

# Language, Migration and Identity: Exploring the Trajectories and Linguistic Identities of Some African Migrants in Cape Town, South Africa

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
KEYWORDS.....	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....	x
ABSTRACT.....	xi
DECLARATION .....	xiii
DEDICATION.....	xiv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	xv
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY.....	1
1.1 General background.....	1
1.2 Rationale for the study .....	4
1.3 My personal language biography.....	6
1.3.1 Early childhood languages and schooling .....	7
1.3.2 Secondary and high school languages.....	10
1.3.3 Higher institution of learning .....	11
1.3.4 The ‘push and pull factors’ of migration: my journey to South Africa .....	14
1.4 Methodology .....	17
1.4.1 Sampling and sampling selection techniques .....	17
1.4.2 Data collection techniques and procedures .....	17
1.5 Data analysis .....	18
1.6 An outline of the chapters .....	19
1.7 Summary of chapter.....	21
CHAPTER TWO.....	22
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	22

<b>2.0 Introduction .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.1 A brief historical and sociolinguistic background of Cameroon .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.1.1 Pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Cameroon sociolinguistics.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>2.1.2 Problematizing language and identity in contemporary Cameroon .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2.2 Sociolinguistic practices in contemporary Cameroon.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>2.2.1 Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>2.2.2 Cameroon Pidgin French (CPF) .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2.3 The influence of globalization on Cameroon sociolinguistics .....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2.4 Migration and the issue of trajectories .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>2.5 The influence of transnationalism on Cameroon sociolinguistics.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>2.6 A brief historical and sociolinguistic overview of South Africa.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>2.6.1 South African pre- and post-colonial sociolinguistic history .....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>2.7 Review of related literature .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>2.7.1 Thematic review .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>2.8. Summary of chapter.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>CHAPTER THREE.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>3.0 Introduction .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>3.1 Language and identity.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>3.2 Identity and indexicality.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>3.2.1 Orders of indexicality .....</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>3.2.2 Polycentricity .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>3.3 Multilingualism and the negotiation of identities.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>3.3.1The socio-psychological approach .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>3.3.2 The interactional sociolinguistic approach.....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>3.3.3 The social constructionist approach.....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>3.3.4 The poststructuralist approach.....</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>3.4 Identity negotiation through narratives and performativity .....</b>	<b>57</b>

<b>3.5 Multilingualism as a social practice and language as a local practice .....</b>	<b>59</b>
3.5.1 Language as a local practice .....	59
3.5.2 Language and locality.....	60
3.5.3 Language as a resource.....	61
3.5.4 Multilingualism as a social practice .....	62
<b>3.6 Multilingualism: An African perspective.....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>3.7 Linguistic repertoire and effective multilingual communication.....</b>	<b>64</b>
3.7.1 A closer look at linguistic repertoires.....	65
3.7.2 Superdiversity .....	68
3.7.3 Globalization and global cultural flows .....	69
<b>3.8 Summary of chapter.....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>4.0 Introduction .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>4.1 Analytical frameworks .....</b>	<b>73</b>
4.1.1 Discourse analysis.....	73
4.1.2 Critical discourse analysis.....	75
4.1.3 Narrative analysis.....	76
4.1.4 Linguistic and discursive features.....	77
4.1.5 A Multimodal biographic approach.....	78
<b>4.2 Research design and methodology .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>4.3 Interviews.....</b>	<b>81</b>
4.3.1 Focus group interviews.....	83
4.3.2 Participant observation .....	83
4.3.3 Transcription .....	84
<b>4.4 My role as researcher .....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>4.5 Data analysis .....</b>	<b>85</b>
4.5.1 Thematic analysis: a text-based approach .....	85





4.5.2 Discourse analysis.....	86
4.5.3 Narrative analysis.....	88
4.5.4 Critical discourse analysis .....	89
4.5.5 Linguistic and discursive features.....	90
4.6 Ethical statement.....	91
4.7 Summary of chapter.....	92
<b>CHAPTER FIVE.....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>THE LINGUISTIC PROFILES OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS .....</b>	<b>93</b>
5.0 Introduction .....	93
5.2 The major factors influencing my participants’ linguistic profiles .....	95
5.2.1 The influence of ethnic, family and community multilingualism.....	96
5.2.2 The influence of institutional multilingualism.....	102
5.2.3 The influence of migration.....	103
5.2.4 The influence of encountering structural similarities in languages .....	104
5.2.5 The influence of language ideologies and attitudes .....	105
5.3 Functions and domains of language use for my participants .....	106
5.4 Learning new languages-how ‘ready’ and ‘motivated’ are my respondents? .....	114
5.4.1 Readiness for action to learn the local languages of Cape Town .....	114
5.4.2 Motivations and demotivations for learning the local languages.....	117
5.4.2.1 Motivations.....	117
5.4.2.2 Demotivation for language learning.....	120
5.5 The language preferences of my participants .....	122
5.6 A summary of main findings on my participants’ language profiles.....	127
<b>CHAPTER SIX.....</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>THE SHIFTING LANGUAGE PRACTICES AND ATTITUDES OF MY RESPONDENTS. 130</b>	
6.0 Introduction .....	130
6.1 Language attitudes and ideologies among the participants.....	130
6.1.1 English .....	130

6.1.2 French .....	135
6.1.3 Cameroonian Pidgin English (CPE) .....	137
6.1.4 Cameroonian home languages .....	140
6.1.5 South African languages: Afrikaans .....	141
6.1.6 South African languages: isiXhosa .....	143
6.2 Observing Cameroonians interacting in their own association in Cape Town: Evidence of modified linguistic identities?.....	146
6.2.1 The Nuka Association .....	148
6.2.2 Birth celebration (Born-House) .....	149
6.2.3 A wake/death celebration (Cry-Die) .....	153
6.2.4 Observing a graduation celebration.....	156
6.3 A summary of the main findings .....	158
CHAPTER SEVEN .....	161
PARTICIPANTS' COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AND THEIR STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING LINGUISTIC AND SOCIO- CULTURAL BARRIERS IN CAPE TOWN..	161
7.0 Introduction .....	161
7.1 Negotiating language differences: Communication challenges and survival strategies .....	161
7.1.1 Cape Town's historical spatial demarcation – the influence of apartheid planning .....	162
7.1.2 How South Africans label the migrants .....	163
7.1.3 Differences in the official statuses of the migrants .....	164
7.1.4 Problems with English.....	164
7.1.5 Problems with the other local languages: isiXhosa and Afrikaans .....	165
7.2 Respondents' strategies for overcoming linguistic and socio-cultural barriers in Cape Town .....	167
7.2.1 Making use of an interpreter .....	168
7.2.2 Switching to English as a common language.....	168
7.2.3 Using non-verbal communication – hand signs, facial expressions, body language, laughter .....	170
7.2.4 Making the effort to acquire essential bits of the local languages.....	171
7.2.5 Positioning oneself in terms of the languages present .....	172

