attention to topics that would not only be of interest to any scholar interested in researching language and education, but to topics that would help me understand education and language perspectives in a culture that is not my own. My goals for this study included authentically representing the perspectives and stories of the participants and interpreting implied perspectives in light of South African educational and linguistic realities. This chapter gives an overview of the theories that informed my study as well as much of the research that relates both to educational and linguistic situations in South Africa and to the theories of language and education that drive the theoretical and research background for this study. This study will inform the fields of postsecondary education, and in particular, literacy and developmental education, where scholars have called for research on linguistic diversity and the effects of linguistic diversity (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1974; de Kleine & Lawton, 2015; Hull & Rose, 1989).

Theoretical Frameworks for a Narrative Approach

To begin with, I will discuss the narratively-oriented social constructivist theoretical framework that informs this study. From a social constructivist stance, knowledge and meaning originates from and is negotiated in the social world. Narratives are particular constructions of knowledge based on social norms and traditions and they are told and re-told in a social context. Meaning is made from narratives from the social negotiations between the storyteller and the listener. There are several specific aspects I

considered in this dissertation: temporality, sociality, and place. I will examine each of these in this chapter. A narrative approach to research provides a window into the theoretical frameworks that enable the approach. Clandinin (2013) stated that “research texts need to reflect temporality, sociality, and place. It is only as we attend simultaneously to all three dimensions that we can come to understand in deeper and more complex ways the experiences relevant to our research puzzles” (p. 50). I will attend to each of these three facets as they intersect with key points of the theoretical framework of this study.

Temporality

Every story is told at a moment in time—in the midst of life, where there is a series of events and experiences that shaped the present, and also an idea, or hope, or question about the future. In this study, I focused on how the participants existed at the time of my study in a linguistic state that was not fixed, but was always evolving based on social contexts. People for whom multiple languages have shaped their realities are in the midst of negotiation between languages and identities. Makalela (2014) stated that “speakers choose who they want to become through a wide array of linguistic resources available at their disposal and, as contexts change, they form, efface and reconstitute new identities in every interaction they are enmeshed in” (p. 670). Thus, as speakers continue to gain linguistic resources and make tacit or explicit choices about how they perform their identities in the places they encounter, narrative scholars have to consider the process of identity formation and language use as a temporal issue.

The state of language politics must be considered in the context of time. While during Apartheid, Afrikaans was the undisputed language of power, afterwards, post-

1994, national legislation gave 11 languages official status. Still, Afrikaans and English remain dominant in terms of available published texts and scientific renown. Politics, educational policies, and language (dis)empowerment, in the moment in which this study took place, are during the post-Apartheid era; this delineation itself references the turbulent and chaotic time that rippled into the currently perceived realities and attitudes about language use and the role of education in South Africa. Even before Apartheid itself, South Africa's timeline is fraught with colonial history. The English language came to South Africa via British colonization during the 1700s. This British colonial period saw the rise of English as a political language, and English still remained relevant after British colonial rule gave way to local governance in the early 20th century. The colonial timeline cannot be discounted even if colonial notions of language preeminence have become embedded in the national psyche—such as policies and people holding preference for European languages for educational and business purposes. The temporal context is crucial for understanding the setting of any narrative.

Linguistic evolution and transformation as well as identity formation are a continual negotiation. I relied on theories of “translanguaging” to describe this idea (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Makalela, 2014). “In a multilingual education context, translanguaging refers to a fluid alternation of languages” (Makalela, 2014, p. 671). Translanguaging relates to a body of research that shifts power and autonomy to the traditionally disempowered speakers of African languages. Translanguaging is “the idea that discursive language practices are used by multilingual speakers to make sense of the world, to express their identities, and to choose who they want to become from a wide array of identity options” via how and when they choose to use their languages

(Makalela, 2014, p. 671).

Sociality

When discussing identity construction, language use, and code-meshing, I wanted to draw attention to the social contexts of narrative and the social constructions of language. There are numerous ways to approach the social situation of a narrative, but in the context of this study, I focused the lens of this discussion of the sociality of the narratives to the role of language in representing, creating, and reaffirming social norms and transactions. This study, from its origins, was framed by a social constructivist (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013) view on social discourse (Fairclough, 2013; Gee, 2013). For any form of communication, meaning is constructed socially through language and interactions with others. Language stood out as a constructed system of meaning making undergirding my approach to research, interpretation of literature, and analysis of data (Gee, 2013; Rosenblatt, 2013). Systems of language both reflect the ideological paradigms of the speakers and provide a guiding framework for reinforcing and upholding the same ideological system (Fairclough, 2013; Fairclough, Graham, Lemke, & Wodak, 2004; Gee, 2013; van Dijk, 2006). I referred to this ideological framework (which varies by language and community) as social discourse. Discourse necessarily varies based on the social context it serves. I was particularly focused on the academic contexts of language.

Academic discourse relates to the way knowledge is created and disseminated in academia (Fairclough, 2013; Gee, 2013). The privilege of academic discourse reflects the dominant privileged culture groups within a nation or community, which are often White middle- or upper-class ideological values and linguistic structures (Gee, 2013; New

London Group, 1996; Tapp, 2014). For any person entering or existing in academia, this niche class of language becomes the dominant discourse necessary for college success. Students must be able to develop an identity that can reconcile their home discourses with academic discourses, even though their home discourse may not be aligned with the ideologies valued in academia (Gee, 2013; Lu, 2010; New London Group, 1996; Pawan & Honeyford, 2009; Rose, 2005; Smagorinsky, 2001; Tapp, 2014).

There is a clearly defined connection between language, discourse, and ideology. Social discourse reflects, constructs, and affirms the way people speak, believe, and interact (Gee, 2013; New London Group, 1996). Social discourses are an assimilated understanding, shared and regulated between members of a community (institutional, local, national) of what constructs socially correct interactions (Gee, 2013; Holschuh & Paulson, 2013; Kucer, 2014; New London Group, 1996; Smagorinsky, 2001). Social interactions can be as common as how friends greet one another, or how one interacts as a restaurant patron, or as profound as how a community welcomes the birth of a new member, or mourns the loss of one. Relations between social community members are always guided by bounded ideological systems.

Theories of power within language systems can inform studies of education. Becoming a part of a discourse community is a process of social adjustment and acclimation (Gee, 2013; Smagorinsky, 2001). Because social discourse is so closely aligned with social power structures, the nature of social discourse has potential to align with and reinforce social inequities. Within a community where inequities exist in the social (un)conscious, language systems often work to maintain that paradigm (Fairclough, 2013; Friere & Macedo, 1996; van Dijk, 2006). Sociocultural acclimation to

formal education environments is a challenge faced by many students who are from traditionally less privileged backgrounds. In South Africa, education there are social structures and ideological systems posed by the legacy of Apartheid that are faced by students in this study (Makalela, 2005; Mutasa, 2014; Seabi et al., 2014; Sebolai, 2013). Completion of secondary and tertiary education is asserted by scholars and individuals in this study to be essential to economic success and mobility of people and people groups; however, access to language, economic capital, and cultural capital can pose barriers to students (Makalela, 2005; Mutasa, 2014; Seabi, Seedat, Khoza-Shangase, & Sullivan, 2014; Sebolai, 2013).

Place

There are several researchers who indicated that politics and social standards surrounding space are fundamental to understanding realities experienced by people in South Africa. Scholars such as Bank (2011) and Deumart (2013) discussed connections between space and language in terms of migration, politics, and identity. Soja provided a robust theoretical basis for understanding the “dialectical” relationship between space and ideologies (1989). In my pilot study, the ways in which participants described language and education strongly referenced the spaces in which speaking different languages and learning took place.

Soja identified connections to space and power as well as the “socio-spatial dialectic,” which is a term for how space interacts with class and social structures, where both shape and maintain the other. Soja counters notions that space is objective or immobile. Rather, “human geography [is] a competitive arena for struggles over social production and reproduction, for social practices aimed at either the maintenance and

reinforcement of existing spatiality or at significant restructuring and/or radical transformation” (Soja, 1989, p. 130). Space is crucially connected to social power as well. Given the legislative creations, restrictions, and enforcements of racially segregated spaces under Apartheid, it would be nearly impossible to argue that space did not play a profound role in the social power struggles (South African History Online, 2015).

With this theoretical stance, it is not truly possible to separate space and power, and further, “space is fundamental in any exercise of power” (Soja, 1989, p. 19). This framework necessitates analytical attention to the geographic reflections the participants offer in relation to the construction of the sociolinguistic identities. When a community member says “who I am is where I am from,” this speaks to the theoretical conversation on the social worlds created through human geography.

Several scholars have researched connecting the significance of space, economic aspirations, and cultural identity with native and colonizing languages (e.g. Bank, 2011; Deumart, 2013). Bank researched the idea that Apartheid-era resettling of Black communities influenced “‘norming and forming’ of new African subjectivities,” particularly discussing East London in the Eastern Cape area of South Africa (2011, p. 65). Building on Bank’s work, Deumart’s research focused on how migration between places influenced how people’s languages develop in the context of their place as does their identity develop in tandem. Speech draws upon both the deep cultural roots and speech patterns and the adaptive use of English, which relates to social mobility (Deumart, 2013).

Social Discourse and Navigating Academic Language

In this section, I discuss literature and research informing major ideas about academic discourse and academic language for students transitioning into postsecondary studies. Academic discourse, the ideology-laden privileged mode of communication in academia, may serve as a gatekeeper for certain populations of students, such as those enrolled in courses at the developmental education (DE) level (Gee, 2013; Kucer, 2014; Parodi, 2013; Rose, 2005; Shanahan, C., Shanahan, T., & Misischa, 2011; Smagorinsky, 2001; Pawan & Honeyford, 2009). In the United States, scholars theorized that discourses which are privileged in the academy often implicitly maintain the traditional White, middle-class dominant norms of higher education (Gee, 2003, 2012; Kucer, 2014; New London Group, 1996; Smagorinsky, 2001). Scholars in South Africa have made similar findings about how academic discourse is part of the social discourse system that maintains power structures (Makalela, 2005; 2014; Prinsloo & Janks, 2002).

Students in many places who do not possess the appropriate background cultural knowledge for higher education may struggle to navigate the discourses they encounter in college (Gee, 2003, 2013; Kucer, 2014; Parodi, 2013; Rose, 2005; Shanahan, et al., 2011; Smagorinsky, 2001; Pawan & Honeyford, 2009). In order to address the gap, students who are not well-matched with academic discourse may be placed in transitional and developmental education courses. Theory and research have demonstrated that the type of students who are most likely to comprise compensatory developmental education courses are students of color, from low socioeconomic backgrounds, who attended less affluent high schools, whose native language is not that of the academy, and/or who are first

generation college students (Gee, 2013; Kucer, 2014; Marquez Kiyama, 2011; Rose, 2005).

To say that it would be hard for any students to succeed in an educational environment where they are not able to communicate in the language of the institution may seem obvious. However, to explain the analogy further, consider a speaker of only English who would have great trouble mastering coursework in only German or only Korean. Ideological language differences function in similar ways. Although a social or language mismatch may not be as obvious as for students who technically speak the same language as their institution of education, differences in the cultural and ideological paradigms inherent in language use may lead to great difficulties in academic acclimation for students.

For students from backgrounds less traditionally privileged in academic worlds, the ideological and cultural mismatch can lead to profound issues with literacy and social relationships within that context (Kucer, 2014). Bias associated with language, cultural, ideological, and epistemological norms can be viewed with the lens of social discourse theory (New London Group, 1996). Students who are further away from the dominant discourses in academia can be put at a disadvantage since their home discourses are not necessarily valued in larger ideological power structures, which include the potentially hegemonic academic social discourse (Gee, 2013; Kucer, 2014; New London Group, 1996; Tapp, 2014). Communities populated by members of more academically marginalized groups often participate in discourses that are likewise further from the dominant academic mainstream which is a product of the home environment, so those individuals may likely have less cultural capital related to college success than those

closer to the mainstream dominant social discourses. (Aragon & Kose, 2007; Gee, 2013; Makalela, 2005; Tapp, 2014). Tapp differentiated between the technical aspects and skills of literacy and the social practice of academic discourse, which is related to students' values and identities (2014). Tapp described how he has found that student success with literacy depends greatly on how students are able to merge their existing identities to one that is compatible with academic discourse. The process of academic discourse acculturation is a process of merging ideologies between the home discourse and the new academic discourse (Melzer, 2014; New London Group, 1996; Tapp, 2014). Similarly, Makalela described how language was used as an ideological tool to separate groups of Black people from one another and from opportunities in higher education (2005). Even more globally Wei (2016) conducted a study looking at students learning English in China, and stated that "more substantial effort can be made to help learners construct meaningful identities in relation to the English language" (2016, p. 112) in order to help them form and participate in a sociolinguistic ideological structure that is both effective and empowering for the learners.

Education in African languages in South Africa was purposefully under-resourced during Apartheid, and because resources for education in African languages are still not as copious as European-based languages, many Black parents/guardians chose to send their children to English-speaking schools in order to have access to the cultural and educational capital offered in those communities (Makalela, 2005). With the social functions of language and how linguistic diversity interacts with social power structures in mind, this review will next turn to research and scholarship addressing higher education in South Africa.

South African Higher Education

Ideas of privilege, access, and language are central to a discussion of higher education in South Africa (Anderson, 2003; Greenfield, 2013; Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2014; Makalela, 2005; Mutasa, 2014; Prinsloo & Janks, 2002; Seabi et al., 2014; Sebolai, 2013; Waetjen, 2006). Literature on higher education in South Africa heavily addresses themes of inclusivity and accessibility of postsecondary education in post-Apartheid South Africa (Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2014; Seabi et al., 2014; Sebolai, 2013; Waetjen, 2006; Wangenge-Ouma, 2012). Scholars give attention to the challenges associated with the social structures that do not provide the literacy, language, and social preparation needed for traditionally disadvantaged students to be fully prepared for higher education (Makalela, 2005; Prinsloo & Janks, 2013). Social ideologies shape the realities of language, power, and education. The ideal of education transformation to a more equitable system is a goal described in much of the literature cited above, but it is necessary to understand not only the legislative history of education, but also the ideological and sociological underpinnings of power and education to understand access and success in education in South Africa.

Though many people both in and out of South Africa may often conceive of South Africa as post-apartheid, the legacy of Apartheid remains an essential element to understanding all levels of education in South Africa from elementary to higher education; it would be impossible to understand the current state of education in South Africa without knowledge of the legacy that Apartheid has left on all aspects of South African society (Anderson, 2003; Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2014; Makalela, 2005; Mutasa, 2014; Prinsloo & Janks, 2002; Seabi et al., 2014; Sebolai, 2013; Waetjen, 2006). For

decades, Apartheid policy divided South Africa on strict racial lines with power existing unquestionably on a continuum of skin color, with lighter skinned persons of European descent at the top and the native Africans at the bottom of the power structure (Mathabane, 1986). Apartheid policies extended into every arena of life; of particular concern to this study are the areas of literacy, language, and education.

Though radical new legislation began the process of breaking down the Apartheid system in the 1990's, huge inequities reverberate from Apartheid to this day, challenging the struggle for equity and educational transformation (Anderson, 2003; Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2014; Makalela, 2005; Mutasa, 2014; Prinsloo and Janks, 2002; Seabi et al., 2014; Sebolai, 2014; Waetjen, 2006). Educational systems under Apartheid were purposefully designed to provide separate and unequal schooling for different racial groups (Anderson, 2003; Mathabane, 1986). Prinsloo and Janks (2002) described the ideological structures of this system where the subjective position of the student is vastly different. Mathabane recounted his experiences growing up as a Black child under Apartheid; his experiences demonstrate aspects and provide commentary on the separate subjective positions of students in different ethnic groups (1986). White students were given a position where they were expected to examine and evaluate, to have pride in their heritage, and to shape their future (Prinsloo & Janks, 2002). On the other hand, Colored (a term in South Africa referring to those who are Indian or nationals with dark skin) students, and to a greater extent Black students were expected to fit a far more passive role; memorizing rules and gaining respect for those with more knowledge and power were more central to their academic lives than was an active critical role (Prinsloo & Janks, 2002). Education for Black students was intended to prepare them for what

legislators perceived to be “tribal” ways of life in their homelands or a subservient existence among White employers (Mathabane, 1986). Scholars concluded that the lasting effects both on educational systems and personal positionalities afforded were results of this educational legislation (Makalela, 2005; Prinsloo & Janks, 2013; Seabi et al., 2014).

After the dismantling of Apartheid, progress towards dismantling inequity in educational systems has been made; despite the legacy of overwhelming inequity, in the present day many South African institutions of higher education are trying to make systemic changes towards becoming more inclusive and accessible to a more diverse body of students (Anderson, 2003; Makalela, 2005; Prinsloo & Janks, 2002; Seabi et al., 2014; Thondhlana & Belluigi, 2014; Wangenge-Ouma, 2012). But the same curricular and ideological problems face South African students still (Makalela, 2005; Seabi et al., 2014; Prinsloo & Janks, 2002). Issues such as resource availability and technological savvy face the educational institutions that serve many Black students even if legislation has not directly mandating lesser resources (Seabi, Seedat, Khoza-Shangase, & Sullivan, 2014; Sebolai, 2014; Wangenge-Ouma, 2012).

One aspect worth highlighting within South African higher education is the position of language and language diversity. How students use language and to which languages they have access have profound impacts on entering and achieving secondary and postsecondary education. The positions of different languages in education follow parallel national trends. Historically, the undoubtedly privileged position of the languages of British English and Afrikaans left African languages in a divided and disenfranchised social position (Makalela, 2005; Mutasa, 2014; Seabi et al., 2014; Sebolai, 2013). Despite

the belief that remains strong in the national ideology that African languages do not have the complex vocabulary and capacity for abstract thinking that science and education requires, this is a fallacy built on prejudice (Makalela, 2005). English, which is a normative global language of education and science, developed by borrowing vocabulary and concepts from other languages such as Latin and Greek. If African languages borrowed in ways similar to English, they certainly have the potential to carry scientific and educational meaning (Makalela, 2005).