7.3 A summary of main findings .....	173
<b>CHAPTER 8.....</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>MIGRATION – TRAJECTORIES AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION .....</b>	<b>175</b>
8.0 Introduction .....	175
8.1 The migration trajectories of my respondents .....	175
8.2 Respondents’ comparison of life in Cameroon and in Cape Town.....	181
8.3 Maintaining culture and identity in Cape Town.....	186
8.3.1 Food and eating habits .....	186
.....	188
8.3.2 Style of dress as an identification tool .....	188
8.3.3 Other identifying factors .....	189
8.3.4 What does identity and its maintenance mean to my respondents? .....	189
8.4 Affect and emotion in the responses of my participants.....	193
8.5 Migration experiences and lessons learned.....	199
8.6 A summary of the main findings .....	204
<b>CHAPTER NINE .....</b>	<b>207</b>
<b>CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>207</b>
9.0 Introduction .....	207
9.1 A summary of the research Findings.....	208
9.2 Implications of the study’s findings .....	218
9.3 Recommendations for further study in this area of research.....	222
9.4 Summarising the contribution of this study to sociolinguistics .....	222
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>226</b>
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>258</b>
<b>Appendix A: A Guide to Interview Questions .....</b>	<b>258</b>
<b>Appendix B: Sample of an interview session .....</b>	<b>262</b>
<b>Appendix C: Segment of the Nuka meeting (birth celebration -born -house).....</b>	<b>284</b>
<b>Appendix D LETTER OF CONSENT .....</b>	<b>293</b>

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Percentage distributions of South Africa’s eleven official languages ..... 38

Table 2. Participants’ reported linguistic profiles..... 94

Table 3. Ethnic affiliation (as Cameroonians) of the participants..... 97

Table 4. Respondents’ migration trajectories ..... 176

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Languages in Mezam Division ..... 7

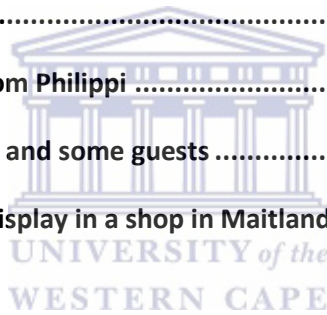
Figure 2. Members eating Achu (traditional meal from the North West Region, Bamenda) ..... 152

Figure 3. The deceased lady..... 154

Figure 4. The South African choir from Philippi ..... 156

Figure 5. The graduate, mother, MC and some guests ..... 157

Figure 6. Food from Cameroon on display in a shop in Maitland ..... 188



## KEYWORDS

Language and Globalization

Migration

Identity

Discourse Analysis/ Narrative Analysis

Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Cape Town

Cameroonian migrants

Multilingualism

Trajectories

Linguistic biographies



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CPE:	Cameroon Pidgin English
CPF:	Cameroon Pidgin French
DA:	Discourse Analysis
CDA:	Critical Discourse Analysis
TA:	Thematic Analysis
MBA:	Multimodal Biographic Approach
IBRD:	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
CAR:	Central African Republic
GMS:	Green Market Square
PAM:	Pan African Market
PanSALB:	Pan South African Language Board
ICT:	Information Communication Technology
LWC:	Language of Wider Communication
ECAM111:	3rd Cameroon Household Survey



## ABSTRACT

### Language, Migration and Identity: Exploring the Trajectories and Linguistic Identities of Some African Migrants in Cape Town, South Africa

This study is an exploration of the different trajectories of a selected number of African migrants into and around South Africa, focusing on the effects of these different trajectories on their language use patterns and linguistic identities. Informed by the interpretive paradigm, the study was done in order to show the effects of space, migration, trauma and ethno-linguistic tensions such as xenophobia on people's language use. Ultimately, the study is an analysis of a number of migrants' language biographies. South Africa is a multilingual and multicultural country with eleven official languages and many migrant languages, resulting from the flow of people from other countries, especially from highly multilingual and multicultural African countries, to this major economic hub on the continent. New trends in globalization witnessed across the globe and socio-political and economic instabilities witnessed in some countries, have prompted some of these migrants to move to South Africa, they see as more economically and politically stable than their home countries. Among those who have migrated to Cape Town South Africa are Cameroonian migrants whose living conditions will never be the same again.

The study was conducted because there is a need for a better understanding of the strategies multilingual people employ to negotiate language and cultural differences in a globalized world, often under very trying conditions (as is the case in South Africa). The study critically explores the language biographies, the full repertoire of communicative resources of selected Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town as well as making visible their polylingual repertoires and associated attitudes and beliefs in the research domain. The theoretical framework for this study is shaped by theories of late modernity with reference to traditional sociolinguistics, globalization and migration. A multi-dimensional analytical approach is employed in this study, incorporating Discourse Analysis (DA), Narrative Analysis (NA), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Thematic Analysis (TA) and Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) that incorporates the Multimodal Biographic Approach.

Concepts based on the assumption of languages as bounded units and on cultural identity linked to a particular language continue to take a monolingual paradigm for granted and has failed to

grasp social heteroglossia. The concept of social heteroglossia that privileges the multilinguality, multivocality and multidiscursivity of our society is supported by this study.

The study further suggests that the concept of multilingualism and the meaning of language in sociolinguistics is a complex phenomenon. This complexity is due to the fact that many languages exist in most communities and people who live in these communities possess multiple languages. Multilingualism, more specifically multilingual practices (observed in this study) is seen as situated practices rather than as abstract and absolute competence a speaker acquires.

The study suggests that Cameroonian migrants are social actors who are part of the meaning making processes in Cape Town, South Africa. The migrant's social interaction in the Cape Town space has influenced their language use patterns and their presence has also affected the Cape Town space, linguistically and otherwise. Cameroonian migrants' linguistic and identity options are limited in the Cape Town context and as such they go through some challenges which they try to negotiate. Cameroonian migrants have proven in this study that they are multilingual speakers whose variety of languages and language use gives meaning to the idea of language as a localized practice. It is the space that they inhabit at a given point in time that determines how they use language.

The overall conclusion of the study is a call for a reframing of the notion of language and identity in society. Language should be conceived of a social practice, and linguists need to pay close attention to the social environment where interactions take place. It is in such environments where new issues about language emerge or are created. The major contribution of the study to the field of sociolinguistics is that it provides further insight into the nature of multilingualism and identities in late modern society. In foregrounding the concept of the lived experience of language, the study also makes a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate on the notion of the linguistic repertoire against the background of increased mobility, migration, or participation in transnational networks of communication. The findings of the study contribute to recent arguments that view language not as an autonomous system but rather as embedded in people's social interactions. The study further demonstrates that languages in multilingual societies have no clear-cut borders. Thus, identities, languages and the spaces of interaction are not fixed systems; but are dynamic and in a constant state of flux. The dynamism of identities and languages are reflected in the migrants' complex and multi-layered language biographies.



## DECLARATION

I declare that *Language, Migration and Identity: Exploring the trajectories and linguistic identities of some selected African migrants in Cape Town, South Africa* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full name: Doreen Nchang



Signed:

Date: 30 May 2018



## DEDICATION

In loving memory of my late mum and grandmum Maghie Bih Rose and Maghie Ngedap. For always believing in the education of the girl child I dedicate this work to you. Thank you Lord for making all these possible!



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# CHAPTER ONE

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

### 1.1 General background

This thesis explores the different trajectories of selected migrants from Cameroon into and around South Africa, focusing on the effects of these different trajectories on their language use patterns and linguistic identities. This is done to show the effects of space, migration, trauma and ethno-linguistic tensions like xenophobia on people's language use. The study is carried out against the background of the sociolinguistic contexts of Cameroon and South Africa in order to show the semiotic and communicative codes the migrants bring with them from their home country and those they have had to acquire for survival in South Africa. Ultimately, the study is an analysis of a number of migrants' language biographies.

As a sociolinguistic study, the starting point for the trajectories of these Cameroonian migrants into South Africa has to be their socio-cultural and linguistic practices in post-colonial Cameroon. Post-colonialism as used here is the period after Cameroon got its independence. It also implies that any use of the word colonialism is referring to the period when Cameroon was ruled by Germany, Britain and France. Cameroon is a multilingual country with two colonial languages English and French, 279 indigenous languages and lingua franca like Cameroonian Pidgin English (CPE) and Camfranglais (CPF). This thesis discusses the language practices of Cameroonians in South Africa against the backdrop of each country's socio-historic and political contexts.

Language practices, particularly in Africa, are complex, fluid and multi-layered. Migrants carry such complex and fluid language patterns with them as they move into new spaces. In the context of globalization, where language resources are perhaps more mobile than before, such patterns of value and use become less predictable and pre-supposable (Blommaert 2010:28). Gone are the days when one could easily tell the language or languages someone speaks simply because you know where that person comes from. How people learn and use language in this era of globalization is not easy to determine. Perhaps this is because globalization and its processes are felt everywhere in the world, and the consequences are that things, people and ideas are affected by change at an unprecedented rate. People can travel wherever they want to, in real or virtual space. Because of these changes witnessed across the globe, Blommaert (2010) believes that a

theoretical challenge has been created for sociolinguists and other scholars, as they are now battling with understanding how people and resources move and what happens to the places they move to. Blommaert (2010) uses the metaphor of a market place where everything is mobile, and because of this mobility nothing seems to make sense in the market. This metaphor of the marketplace implies new ways of being, new ways of negotiating subjectivity, and new languages. This scenario can be applied to the context of this study as it deals with people who have moved to a new location with its own norms and values. The space has suddenly changed and some things in the space are not only alien to the newcomers but also to its original inhabitants. The spaces are also creative, forcing people to behave in new ways.

This study focuses on the linguistic aspects of mobility. Mobility, sociolinguistically speaking, is according to Blommaert (2010), a trajectory through different spaces controlled by others and filled with their expectations and beliefs. According to Blommaert (2010) when people find themselves in such spaces, language plays a dominant role in their success or failure to communicate. People are able to tell where you come from, your educational background, and social status the moment you open your mouth to speak. It is however important to acknowledge that the idea of "unbounded languages" is difficult to implement in sociolinguistic research. That is why participants used names of "bounded languages" to talk about the languages they use.

The study of the linguistic trajectories of Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town is also the study of how and why people migrate. Migration is a global phenomenon that has been in existence from time immemorial. In the current era of globalization, it is believed that economic or labor migration is on the increase. Many believe that it is the lack of employment opportunities amongst others in developing countries and increased demands for low-wage workers in developed countries that lead to people moving to the more developed, well-resourced world. Issues relating to migration are at the centre stage of world politics, giving a variety of crises created by war (e.g. the Syrian crisis) and ethnic cleansing (e.g. the treatment of the Rohingya in Myanmar). According to Vigouroux and Mufwene (2008:230), the discourse on migration has often been constructed along a number of different axes such as the duration of stay in the host country (permanent versus temporary residents), geographic roles (sending versus receiving countries), direction of migrants (points of departure versus point of arrival), and types of migration (forced versus free migration) as well as individual versus family migration. These authors claim that in linguistics, these differences have always been cited as reasons for explaining the language practices of migrants or the dynamics with regards to migrants' languages and language practices. Consequently, reasons

for migration and how this migration happens is critical in this study as it will help shed light not only on the language history and practices of Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town, but can also provide other important details on the lives of Cameroonian migrants in particular and the Cape Town migrant community in general.