The position of African languages, as opposed to European and Euro-based languages, is likewise in a transformational stage; while Apartheid policy made English and Afrikaans the languages of power, education, and business, the end of Apartheid saw the officiating of 11 languages to represent the spectrum of languages spoken in South Africa (Makalela, 2005; Mutasa, 2014; Prinsloo & Janks, 2002). Yet the curricular resources and opportunities in higher education for speakers of the African languages remain stunted (Makalela, 2005; Mutasa, 2014; Seabi et al., 2014; Seabolai, 2013). Thus, because of the linguistic hegemony in place, students who do not have English as a primary language, which is the case for the majority of Black people in rural communities, can be put at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to access and success in higher education and subsequent social mobility. Greenfield (2010) conducted research inquiring into the attitudes and beliefs of university students as they relate to language and education. He found that while the stated opinions of many students aligned with the prevailing ideology of the usefulness of speaking English and Afrikaans, many of them stated a profound dissonance with the preeminence of colonizing languages in their lives.

Not only did the participants in this study describe needing to learn English, but they also had to acculturate to the value system of the academic world.

A lens attuned to (post)colonial theory is a useful way of understanding the positionality and attitudes surrounding language use and learning. Privileged languages and ways of speaking have a distinctly colonial heritage. The perpetuation of the beliefs in the academic superiority of one language over another is a way in which the colonized have internalized the inferiority projected unto them (Fanon, 2008). The language of formerly or currently colonized peoples is shaped by colonial legacy. This is an important perspective to keep in mind for the next section dealing with South African educational and linguistic systems.

South African Linguistic Hegemony

Even with legislation put in place beginning in 1994, and with ongoing iterative changes and reforms ever since with good intents on the part of many reformers of education, the social reality of education and even more so of higher education remain systemically inequitable. The social position afforded to students and the ideological forces behind that position impact all aspects of their educational reality (Makalela, 2005, Prinsloo & Janks, 2002; Seabi et al., 2014). Prevalent ideologies can be examined through analysis of social discourse. For example, “Prinsloo’s research views the human subject as constituted through discursive practices and recognizes that particular discursive practices validate particular knowledges and behaviors” (Prinsloo & Janks, 2002, p. 22). Prinsloo and Janks (2002) directly referenced the theoretical framework of critical discourse analysis as means of understanding how language is a sociocultural force for creating and maintaining dominant ideologies. Prinsloo and Janks made the

important connection that although theories of discourse originated in the west, the theory lends itself to other cultures, almost by definition as it calls for direct attention to sociocultural context and dominant hegemonies—issues that are certainly relevant in South Africa.

Similarly, participants in Seabi et al.'s (2014) study reported issues connected with differences in social discourse communities, with concerns “include[ing] emotional insecurity, anxiety around ‘fitting into and coping with’ the university culture, lack of knowledge of existing university processes, academic demands, financial support and social isolation as a result of racial, gender, linguistic or cultural differences” (p. 69). If students currently in higher education face daunting obstacles, students who did not have the opportunity to make it to higher education must have perceived similar if not greater challenges, thus, with this gap, it would be important for future research to access populations who have a perspective outside of what might be considered successful.

In reference to language and education in South Africa, Makalela (2005) stated “Language is inextricably linked to identity, ideology, and power” (p. 163). Students who are able to construct an identity that can switch and/or merge their home discourses are better at making meaning within the discourse norms of their educational fields (Shanahan et al., 2011; Tapp, 2014). Social literacy, including academic literacy, must connect to students’ life narratives in order for students to find meaning; without that connection, meaning may be difficult to come by (Rose, 2005; Smagorinsky, 2001). Success in higher education typically requires students to be able to merge their discourses and identities in order to interpret the language of their academic discipline. When students’ life narratives are shaped by one social discourse and ideology, and the

academy is shaped by another, students who have not learned to weather the storm of discursive transitions will inevitably struggle to some extent until they are able switch or merge discourses (Melzer, 2014; Rose, 2005).

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the major theories and bodies of literature that inform this narrative research study. Narratives need to be considered in the contexts of their temporality, sociality, and place (Clandinin, 2013). This consideration allows a look at the literature about academic discourse and its gatekeeper role for traditionally marginalized students in various national contexts. In particular, this view gives a frame to view South African Higher education and the legacy of inequality combined with the push for further equity for all students. Cultures and ideologies that surround education and the languages used for education remain topics of great importance for scholarly research and points from which to understand the experiences of students. Despite their importance to academic studies, language ability, fluency, and acculturation are gatekeepers for students. A discussion of equity and access is at the heart of any student rooted in the field of developmental education; for many students, negotiating their languages and identities is central to their entrance to and existence in higher education (de Klein & Lawton, 2015).

III. METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative inquiry was to investigate the socially constructed linguistic realities of participants in a rural multilingual South African village, particularly in regards to how constructions of language and place interact with the schooling and educational values of the participants. This narrative approach to research privileges and prioritizes stories within a social constructivist paradigm. Stories are both the content under inquiry and form of constructed retelling of reality. Clandinin (2013) describes a narrative approach to research inquiry as “an exploration of the social, cultural, familial, linguistic, and institutional narratives within which individuals’ experiences were, and are, constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted” (p. 18).

Researchers such as Brodkey (1987) and Spigelman (2004) explained stories and personal experience are powerful cultural evidence. From a social constructivist framework, stories are themselves constructions of people’s constructed realities, and thus methodologically intriguing (Clandinin, 2013; Spigelman, 2004). Brodkey (1987) stated:

One studies stories not because they are true or even because they are false, but for the same reason that people tell and listen to them, in order to learn about the terms on which others make sense of their lives.

Furthermore, the ability to capture in-depth narrative allows for authentic data to emerge. The context and detail afforded by the narrative give rich cultural insight, particularly when approached from a loosely structured design that allows conversation to emerge organically rather than forcing topics too narrowly or not allowing for the nuance that shapes the construction of stories (Clandinin, 2013; Seidman, 2010).

For this narrative study, I navigate boundaries between normative research traditions and full engagement in authentic narrative inquiry. One of the tensions between the two lies in the impetus for research. While researchers traditionally will name the research “question” and follow this question thorough to an answer, I want to draw attention to the re-definition of the impetus. Clandinin (2013) called this the “research puzzle,” explaining that, “narrative inquiry is composed around a particular wonder, and, rather than thinking about framing a research question with a precise definition or expectation of an answer, narrative inquirers frame a research puzzle that carries with it a ‘sense of search, a re-search, a searching again’... ‘a sense of continual reformation’” (p. 42). This is not to separate the research puzzle from a sense of relevance, of course. Rather, the justification of the research lies in laying out the purposes of the research in terms of the personal, practical, and social justifications for research—even as these purposes “begin... and end in the midst, of experience” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 43). Thus, the following questions reside in the midst of socially constructed navigation of the boundaries between adhering to institutional norms and creating an authentic narrative inquiry into the puzzles of lived experience.

1. How do participants narrate their various languages? What factors affect that narration?
2. How do participants’ stories reflect overlapping social constructions of languages, places, and ideologies?
3. How do participants narrate their identities within their social contexts?
4. How do participants’ stories reflect their beliefs about success in school?
About access to school?

Narrative Process: An Overview

Throughout this study, I engage the social constructivist narrative approach explained by Clandinin (2013). This narrative approach to research privileges and prioritizes stories. Stories are both the content under inquiry and form of constructed retelling of reality. With this ontological and epistemological underpinning, I followed a process that led through the following phases: entering into the field → creating field texts → creating interim research texts → creating research texts (Clandinin, 2013). I will describe these processes in more detail.

Positionality

Before engaging with the participants in either data collection or analysis, as a researcher, I took time to self-reflect on the positionality I brought with me to the field site, and how that positionality itself has been socially constructed. I am an educated White female from the U. S. I primarily speak English. My interest in language variation began with encountering dialects and varieties of English within the U. S. What I know about South Africa began with second-hand information—I read books written by South Africans, spoke to people who had been there, and researched the country, its history, and its educational systems. My first personal encounter in South Africa took place during July-August of 2015, during which I collected data for the pilot study to this research. After collecting pilot data, I had at least some first-hand knowledge of the country, but I remain a cultural and linguistic outsider. Still, when I returned during July-August of 2016 and reconnected with some of the original participants, I was better able to engage in a relational way because I had an existing relationship with them, and I was much

more familiar with some of the contexts of their lives. I more easily entered “alongside” the participants and their lives as much as I was able in a short time (Clandinin, 2013).

Data Collection and Analysis

The primary data source for this study comes from in-depth interviews, which follow a loosely structured protocol. I developed this interview protocol prior to departure for South Africa (see Appendix A). This instrument was updated from the validated pilot study instrument to streamline the narratives of the interview process. The interview protocol allowed participants’ stories to emerge and be as organic and authentic as possible (Clandinin, 2012; Seidman, 2010). Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, I kept a field notebook and a memo journal in which I reflected on my data and maintained mindfulness of keeping my own cultural biases in check. For example, I recorded informal conversations with participants and community members, and I would note their comments and attitudes about the schooling systems currently in the area. Keeping a reflective journal helped me maintain a critical self-awareness and maintain transparency in my research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The process of creating the final research texts presented in this manuscript was an iterative process. This began in the field with reflexive journaling and memo writing throughout the interview process. While I recorded the interviews and had them professionally transcribed verbatim, the first phase of field text creation was based mainly on recording my reflections and evolving ideas as they related to my ongoing understanding of the participants and their lives, my place in the process, and the connections or disconnects between the stories and what I read in the literature. For example, before my interview with a participant from the pilot study, I reviewed my prior

field notes and made notes on items I needed to member check with the respondent. After the interview with the participant, I wrote memos including a summary of how the interview went, my impressions and wonderings, and how I initially connected the interview to major themes in the literature. I also recorded further items and themes I needed to triangulate with experts and insiders to South African education and culture.

After returning to the U. S., I revisited the stories by both listening to the audio recordings, reading along, and taking notes. During this phase of creating interim research texts, I approached this analysis from several angles. Firstly, I used constant-comparative emergent coding techniques. I began with one interview and analyzed that using open coding. I compared the emergent codes with the validated codes from the pilot study. After that, I pared down the list of codes to themes that were most relevant to the research questions and puzzles under investigation. I continued to apply this list of codes across all four cases as well as allowing room for open coding on each case to allow points unique to each perspective to remain visible. Therefore, I was able to maintain reliable themes for the research, while at the same time maintaining the visibility of the nuances of each person's story for later reporting.

I also relied on domain analysis techniques to understand the relational ways in which themes both within and between cases related to one another. Taking some of the major themes of language, identity, space, and ideological statements—themes that both emerged from the data, connected to the literature, and related to my research questions—I used Spradley's (1979) domain analysis to map out ways in which codes related to one another both across topics and within cases. For example, across cases, I analyzed reported perceptions of isiXhosa such as cause-effects, locations, sequences,

rationale, function, and means-end. Within a case, I looked at the domains individually such as how locations for action compared from one language to another. The underlying theoretical framework of narrative social constructivism guided each step of analysis throughout.

These interim research texts took several narrative forms, including visually organized charts and matrices, crafting mini-narratives from key moments in the texts, and identifying key quotes and putting them into dialog with one another through memos and texts organized thematically to reflect between and within case analysis. Finally, in creating the final research texts, I used elements from all of the analytic interim texts and created a researcher's retelling of the narratives presented along with a research narrative of some of the major connections of each perspective. As the researcher, I make clear that the research texts are purposefully crafted in order to address my research questions while maintaining the authenticity of the participants' stories as they presented them during the interviews. Therefore, the researcher's retellings that are presented in the following chapter follow themes, ideas, and trajectories storied by the participants, but condensed and understood from a narrative analytic lens. Even as such, the final research texts do not offer direct answers to questions, as this is not the primary focus of a narrative approach; rather, they are "intended to engage audiences to rethink and reimagine the ways in which they practice and the ways in which they relate to others" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 51).

Where I Was and How I Got There

On the way to the village, I rode in a bus past sweeping ocean vistas. Grassy hills rose and fell on the sides of the winding highways. Springboks, zebras, and elephants were some of the animals living their lives in the passage. People walked on the sides of the roads as well, over miles of pavement up and down steep inclines. Other people waited for buses. Others not engaged in daily business watched and waited. The bus passed several villages filled with dwellings that have been described in many ways: colorful blues, greens, and pinks; straw-roofed or metal-roofed; huts or shacks; traditional or circular rondavels; more modern square or rectangular buildings; made of straw, mud, metal, or sticks; in some places tightly packed, and in others spread out and standing alone. The people in these homes were equally varied. Large, small, thin, stout, old, young, male and female, the majority of the people I encountered would tell you they are “Xhosas,” or members of the amaXhosa ethnic group.

When I arrived at my destination, nestled into one of the hills and hugged into the Indian Ocean coastline, I found myself among one of the richer vacation areas of the Eastern Cape province. The houses here are larger; the house I stayed in was a spacious three-bedroom that would shelter the 13 women here to study abroad and student-teach in this community for the next month. The house did not have central air conditioning or heat, but did have consistent running water and electricity. From the windows, I see the foamy edges of the ocean lapping the sandy stretches of pristine beach. Outside, the leaves of the trees point upwards, and monkeys swing from the trees, looking out for any dropped fruit people may be careless enough to let fall.

Over the course of the next day, I make my way with the group outwards into more of this village. Directly surrounding us are more houses similarly sized and styled.

Down the road are two narrow strips of office and store front. A café, a small grocery store, a liquor store, a real estate office, a casual restaurant and bar, and the volunteer office that partners with us make up the majority of the clientele of these strips; much of these spaces are dedicated to hosting beach vacationers. Keep going up the hill, though, and the buildings begin to look more like those along the roadside. Carved into the other side of the hill is an informal settlement the people call their village. Most of the amaXhosa residents of this village live here in what many of the residents describe as “shacks”. There is running water in central public areas; folks no longer must go to the river. There is electricity in some, but not all, of the homes. Some of the dwellings are one-roomed, and some have several rooms. Large families often live in small spaces. On this side of the looming hill, one can only catch a glimpse of the ocean from between two rises. The spaces are totally separated by physical geography, but more profoundly, they are separated through geography connected with cultural concepts such as language, wealth, education, and social capital.

The village is in an area where people identify with amaXhosa culture and the language of isiXhosa, although many of the people in the region speak multiple languages. In larger cities such as Johannesburg and Cape Town, there is far more linguistic diversity, but more rural areas are identified with the culture and language of one of the native African ethnic groups of South Africa. The people say that their language defines their home spaces. This village is an isiXhosa space. Several homes I see have *kraals*, which are areas nearby the homes marked off with homemade fences constructed from woven sticks. This is one of the most sacred areas for traditional Xhosa rituals. It is here that goats and other animals are slaughtered to create communion with the

ancestors of the respective families. It also can be a holding place for cattle—the traditional marker of wealth—but from what I’ve seen, the cattle roam and graze freely.

Over the hill, however, English and western culture takes preeminence, they say. Amongst the tourists and the diverse group of South Africans, isiXhosa does not culturally define the area so completely. While African languages, including Afrikaans and isiXhosa, define certain people groups, in areas where there is ethnic diversity, the participants assert that the non-ethnically associated language of English is the language of transaction.

The Storytellers

The participants—the people who tell their stories for this project—are all ethnically amaXhosa and speak the isiXhosa language as their home language, or mother tongue. Given the proximity and movement between the village and the tourist area, and the national curricular requirement that students learn a second language (in this area, mainly English) many of the Xhosa people spoke English, at least conversationally. As I was reacquainted with the people in the village, I reached out to participants who did interviews with me the year before and also a few people I met for the first time; the participants who I ended up including in this final research texts were all people who I interviewed twice—once during 2015 and once again during 2016. This helped to assure authenticity as the double interview allowed me to member-check and reconfirm ideas previously described by the people. Altogether, I employed a purposive criterion selection based on several factors: (a) English language fluency; (b) local residency; (c) balance of sex/gender representation; (d) age; and (e) type(s) of educational experience.

In order to conduct interviews in English, I needed to recruit participants who spoke English conversationally and with enough proficiency to touch upon abstract concepts such as “success” and “beliefs”. Participants were all members of the local community, with most of the past participants currently residing in the village. Several participants have also lived in other areas of South Africa such as nearby villages or even as far away as the major city of Cape Town at some point in their lives. Within both the total group I interviewed and the final group of four from these whom I focused on for analysis, I maintained a balance of both male and female stories. Every participant was an adult over the age of 18, due to IRB requirements and my postsecondary research interests. However, their schooling status varied from high school/aspiring to postsecondary to completion of a credential to variations of educational institutions from universities to adult education. For the purposes of this study, I used the IRB guidelines for defining adulthood as a person over the age of 18, though within the Xhosa culture there are customs and traditions that define adulthood that often, but do not necessarily, align with a person’s 18th birthday. The range of ages and educational experiences should allow a multiplicity of educational stories to be told on the languages influencing beliefs among the community members in the area. Below, please find a graphic summary of the description of my participants. For reference in the table below, the “Matric” is a shortened phrase for matriculation, or similar to what is called graduation in the United States. Matric involves a days-long, highly rigorous, and summative examination in order for secondary students to achieve their secondary-school credential. Furthermore, high ranking scores on the matric are necessary for entrance into postsecondary education of any kind. Failure to achieve matric requires a student to complete an adult education

certificate to enter certain postsecondary credentialing programs; however, an adult basic education certification will not suffice for entrance into university and the more prestigious forms of higher education. Matric exams are taken in multiple languages: the student's mother-tongue, or home language, as well as an additional language, which is often English or Afrikaans.

Table: Participants

Name	Gender	Age	Schooling
Lisoletu	Male	Early-20s	Secondary Student
Kwezi	Female	Mid-30s	Passed Matric & Postsecondary Credentials Earned
Noxie	Female	Late-40s	Matric Not Earned, Adult Education Credential, & Postsecondary Credential In-process
Shaun	Male	Late-20s	Passed Matric, Completed some University Courses without Credential Completion

Ethical Reflections and Reminders

Throughout this research process, I have been, and remained, mindful of several ethical considerations. Firstly, and perhaps ironically, this study took place primarily in the English language, a language which many world citizens consider to be a globalizing force (Wei, 2016). Further research that delves into my topics using languages other than English, such as isiXhosa or Afrikaans, would be ideal to understand the cross linguistic-cultural implications of multilingual educational experiences. The necessity of speaking English is a criterion for participant selection, so the stories that will be shared will be limited by that language need.

Secondly, I am an outsider to the geographic and cultural community. On one side of this issue, I do not have any cultural bias of an insider to either isiXhosa or Afrikaans while interpreting the data, but on the other hand, I have been mindful of not superimposing my own cultural bias on the cultural realities that are expressed by the participants. Some of the ways I addressed my own cultural assumptions have been to continue learning as much as possible about South Africa and the community in which I was conducting research not only through reading, but through personal and prolonged engagement with community members outside of the research project. Keeping a journal to reflect critically on my lens has assisted me in bracketing off my bias.

As I was in South Africa and throughout the time in which I collected data, I was also part of an immersive study abroad program that highlights cultural awareness and attention to language and power. I was a teaching assistant for 11-12 undergraduate preservice and graduate in-service teachers while in this program during 2015 and 2016. Over the course of two years, I have spent a total of two months with daily exposure (with one year between two visits) in the community where I conducted research. In addition to my research agenda, I was also a participant-observer in both the general community as well as in some of the local schools as part of a service learning teaching project. Though I had some contact with several schools in the area, I was part of a teaching team in two schools in the area over the course of both visits.

While in those schools, I worked with school children and teachers on students' writing and digital literacies development. I have also been cognizant of and responsive to addressing implied statements and assumptions that came up in the interview process through follow-up questions and member-checks about meaning and clarity of

information. Finally, I engaged in hermeneutical dialog during the field work after my return to the U.S. with other scholars who are familiar with the cultural contexts and implications of my research throughout the data analysis process, including scholars who live and work in a multilingual, multicultural South African setting.

Thirdly, when reporting on participants' words, phrases, statements, and stories, all the above factors will impact how I am able to translate accurately or interpret the dialects and varieties of English that I encountered in the geographic and cultural area. In order to represent the words and meanings of the participants as accurately and authentically as possible, I both member-checked during the interview process and cross analyzed statements throughout each person's story as a whole. This process proceeded in tandem with the cultural-assumption checking I described in the previous point listed above. This project was reviewed and approved by Texas State University's Institutional Review Board first in June 2015 and again in June 2016 after the study instrumentation was modified.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have detailed the methodology I used in this narrative research. The narrative methodology I used was underpinned by social constructivist theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013). Arriving in the midst of life and experience, I used loosely structured interviews in the context of prolonged participant observation in the village to learn about and understand participants' stories. I have detailed my process of contextualizing my positionality, gathering field texts, creating interim texts, and finally, presenting research texts. In the following chapter, I will present findings that inform how participants narrate their various languages; different factors that affect that

narration; how do participants' stories reflect overlapping social constructions of languages, places, and ideologies; and how participants' stories reflect their beliefs about success in school and about access to school.

IV. FINDINGS

“Everyone’s got their own story. If you listen to their story, then you’d know” –Shaun

Throughout this chapter, I have re-constructed the stories that were told to me by the participants in my study. To review, in this narrative approach to inquiry I used a loosely structured approach to interviewing wherein I asked participants to narrate their experiences—especially as those experiences related to their educational goals, achievements, and dreams. I privileged the complex tellings and re-tellings of the participants as I entered alongside some of their moments in time and developed a relational dialog (Clandinin, 2013). The findings have been reconstructed within the methodological underpinning of “thinking narratively”; that is, thinking “with stories” and not simply “about stories,” which works to “oppose and modify... institutionalized Western practice,” and draw our focus to the lives and contexts of the South African people who tell their stories (Clandinin, 2013, p. 29).

Throughout their in-depth interviews, the participants revealed both breadth and depth of experience regarding language, culture, identity, aspirations, and of course, education. However, what I opted to present in line with narrative research traditions was researcher’s (re)telling of the four stories I examined. I did not present a verbatim retelling of the interviews, but instead I condensed certain parts, and highlighted the words of the participants in other areas. I honored the words and voices of my participants. Even throughout the process building up to this retelling, I engaged in dialog with the verbatim transcripts, referencing the member-checks and verifications of meaning within the interview transcriptions of both the transcription under study and the interview transcriptions from the pilot study to validate meanings.

With each participant, I conducted two interviews over the course of two years' time. For this study, I focused on the secondary interviews as data for my dissertation. However, I also used data from my pilot study as a means to provide context and confirm continuity of meaning and events. During both of those iterations, each person requested that their original preferred names be used for reporting after I explained the nature of the possible ways this data will be reported as a dissertation and as a research report. Some of the names the participants chose were their given names, and some were preferred nicknames. I honored their wishes. This use of participants' actual names was rooted in a social justice agenda seeking to honor the lived experiences and storied retellings of their own lives (Perry, 2009). The participants expressed a desire to have their own stories told and attributed, so in this way, I authentically represented their wishes in this study.

Many of the themes and ideas I analyzed cut across each case, and certain individual's narratives drew more attention to different ideas. For example, each participant highlighted the many struggles—personal, social, financial, etc.—that they faced throughout their educational trajectories, and Lisoletu in particular framed his experience in overcoming struggles, and how worthwhile he viewed facing and overcoming hardships amidst social and personal pressure to drop out of secondary school. He framed key scenes in his stories as individual battles that came together overlapping to form the larger struggle to overcome in order to reach his dreams. Kwezi on the other hand, did not frame her story in overcoming struggles, but rather framed her story as a forward trajectory. She took one step at a time, and built her smaller success and achievements into a larger narrative arcing towards her ultimate goal; or each step as a rung on the ladder she saw herself climbing. Perhaps embodying the challenges and

struggles facing many people in their context, Noxie's journey was framed less like a ladder and more like a cliff she has been struggling to scale her whole life. Sheer and steep, this cliff has been extremely difficult to climb, especially without proper preparation. She has fallen many times, but she got back up and strove to get a little higher every time. Finally, Shaun was certainly able to see the cliffs—the steep challenges, potential setbacks, and distance from the top to the bottom—and he has lived experience of the perils and struggles involved. But more than that, Shaun explained seeing bridges and connections between and across languages, cultures, and people groups.

Keeping normative academic rhetorical styles in mind, I was aware that I had a preexisting bias towards presenting a more linear narrative, but this may not have been the norm for storytelling for the participants. While I made every effort to be culturally responsive in my representations, I kept in mind the following points: (a) I attempted to condense the stories to present the data in the most authentic way possible, and (b) any clear structure to the participants' stories was inevitably masked by interjections and requests for clarity—either of me member-checking or of the participants clarifying my questions and comments—so I did my best to maintain the narratives below clearly and without too much repetition.

Finally, for the sake of clarity, I want to again specify that although the participants' home language is officially called “isiXhosa,” the participants often shorten the name of their language to “Xhosa.” Therefore, when I quote the participants, I quote exactly what they said, (i.e., “Xhosa”) but when not using a direct quote, I generally used the formal name, “isiXhosa.”

Lisolethu

Lisolethu is young adult, striving to finish his high school degree in order to move on to bigger accomplishments. At the time of my study, he attended boarding school in a nearby village, but he came back to his home village fairly often and held a part time job at a restaurant in the village. When was home, he lived with his sister as his parents had both passed away. Many parts of his story reflected a search for a role model, a mentor, someone who would stand with him on the journey. He expressed several big dreams, including government work and international business. When he described his big dreams, his voice echoed back and forth between wonder at the possibilities of the future and bearing the weight of all the obstacles he faces on his journey.

Lisolethu saw evidence of the struggle to achieve a diploma and a degree all around him. His sister did not pass grade 12, and he wanted to work to be the first in his family to pass grade 12 and achieve the dreams he spoke of. He spoke of ambition. Indeed, the more successful he would perform on his matric, or examination needed to pass grade 12, the better his options would be for his future intended education.

It was difficult to find a time that Lisolethu and I were both available to meet for an interview. Between his school schedule and being called into work last minute, I only got to talk with him on my last night in the country. A few weeks prior, when he agreed, he asked what was the purpose of this interview. He wanted to know what I was doing this for. I explained that I wanted to know more about education in South Africa and how languages work in getting an education. I wanted to know his perspective. I would write a report that was essential for my studies and would help me to get my own degree. He told me he would help me. He would be the expert.

The Story Begins

The sun was just setting as Lisoletu and I finally sat down in a corner of a coffee shop that was usually quiet. Today, though, there was a group of people watching a rugby game nearby. I thought this might seriously impact our ability to get in-depth, but as the stories unfolded, the background faded, giving way to Lisoletu's words. As the interview began, Lisoletu told his story in an outward spiral. He began with his main idea and then branched and storied his experiences further. He began in a nutshell.

"I'm where I am today because of being encouraged by people. And then, I am where I am because I wanted to learn. My story is that I speak the languages I speak because I wanted to learn more. You see?" Lisoletu wanted to make sure I understand him. It's a tension between having his story heard and doubt about his ability to express it in English.

Lisoletu continued, saying "there were times that I wanted to give up on things, but I would think of those who said 'you can make it.' There are people who used to say to me, 'your English is beautiful.' And I was like no, no, no. Still poor, still real rough. But other people say, 'it's the best.' Then I would continue. So I learned a lot; I learned a lot. I'm not great in English, but I know I can make it so people hear what I'm trying to say."

Lisoletu spoke with intensity. His hands emphasized the words and syllables he spoke. When the interview began, I talked easily with him, and he seemed confident, yet laid back. Somehow that reversed while he told his story. That need to 'make it so people hear what he's trying to say' gave an urgency, and perhaps a hint of self-doubt to his speech, but when he spoke it was with conviction and sincerity. He's said so much

already, I thought, but skimmed right over those points I wanted to get into. I asked him to tell me more, starting with where he was at that moment.

He thought. “Where I am now with my education... I’m at a better level—or a level that other students wish to have the opportunity but they can’t have it.” Lisoletu paused, gathering his thoughts. Maybe waiting to see if I would change the subject. He went on, “education helped me a lot. I went to many places because of the education and the learning that I wanted to do.” His education so far, had helped to get him a respectable job he worked when not in school. He has been working at several restaurants in town. “It’s just the way I speak with people—the education I have now. You see? So, my education has taken me somewhere. Taken me from that zero point to that meter,” and he raises his hand above his head to indicate the height of his personal rise. “From nothing to something.”

That was quite a rise. Lisoletu was in his final years of high school, with hopes of going further. He can see that he has already done some challenging things, though. What was it? What was so low it was a “zero” point? But he expressed an awareness of comparing his own journey to others. “Many young people wish to be me,” this young community leader explains, but “I would like to ask them, ‘but you have other things, why don’t I?’ I just tell them ‘it’s the change that I want to do inside me, it’s not for other people.’”

Already, Lisoletu has reflected both internally and externally. He was where he was because of the supportive people in his life, and yet he was driven internally. He could compare himself to those in the community, but he measured himself by an internal standard. “I’m already a leader everywhere I walk. Yeah, so my education has taken me

somewhere.” Everywhere I walk. Somewhere. There is a sense of the unfinished in what he says. As if he intended to go beyond where he currently walked. He is somewhere, but not where he will be if he can keep going.

Going Further

“To be honest,” Lisoletu explained, “and to tell you the real truth, I want my education to take me from the lower level”—he lowers his hands to the ground, then raises them— “to the higher level; and not even to the higher—to the extreme level...to the exciting level! You see?”

Lisoletu was somewhere. He was on a mission of the mind, and he had just gotten started. He was somewhere, but not nearly to highest level of his dreams. “Where I would see myself be the best and the world’s greatest something. Because I’ve had that vision of seeing myself that way, [the] world’s greatest business man among Black people.”

He saw his education as an integral part of this journey, especially when it came to seeing what generally happens to those who abandon their schooling; they are “doing things they don’t like.” Lisoletu illustrated his point, telling a story about a conversation he had with a mentor in his life. An old man in his fellowship. A time will come to do your duty, and to do right. Finishing assignments and finishing school were part of that duty and what the right thing to do is. “So, I’m trying to dwell on this here, before I reach it—that second point.” He continued, saying, “there’s a lot of opportunity to go to, and I see myself going out with education, nothing else.” Education is the primary key, according to Lisoletu. Nothing else. But what is education? What comprises that term? Education was the beginning of his “legacy.” That legacy, or dream of a legacy, was part

of what keeps him going—and what his mentors remind him of—so “even if I feel like no one made it, I can make it.”

Making Connections

In the world he projects for himself, Lisoletu wanted “to associate with the different business men coming from different cultures, different continents, different countries.” He explained further, “I don’t want to associate myself with South Africans only. And not because I think, they are, are, I mind them or discriminate them, but because I want to build a relationship with different people.”

The key to that relationship lay in communicating, and in particular, Lisoletu said, communicating in English. “English is the best language, because it is a tool to make people connect.” He learned this belief before entering that world though. “All the things that you do, needs English. The people you meet—you need English; the tests that you write needs English, the teachers will teach you, teaching us in English.” This idea about the “best” language, or the “connecting” language has its roots in his life firmly before he leaves school.

I asked how language fits into his education and his life. Lisoletu lists isiXhosa, English, and isiZulu as the languages he spoke, because, as he explained, he is “someone who likes to learn and commit myself with people”—he didn’t “discriminate.” “You see,” he continued, “every time a person speaks, I would like to learn that; what do you know? And I tell that other person what do I know?”

I wondered if he was trying to get at something beyond facts— Lisoletu seemed like he was circling around that point. I asked him if he was indeed communicating something beyond words—sharing cultures and deeper beliefs. He said, “Yes. Because,

the moment, you speak with that, with a person, you connect.” He explains more, relating our relative national cultures (U. S. and South Africa). But despite his often discussing the separate peoples and places where he used his languages, Lisoletu has taken ownership of his language use and his communication of words or cultures.

When he had met someone new, he didn’t only want to connect using English, he wanted to share and teach his language, isiXhosa. “I’m just sharing what I have, and I’m proud of being a South African, I’m proud of being a Xhosa, proud of speaking Xhosa. So you see, I speak it anywhere, and I teach everyone in Xhosa. Yeah.”

Lisoletu took agency in language use and sharing. But did he still struggle with the mix and mingle of languages and the different demands for levels of fluency in any? “Big time,” he says. “It’s, killing me.” But he was determined to persist against the odds. In his interview last year, the word “persistence” was in fact the anchor of his story. Persist. Persist. Persist. That, he saw, is the bridge between the struggle and the accomplishment.

What Makes the Struggle Worth it

As I felt our talking points were nearly exhausted, I moved towards wrapping up the interview. I asked Lisoletu what was the most important thing he thought I should know to really understand people’s education in South Africa. Some participants up until this point said various things. Some said “nothing” or “money is the most important” or “I’ve think I’ve said everything I needed to say”; others went into more depth. But Lisoletu showed me a picture of his beliefs however, and he waxed poetic.

“Education is like a pole of electricity. Where it is staying, it cannot move; it needs you to go there. There are people who go out, but education remains there calling

them back. Now it's their choice to go or stay there." Lisoletu was talking about motivation, movement, momentum on the part of students. "Education cannot run. It cannot walk to anything but the key, or the main message of education is that it is the success to your destiny."

Lisoletu gave speech to education saying, "Now come to me so that you can get success in this place." The passion in his voice rose like a preacher with a good message. "It may be a hard thing. It may have challenges, but education is the best to get there. Because you cannot make it without education. There was once a man [who] said to me, 'it is very hard. It's very good to make what is bad, but it's bad to make what is good.'" He went on to explain more about how it's easy to use good things for bad purposes, but it is harder to take what is bad and use it for good.

Lisoletu used a reference to his mother as an example of this struggle. If she said "give me a hundred rand, I want to buy something amazing, I would say 'no ma, that's not good. I will use this money.'" And then if my friend comes and says 'give me a hundred rand, I want to go buy drugs and alcohol,' I would say 'let's go for it.' You see? I am using the right thing for the wrong thing, and I'm having joy to the wrong thing. He is taking something good, money, and using it for the wrong purpose.

But the best one, that's hard to do. Lisoletu explained how it's hard to sacrifice enjoyable relationships once they become harmful. He said, "so that's why you have to sacrifice to get the best. There are certain things that people have to sacrifice. Sometimes friends can think that they're the best, but there are times you have to sacrifice them, and look there at the future, at the education."

When he first launched into this extended metaphor, I was confused. It sounded like the conversation was moving away from education. But the beauty in his speech was that he encircled an entirely new concept in order to bring it back to the main topic. Lisoletu encircled the concepts of sacrifice, of hardship, of temptations, and the need for moral uprightness. This was what he explained about the most important thing to understand about education for South Africans.

Because the education was staying, reminding that ‘I am still here.’ The time you go out it is wasted. It depends on your decisions; you see? Education needs you, and education is still waiting for you. Even if you’ve dropped out, school is still there. So go back and start studying something everyday.” Lisoletu further emphasized the sincerity of claims, telling about several near death experiences he had in the past year, indicating that the struggle to leave school, sacrifice friendships, and push through hardships were all very real in his life. This was indeed Lisoletu’s lived experience shaping his beliefs.

“So, the future, is my thing, I’m going to make it. Even if life is full of ups and downs, I’m going there, I’m getting there.”

Kwezi

Kwezi grew up in a town near the one she currently lives in within the Eastern Cape. When she was young, her mother moved around to find work, so she stayed with her mother’s sister. This relative had no daughters of her own, so she considered Kwezi to be like her daughter. In this environment, Kwezi completed her primary and secondary schooling. Kwezi was the only daughter in a family of boys. Her eldest brother died young, however, as did her parents by the time she reached adulthood. After Kwezi passed her matric test, she went out to find work to pay school fees so her younger

brother could finish his education as well. She moved to the present village in order to find work. “After matric I came here,” she said, “because, I came from a poor family; to try to find some work.” In this village, she found work at a restaurant, but ultimately landed in a housekeeping management position. She has completed several tertiary level certifications that have helped her achieve the job she presently holds, including several sponsored by her employer. They may have been small, but Kwezi has built up her journey one step at a time.