Research on sub-Saharan African migration to South Africa does not only have a limited literature but is also a recent phenomenon. Vigouroux and Orman are some of the authors that have written and published on sub-Saharan African migration to South Africa. However, a number of unpublished research studies have also been conducted on African migration to South Africa, some of which have focused specifically on Cameroonian migrants. This literature is reviewed in Chapter 2. Vigouroux (2008) for example posits that Black African migration to South Africa started right back during the apartheid era but only with migrants from neighboring countries like Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Therefore, African migration from other parts of sub-Saharan Africa only started shortly after the end of apartheid in 1994. Orman (2012) on his part examines the phenomenon of African migration to post-apartheid South Africa from a language-sociological perspective. According to her, mobility is often seen as something that changes everything about a migrant. Some of these changes include their languages and how they use these languages. Orman believes that most often these linguistic changes are felt or read negatively and thus migrants are always in a disadvantaged position to the host population. Thus the consequences of migration or mobility require on-going research.

Orman (2012) feels that there is a need for the development of a theoretical perspective on the sociolinguistic consequences of geographical and social mobility. He nevertheless also acknowledges that there have been a handful of insightful studies carried out on the language practices and attitudes of sub-Saharan African migrants in South Africa. While reviewing a number of these studies, I was able to focus on the main issues that put my own study into perspective. For example, the studies by Vigouroux (2005, 2008), Mba (2006, 2011) drew attention to Congolese and Cameroonian migrant identities, attitudes and language practices in Cape Town.

My study adds to this field of research, but also builds in family language practices or policies (with regards to those who have children in Cape Town). Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town are a diverse group that includes families who migrated here with their children, while others are cross-linguistic, cross-cultural families where Cameroonians have either married South Africans

or Congolese. It is vital to pay attention to these family language practices and what drives their language attitudes, practices or policies. Bearing in mind how language impacts people and what people do with language in this globalized world, exploring the trajectories and linguistic identities of the migrants in my study will add value to the lives of migrants, the environment in which they live in and to the broader research community.

The migrants selected for my study in Cape Town have to balance their everyday survival need to acquire proficiency in the local languages with the maintenance of their own languages at home or in their own cultural associations. At the same time, their children are attending schools where they are also picking up varieties of the local languages, e.g. *Kaaps*, *Tsotsitaal* and other urban dialects. The South African classmates with whom they associate may also over time have picked up aspects of the languages these migrant children speak to one another, like Cameroonian Pidgin English. Language contact is never in one direction and Cameroonian migrants' polyglot repertoires have the capacity to change or affect the Cape Town space. All these influences may eventually lead to the development of new hybrid codes in super-diverse urban settings like Cape Town.

To sum up: this study endeavors to show how the migrants in my study construct their complex linguistic identities in this city, thereby making a contribution to sociolinguistic literature on multilingualism and identity.

## 1.2 Rationale for the study

The rationale for this study is the need for a better understanding of the strategies multilingual people employ to negotiate language and cultural differences in a globalized world, often under very trying conditions (as is the case in South Africa). Most societies of today are multilingual and to Canagarajah (2011), it is vital to look into more complex models that explain not only the ways in which multilingual communities acquire language competence but also how all of us are compelled to learn and use languages in late modernity. There is need to bridge the gap between migrants and the host society by making the plurilingual repertoires of migrants visible and their voices heard (Busch, Schicho, Spitzl, Slezak, and Rienzner, 2010:2).

By way of introduction to this thesis, I would like to present a personal narrative which captures my own trajectories and changing linguistic identities as a migrant. This biography is presented as part of the rationale for doing this study, which aims to:

1. do a critical exploration of the language biographies of selected Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town;
2. investigate ways in which participants' multilingual repertoires have influenced their lives as migrants in Cape Town;
3. establish how the space of Cape Town has influenced and modified their personal and linguistic identities as well as the effect of their presence on the linguistic and socio-cultural nature of this city;
4. investigate the full repertoire of communicative resources that these migrants use in this heterogeneous and diverse space;
5. investigate their communicative challenges and strategies to overcome such challenges;
6. investigate how the process of migration to a new environment has influenced the migrants in terms of their identities and their linguistic practices; and finally
7. afford such polylingual repertoires and associated attitudes and beliefs greater visibility in the research domain.

The research questions for this study are:

1. How do participants describe and present their languages or language profiles?
2. In what ways have their multilingual repertoires influenced their lives as migrants in Cape Town?
3. How have participants' beliefs, attitudes and ideologies about the various languages in their repertoires been shaped in Cameroon and modified in South Africa?
4. How have these attitudes and ideologies contributed towards the active modification of linguistic identities (if at all), and what are the consequences of this for the participants' languages and actual language use?
5. How and in what ways have participants been affected by their inability to communicate in the local languages/varieties of Cape Town, and what strategies do they normally put in place to overcome such challenges?
6. How has the process of migration to a new environment influenced the migrants in terms of their identities and their linguistic practices?

Furthermore, the study is based on the following assumptions:



1. The study of the migrants' repertoires will allow for documentation and awareness of the trajectories followed by Cameroon migrants in settling in Cape Town - the social and linguistic opportunities, constraints and inequalities they were and are still facing.
2. The use of South African languages as a means of integration and socialization with the local communities may have a beneficial effect on their education, jobs, businesses and social interactions.
3. Cameroonian migrants' 'diverse mobilities' are redefining community spaces in Cape Town.

### 1.3 My personal language biography

I was born in the North West Region of Cameroon in a small village called Chomba, 6 km from Bamenda, the main metropolitan Capital of the North West Region. The Northwest Region of Cameroon is part of the territory formerly known as the Southern Cameroons. It is bordered by the South West Region, the West Region and the Adamawa Region. The Chomba dialect is my mother-tongue. This dialect is classified under Ngemba which is a cluster of languages spoken in the Mezam Division of the North West Region. Most of the languages under the Ngemba cluster are mutually intelligible. This means that people from Mankon, Bafut, Akum, and Mbatu for example can understand each other when they communicate. None of these dialects have been standardized, thus most of them can only boast of some collections such as song booklets (using the English alphabet), an alphabet chart, diaries and prayer books, but no other books (Michael Ayotte, 2002).