The Story Begins

Kwezi was a busy woman. She worked hard, but she agreed to talk to me when she could. My interview with her was in two parts because of work related interruptions. At our first meeting, Kwezi and I were sitting at the kitchen table, waiting on a delivery. Kwezi was feeling tired, but said that was the best time for her. The setting echoed our first interview last year. Kwezi reiterated some similar things as last year, but fleshed in some of the details and opinions she shared last year.

Language Values

One line that really stood out to me above many others during that first interview was Kwezi’s opinion on the value of her language. She said, “when I was in school and I was young, I was thinking maybe Xhosa is very important because I’m a real Xhosa girl. But, no, Xhosa is not, because you can’t go to find a work if you’re just speaking Xhosa only.” She stated that she learned to believe that her own language, connected with her personal cultural heritage, was of little value to her future employment prospects and further to her future financial security. She went on to further explain that she valued English as it gave her access to good work. “How did that make you feel?” I asked her.

“Our Xhosa, yeah. I’m not feel nothing. Because for now I know English, and even the people that are not working, they know if they didn’t know English they can’t find the work.” Kwezi seems to be expressing her socialization into the colonial power structure. When she says she does not feel anything, or does not question that validity of English language cultural preeminence, she presented an ideology representing internalization of the colonizing values that deny equal worth to isiXhosa and English.

Her opinions regarding languages had not changed much since last year. When I asked what languages she used in school, Kwezi reiterated how “I was using Xhosa, it was my first language,” and she connected it with her ethnic identity— “because I’m a Xhosa girl”—but she was compelled to use English and Afrikaans as well. In her own identity structure, she maintained her cultural affiliations to her home group, but simultaneously maintained her socialized perspective on the relative values of Xhosa and English cultures and languages.

Struggles: National and Personal

Kwezi’s feelings about Afrikaans were laced with distaste; this was another parallel to her feelings expressed last year. She discussed the language as a part of a specific group, and in a historical sense, apparently referencing back to Apartheid times and the ruling group therein, under which she completed much of her primary schooling. Kwezi said last year, “when we grow up, so we’ve just known the people we call Afrikaners, they speak Afrikaans, didn’t love the Black people, they trying to kill them in.” Her typically relaxed body language and soft-spoken voice changed. She crouched up further, and her voice became sharp with anger. She gesticulated sharply with her hand, saying further, “even like now, if you just met with the people speaking Afrikaans,

if you're speaking Xhosa, they didn't accept you, they taking you like a dog. But all the English they are good, but all the Afrikaans people they are bad to us."

Again, Kwezi stated her feelings, this time directly referencing Apartheid, and again associating the language with the ethnic group in power at that time. "And the most people speaking Afrikaans, they are naughty, naughty people. So I don't like Afrikaans... like, apartheid, yeah, so they didn't love especially the Black people, they have too much racists. So."

Kwezi identified the oppressive colonial legacy of Apartheid in the language of Afrikaans, but it was interesting that she did not consider English in an oppressive or colonial sense. Much research and theory (see Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Wei, 2016) has demonstrated that the preeminence of English as a global language of power is indeed colonizing and oppressive, but in this case, Kwezi did not articulate that attitude, or at least awareness. This could be a result of how colonizing attitudes and beliefs are internalized by people under forms of oppression (e.g. Fanon, 2008). In the next chapter, I further discuss aspects of this deeper colonization that passes as common sense.

Going Further

When she talked about English, Kwezi said, "English is good. Yeah. If you just know only Xhosa, you are not going to get a better job. But if you know English more and more, you are going to get a better job." It was not easy for her to learn in school, though she tried. "I was just learning more, more, more English. It was very poor, when I was at school. Yes, our teachers they are Xhosas." Later on, she mentioned that speaking English is a sign of good education, whereas not being able to speak English was a sign that someone from her area didn't go to school or succeed there.

As for her own child, Kwezi envisioned her going even further than she herself had gone. She sent her daughter to a school where the primary language of instruction is English, saying, “because I want her must get a better education than me.” This had helped to create a multilingual home environment where she uses both isiXhosa and English. Kwezi said, “It’s at work and at my house. Because my child, she’s at English school... So I’m speaking less Xhosa at home. Mix all the time, I mix with English, so English is a good language.”

Connections, Intersections, and Where Next

The home Kwezi described is a blending and merging of languages and identities, fueled by dreams of success. Where the family moved away from the mother tongue, but didn’t leave it behind. Where the parent and child learned together. Where dreams were forged in the very words they spoke at home.

Kwezi revealed that while she enjoyed her work, it was not her dream job. After she “came to [her village] to get the job,” she found one, “but I didn’t find the work, I want to do when I’m get older. It’s not the work I was just decide to do this work for cooking,” work to provide for herself and her daughter. She said, “I love it for now,” but she was “choosing to be a social worker. I love to be a social worker, because I’m good with kids. I’m good with people.” Perhaps someday she will have the time and money to complete the necessary tertiary schooling to achieve that goal.

But Kwezi’s definition of success centered on her family and providing well for them. She explained what her definition of success was, saying, “my goal, it’s, yeah, it’s just, I want to be richer at the end. Yeah, so it’s just like to be with my family all the time.”

Just like last year, Kwezi ended on a note that reaffirmed a positive connection with her mother tongue. Although she was actively creating a multilingual home and looking to gain “more and more” proficiency in English, she hadn’t given up on her mother tongue, and she didn’t want others too either. When I asked her what I need to know about education in South Africa, Kwezi told me, “you have to know Xhosa, you have to learn some words. And even us, we learn the English and for you, you have to know some Xhosa words.” There is give and take there. In her daughter’s school as well, they are beginning to use isiXhosa as an additional language of instruction, and Kwezi thinks this is good, saying, “they are most kids are Blacks. They are Xhosa kids. They are not Coloreds. The Coloreds, they are the people that speak Afrikaans, so it’s good. It’s good for them.”

As I reflect on this idea, it becomes almost a platitude: yes, it is good for us all to speak and learn in both languages.

Noxie

I sat down in the attic loft of a coffee shop to talk with Noxie. I didn’t know what to expect. This would be my second interview with her. I met her and talked with her almost a year ago, but I nearly discarded that interview from the data set because she had been very short and reserved with her responses. But there was something there that was ultimately intriguing, so I took another look. And I wanted to see if her story could get deeper this time—at any rate, I wanted to confirm or recheck some of the stories and attitudes she had expressed before. At five past the hour, I should not have been worried, but I was. What if she didn’t show up? There was no pressing reason for her to come—she may only have been doing this out of curiosity or for the cup of coffee she could get

elsewhere. Maybe she changed her mind. But Noxie showed up at seven past the hour, all smiles and hugs. Noxie and I could be old friends for a minute. She asked about my family and filled me in on some of her life in the past twelve months.

The Story Begins: In the Midst of Struggle, Persistence

Noxie and I drank our coffee and moved our conversation away from small talk and into Noxie's experiences. "Tell me the story of your education" I asked her. The first thing she told me is how "I did struggle to get my education... But I didn't get that much, I only, goes from grade R up to grade 10." Still, she completed her adult education certificate, which she almost gave up on according to last year's interview.

Born in 1976, during some of the most turbulent moments of the Apartheid era, Noxie started school at age 10—approximately four or five years older than most students beginning school she says. She grew up with her grandparents in a rural farm area. Because both her grandparents' attitudes about education and the distance to school, she told me, she was not able to start grade R (reception, pre-grade 1) until the age of 9 or 10. "At the age of 9 years, I was strong enough to go and, come, back again," she said, talking of the huge distance she had to walk with no transportation options available. She then referenced the attitudes towards school she grew up with—for one, her "granny there, doesn't care if you go to school or not, because she doesn't know anything about school" and "my grandpa says 'whoo! this is a waste of time... the children must come and look after their cattle.'" Noxie herself, did not develop an appreciation of school until she was in grade 5. She said, "I didn't understand what I want, I didn't understand what I'm doing... I only realize that when the time I left the school, I see myself, was so stupid." She was so harsh on herself, I thought. It seemed that she was holding herself

personally responsible. In my mind, I wanted to say, but what about the challenge of going to school? Of walking for miles, of using poor resources, of speaking a language you barely understood?

Maybe, Noxie thought, “if I was started at the normal age, six years, I was going to get my matric,” or secondary school graduation requirement. Still, she didn’t remember her school days with bitterness. She remembered being “very happy to go to school,” in her younger days, but facing social pressures prevented her from staying in school after she had a baby in high school. Some of her friends gossiped about her, but her teachers advised her to stay in school and learn.

In recent years, again, Noxie identified teachers and mentors in her village who encouraged her to keep learning and to go back to school and complete her vocational certificates. She is looking for the right job now, where she can “put together” all of her experiences and certifications, but there was still a challenge, maybe even a stigma it sounded to me, about not finishing the matric.

Going Further

Last year, I would have said the phrase “it’s too late for me” characterized Noxie’s story of education. This year, Noxie reported completing three educational certificates since last year’s interview, including her adult education certificate, a CPR certification, and a waste management certification. She had a new job and was applying for other, better jobs. Will she go further? No, even “trying, trying” she “can’t go further” because of the high cost of education. Still, she did complete several vocational certifications—was this not “further?” Does she see this as a lateral move, not “higher” or more prestigious?

Noxie was expressing a lot of hope to me. This is really different than what I heard last year. Before she was telling me, “I can’t tell anything about success at school, because I didn’t make it.” Now she’s looking to “make it.” Her whole demeanor has changed. I was so glad I got to talk to her again and hear this additional part of her story.

Linguistic Navigations

I wanted to ask Noxie more about her language use in school. “How did language learning impact your story?” I asked, wondering how she would think about the languages that seemed to represent different powers and social groups in her life. Apparently, learning three languages was “not too much” according to Noxie. Compared to my monolingual schooling, that was quite a lot indeed. But there are 11 official languages in South Africa, and perhaps three is really not that many of them. Compare that to the hundreds of languages in Africa, and maybe three is a small number. But perhaps she meant that she didn’t learn them all well. She didn’t have enough of her mother tongue, isiXhosa to master her native literacy or enough of the other two, English and Afrikaans, to properly master those either. By secondary school, her studies were mainly conducted in only two: isiXhosa and English.

Her studies in subject areas were divided by languages— “we have to learn a lot in isiXhosa, but in English we learn mathematics, and accounting, and biology, and history. But in isiXhosa, we learn our language and grammar, and then we have to know how click in to those things and match our languages and our cultures.” Matching languages and cultures—certainly an idea I’ve read about and understood based on last year’s interviews. It was interesting to me that she is very self-aware of the connection.

Does the separation of the subjects (math and science) carry out into other spaces of life and cultural separations as well?

Noxie explained that the places she and her peers used isiXhosa was “a lot at our homes and in our villages... in our churches... But if you go to apply at a job, for the interview you have to use English, it’s not isiXhosa. If I’m going to look at a job, I have to prepare myself because I’m going to speak English, even if the company is for a Black person.” Her statement was weighted with assumption and cultural implications. So much to analyze. Firstly, she identified a specific language separation between home and business worlds—language, or rather, fluency in the English language is a gatekeeper to employment. And this wasn’t divided completely by race—even if the company is “for a Black person” she needs English. The divide seemed to be based on language and across spaces and cultures. Noxie had to prepare herself to enter a non-native language world. Noxie continued to encounter the linguistic dissonance between her needs and what she described as the imperatives for meeting those needs. The socialization process of negotiation the language and identity she believed she required was ongoing and anything but a smooth transition.

Accessing Connections

English, Noxie said, “is a communication language for us.” What do you mean by that? I asked. Essentially, it means you can communicate across nationalities. It’s a global language to bridge what would normally be a linguistic impasse.

To illustrate, Noxie talked about going to a clinic. “Sometimes I have to speak English,” she said. It’s not required in order to receive medical attention, but “sometimes we meet a White person or you meet a Ghana lady, or you meet a Nigerian lady, and you

have to speak English.” They didn’t all know isiXhosa, but they all knew English. “But,” she qualified, “sometimes we get a Xhosa lady there and we can speak in Xhosa,” she said with a tone of something like relief at the prospect of communicating personal information in the language she can best express herself in. Still, she says, she won’t just “go to a Xhosa doctor because I’m Xhosa... I choose the good doctor” even if it means “speaking English.” Here Noxie continued to describe her basic needs, including medical care, education, and financial security as being tied to her participation in dominant cultures.

Even in government offices where people receive their identification, certifications, and passports, “we meet people who have to speak English.” Even across villages too, it’s common to need English because it’s not a guarantee that everyone in all the villages will speak isiXhosa. Sometimes there are people who are not from South Africa living in the villages, and sometimes, Noxie explained, there are White people. Well, maybe it’s not only race, but race is definitely connected to languages spoken.

“You have to speak English. Even if it’s a person like me.”

Even if. A person like me. She was expressing a language dominance that was not a part of her, but was a matter of fact in her life. A “person like her” didn’t automatically know English—so they had to make up for that in order to function in an interconnected society. “It’s a must.” Noxie, and other members of her community, must learn to articulate their needs and desires in the English language, because often the source of their needs and desires, such as medical care or state documentation, could only be accessed through English-language communication channels.

“Although,” Noxie noted with humor, “if I don’t want to speak” with people selling something on the phone, I “can speak isiXhosa. They they drop the phone.” As she told her counter narrative of privilege using humor, she still claimed the right and the power to refuse to speak English.

Underlying understandings of cultural socializations rose to the surface when Noxie talked about social stratification based on the English language within and without her isiXhosa-speaking peer groups. The more fluently you speak English, the more you are perceived as well-educated, and thus intelligent. I guess this makes sense since the language is specifically associated with school, and the value of attributing success to one’s own efforts was learned there. Thus, if you are smart, you succeed in school, and in this case, that necessarily means succeeding in English language fluency.

Even though “English is not our language,” she said, “we speak because we want somebody to hear what we’re saying... and we speak because we want people to see we are educated... If someone can speak English fluently, they say, ‘you are very educated.’” What Noxie described was an ongoing process of self-awareness and self-actualization in the context of dominant linguistic, cultural, and social power structures that put her, as a Black woman, in a less empowered position than men or White people would experience. Noxie’s words also spoke to her socialization when she identified and ranked members of her own community on their level of ability to participant in the socially dominant language and culture.

Cultural Comparisons

Though she recognizes it, Noxie expressed reservations about the social associations of English language speaking. “It’s tough,” she explained, telling a story about speaking with a friend. This friend said “I don’t like people if they speak English like this.” That is, her friend was not impressed by people who could not speak English with a higher degree of fluency. In the social context Noxie referenced, lesser degrees of fluency were associated with less prestigious educational achievements, and thus, either tacitly or directly, associated with a lower intelligence. But Noxie contradicted her friend, saying, “we are not English ladies, we can’t compare ourselves with English people, because it’s not our language, our language is Xhosa, and we are very good in Xhosa.” At once, she disagreed with comparing intelligence based on one measure and also recognized the value of speaking and identifying with Xhosa people and language. She both un-associated intelligence and English language fluency and tacitly suggested that one can be intelligent in one’s own language. But still, even if she says “we have to accept” she identifies that it was “speaking broken language—like me.” Even if less fluency does not mean less intelligence, it is still “broken”; she still sees the language as needing fixing. Noxie showed a hint of self-compassion but also hint of self-criticism.

National Struggles

But Noxie mentioned another language as well, and I didn’t want to forget to ask about that one. “What about Afrikaans?” I asked. Noxie’s body changed. She crossed her arms and leaned her body away slightly. She lowered her voice to barely above a whisper. “A long time ago,” she said, “Afrikaans was very important to people.”

Noxie seemed like she was about to tell a fairytale that began with a curse from an evil witch, I thought. I wasn't even just noticing what she said; it was a total shift in her body—was it fear? What words lay unexpressed there?

“There was a people here...called Afrikaners. They speak Afrikaans—it was Apartheid time. Yes. It was very, very, very good for those people. In that time of Apartheid, they used to speak Afrikaans,” but “in 1976 they said ‘stop Afrikaans.’” Noxie appears to reference the Soweto student uprisings, where students rebelled against Bantu education policies which included language policies that were punitive to Black students.

“It’s a very difficult language, it’s not easy.” Noxie compared the language to German for me, trying to help me to understand the difficulty of the language. I nodded. Noxie offered a simplified overview of the history of the era, summarizing, “in those days, Afrikaans was very popular in South Africa, and after that the people they said, ‘no, the Afrikaans is very difficult to learn. Because the people want to learn.’” The people, she explained, wanted to learn English instead. But, she said, “I was very young. I’m not sure, so everybody preferred to learn in English.”

Why? I asked. “Because those Apartheid people, they force people to do things... then the other people, they don’t like to be forced to do things. They said, ‘sorry Afrikaans, sorry Afrikaner people.’ So we preferred to learn English. The English—there is no problem with the English. Everyone is happy to learn English.”

Language Values: When the Struggle to Learn Pays Off

I couldn’t help but wonder why she was emphasizing English—was it for my sake? The English language had obviously been a central dynamic of this interview and this study. But this perspective of the English language as a non-native tongue. As a

preferred second language. As a challenge. I wanted to make sure I get her authentic perspective straight.

Noxie continued, shifting to the present day, “even my kids now are studying this. My little baby is very happy to learn English. Each and every day, when we go to sleep, asking me ‘can you read a story?’ So now I have to tell a story. About myself, about my family.” These experiences with her children continued to shape her perceptions of English. “So I think English—I think it’s a good language to learn... because with English, you can go anywhere. You can speak with, you can communicate with everybody.” She told me stories of how English has helped her communicate with all kinds of people groups in the village, from White people, to Somalian people, to Nigerian people, Zimbabweans, Malawians, and many different tribes. There was one person she remembered who was from Malawi living in her village who did not speak English—or Xhosa. “We did struggle to talk with her. I was so worried about her, but she learned quickly.”