The following is a map of the geographical distribution of the Ngemba languages (adapted from Breton and Fohitung, 1992:133).

# Mezam division, NW Province, Cameroon

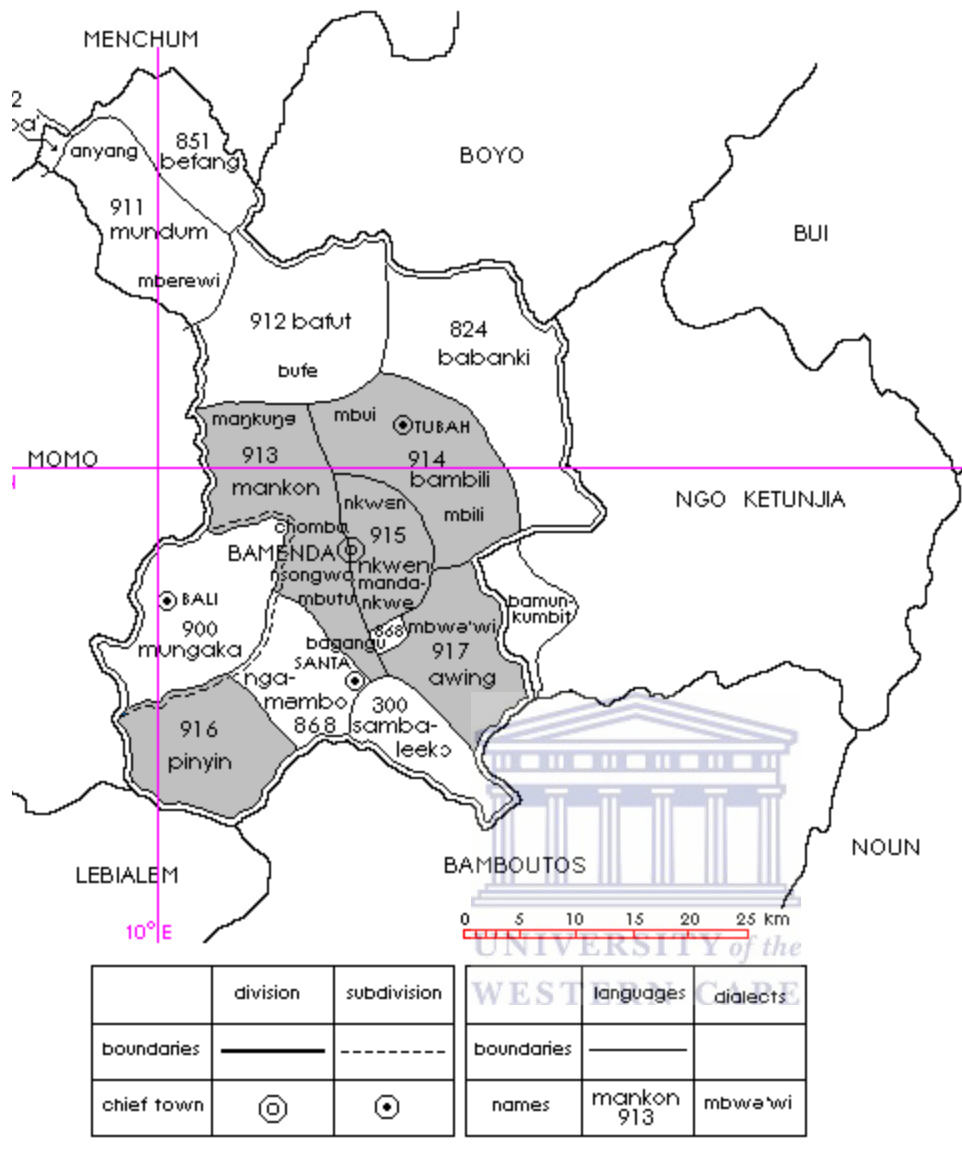


Figure 1. Languages in Mezam Division

## 1.3.1 Early childhood languages and schooling

I grew up in a highly multilingual family that spoke the following languages: Chomba, English, Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE), and Mugaka (a language spoken in Bali Nyonga a neighbor village to Chomba). The first language I spoke as a toddler is the Chomba dialect. I spoke this language at home and in the community as I started interacting with others. At home with my family we mostly spoke this dialect. Occasionally my mother, who was teaching in the same school I attended, spoke English to us at home but not CPE. When I started primary school I was exposed to other languages like the English language which was the medium of instruction, and CPE which

was mostly spoken in informal situations. I started speaking all these languages at school, at home and in the community as I interacted with others thereby assuming a normal polyglot status.

Although Cameroon is a bilingual country with English and French as official languages, I was introduced to other languages like CPE and Mugaka in my early years of schooling. I came into contact with French later in life as part of my academic development. Some of the primary schools in the urban areas introduced French as a subject, especially if it was a government school. The primary school I attended was a mission school owned by the Presbyterian mission which could not afford to hire a French teacher. Some government schools mostly in the urban areas however managed to introduce French in the school curriculum. I started learning both the spoken and the written forms of English. The teachers were expected at certain times in the course of the lesson to explain things in the local dialect (although the medium of instruction was English) to accommodate those pupils who could barely understand English. The school therefore made sure that only someone who understands the local dialect taught the first two grades.

School was exciting and I was eager to learn new things including new languages. The use of English was mostly for official classroom activities and for interaction with the teachers. The teachers' role did not end in the classroom but continued in the community where they were treated with a lot of respect. Many in the community looked up to them so no matter where we met our teachers; English was always the preferred means of communication. Outside the classroom I spoke a mixture of both CPE and the local dialect with my peers. English was only reserved for academic purposes. From the morning devotion to the singing of the national anthem and other school activities, everything was done in English. If there was a need to use other languages, for example during the youth day and national day celebrations every year to commemorate the unification of Cameroon, English, CPE or the local languages were used, but rarely French. The use of French in the Southern Cameroon Region was very minimal and mostly restricted to bilingual schools or schools in the urban areas.

In addition to the fact that I could communicate in my local dialect, English and CPE, Mugaka (a language spoken in one of the neighboring villages) also featured in my linguistic repertoire as already mentioned. This Mugaka was spoken mostly by the elders in my immediate and extended family. According to my family history my great grandfather hail from Bali where this language

is spoken. Although he later settled in Chomba as a result of his evangelism, my family still maintained a great connection to Mugaka believed to be the language of their forefathers. My family did not only speak this language to maintain that connection to their forefathers but also to counsel certain things to strangers like most people from my village that could not understand nor speak the language. I was not only exposed to Mugaka but actually started speaking it especially because I use to follow my grandmother to this neighboring village and my interactions there improved my competence in the language. Mugaka therefore pointed my family to their roots and it was also seen as the language for protection. My family made use of this language when they wanted to differentiate themselves from others, thus creating or marking a social boundary. This shows how language can be used to create boundaries between people.

Meanwhile, the language had different meanings to different people. It is also important to mention that the German scholars during the colonial era classified Mugaka as a semi-Bantu language. This classification was however rejected by the English Linguists who found nothing in common with the semi- Bantu language but for few imported words. This English linguist preferred the language to be called a Bantoid-language (Awah, 1997). The colonialist encounter with this language elevated it as a high profile language in the Southern Cameroon region. The language became influential in the province most especially because it had a well-developed bible and a hymn book. I could still remember vividly how in our local Presbyterian church even some songs were sung in Mugaka as well as prayers. The languages that dominated during my childhood and early schooling were the Chomba dialect, English, CPE and Mugaka and my choice of language use depended on the domain and the audience. That is to say who I am with, what we are discussing and where we are determines the language to speak.

When it comes to the issue of competence I cannot say I have full competence in all the languages in my repertoires but understanding and speaking few words in some of the languages qualified me as a multilingual. Multilingualism as argued by Blommaert (2010:102), should not be seen as a collection of 'languages' that a speaker controls, but rather as a complex of specific semiotic resources gathered here and there from all the languages in one's repertoire. Blommaert explains further that such resources include the various accents people have, their language varieties, genres, modalities and the different ways of using language in different contexts. These communicative repertoires he claims are not always complete languages or need not be complete languages in terms of full competence but bits and pieces of different languages and varieties that people draw on when communicating as they go about their daily activities or interactions.

Understanding people's communicative habits, like those of Cameroon migrants in Cape Town, entails examining all these different accents, varieties, styles, registers or modalities and so on that they use as they navigate between the different communities and spaces in their new ecology.

### 1.3.2 Secondary and high school languages

Although Cameroon's language policy stipulates equal bilingualism throughout the country, I was only introduced to French in secondary school. I learned French as a subject in school and this was only because it was a compulsory subject else I would not because I knew nothing about the language. I started learning how to speak and write French but my dislike for it continued. French periods were some of my worst periods and I could not wait for the bell to ring at the end of such classes. My inability to either understand or speak French was the main cause of my disdain towards the language. There were however some of my classmates that could actually speak write or understand French and I used to admire them when they spoke. They might have been lucky to go to schools where French was taught or have lived in the French region. I never spoke any word of French except during those French periods, as nobody spoke French outside of the classroom in my region. At the time it was difficult to see a Francophone in an English school unless it was a bilingual school. Even in the so-called bilingual schools (which were very few and limited to the urban areas) the Anglophone section was separated from the Francophone section so it was still difficult to see Anglophones speak French or vice versa since there was little or no interaction. Things have since improved and it is common to have Francophones attending English schools but rarely Anglophones attending French schools. Although many bilingual schools have been created, those that are actually functioning are found in the urban areas. The ones created in the rural areas are not really functioning properly.

After five years of secondary school I did two years of high school that qualified me to enter a higher institution. I moved from the secondary school to a bilingual high school. Since we were expected to specialize or choose subjects in high schools, French was never one of my subjects. It was still to be taken as a minor subject and the story is the same as in secondary school. At this stage I was no longer living in my own area and so I began using less of my local dialect. Cameroon Pidgin English was still the language that dominated in most of my interactions at school and in the community. I moved to other places with my languages including CPE which I continued making use of. CPE became a social currency for me whenever I travelled to other places.

At this bilingual school I became conscious about being an Anglophone or a Francophone although the two sections had nothing in common. Everything was done separately but you could hear a lot of French on campus especially during break times since everyone was allowed to interact during this time.

### 1.3.3 Higher institution of learning

When I completed high school I enrolled at the Higher Teachers' Training College (Ecole Normale Annex) situated in the Northwest region of Cameroon. The training college is a branch of the University of Yaoundé I. The medium of instruction is English except for those doing bilingual letters, whose subjects were mostly in French. While the first cycle of the training college based in the North West Region adopted English as the medium of instruction, the second cycle based in Yaoundé adopted French. Just like in the secondary and high school I again studied French as a subject. This meant that I only spoke French during French periods. Out of the normal classroom context, the languages that dominated most of my daily interactions were CPE and English. At this stage English was the preferred language and that is why even in out of school activities, English was mostly used although at times interspersed with CPE. My local dialect and Mugaka became valueless in this context as it was difficult to see someone from my area that spoke these dialects. Some languages or varieties lose their value or are devalued when they travel to new spaces. I however spoke these languages whenever I went home during holidays.

Just like in secondary and high school, CPE was being discouraged from use in the higher institution of learning for reasons that it accounts for the poor standard of English amongst the Anglophones. After three years of study at Ecole Normale I graduated with a diploma in teaching. I moved to Yaoundé I university and enrolled in the third year to obtain a BA degree. Although the courses are degree courses they are designed for the classroom and that is why we had to go to Yaoundé and do a one-year degree program. Things have since changed and the school now offers degree programs and so people wishing to continue studies or get into the second cycle do not need to go to Yaoundé. Here I was moving from a region that is predominantly English to another that is predominantly French. My movement was restricted due to language challenges. My inability to understand or speak French met with some repercussions. When people or messages move, they move through a space which is filled with codes, norms and expectations (Blommaert, 2010:32). In this new space I began to feel like a second class citizen and the space felt so alien to me. I looked upon myself as being inferior simply because I couldn't communicate or interact with

others. I begin to feel a sense of inequality and needed to figure out how to function in such a space. Blommaert (2010) proposes that scale is a metaphor used to imagine such moves. I was now in a space that expected me to function in a particular language or languages. It was not only French I had to deal with in this space but also the local languages like Ewondo, Beti and Bulu. Communication was extremely difficult for me in this market place.