“English: with everybody, every day,” she said. But Noxie clarified her statement, qualifying her order and preference of languages. She said she would, “Try isiXhosa, but if that doesn’t work, it’s English.” Even so, that didn’t translate to the personal experience of the language. “When I’m speaking Xhosa,” she said, “I’m comfortable.” Noxie sighed and leaned back in her chair, her body language showing a physical difference. “I feel free; I can speak on my dream—oh I have a dream so good!” This was not only comfort; this was where her abstract thought could be free. This language was where she could self-actualize.

“If I’m speaking English,” she continued though, “I have distance myself. I have to think—what can I say? I’m not that comfortable in English. But I can speak, I can make someone hear what I’m saying.” English took effort, and it took persistence. It took a lot of effort and not giving up to make it work—to create a professional and personal self in a language world that was not her own.

There were other languages Noxie can speak and understand. Between family and friends across the nation and similarities in the African languages of South Africa, she could understand and get by in many of them. But isiXhosa and then English, she says, are her primary languages.

Deeper Connections

I shifted the conversation a little, asking Noxie if she saw a connection between language, culture, and beliefs. Noxie shifted into a reflection on her culture, and what characterized it according to her. “I believe in our culture,” she said, “to begin with... The woman must be married... have a husband and family to look after,” Noxie continued. “And my belief is this... after death there is ancestors. We believe in us.”

“We believe in us” – I hung on to this phrase for a moment. It’s true, ancestor worship is not about something outside yourself, but a belief in family. The endurance of family and the enduring relevance of the personal spirit. But ancestor worship in Noxie’s culture required the slaughtering of cows and goats in order, as she stated, “to praise the ancestors,” and here Noxie remembered a clash of cultural values. She remembered a time when a Black child and a White child were playing together. “I invite you,” the Black child said, “at home we are going to have a celebration!” His father is going to

slaughter a goat for him. But the White child was shocked— “no! it’s not legal, it’s illegal!”

The Black boy tried to explain. “No, no, it’s our culture. We use that... it’s not only me.” But the White boy went home and told his father “there is something happening at, next door. They are killing the goats, they abusing the animals, it’s not good.” And the father called the SPCA! Noxie laughed. “I said wow! Because they don’t understand. The other people, they don’t want to understand our culture.”

Noxie told me about learning her cultural beliefs and practices as a child, and that a child doesn’t ask “why” about practices, and she was not sure of the reasoning behind certain beliefs such as sitting down during a lightning storm. You simply respected what you had been taught by your elders and did it.

But then, Noxie opened up about some personal dissonance she felt with her cultural belief system. Even as a young child, Noxie said, “I was a naughty girl because, I was always asking, ‘why granny?’” And now, she said with a small laugh, “me, I don’t believe in many things.” She explained the personal disconnection more. “Men can speak.” She remembered her father. “And we have to respect that, we sit there and listen. He believes that he can get a job, he believes that those ancestors can look after us, but me, I don’t believe it.” Noxie stopped talking to have her coffee.

Throughout her reflections on the various positions she had in her stories, and also through her retrospective reflections on her experiences, Noxie expresses elements of the ongoing social construction of her ideological system of beliefs. She is able to recognize, in the story of the two young boys, that her culture is not recognized, accepted, or found meaningful by White people. She tacitly identifies the inequitable cultural power

systems. In her reflections on her position as a woman, and previously as a child, in this culture, Noxie notes how she does not feel empowered to either act in important ceremonies or ask understand the rationales behind the traditions. All of these positionality contribute to what Noxie identifies as disillusioning process. She questions the value of her culture and her position in her culture because of the imbalanced power structures she identifies.

Misconceptions and Re-conceptions

Noxie went on to explain some of how her beliefs developed in school. While learning a new language, she remembered the misconceptions she held, saying, “I’m laughing—I was starting to learn English, yeah, and I start to think, whoo! ‘I’m learning English; I’m going to be a White person now!’ And then I go back home, my first words at home, it was... the window, window! I was always singing window, window, window, window, window, window, I’m a White person. Window, window, window!” She laughed at her childish fantasy. “So that was a stupid and childish thing.”

As I gazed into the window Noxie pained into her reality, I felt that it wasn’t too hard to see the connection she alluded to. If language is where people form beliefs, social networks, power structures, then it follows that learning a new language could mean becoming a new iteration of oneself—new beliefs, new words, new social connections. There was a latent truth hidden in Noxie’s story. Language is a powerful conveyor of social identity (Gee, 2013; Rose, 2005). But Noxie’s reflections about language and race did make her more aware of her own identity, and she went on to further describe her affiliations. “I did realize,” she explained, “that no, it’s not about turning myself to another tribe. I am a Xhosa.”

Noxie stated her identity claim and went on to explain the relationship of new languages to her identity. “Learning in English [is] to learn more things. I can speak in Xhosa and then tell isiXhosa to English. I can interpret. I can think about myself,” Noxie says, and what “I’m going to believe in.” Learning new things gave her access to new and more beliefs—and choice therein.

But there was still a part of Noxie that imagined what it would be like to be an English speaking person. “I was admiring them. ‘Oh these people—they are funny, these people drinking those wine glasses.’ I go back home,” she continued, “and then I put water in my glass, and then I pretend like I’m speaking English. I’m a White person, when somebody asks me my name, my name is Maureen.” Noxie said how her brother joined her. “‘Here’s your glass!’ Then we have to speak English. Happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy, happy. We pretend like we speaking English.”

Negotiating Identity

I didn’t know what to make of this when I heard it so I didn’t interrupt Noxie. With her stories, though, Noxie demonstrated an awareness of the social identity associated with the English language and some of the values she perceived as part of it—relaxation, happiness, being waited upon. And of course, she recognized the racial hierarchies associated with the English language. To pretend to speak English and drink wine was to be a White person.

And then Noxie acknowledged the difference and separation of the English language culture from hers. “I think, there is a difference. Once you saw the other people they are doing their own things. When you grow, you know, ‘this is not my culture.’” While she separated the two at first, she went on to say, “I have to learn more about my

culture, but I can read and know their culture, but I can't practice their culture." She explained the difference between being an English-speaking insider and an outside-acquirer of the English language. There were cultural and practical differences that she perceives as enduring. She both understood her own emic and etic perspectives and showed a certain amount of awareness of mine as well as she explained her positionality to me.

But that did not mean cultures don't ever mix. "Now," Noxie said, of the White, English cultural influence on her own Xhosa cultural traditions, "we are having birthday parties... cake, drinks, party, party, party! Then I think, now we are mixing our culture with White people's culture," since there was so much sharing of language and learning. But Noxie saw this as a one-way sharing. "I can't see White people slaughtering the goat. I never saw that."

Revisiting the reflection on slaughtering animals, Noxie explained the mingling of religious beliefs. Many people now believe "we have one cow was slaughtered, Jesus Christ." From birthday parties to religion, many people mixed White, Christian, and traditional Xhosa beliefs together. And now they have formed a blended belief system, and a multicultural tradition.

Shaun

When I sat down with Shaun, our conversation began with small talk. He tells me a little about business at the local hangout where he tends the bar. Shaun and I each share some details about our lives as he and I reacquaint with each other. I talked to Shaun last year. He told me the story of his life and languages growing up. He said he "was born, bred, and raised, right here," in this village. He spent much of his childhood in Cape

Town, however, due to his family's employment opportunities. While people in this village speak isiXhosa primarily as a mother tongue, for Shaun in Cape Town, "there was only English and Afrikaans—there was no isiXhosa. Moving there from [our village] was a bit tricky. It was a bit of a mission."

Starting from Struggle

Shaun continued to explain the challenges of schooling outside of his mother tongue and how his perceptions of the dominant language he experienced were shaped. "The language switch was hard, big time. The teachers told us, 'Afrikaans is the language. This is what we are teaching you. Forget about your language—put it out of your mind. Forget about anything else.' That's how they put it."

Not only did Shaun face systemic educational challenges, he also faced violent interpersonal challenges as well. He explained, "There was also a lot of fighting—people shooting each other in the streets. Some right there in school. The school I attended was good, but the community was something else. Some guys would come with guns in school. Make a mistake, they'll blow your brains out."

Persisting and (Re)Connecting

"But I survived Cape Town," Shaun said. "I survived bullies, being tazed, being run over by a car. I'm right here now." After coming back, Shaun explained how he reoriented himself with both his mother tongue and his future plans. "I worked for what I've got—that's why I have pride. In Cape Town, I started in the lower grades and went through grade 12, but then I came back to the Eastern Cape. I needed to learn isiXhosa, so I repeated grade 12 here to learn isiXhosa. After grade 12, I started going to school for graphic design, and I made my own label. I came back to [our village] instead of staying

in Cape Town for a few reasons. I came back to the Eastern Cape to pay it forward. I came back to pay it forward; I just wanted to make something different in my community. I also wanted to learn my language, which now I know I can write and read. Can write it and read it and like speak it fluently. It's great! I don't want to be one of the people that decided when I go to another country, and be like, my language *was* isiXhosa, I just don't remember how to speak it. I don't want to be one of those people."

Shaun began to grow philosophical about his languages. He carefully crafted the idea of how this space—his own language space—defined his identity. But he also had specific dreams and goals regarding other spaces and other languages—and he saw English as a something of a gateway to the wider world. Using the English language, he saw himself communicating, traveling, and finding validation internationally where language will serve as the medium of both identity (Xhosa) and success (English and language of the country).

Going Further

Shaun was hopeful about his future, but put a great deal of what he said in the context of his life experiences. "I wouldn't say I've made it, yet, but I'm on the right track. There's a huge difference from where I came from, to where I am right now, to where I am going." Where was he going? Shaun imagined not only artistic and business renown, but connected his legacy with a future family. When he described his dreams for his potential future children, his ideas and beliefs about language and place was placed even further in relief. He imagined:

I'll come back and bring my kids and show them that this is where I came from.
[This place, my village], this is me. If you accept this place where I came from

then you accept who I am. But if you don't accept the place that means you are accepting another person, not me. I'll never expect my kids to have the mentality that since their dad was treated badly they should hate people who speak Afrikaans. If they want to learn Afrikaans for a reason, like to get a job, they can learn it. As far as education, you have to teach your kid the most important language, which is English—it's sort of the language which brings the whole world together, you know? But make sure they know their own language. The best thing any parent would do, in my opinion, is to teach your kid the most important languages, but make sure your kid doesn't forget his or her roots. Any language where she comes from, or where he comes from."

Shaun told his story with a great deal of intention and reflection. He expressed how he has created a message through his story which he shares with his music. As Shaun and I prepared to move into this year's interview, I wondered how similar or dissimilar his story would be. As he covered some similar topics regarding the story of his education, he did indeed share much of the same story, even down to his assertion that he learned English by watching cartoons on television.

Language Values

Some of the nuances of Shaun's story changed, however. For example, he shared more about the multilingualism he encountered, even using metaphor to get his point across. "In Cape Town, there was a huge explosion of different people from different backgrounds with different cultures. And a lot of multi-languages, especially in my school. They were Afrikaans. Afrikaans itself is different, especially in Cape Town," depending on skin color, location, and vocation. "The Afrikaners speak with people that

are staying outside Cape Town and then the people that are staying in the wine fields are men, they speak this proper Afrikaans. And then Cape Coloreds would speak a lot of slang, still Afrikaans, but it's way different. And then the teachers and other people that are in school, they speak a different Afrikaans."

Indeed, Shaun can speak some of many of the languages that make up South Africa's linguistic worlds, such as Sotho, Tswana, and Zulu in addition to isiXhosa, English, and Afrikaans. He learned these through his experiences both in Cape Town and in his wider travels. He explained, "Then I picked up and then the more I traveled, the more I got to be able to speak the languages with the people from the right culture. And then I was able to know yeah, I can really speak the language. Yeah, I can even get the dialect, when I'm speaking it." But his first language never stopped shaping his identity: "I'm a Xhosa by nature." He had to make it a priority to come back and learn "About Xhosa and culture, tradition and how to read and write in my language."

Shaun spoke a bit more about the differing dynamics between isiXhosa and English specifically. "When you speak Xhosa," he said, "you, you fluent and you feel free. But when we speaking English at the same time, you holding back." Shaun echoed the sentiments of other participants in his differing feelings surrounding his personal comfort levels with his languages. He described his worry, saying "like, what if this word is not speaking like that? No, what if I don't have the dialect or the accent of English?" But then Shaun also described his thought process is overcoming his self-doubt. He showed an awareness of the struggle faced by himself and others, but also a determination to work through it. "You don't need it, just be yourself, just speak the language. If you don't understand, you speak your first language. It's not your mother

tongue. You speak the language that means you trying. You learning.” At once, Shaun is demonstrating his socialization into the dominant belief systems surrounding his languages, but also creating a space of empowerment for himself.

Seeing and Making Connections

For Shaun, identity, place, culture, and language were all clearly connected. “Where I am is who I am,” he said, and to speak the language of a place is to be a part of that culture. Making this connection on a personal level is how people reach across boundaries and create relationship, he explains; “even if it’s just one word in my language, every culture, I think value any person that can be able to understand or say one word of their language...[it’s] important.”

Shaun discussed many of the same social parallels with language groups that he explained before. This year, though, his general discussion regarding multiple language use and internationality had an even more positive overtone. He mentioned what could a possible reason for this shift: he had formed a deep personal relationship with a woman from another country, and English was the language that they primarily spoke together—“then it’s English 24/7.” Furthermore, Shaun was growing what he intended to be a successful international music business, so explained, “most of the time, it’s always in English on my side, because my marketing is in different counties and different languages and then I understand as much as I can be able to sell my music.”

Self-knowledge, or more specifically, cultural self-knowledge remained important for Shaun. He reflected on how he came back to his home town to (re)connect with his cultural and linguistic roots. He explained further, saying, “then knowing your background, your history, your culture, your tradition and norms, makes you a better

person.” At this point, while Shaun was describing his beliefs, he countered attempts at dominant cultural socializations by saying it was affiliation with one’s own culture that “brings the greatest thing inside of the person.” He continued, saying, “so knowing where you come from can help in a way that you appreciate your values. That’s a culture itself, it brings the inner and the greatest of the people and the person. Where I’m from, my culture really made the person I am this day.”

Shaun’s definitions of success included education, money, and financial comfort, but over all this, he emphasized the human connection.

When person come to education, ... There’s a piece of paper you get at the end, your diploma, your degree. You can have all of that. You can be a businessman, very successful with a lot of cars and everything, and your house... You can all have whoever you want to be successful, it’s fine, but without a family, what is success without a family? You just need to have enough to fulfill the dreams of the family. Your dreams, your wife, your husband, your children all together. For me that’s how I describe it.

When I asked Shaun what else I needed to know about South Africa, language, and education, what he told both summed up what he had said and shed new light on the cultural and transcultural paradigm.

Why the Connections are Needed

As he wrapped up his narrative, Shaun took a strong position on the role of culture. He stated, “here in South Africa, things eventually come to culture or how it works.” Not leaving his statement in brief, he connected it to his own amaXhosa heritage in a personal way while also identifying cross-cultural forces at work.

Xhosas, we got ancestors. And then there is God at the same time. Son of Jesus, they would say. You have people, Xhosas that are Christian, they go to church every Sunday, they pray to God every day, but when it comes time for them to go and do their culture traditional norms, they put the church thing, the uniform for the church and the Bible on the side, and then they go to the *kraal* to go and speak in Xhosa their ancestors. If you value that belief in any Xhosa culture, but these people, they believe in ancestors. And you appreciate it, and when they have to go to, go and pray to God, they go and pray to God, but they never value God more than the ancestors. They never value the ancestors more than God. They're all the same. And some don't believe in ancestors, they believe in just respecting their cultural belief."

Summary of Individual Stories

After collecting, pouring through, puzzling over, and reflecting upon these stories, what can be learned about the messages the participants were sharing both tacitly and explicitly? Achieving secondary and postsecondary credentials are inevitably a struggle, and learning a new language in particular was challenging. But the educational struggle was worth it, for an assortment of reasons, some personal and some relating to broader culture. Learning a new language was worth it, despite the invariable personal identity negotiations. Why? The participants believed languages would create connections towards further education, employment, and relationships with people across cultures and nations. They saw that education and work would enable them to provide stable and better lives for themselves and their families. There are many challenges and many

reasons to give up, and a person on their journey will inevitably get knocked down. But even if someone is down—even if they’re down for a while—persistence is possible.

Narrative Understandings and Insights

Larger social and cultural narratives were represented across the individual narratives. Clandinin (2013) called attention to the “larger social, cultural, institutional, familial, and linguistic narratives” that are embedded in the stories represented in narrative research (p. 207). With this in mind, I call attention to some of the educational, social, spatial, and temporal narratives embedded in the stories above.

Struggles and Motivations to Keep On

I drew connections between one of the central issues of educational struggles and the theory guiding this research. Sociality, and in particular social implications and norms for language shape how people perceive and interact in educative environments (New London Group, 1996). At the very beginning of her narrative, Noxie stated, “I did struggle to get my education.” She recounted physical, geographic, structural, and social obstacles she had to overcome. Even still, she believed that “, no matter what, you have to go to school.”

This struggle took various forms for the different participants, but at the core was a struggle to learn and to learn in a privileged language that is not the home language. Shaun specifically storied the culture clash behind the linguistic struggle.

The people from my school was unfairly treated by Afrikaans speakers... When Afrikaans was speaking and then they treat us all bad, then now you hear someone speak the language, you just become very angry. That someone hasn’t done nothing yet... to learn Afrikaans, because I’m Xhosa, Afrikaans kicked in a

bit later because mentally, there's a mentality in any Xhosa, Zulu, Tswana guy in Africa, if someone speaking in Afrikaans, immediately stop, look and listen.

Conversely, Shaun also cited a challenge in re-integrating into his home language space after being in a multilingual environment for much of his schooling. In this following statement, he also reaffirmed the natural and inherent connection he perceived between language and ethnic identity.