Fortunately, I was in the department of English Modern Letters where everything was taught in English except during French periods. Just like in the teacher training, secondary and high school, French was taught only as a subject. This was however not the case with most of the Anglophones studying at this university. Most of the Anglophones did not only face challenges of large classes but also that of language. Most of the subjects were taught in French, unless they were lucky to get an Anglophone lecturer who could choose to lecture in English or French. It was even rare for most Anglophone lecturers to lecture in English as they also often preferred to lecture in French even with their limited competence in the language. After sitting through these large classes for the duration of the lecture, while the Francophones could go home to rest, the Anglophones were usually begging and borrowing notes to take to translators to be translated into English. At times some of the examination questions were set only in French to the detriment of the Anglophones and so the Anglophones failed the test or exam before attempting it due to their inability to interpret the question. This social and institutional language policy was a great asymmetry or imbalance in the relationship between the Francophone and Anglophone Cameroonians.

Outside of the lecture halls or the student residences, French was the language mostly spoken. On campus or in the community one could easily be identified as an Anglophone because one either spoke English or CPE. Most of the times we interacted mostly in CPE and English were reserved for official class activities. Even in the classroom we communicated in CPE but outside the hearing of the lecturer, thereby enacting self-censorship. Some students at this stage although they knew how to speak CPE didn't want to because of the negative discourse about the variety. The challenges (especially linguistic) in this new space reached a point where at times I decided to remain silent because I could not communicate in French. I also did not want to try because I was afraid I would be laughed at if I made a mistake. Such silencing can lead to a situation of discomfort. I still remember one incident when I had to rush back home to collect an assignment I forgot. I stood on the road side for more than 30 minutes trying to stop a taxi. No taxi would stop because I was not calling out the destination in French, and drivers did not want to waste time on an Anglophone. What happened to me that day is a typical example of what most Anglophones go



through in Yaoundé on a daily basis especially the newly arrived. It is also part of the possible biographies people travel with.

The space I just entered expected me to speak the right language and behave accordingly or face some consequences. Speaking the right language in this space was not all up to me or ‘others’. I still had access to my other languages and the only restriction was where and to whom I spoke these languages – or what Blommaert (2010) refer to as polycentricity. This concept questions the notion of authority, power and access when there are powerful voices at the centre of encounters. Polycentricity can also refer to the different languages, varieties, cultures that people encounter when they migrate to other places and how these differences play out in such places.

After obtaining my first degree, I found a part-time teaching job in a French secondary school to teach English to Francophones. My level of French improved while in this college because I was forced at times to explain certain things to students in French. Most of the students especially students in the first grade knew nothing in English so I was forced to say certain things in French for the lesson to continue. I started developing an interest in French because I realized that I needed it to discuss topics freely with students and colleagues. This positive attitude I developed greatly improved my level of French both in the spoken and written aspect. At the same time while at home I was also picking up French from my niece who could speak French very well. At times she even corrected my French if I spoke incorrectly and this is how my knowledge in French improved. Most of the Anglophone kids or pupils in Yaoundé could speak both English and French because most of the schools taught English and French on a 50/50 basis. This is however not the case with all the schools.

Meanwhile, back at home with the children we spoke only English. The elderly members in the family usually communicated in CPE but when it comes to communicating with the children we immediately switched to English, believing like many others that CPE would negatively influence their English proficiency. At times we tried to teach them our local languages so they could understand or speak it. Their knowledge of CPE and the local languages was rather poor because their exposure to these languages was limited. However, the use of local dialects in the rural areas and CPE especially among the youths is still very common.



### 1.3.4 The ‘push and pull factors’ of migration: my journey to South Africa

At some point in people’s lives, they may find the environment in which they live less conducive to attaining a better life and they may be attracted to other spaces which offer more opportunities and better environments. The relationship between migration and network plays out here as most people migrate to areas where they know people. Once the choice is made to move to these more desirable spaces, it usually means taking up a new status as either a translocal or transnational migrant. Lee (1966) describes migrants as people who are subject to either ‘push’ or ‘pull’ factors. Referring to push factors, Lee alludes to things that are unfavorable about an area that one lives in such as not enough jobs, lack of political and religious freedom and poor medical care- Pull factors, on the other hand, refer to those things that attract one to another area (job opportunities, better living conditions education and better medical care). Migration is one of the most direct outcomes of poverty and social disturbances, and the continent of Africa is a major theatre of migration activity (Cross, Gelderblom, Roux, and Mafukidze, 2006:1). When people migrate to other areas they expect their living conditions to be better as they have to care for themselves as well as providing for the families they left behind.

In my case, the ‘push’ factor was that my job as a part-time teacher was not taking me anywhere. I got very little pay and could not meet my expenses. My attempts to get a decent job proved abortive. One day I got a call from a friend who was a classmate at the teachers’ training college. She had relocated to Cape Town some four years back and at the time of our discussion she was doing her master’s degree. She knew the situation I was facing back home at the time after going through the same situation. According to her after leaving and studying in South Africa for four years she believed South Africa to be better than Cameroon. She proposed I undertake the journey to South Africa and promised to look for admission at the University. At first I wasn’t taking the proposition seriously because of some reasons. I knew little about South Africa except about the history of apartheid and the fact that many people were infected with HIV and AIDS. The ‘pull’ factor for me was this prospect of a better life in South Africa and a chance to improve my qualifications. I accepted her offer and my first application for a study visa was rejected because of insufficient funds. At the same time, I also lost my mother. All these difficulties and challenges compounded my problems and I was now more determined to leave Cameroon. I re-applied the following year and was granted a study permit.