It was a bit challenging for me. I wouldn't say it was difficult but it was a bit challenging. Because I wasn't able to answer or write as much as any other Xhosa-speaking student who grew up in a school by he's being taught or she's being taught in Xhosa how to read and write. It was a bit challenging. But I managed to, to get into it, 'cause I'm a Xhosa by nature. I definitely, I got into it, but I, if I would say if I had a chance of starting and learning, writing, in Xhosa at the young age, like another kid that's started in Xhosa school, I would definitely have been able to excel it

Throughout the serious challenges, what did people say that kept them motivated to persevere? Each person's story specifically expressed a belief that education and all the language and social negotiations it requires is worth it. Kwezi saw her end goal as being a solid provider for the future of her child. She explained, "my goal, it's, yeah, it's just want to yeah, I want to be richer at the end. Yeah, so it's just like to be with my family all the time."

This particular theme relating to struggle connected to parallel familial narratives. In conversation during my participant-observations in the field, I learned from several people that the family structures described by all the participants is not uncommon. While

Lisolethu lives with his sister, Kwezi was raised primarily by her aunt, and Shaun and Noxie reported primarily living with their grandparents when they were younger. Each story was unique in exact circumstances—whether death, movement for work, or something else—but relying on and considering extended relatives to be the core family often due to hardships was a commonly held familial narrative.

The story that Lisolethu shared on struggle, family narrative, and belief in the worth of continuing on is particularly poignant. He says:

There were times that I wanted to give up on things. I don't have money...

My mother passed away and I thought that, that was the end of the life. I tried to commit suicide, to myself, where I, took all the tablet, eh, expired and new and all types of, of tablets to kill myself... I was also stabbed, but, nothing happened... soon I, came back to my senses... life is, full of ups and downs, but, I'm going there... It may have challenges, but education is the best to get there. I've had that vision of seeing myself that way: world's greatest business man.

Movement through Time and Space

Participants' stories reflected narratives of movement in terms of space and time. Lisolethu described how he imagined his educational trajectory has taken him and will continue to take him over time and to different, and better, places. He says:

My education has taken me, somewhere. from nothing, to something... and to tell you the real truth, I want my education to take me from the, lower level, to the higher level and not even to the higher, to the extreme level... or not to the extreme, to the exciting level.

For the most part, however, it was not a simple or straightforward trajectory. Even for Lisolethu, he later provided nuance to the idea of the straight trajectory. What the participants described as movement is what Makalela (2014) cites as not “crossing over” but “shuttling between communities that might be ideologically desirable” (p. 671). For example, Shaun in particular demonstrated the type of translanguaging Makalela posited. In his story, Shaun shared how being in an urban, truly multilingual environment and traveling around the country shaped how he saw himself move between social circles along with geographic ones. Because of the great similarities in many native South African languages and the environment where many of them are in use at the same time, meaning is made through the combined use of many languages at once; language divides are to a great extent overemphasized and not truly indicative of linguistic or cultural difference between many tribes. Shaun said:

You’re surrounded by different people from different cultures, different languages and different races. And then immediately kicks on the mind, like, okay I wanna understand that language... which is the main reason why I can be able to be fluent in speaking different languages. So, from understanding that, I took it out by traveling first only in nine provinces in South African and then being able to speak the Zulu, but then when I got um, Kwa Zulu Natal I was able to speak Zulu. They’re like, oh yeah! And then I felt so free and they were like, oh, you a Xhosa, your Zulu’s on point. And then I was like, then I got to Tswana side, I was able to speak and they’re also impressed.

Shaun and Lisolethu in particular discussed moving forward into a space without giving up the important cultural and identity aspects of the home space. Shaun directly

discussed this when he talked about how individuals must pass on certain languages to their children even as they move around. The mother tongue was identity and English and other languages connected to other cultures. Lisoletu spoke of this more indirectly as he discussed how when people from two cultures meet they both share part of themselves. He was able to learn about language and culture from others, but he also intentionally shared and taught his own language and culture with people who come into his world.

Noxie and Kwezi in particular, saw movement between language spaces as distinct, with each space and language attuned to particular purposes. Noxie described public places such as doctors' offices, government offices, and places of business as places where English predominates. Kwezi, similarly says that "it's not time to speak Xhosa at work," but discusses a somewhat smaller scale translanguaging element in her home, where she and her daughter mix isiXhosa with English. She explained, "I'm speaking less Xhosa at home. Mix all the time, I mix with English, so English is a good language...because I want her [to] get a better education than me."

Cultural Connections Through Language

Each participant engaged in a narrative of cross-cultural connection. This is one larger narrative that runs throughout each narrative in some way and intersects with many other sociocultural narratives. Connections with other cultures and people groups is described as both a way and a reason for moving through linguistic places. It is both a struggle and goal in and of itself. Noxie recounted how even the village she lived in was growing more diverse, and thus, she said, English is a way of reaching people near and far:

We have Nigerians now We've got lots of people there, different tribes So we have people from Zimbabwe, they speak Shona. We don't understand Shona, we just speak English with them the people from Malawi... So now, English, every day, English every day, English every day. You wake up, you go to the shop, you have to speak English, at our village, you wake up, you see someone... not responding... speak English [not] isiXhosa. A lady from Malawi... Doesn't understand isiXhosa. Doesn't understand English, only speak one language. We *did* struggle to talk with her."

For Kwezi and Lisoletu, connections between languages and cultures was directly related to their educational and professional goals. Kwezi saw English as a way to enter and gain a foothold in a stable job, and later an enjoyable career. Lisoletu too, talked about language and cross-cultural connections, saying, "English, why? Because, I want to associate with the different business men which are coming from different cultures, different continents, different countries."

Shaun and Noxie reflected on different stopping points they made on their journey to the awareness of culture they possess. Noxie recounts how as a child, she misinterpreted what the intersections of race, language, and culture actually meant. When she was a child, she thought:

I'm learning English, I'm going to be a White person now... [but later realized] it's not about turning myself to a, other tribe, I am a Xhosa. But it's about to learn more things, then it's about to, to, to learn different languages... I have to learn more [of] my culture, but I can read and know their culture, but I can't practice

their culture... [but] Then I think now we are mixing our culture, with... White people's culture.

Shaun reflected on how, "in South Africa, things eventually comes to culture or how it works... [and] where I'm from, my culture really made the person I am this day." He told a bit more of the story on how he worked through some of his views on ethnic divisiveness:

So as a Xhosa growing up in a ghetto, [you] didn't have much, but then when we go out, you meet different people from different cultures. But and then they are like, oh, I didn't have much but this person is being so nice to me even though I don't have anything. And then my mom always taught me on the other side, it's like, be nice with the person. Whether you don't know or know.

Intentional use of language played a big role in cultural connections for Shaun. He said in general, "if you just be able to say any word of that culture. That means like, you value their language." Culture and language were inextricable, and acceptance of one is key to entrance into the other. Ultimately, across each case, this goal of connecting across cultures, whether internationally, within the nation, or even across communities such as from the village to places of business, was believed to be a worthy goal.

Language Domains: Overlapping Social Constructions of Languages, Places, and Ideologies

I looked at some of the connections participants described using domain analysis (Spradley, 1979) in order to better understand the relationship of language to the overall arc of the narratives (Gibbs, 2014; 2015). Using spatial semantic relationship, which Spradley describes as "X is a part of Y" or "X is a place in Y." Using this formula, I

analyzed what the participants said using languages as X and looking for what Y might be. For example, one domain was “function.” For both languages, isiXhosa and English, I asked what the function of the language was according to the participants. I continued across different domains, looking for evidence as to what the cause, location, purpose, function, and mean-end was for isiXhosa and English.

Before I go into more detail on how several domains compared across themes, I note that while most of the participants discuss aspects of three languages—isiXhosa, English, and Afrikaans—the youngest participant, Lisoletu, did not mention Afrikaans at all. I did not prompt him, or anyone to address any particular language; every language discussed was originally brought up by the participant. Lisoletu’s lack of discussion on Afrikaans may be due in part to his age. This would be consistent with pilot data and confirmatory discussion with Leketi Makalela (personal communication) wherein only the participants who had some life experience under Apartheid brought up this language and the cultural associations of it. Those participants who did discuss Afrikaans associated the language strongly with the Afrikaner people group. Their comments paralleled Greenfield’s (2010) findings that Black students had strongly negative responses to Afrikaans. Even with that being said, all of the participants discussed isiXhosa and English as the primary two languages with which they operate in their daily lives. I will continue with more detailed analysis on these two languages in particular since these are the two languages the participants discussed in enough detail to truly analyze in this way. Please refer to the Figure below as an overview of major findings using domain analysis techniques.

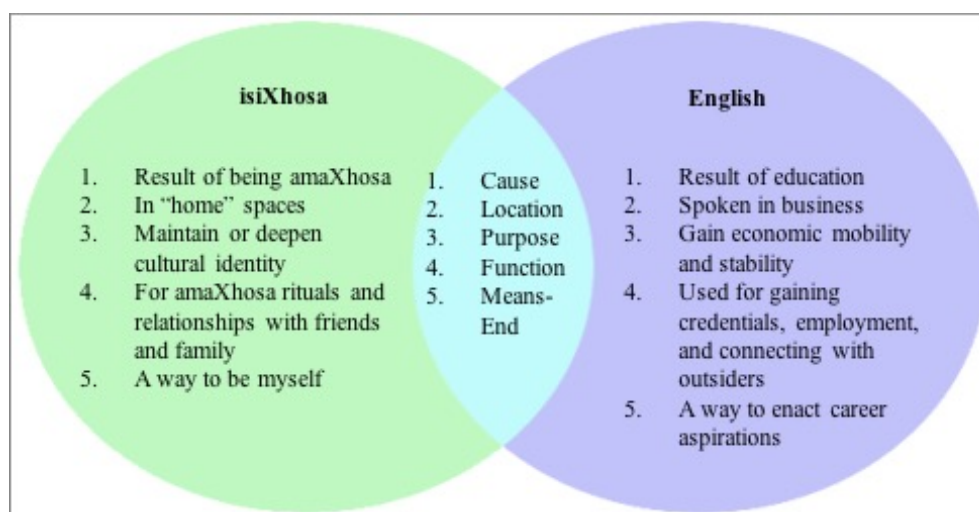


Figure. isiXhosa and English Language Domains

English and isiXhosa: Getting In and Getting Out of School

After getting an idea of how these connections fit together spatially, I more specifically examined the connections between language, education, aspirations, and identity. In particular, I analyzed how some of the other semantic relationships with isiXhosa and English led up to the spatial and ideological associations expressed above. Because the participants expressed that isiXhosa and English were languages associated with different places and different things, they either articulated or implied ways in which they needed to or actually reconciled their cultural identity with their educational and vocational aspirations and/or continued to struggle with the tensions that went along with switching languages and cultural discourse communities.

In chapter five, I focus more on the two languages isiXhosa and English since those are the two languages participants really focused on in their stories. This is not to diminish the impact or importance of other languages, but rather to delve into what the participants described as the languages that were most dynamic in their lives. In terms of how each language was discussed from the perspective of different domains (Spradley,

1979), both isiXhosa and English are each uniquely complex, but considered separately in specific ways. For instance, speaking isiXhosa is a result of being part of the cultural community and having an amaXhosa heritage. At home, with other Xhosa people, and in the village is where the language is used. Knowing or re-learning isiXhosa is a step in maintaining or deepening one's cultural identity. Reasons for speaking isiXhosa include the desire to remain in touch with the Xhosa cultural heritage and identity and communicating easily and comfortably with friends and family. The language, isiXhosa, is used for cultural rituals and connecting with amaXhosa people in the village. Speaking isiXhosa is a way to express identity and be oneself.

English on the other hand, is a result of succeeding in school. Places for speaking English include school, places of business including the workplace, and international settings. Learning English is a step in gaining economic mobility and stability. The desire to succeed in school, work, and the wider world beyond the village is a main reason for speaking English. English is used for obtaining degrees and jobs as well as connecting with people who are not native to the village or the amaXhosa cultural area. Speaking English is a way to enact career aspirations.

Chapter Summary

Throughout this chapter, I presented the findings of my in-depth interview research in the midst of participant observations in a rural South African amaXhosa village. I have presented a researcher's retelling of the accounts of Lisoletu, Kwezi, Noxie, and Shaun, who were all residents of the village. Each had a unique personal history with intriguing nuances, and in reality, each individual story offers more depth so that each could have been the sole basis for its own narrative inquiry. Still, in total, the

richness and complexity both within and between the individual narratives allows a more profound understanding of how social, educational, linguistic, and cultural narratives shape people's lives. The forces that shape peoples' experiences within and beyond their education are related to complex language and social structures, from the personal to the local to the national to the global levels. Each participant identifies very personal aspects of their struggle, but in their own ways, each also confronts the forces of colonial socialization and negotiating an identity, or persona, that is capable of standing up within the dominant social world while maintaining an authentic home cultural identity. In the following chapter, I will delve into further discussion of these findings and present some of the implications of this narrative research.

V. DISCUSSION

This chapter contextualizes the findings of this study within the contexts of postsecondary education and (re)frames the literature review presented in chapter two. The perspective highlighted for each person in the narratives are described below along with major overarching themes. Since this was a study based in rich narrative of a person's socially constructed perspective, each point informed the interpretation of the others. To review, my research questions were as follows:

1. How do participants narrate their various languages? What factors affect that narration?
2. How do participants' stories reflect overlapping social constructions of languages, places, and ideologies?
3. How do participants narrate their identities within their social contexts?
4. How do participants' stories reflect their beliefs about success in school and also about access to school?

Each story in its uniqueness is not meant to emulate another or even to cover the very same topics. Some of the themes each focus on, however, relate to the other narratives in specific ways. When the foci of each story and how they relate to each other is taken into dialog with my initial research questions, the potential answers to each question becomes more robust. Much of the information below is also presented and summarized in a table-matrix format in the appendices. Please refer to these appendices for a more visual format of some of the connections described below.

Language

Language was a key element of both the research questions and the narratives under conversation. Language really was the nexus for the struggle. The participants struggled at times to speak the language of education—in a theoretical sense, but also in a literal sense when the language of instruction was English and that posed a very real struggle to understand content delivery. Each participant expressed doubts about their English language ability while nearly simultaneously confirming their beliefs that it was crucial to living the life they want to live. They were compelled to continue learning and communicating. This concept of the preeminence of the English language for education and the inadequateness of native African languages echoed Prinsloo and Janks' (2002) work. While Prinsloo and Janks (2002) described the prevalence of this idea in the national imagination, they refute its validity.

Participants expressed that learning English was something they saw themselves stumbling with, and even failing in, over and over, yet they kept on trying. Languages are associated specifically with certain cultures. Home languages define people's groups and ethnic identities from group to group, whether isiXhosa, English, or Afrikaans. Each participant defined their home spaces and identities through isiXhosa. Similarly, they defined other ethnic groups such as the Afrikaners through their language, Afrikaans, as well. Even in the case of English, while they did not perceive it as being associated with one definable people group, it's a culture of business and professionalism. This is a tricky and potentially problematic perception of language, which I will return to later. I should note that their perceptions of English as a global, or internationally accepted, language could have been influenced by their numerous experiences with volunteers in the area, including groups such as the study abroad with which I was involved. Further research is

needed to clarify what types of influences shape perceptions of languages from community to community.

Greenfield's (2010) research provided insight into the complex ways that languages were associated with peoples and beliefs among South African college students. My study echoes Greenfield's idea that "language [is] operating as a powerful marker of cultural identity" (2010, p. 519) but also extends it to South Africans currently outside of higher education or outside of more privileged university settings of higher education. Students in Greenfield's study also believed in the pragmatic need to learn English in order to succeed in educational pursuits, but despite this stated belief, they experienced some internal dissonance over the relative value of English and mother-tongue languages. Students in Greenfield's (2010) who had gone relatively further, on to more prestigious forms of postsecondary education, than most of the participants in my study so far, articulated more personal connections and cultural assimilations to the English language and the accompanying cultural values. More research is needed to understand the relative assimilations between those more inside and those more outside the most privileged forms of higher education.

Place

Each participant's narrative was temporally and spatially bound; this was one of the foundational themes for my study both theoretically and methodologically (Clandinin, 2013; Soja, 1989). Scholars such as Bank (2011) and Deumart (2013) have made the connections between South Africans' senses of identity and their spaces and communities. However, my study makes specific connections to how cultural and linguistic norms are created and maintained by and within specific areas of space—and

indeed, it recognizes the active role space and place has in the tandem development of language, identity, culture, and ideology.

The spaces where different languages were spoken were often delineated distinctly. For example, the home and with friends were discussed as spaces for using isiXhosa while school and work were places of using English. However, where all the languages truly resided is in the individual. The individual is where the negotiations take place. They negotiated their identities in the contexts of the places they navigated, and they re-negotiated as their contexts changed; their identities were not stagnant. Each person crossed both spatial boundaries along with social ones, but the person is the site of the transaction and translanguaging (Makalela, 2014). The spatiality and temporality of the metaphor of “one more step” is more apropos when considering the physical as well as psychological spaces the participants are navigating. Carrying that “one step” metaphor, this idea captures and combines it with the concept of struggle. But further, it ties to the belief that success is achievable. The dreams are reachable—if one persists. Persist in education, in language, in work. Nevertheless—in spite of all obstacles and setbacks—persist.

Ideology

Through their stories, the participants expressed specific ideas that connected to their belief systems and ways of viewing their worlds. In regards to education, they communicated that education was vitally important to them in terms negotiating large epistemological questions such as “who I am” and/or “who I want to be.” They expressed that they have not yet reached a place where they feel they will stop striving towards their goals, whether personal, vocational, social, or some combination of these mentioned and

other under- or un-articulated goals. Though each participant defined success in many ways and personal ways, including socially and relationally, they all articulated clearly that their educational stories had not yet ended. They all expressed a belief that one must persist in developing fluency in English, certifications in education, and the next step in vocational goals. Each of these goals was connected to the other. One element relied on the other. The reward for all this struggle? Connecting with other people across language and culture groups is both personally and financially rewarding. Indeed, those two were not mutually exclusive.

Ideology connects to language, as in Greenfield's (2010) study, where students' beliefs about the relative value of their languages was rooted in a colonial ideology of the preeminence of European-based languages over native African ones. Participants in my study so expressed this, even in a differing social and educational context. This belief about how much value one's language holds connected also to identity. When language is so bound to identity, beliefs about language are similarly bound to beliefs about the self.

Wei (2016) conducted a study focused on beliefs surrounding English language learning among Chinese students in higher education. While in another global context, this study found that global politics and economics surrounding English language use and learning gave English communication a perceived privileged status. Wei (2016) found that it would be useful for students to navigate their languages in an ideological framework that values language diversity and gives speakers of both English and the mother-tongue a true sense of belonging.

Still, beliefs about reasons for English use and the relative values and purposes for English and Chinese were multifaceted in nature and complex. In my study, I saw similar

tensions with forming and norming beliefs systems where the value of linguistic diversity was in question. Did the speakers believe they belonged in the community of English language speakers? Did they believe their own identities and personal value matched the value they saw in English speaking communities? The answers to these questions are complex and continually unfolding, but in the constant answering and re-answering of the questions, the need for an empowering ideological framework can be seen.

Identity

Participants differed in how they addressed identity across the four narratives. While each self-projection looked differently, each participant talked about both who they were and who they wanted to be. In order to be the person each wanted to be, they expressed a need to achieve something meaningful in educational or vocation. Because their home identity did not naturally fit the sociolinguistic expectations they saw in school and the workplace, it was a struggle to achieve. While in a different national and educational context, this echoes literature that has found identity and identity negotiation to be a major factor for students adjusting to academia.

Tapp (2014) contributed how student success with literacy depends greatly on how students are able to merge their existing identities to one that is compatible with academic discourse. The process of academic discourse acculturation is a process of merging ideologies between the home discourse and the new academic discourse. Rose (2005) posits his own acculturation process in his book, *Lives on the Boundary*, which gives a clear picture of how the process of academic identity negotiation can be isolating. As a child, he feels alienated from other children, he doesn't feel he fits during high school, he feels and becomes disconnected from his family in several ways over the

course of time. He is forced to acknowledge and helps young students confront their own isolation, while giving a very clear picture of how an educational system can isolate students further.

Just as Rose reported how he felt, and how he saw other students in his career experience doubts about their fit in the academic world, so do the participants in this study allude to the struggle to believe in their own belonging. Even when the participants in my study expressed doubts about the journey, however, they also expressed that the journey was not over. It was not stagnant. Each person's identity was built based on life experiences so far, but each will continue to be redefined as each takes more step towards reaching his or her goals. This finding parallels the ideas in literature such as Tapp and Rose where students must merge and connect. Even at times when participants expressed that their home identity simply doesn't connect to professional, educational, or financial success, they expressed a counter-idea that a new identity could be forged or merged in order to accomplish that. It is difficult and there are setbacks for many reasons in becoming who a person wants to be or fully realizing who a person is in the society where he or she is located. But when individuals face setbacks, they will persevere. At various times, the participants expressed how, in their own ways, they wanted to be people who connect to different people groups across cultures; this relates strongly to the way they do or want to define themselves as people, workers, students, and members of society.

(E)mergent Identities: Locating and (Re)constructing Identities in Context

At the heart of the struggle participants expressed regarding their educations,

getting jobs, and persisting, there was the tension of making a space in a new language world and entering the language and culture that is not part of their mother tongue identities. All of the languages the participants brought up reflected, reinforced, intersected, and inspired parts and the whole of each person's identity. In their own ways, each participant revealed how they negotiated an identity that bridges the language spaces in the contexts of their social communities.

Defining and redefining identity is virtually inseparable from language use (Makalela, 2014). As Creese and Blackledge (2010) stated, "If languages are invented and languages and identities are socially constructed, we nevertheless need to account for the fact that at least some language users, at least some of the time, hold passionate beliefs about the importance and significance of a particular language to their sense of identity" (2010, p. 554). Participants in the study talked about their home identities, their emergent identities that they crafted for themselves, and how those intersected in meaningful ways.

With Lisoletu, for instance, he was an isiXhosa speaker from a small village dreaming to make it to the wider world. He saw himself as a future international businessman with connections across cultures through English. As he struggled to carve his way into a vocational and identity space using English, he taught and learned with speakers of other languages—he took pride in his language and intended to teach it to those with whom he comes into contact.

For Kwezi, similarly, she saw herself as a "real Xhosa girl" but at the same time a fluent speaker of English who was employed pursuing her goals of financial stability for her family. She negotiated linguistic identity for both herself and her child, who was

enrolled at a primarily English-speaking school. At home, they negotiated school and their relationship in both English and isiXhosa. Noxie shared similar ideas about her linguistic identity. She represented herself as a Xhosa girl who dreamed of crossing people/language/racial groups in pursuit of both discovering who she is and where she belongs as well as becoming an educated and employable person. For her, English was a sign of education and social status. She expressed how throughout her life, she (re)imagined and played with ethnic identity, and she imagined a world where she crossed ethno-lingual boundaries in both physical and symbolic ways.

Shaun expressed some of the most nuanced ideas of language and identity intersectionality. He defined who he is by the language and place into which he was born. In his life, he has been an isiXhosa speaker who was challenged in profound ways by members of other language and people groups. Still, he represented himself as an international artist and businessman and one who connects personally across cultures through many languages. He spoke both English and isiXhosa as well as several other languages, and code-switched constantly with his friends and associates. New technologies in particular offered more avenues for code-switching and connecting across groups.

Supporting (E)mergent Linguistic Identities for Educational Success

The literature thoroughly demonstrates that effective language negotiation is crucial for multilingual students' educational access and success. In a South African context, for instance, Makalela (2014) discussed how the privileging of English over the other home languages limited South African students. These “multilingual speakers become sidelined and alienated”; conversely, however, “there are far-reaching

implications for students' identity construction in multilingual classrooms" (p. 680). Each of the participants represented in this study discuss the often-difficult identity and language negotiations they must go through in order to persist in their studies.

In a western context, scholars see similar patterns. Through the lens of social discourse theory, scholars understand that students must be able to develop an identity that can reconcile their home discourses (that may or may not be aligned with the ideologies valued in academia) with academic discourse in order to be successful in college (Gee, 2013; Rose, 2005; Shanahan, Shanahan, & Misischa, 2011; Smagorinsky, 2001; Tapp, 2014). Shanahan, Shanahan, and Misischa (2011) found that personal identity development and community association were important for student success in a discipline. For a student to learn the literacies and means of communication in a particular academic field they had to go through a process of acculturation. Using a Vygotskian framework, Smagorinsky (2001) made the point that without any form of connection to one's personal life, meaningful communication and learning will be extremely difficult.

When the participants talked about the different places they experienced language and how they interacted differently, felt differently, and had different goals, they negotiated their identities via languages. They needed to enact a persona that was capable of existing in and navigating a world that is not the original home world. The participants expressed their own empowerment when they expressed intersections of language. For example, although Lisoletu remarked on his struggles in school and learning the English language, he was also able to combine his languages in student/teacher dynamics where his learning of English may have come secondary to his teaching of isiXhosa. He

expressed pride in this identity where he expresses who he is and what he is capable of in both languages. He is not simply a marginalized person, stagnant in that position. He made a move to take ownership of his languages and life when he creates intersections for teaching and learning both isiXhosa and English.

(Post)colonial Considerations

While the subjective reality the participants expressed is that English is the language of power and they need to learn English to enter this world, scholars must question the root of this paradigm. While not discounting the lived experiences of the participants, their belief in the power and necessity of English reflects postcolonial residue from colonial era inculcation in a way that permeates space and time in formerly colonized spaces. Makalela describes how language was used as an ideological tool to separate groups of Black people from one another and from opportunities in higher education (2005). Education in African languages in South Africa was purposefully under-resourced during Apartheid, and because resources for education in African languages are still not as copious as European-based languages, many Black parents choose to send their children to English-speaking schools in order to have access to the cultural and educational capital offered in those communities (Makalela, 2005).

But the curricular resources and opportunities in higher education for speakers of the African languages remain stunted (Makalela, 2005; Mutasa, 2014; Seabi et al., 2014; Seabolai, 2013). Thus, because of the linguistic hegemony in place, students who have not mastered English as a primary language (the majority of Black people in rural communities) are put at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to access and success in higher education and subsequent social mobility. The meta-narrative of the global priority

and preference of the English language is rooted in colonial ideologies and passed on from one generation to the next through rooted cultural norms (L. Makalela, personal communication). Meta-narratives and colonial beliefs passed on and reproduced through instated cultural norms.

In reference to language and education in South Africa, Makalela states “Language is inextricably linked to identity, ideology, and power” (2005, p. 163). Students who are indeed able to construct an identity that can switch and/or merge their home discourses are better at making meaning within the discourse norms of their educational fields (Shanahan et al., 2011; Tapp, 2014). Social literacy, including academic literacy, must connect to students’ life narratives in order for students to find meaning; without that connection, meaning may be difficult to come by (Rose, 2005; Smagorinsky, 2001). When students move to places of higher education, it can be a traumatizing event when the identity and cultural mismatch is so great; reasons for this mismatch range from lack of real language skills to under-resourced schools to the level of skills required during secondary schooling (L. Makalela, personal communication). When identifying many of the struggles they encountered during their schooling, the participants often referenced this great mismatch in secondary and postsecondary schooling, whether in terms of resources, skills, language expectations, or personal affective factors, such as persistence or motivation.

Theoretical Consideration for Breaking Down Colonial Perspectives through Narratives

Through narrative research, the participants' full stories are honored and their experiences are considered in light of their lives. This research helps to make visible the impact of linguistic policies on multilingual and under-resourced students. In terms of a methodological impact, the narrative approach works to break down privilege and honor the lived experiences by represented the nuance of their lives and retellings. Non-western stories have been so marginalized, I wanted to pay particular attention to representing the fullness of the lives, stories, and voices of those people participating in my research; a narrative methodology helps to achieve this goal. This goes back to my earlier point of the importance of honoring the wishes of the participants who wish to be described by their given names. In these ways, I am able to honor their journeys, their storied lives, and the words with which they used to express their opinions, beliefs, and experiences. Though I was not able to converse with them in their mother tongue, I wanted to honor their authentic words in every way I was able to do so.

Why It Matters: Chapter Summary

In summary, throughout this chapter I have presented several important discussions and implications for this research. These cover identity, language, space, and ideology as they relate to the nuances and understandings of each participant's stories. Further, this chapter has covered several implications for student identity (re)development, access and negotiations of success in educational realms, and (post)colonial considerations for a study of marginalized languages and peoples.

Finally, I want to cover several areas that narrative inquiry can impact. In other words, why this research matters practically as well as socially and theoretically (Clandinin, 2013). In terms of what difference this research makes to practice, this

narrative inquiry draws our attention to understanding in more profound ways how people's experiences—their successes and their failures—are shaped by complex forces.

This research makes visible how lives are shaped by educational forces, and as higher education scholars and practitioners, it is important for us to understand this in more profound ways. For example, when assessing students and what they bring with them to postsecondary or higher education, there is much to consider. When considering the attitudes, potentials, and values of a student, their storied experiences offer a wealth of depth that numerical assessments alone cannot hope to achieve.

The impact of colonialist linguistic policies on multilingual and under-resourced students are real and lived, and this research brings voice to that abstract idea, which is relevant for scholars and educators in every English speaking area of the world.

Colonialism is not a phenomenon unique to South Africa. Dominating and inequitable sociopolitical systems exist throughout the world, and often social injustices are reflected and reinforce through education and language policies and practices. This research draws our attention to further research questions and puzzles to be asked in contexts near and far. Further research and attention to the forces shaping both equities and inequities in education.

In terms of a methodological impact, the narrative approach works to break down privilege and honor the lived experiences by representing the nuance of individuals' lives and retellings. This could be a way to further investigate and gain understandings about many peoples' experiences with education. Non-western stories have been so marginalized, I wanted to pay particular attention to representing the fullness of the lives, stories, and voices of those people participating in my research. Through a narrative

approach, I was able to work to honor participants' journeys, their storied lives, and the words with which they used to express their opinions, beliefs, and experiences.

Implications for Future Research and Practice

Future research should continue to explore how students navigate language as a gatekeeper for higher education. In South Africa, there are many languages and geographic contexts. Due to my own research limitations, I was not able to engage participants on a research level in any language beyond English. However, narratives in participants first languages would be valuable research.

While this research purposively focused on participants who had varied educational experiences in one location, future research may look at groups of participants who are experiencing the same level of education at the same time, but who are from diverse backgrounds. For example, inquiry into the narratives and experiences of a group of students in one developmental education course who are from a variety of national and language backgrounds would also contribute to scholarly understandings of the perceptions and beliefs about learning and using privileged languages in academia. Furthermore, given the finding that space is major factor in considering language, identity, and ideology, inquiry into the experiences of people from different global locations would only provide richer insight into how these forces change or remain constant from place to place. Depending on the social situation, continued research into various contexts, including the United States, can bring to bear further insights into the lived experiences of linguistically diverse students (de Klein & Lawton, 2015).

Next, I also echo Makalela's call for "further studies on identity-building spaces in multilingual language contact zones" (2014, p. 668). Scholarly research into the

importance of student identity negotiations in higher education show that identity constructions are related to success in everything from college major selection, to students' sense of belonging, to motivation to persist. More research connecting these factors to language would also be beneficial. This applies to student populations around the globe, including in the United States.

Finally, I want to draw some direct implications for practice in developmental education within the United States. Insight and understanding of the how and why students' diverse languages affect their educational experiences is important for any instructor, and in particular, this is important for an instructor with any kind of social justice or strengths-based positionality (Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1974; de Kleine & Lawton, 2015; Hull & Rose, 1989). Often, students are placed into developmental literacy courses for reasons that have more to do with language acquisition and fluency than with literacy skills, strategic learning, or motivational or affective factors (Klein & Lawton, 2015). Thus, linguistically diverse students who do not speak English as a first language are often faced with the double-task of gaining fluency while also mastering the socially regulated discourses of the academy. Furthermore, and again echoing de Klein and Lawton (2015) the same principal may be applied to native speakers of less privileged varieties of English. While any language, including various dialects of English, follows its own rules and normative conventions, adjusting to the norms and conventions of the so-called "standard" variety of English poses a learning curve along with adjustments to norms and expectations required by academic discourse. This has several implications for pedagogy.

The first implication for pedagogy is that awareness on the part of scholars and

instructors who teach linguistically diverse students can impact how they approach and consider the students (de Klein & Lawton, 2015; Rose, 1989). While a score on a placement exam may have a definitive cut-score, the reasons behind the scoring and placement are varied, as they were with the participants in this study. Instructors should be aware of power dynamics, identity formations, and their own linguistically privileged positions when approaching the task of instructing or mentoring students. Second, instructors and those responsible for curriculum development should be aware of the actual learning needs of the students. Curriculum and daily lessons should provide opportunities for students to acculturate to academic discourse and “standard” English in a holistic and relevant way (New London Group, 1996). Furthermore, those responsible should make an effort to create lessons, assignments, and texts that are able to connect to students’ lived experiences to facilitate their academic development (Smagorinsky, 2001).

In conclusion, my study sits at an intersection of many theories and pedagogies. The narratives of Lisoletu, Kwezi, Noxie, and Shaun illuminate their lived experiences as linguistically diverse students. Language, in tandem with social context, place, and systems of belief must be considered when questioning the nature of students’ experiences. As narratives constructed in a social context, both the methodological and theoretical considerations are numerous, and worth further study.

APPENDIX SECTION

APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol

Interviewee:

Interviewer:

Date:

Start Time:

End Time:

Location:

Notes:

Interview Sections Utilized; Degree of Conformity to Protocol (Check if
Used/Applicable)

_____ **Pre-Interview**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol _____%

_____ **Topic Domain I:**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol _____%

_____ **Topic Domain II:**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol _____%

_____ **Topic Domain III:**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol _____%

_____ **Topic Domain IV:**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol _____%

_____ **Conclusions:**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol _____%

_____ **Follow Up/Thank You Email**

Degree of Conformity to Protocol _____%

_____ **Other Topics Discussed:**

_____ **Documents/Artifacts Collected:**

_____ **Post Interview Comments/Concerns/Irregularities:**

_____ **Length of Interview:**

Introductory Narrative:

My name is Kristie. I am a student at Texas State University and I am working with Dr. Assaf who leads the Texas State Study Abroad Program to Chintsa East.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study on language and education in Chintsa East. Our interview will take 30 minutes to an hour. Please let me know if you have any questions as we proceed through the interview. May I audio record this interview so I can take notes on it later?

During this time, we will focus on the story of how you got your education. We will focus on a few topics within that story like what languages you used and learned in school, what the places you went to school were/are like, and how you came to believe certain things as a result of your education.

Our conversation will mainly focus on these topics. I may occasionally need to ask you follow up questions and I will try to focus the interview so we finish on time.

We requested to interview you because you are a member of Chintsa East, are at least 18 years old, and have different levels of education (secondary and post secondary).

Are you ready to get started with; the interview? <Wait for response> This research study will investigate your beliefs about language used school. Our goal is to learn more about your perceptions of language use in education.

Introduction: (any general intro to ease into the interview; example.... Thank you so much for agreeing to this interview. It is very helpful to me and my research. I will be asking you some general questions about (...) that I think will lead to some helpful conversations between us, but first I would just like to ask some basic questions about yourself, okay?)

Demographic information: (Ask any demographic Qs)

Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

Where are you from?

Where did you go to school?

Primary Topic Domain: Story of Your Education

INTERVIEWER SCRIPT: The main thing I would like to talk about today is your experience getting your education. Though I may ask some questions to help me understand your story, I mainly want us to focus on the story of how you got your education.

I have some paper here for both of us to use. If you ever want to use the paper to draw or help talk about your story, please feel free.

Possible Follow Up Questions:

Covert Categories: language, place, ideology

Place/Space

- Where did you go to school?
- What was that place like?
- What level did you finish?
- What was the most important things about school to you?
- What made you want to keep going to school?
- Were there any things that made you not want to go to school?

Language

- What languages did you use while in school?
- What languages did you use at home?
- How did/do you feel about using the same/different languages in school?
- What the benefit or drawback of using different languages at school and at home?
- Was your mother tongue a valuable part of your education? Why or why not?
- Was English a valuable part of your education? Why or why not?
- Was Afrikaans a valuable part of your education? Why or why not?
- Were any other languages a valuable part of your education? Why or why not?

Ideology

- What did you learn to believe about school?
- What do you remember about your teachers?
- Are there any memories that stand out to you about [that aspect]?
- How do you measure your success?
- It seems like you said you believe [blank]. How/where you learn that belief?

Conclusions:

Thank you for your time and for your honest responses to the question. Before we conclude this interview, is there anything else you would like to share?

Post Interview Comments and/or Observations:

Appendix B: IRB Approval



In future correspondence please refer to CON2016A342

June 29, 2016

Kristie O'Donnell
c/o Emily Summers
Associate Professor
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
Texas State University
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666

Dear Kristie:

Your IRB modification application CON2016A342 titled "Language and Location" was reviewed by the Texas State University IRB and approved 06/29/16. It has been determined that risks to subjects are: (1) minimized and reasonable; and that (2) research procedures are consistent with a sound research design and do not expose the subjects to unnecessary risk. Reviewers determined that: (1) benefits to subjects are considered along with the importance of the topic and that outcomes are reasonable; (2) selection of subjects is equitable; and (3) the purposes of the research and the research setting is amenable to subjects' welfare and producing desired outcomes; that indications of coercion or prejudice are absent, and that participation is clearly voluntary.

Please note the stamped consent forms and participant documents. These are to be used moving forward in your study.

1. In addition, the IRB found that you need to orient participants as follows: (1) informed consent is required; (2) Provision is made for collecting, using and storing data in a manner that protects the safety and privacy of the subjects and the confidentiality of the data; (3) Appropriate safeguards are included to protect the rights and welfare of the subjects.

This project is therefore approved at the Exempt Review Level

2. Please note that the institution is not responsible for any actions regarding this protocol before approval. If you expand the project at a later date to use other instruments please re-apply. Copies of your request for human subjects review, your application, and this approval, are maintained in the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance. Please report any changes to this approved protocol to this office.

Sincerely,


Monica Gonzales
IRB Regulatory Manager
Office of Research and Integrity
Texas State University

OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH

601 University Drive | JCK #489 | San Marcos, Texas 78666-4616

Phone: 512.245.2314 | fax: 512.245.3847 | WWW.TXSTATE.EDU

This letter is an electronic communication from Texas State University-San Marcos, a member of The Texas State University System.

Appendix C: Data Tables

Table 1

Major Themes

	Education: A Worthy Struggle	One More Step Further	Nevertheless, She Persisted	Connections Across Cultures
Identity	In order to be the person I want to be, I must achieve educational success in whatever form that means most to me. Because my identity does not naturally fit the sociolinguistic expectation I see in school, it is a struggle for me to achieve.	I don't see my journey as being over. It is not stagnant. My identity has been built so far based on my life experiences, but I want to keep redefining who I am in order to reach my goals.	I don't see that my home identity connects to professional, educational, or financial success. But I believe I see a way to achieve that. It is hard, and I get knocked down, but I get up again. I will never be kept down forever.	I want to be a person who connects to people in other language and culture groups. This relates strongly to how I do or how I want to define myself as a person, a worker, a student, and a member of society.
Language	Language really is a nexus for the struggle. I struggle to speak the language of education—in a theoretical sense, but also in a literal sense when the language of instruction was English and that posed a very real struggle to understand content delivery.	Everyone expressed doubts about their English language ability while nearly simultaneously confirming their beliefs that it was crucial to living the life they want to live. They are compelled to continue learning & communicating.	Learning English is something I see myself stumbling, and even failing in, over and over, yet a I keep trying.	Languages are associated specifically with certain cultures. Even in the case of English when its not an ethnic culture, it's a culture of business & professionalism. Perhaps even an ethnically-neutral culture they perceived.
Space	Spaces where different languages spoken	The spatiality and temporality of the metaphor	This idea captures and combines it with	We can easily imagine the different

<p>often delineated distinctly. But if we flip that and wonder where all the languages resided, the answer to that is in the individual. The individual is where the negotiations take place. They negotiate their identity space while navigating the temporal world.</p>	<p>of “one more step” is more apropos when considering the physical as well as psychological spaces the participants are navigating.</p>	<p>the concept of struggle. But further, it ties to the belief that success is achievable. The dreams are reachable—if we persist. Persist in education, language, work. Nevertheless, in spite of all obstacles and setbacks, persist.</p>	<p>cultures brought up by participants are different peaks on a mountain range where the ability to connect in the places language functions as a bridge between the two cultural spaces.</p>
--	--	---	---

<p>Ideology</p>	<p>I believe education is or has been vitally important to me in terms of making me who I am and/or who I want to be.</p>	<p>I have not yet reached a place where I am done striving. I define success in many ways: social, relationships, as it relates to other areas, I am not done.</p>	<p>I believe that I must persist in developing my English, my education, and my vocational goals. These are all connected.</p>	<p>Connecting with other people across language and culture groups is personally & financially rewarding. Indeed, those two are not mutually exclusive.</p>
------------------------	---	--	--	---

Table 2

Language Domains

	Lisolethu	Noxie	Shaun	Kwezi
isiXhosa is a part of my village	we have our main language, which is, the first, our first language, which is Xhosa	we use [isiXhosa] a lot at our homes and in our villages	When I was here in [the village] it was Xhosa being spoken... And then I'm Xhosa myself.	It's just I'm speaking Xhosa at home
isiXhosa is a part of my cultural identity	I'm just sharing ... what I have and I'm proud of being a South African, I'm proud of being a Xhosa, proud of speaking Xhosa	I am a Xhosa... we learn language and grammar in Xhosa and then we have to know how to, click in to those things and match, our languages and our cultures	I'm a Xhosa by nature... when you speak Xhosa, you, you fluent and you feel free... where I'm from, my culture really made the person I am this day.	I was using Xhosa; it was my first language. Because I'm a Xhosa girl.
English is a part of the global and business community—where I'd like to have a strong place	English is the... international language... I want to associate with the different business men... coming from different cultures, different continents, different countries... I don't want to associate myself with South Africans only... English is the best language, because it is a tool to make people connect.	For the job interview you have to use English, not it's isiXhosa... if I'm going to look at job, I have to prepare myself because I'm going to speak English, even if the company is for the Black person... because they say it is a communication language	English is a universal language	If you just know only Xhosa, you are not going to get a better job. But if you know English more and more, you are going to get a better job.

School and business are place wherein you need English	all the things that you do, needs English. The people you meet you need English, the tests that you write needs English, the teachers will teach you have the, teaching us in English... the attitude from speaking English, 'cause I want to learn more... the main message of education is that and the success to your destiny.	I did struggle to get my education... But I'm still trying to get something... I'm just doing it, I've got certificates for many things... then continue trying, trying,	It's always in English on my side, because my marketing is in different counties and different languages	it's not time to speak Xhosa at work. [English is] at work and at my house. Because my child, she's at English school... because I want her must get a better education than me
Afrikaans is a part of the Afrikaner community	n/a	Those Afrikaners they speak Afrikaans	That's their language, you know! It's their culture.	And the most people speaking Afrikaans, they are naughty, naughty people... like, apartheid I don't like Afrikaans... it's not a good language... they didn't love especially the Black people, they have too much racists. So.
Afrikaans is part of the cultural heritage of Afrikaners—which is not mine	n/a	They were training all of them, with, all the South Africa here. So, if you don't understand Afrikaans, is a, it was a Apartheid time, you know the apartheid... twas very, very, very, very, very, very good for <i>those people</i>	A lot of people that are speaking Afrikaans especially in my community, they weren't-, even at my school, they weren't really that nice. Which made it for me, like, why am I even learning this language?	

Table 3*isiXhosa and English Domains*

Cause-effect: X is a result of Y	Location for action: X is a place for doing Y	Sequence: X is a step/stage in Y	Rationale: X is a reason for doing Y	Function: X is used for Y	Means-end: X is a way to do Y
Speaking isiXhosa is a result of being part of my cultural community and heritage	My home and village is a place for speaking isiXhosa	Knowing or re-learning isiXhosa is a step in maintaining or deepening my cultural identity	My desire to remain in touch with my cultural heritage/ identity & communicate with my friends and family is a reason for speaking isiXhosa	isiXhosa is used for cultural rituals and connecting with people in my village	Speaking isiXhosa is a way to be myself
Speaking English is a result of succeeding in my schooling	School, places of business, & international settings are places for speaking English	Learning English is a step in gaining economic stability	My desire to succeed in school, work, and the wider world beyond my home is a reason for speaking English	English is used for obtaining degrees and jobs as well as connecting with people outside my village	Speaking English is a way to enact my career aspirations

Table 4*(E)mergent Identities*

	Lisolethu	Noxie	Shaun	Kwezi
Original identity	isiXhosa speaker from a small village dreaming to make it to the wider world	Xhosa girl who dreamed of crossing people/language/ racial groups	isiXhosa speaker who was challenged by other language people groups	A real Xhosa girl
Merged/Emergent identity	Future international businessman with connections across cultures through English	An educated and employable person. English is a sign of education status.	International artist and businessman and one who connects personally across cultures through many languages	Fluent speaker of English who is employed pursuing her goals of financial stability for her family
Intersections	He teaches and learns with speakers of other languages	Noxie plays with her ethnic identity and imagines a world where she crosses ethno-lingual boundaries	Speak both languages— friends and associates code switch. Technology: social uses in English	Child in English school— both isiXhosa and English at home

REFERENCES

- Anderson, G. M. (2003). National liberation, neoliberalism, and educational change: The case of post-Apartheid South Africa. *Journal of African American History*, 88(4), 377-392.
- Aragon, S. R., & Kose, B.W. (2007). Conceptual framework of cultural capital development: A new perspective for the success of diverse college students. In J. L. Higbee, D. B., Lundell, & I. M., Duancyk (Eds.) *Diversity and the postsecondary experience* (7th ed., pp. 103-128). Minneapolis: Center for Research on Developmental Education and Urban Literacy, University of Minnesota.
- Bank, L. J. (2011). *Home spaces, street styles: Contesting power and identity in a South African city*. New York, NY: Pluto Press.
- Boylan, H. R., & Bonham, B. S. (2007). 30 years of developmental education: A retrospective. *Journal of Developmental Education* 30(3), 2-4.
- Brodkey, L. (1987). Writing critical ethnographic narratives. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 18, 67-76.
- Casazza, M. E. (1999). Who are we and where did we come from? *Journal of Developmental Education* 23(1), 2-6.
- Clandinin, D. J. (2013). *Engaging in Narrative Inquiry*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Cost Press.
- Conference on College Composition and Communication, U. I. (1974). Students' Right to Their Own Language. [Special Issue]. *College Composition and Communication*,

- XXV. Retrieved from
<http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Groups/CCCC/NewSRTOL.pdf>
- Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Towards a sociolinguistics of superdiversity. *Zeitschrift Fur Erziehungswissenschaft*, 13(4), 549-572.
- de Klein, C., & Lawton, R. (2015). Meeting the needs of linguistically diverse students at the college level. College Reading and Learning Association. Retrieved from
https://www.crla.net/images/whitepaper/Meeting_Needs_of_Diverse_Students.pdf
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln Y. S. (2013). *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials* (4th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Deumart, A. (2013). Xhosa in town (revisited) – space, place and language. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 2013(222), 51-75.
- Fairclough, N. (2013). Critical discourse analysis and critical policy studies. *Critical Policy Studies*, 7(2), 177-197.
- Fairclough, N., Graham, P., Lemke, J., & Wodak, R. (2004). Introduction. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 1(1), 1-7.
- Fanon, F. (2008). *Black skin, White masks*. London, UK: Pluto, 2008.
- Freire, P., & Macedo, D. P. (1995). A dialogue: Culture, language and race. *Harvard Educational Review*, 65(3), 377.
- Gee, J. P. (2013). Reading as situated language: A sociocognitive perspective. In D. E Alvermann, N. J Unrau, & R. B. Ruddell, (Eds.). *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (Vol. 978, No. 0-87712). *International Reading Association*, pp. 136-151.

- Gibbs, G. R. (2014) Analyzing Biographies and Narratives. In: *Documentary & Archival Research*. SAGE Benchmarks in Social Research Methods. London, UK: Sage.
- Gibbs, G. R. (2015, February 21). The analysis of narratives. [YouTube recording].
Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZJbnPKJmrpY>
- Greenfield, D. (2010). 'When I hear Afrikaans in the classroom and never my language, I get rebellious': Linguistic Apartheid in South African higher education. *Language and Education*, 24(6), 517-534.
- Holschuh, J. P., & Paulson, E. J. (2013). The terrain of college developmental reading. [White paper]. College Reading and Learning Association. Retrieved from <http://www.crla.net/images/whitepaper/TheTerrainofCollege91913.pdf>
- Hull, G., & Rose, M. (1989). Rethinking remediation: Toward a social-cognitive understanding of problematic reading and writing. *Written Communication*, 6(2), 139-154.
- Kucer, S. (2014). *Dimensions of literacy: A conceptual base for teaching reading and writing in school settings* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Leibowitz, B., & Bozalek, V. (2014). Access to higher education in South Africa. *Widening Participation & Lifelong Learning*, 16(1), 91-109.
- Lester, A. (1996). *From colonization to democracy: A new historical geography of South Africa* / Alan Lester. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Lu, M. (2010). Professing multiculturalism: The politics of style in the contact zone. In P. Butler (Ed.) *Style in Rhetoric and Composition*. (pp. 303-232). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

- Makalela, L. (2005). 'We speak eleven tongues' Reconstructing multilingualism in South Africa. In B. Brock-Utne, & R. K. Hopson (Eds.), *Languages of instruction for African emancipation: Focus on postcolonial contexts and considerations*. Cape Town, South Africa: Mkuki n Nyota.
- Makalela, L. (2014). Fluid identity construction in language contact zones: metacognitive reflections on Kasi-taal languaging practices. *International Journal of Bilingual Education And Bilingualism*, 17(6), 668-682.
- Marquez Kiyama, J. (2011). Family lessons and funds of knowledge: College-going paths in Mexican American families. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 10(1), 23-42.
- Mathabane, M. (1986). *Kaffir boy: The true story of a Black youth's coming of age in Apartheid South Africa*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Melzer, D. (2014). *Assignments across the curriculum: A national study of college writing*. Boulder, CO: Utah State University Press.
- Mutasa, D. E. (2014). Multilingual education in South African universities: A possibility or delusion? *South African Journal of African Languages*, 34(1), 9.
- New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Education Review*, 66(1), 60-92.
- Parodi, G. (2013). Reading–writing connections: Discourse-oriented research. In D. E. Alvermann, N. J. Unrau, & R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (6th ed.). Newark, DE: International Reading Association
- Pawan, F., & Honeyford, M. (2009). Academic literacy. *Handbook of college reading and study strategy research*, 2, 26-46.

- Perry, K. H. (2009). Genres, contexts, and literacy practices: Literacy brokering among Sudanese refugee families. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 44(3), 256-276.
- Prinsloo, J., & Janks, H. (2002). Critical literacy in South Africa: Possibilities and constraints in 2002. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 1(1), 20-38.
- Rose, M. (2005). *Lives on the boundary* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- Rosenblatt, L. M. (2013). The transactional theory of reading and writing. In D. E. Alvermann, N. J. Unrau, & R. B. Ruddell, (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (Vol. 978, No. 0-87712). *International Reading Association*.
- Seabi, J., Seedat, J., Khoza-Shangase, K., & Sullivan, L. (2014). Experiences of university students regarding transformation in South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 28(1), 66.
- Sebolai, K. (2013). Validating a test of academic literacy at a South African university of technology. *Acta Academica*, 45(3), 215.
- Sebolai, K. (2014). Evaluating academic literacy teaching at a South African university: A case study of an academic literacy programme. *Journal for Language Teaching*, 48(1), 51. doi:10.4314/jlt.v48i1.3
- Seidman, I. E. (2010). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in the social sciences*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Shanahan, C., Shanahan, T., & Misischa, C. (2011). Analysis of expert readers in three disciplines: History, mathematics, and chemistry. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 43(4), 393-429.
- Smagorinsky, P. (2001). If meaning is constructed, what is it made from? Toward a cultural theory of reading. *Review of educational research*, 71(1), 133-169.

- Soja, E. W. (1989). *Postmodern geographies: The reassertion of space in critical social theory*. New York, NY: Verso.
- Spigelman, C. (2004). *Personally speaking: Experience as evidence in academic discourse*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- South African History Online. (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.sahistory.org.za/>
- Spigelman, C. (2004). *Personally speaking: Experience as evidence in academic discourse*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Spradley, J. P. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning: 1979.
- Tapp, J. (2014). 'I actually listened, I'm proud of myself.' The effects of a participatory pedagogy on students' constructions of academic identities. *Teaching In Higher Education*, 19(4), 323-335.
- Thondhlana, G. G., & Belluigi, D. D. (2014). Group work as 'terrains of learning' for students in South African higher education. *Perspectives in Education*, 32(4), 40-55.
- van Dijk, T. A. (2006). Ideology and discourse analysis. *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 11(2), 115-140.
- Waetjen, T. (2006). Measures of redress: defining disadvantage in a university access programme. *South African Review of Sociology*, 37(2), 200.
- Wangenge-Ouma, G. (2012). Tuition fees and the challenge of making higher education a popular commodity in South Africa. *Higher Education*, 64(6), 831.
- Wei, M. (2016). Language ideology and identity seeking: Perceptions of college learners of English in China. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, 15(2), 100-113.

Zisselsberger, M., & Collins, K. (2016). Whose language is legit? Intersections of race, ethnicity, and language. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership*, 19(1), 51.