I boarded the Kenya Airways flight and with a two hours' stopover in Kenya, arrived in Cape Town the following day. As we drove past through the streets of Cape Town, I had these mixed feelings of happiness and sadness. As usual my hosts receive me in Cameroon Pidgin English interspersed at times with Cameroon Standard English. At times they spoke to me in their native languages – the *Mbili* or *Bafut* dialect which I understood a little. We normally speak these languages when we want to hide certain information from others. In addition, my host family had children who attending Cape Town schools and interacting with South African kids. What happens during such interactions are important for this study.

Finally, we went to campus to commence with my registration process. After the registration classes started it took me no time to realize that I was again in a new environment, in which I struggled to understand what people were saying not only in Xhosa or Afrikaans but also in English. The English many people spoke was so different from the one we speak in Cameroon. At times I nodded my head even without understanding what was said. The accents were so different and for the first time I started feeling the reality not only of living in a strange country but also in languages and accents that were so different from mine. I was not only affected by these language differences but also in my modules as some of them needed an understanding of Cape Town society. I again felt handicapped due to all these different challenges I had to face on a daily basis. Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck's (2005:198) quote below summarizes such situations:

*'People with highly developed multilingual skills can feel, and be, communicatively incapacitated when they are out of place. One can find oneself struggling with the most basic and mundane tasks in a foreign country because they don't speak your language, they don't speak any language, or, from a different perspective, because you lack the specific multilingual resources and skills required in that place. A change in spatial environment clearly affects our capacity to deploy linguistic resources and skills and imposes requirements on us which we may fail to meet a quite common globalization experience which we accept as a sociolinguistic problem'.*

Apart from the school context described above with regards to Cape Town's languages, I also needed to function in the community. My first exposure to Xhosa words was at home with our neighbor who was a Xhosa lady. She used to speak with her daughter and I picked up a few words.

On campus, in the community and in my daily encounters I interacted with Xhosa and Afrikaans speakers but mostly in English. I didn't feel like it was an obligation for me to learn their languages, as English is the medium of instruction at the university and I was not living in either a predominantly 'colored' or 'black' area. However, there were certain moments when I felt the need to learn especially Xhosa, as Xhosa people like to speak their language and they will speak Xhosa with all black people. Occasionally, some people also mistook me for an Afrikaans speaker perhaps because of my skin complexion. In such moments I always felt sad or embarrassed by my inability to interact in either Afrikaans or Xhosa. At times I spoke a few words in Afrikaans or Xhosa to blend in or to feel like I also belong. When I was in spaces in which I felt unsafe, I normally didn't answer my phone or even speak because of fear of being identified as a foreigner. There are however other spaces that make you feel comfortable and not feel treated badly because of where you come from like the Bellville Presbyterian church I started to attend. The church does not only tolerate diversity but actually embraces it. When you are in such an environment you feel at home without having that feeling of being marginalized.

Interacting with my fellow Cameroonian migrants here in Cape Town is still very much a reflection of the language practices back home with the addition of the Cape Town languages - a heteroglossic situation where different languages, accent, varieties, dialects, registers, styles etc. feature in our daily interactions depending on the context and domain. At home, I speak only English to my son and he is picking up Afrikaans in the crèche he attends. He sings some of the Afrikaans songs taught in the crèche. My choice that he speaks only English means that we have a family language policy. My plan is that when he starts primary school I will enroll him in a predominantly English medium school. The area I am living in exposes him to Afrikaans speakers and I believe that the Afrikaans he is learning is of a low standard. That also keeps me thinking and worried about the quality of his education.

After reflecting and going through my language trajectories, it should be clear that my identity and that of my family will never be the same again. My identity is a social product and it allows me to draw from my social history and what I have actually internalized through socialization. I believe that coming to South Africa has meant that a lot has changed with regards to my identity and my social interactions. Now that I have presented my language biography connected to the trajectories I followed as a migrant, it is important to point out that my research respondents followed far more complex trajectories than I did. Not everyone had the convenience of travelling directly to their ultimate destination, but many moved several times, from one country to another and from one

city to another. This led to the development of very complex multilingual repertoires as well as complex identities.

## 1.4 Methodology

### 1.4.1 Sampling and sampling selection techniques

The study follows an ethnographic-styled research method informed by the interpretive paradigm that describes and interprets data qualitatively. The sampling is purposefully done and thus 14 participants (Cameroonians) were selected from all walks of life such as students and ordinary migrants, males and females aged between 25 years and 50 years. Amongst the 14 participants 9 came from the individual interviews and the other 5 from the focus group discussion. In addition, 7 were people whose living condition can be described as '*stable*' and the other 7 whose conditions are said to be '*precarious*'. While selecting this group of migrants, I was also very interested in those who have children. Opportunistic sampling was done because some of the unexpected and unforeseen opportunities (usually emanating from informal discussions) could add value to the research.

### 1.4.2 Data collection techniques and procedures

The study adopted a multiple interpretative qualitative method (that is multiple interpretative frameworks) as well as multiple data collection sites. This was to get a better understanding of the research problem. The data collection strategies and procedures included interviews, focused group interviews, observations, as well as participant narratives. Participants who were willing to participate in the research (during the interview schedule) were identified, briefed about the research and interviewed. When the purpose of the research and instructions on what to do was understood, these individuals were then interviewed with the aid of some guiding questions. Additional questions were asked depending on responses to the interview questions. Data was also collected through focus group discussions developed from the research assumptions. While the focus group discussions were going on, I acted as the moderator to see that misunderstandings did not occur and to prevent some participants from dominating others. Participants were given the choice of French, English or Pidgin English (or mixtures of these languages) in which to provide answers to the research. The choice of these languages allowed the participants to demonstrate their plurilingual and pluricultural flexibility in their narratives as well as in the process of describing their relationship with various languages and cultures.

Participant observation is a type of research method in which the researcher actively participates in the activities of the people s/he is researching. Therefore, a participant observer immerses him/herself into the group, becoming part of the people being observed. I actively participated in some leisure activities taking note of particular information vital to the study. I also passively observed people's interactions in order to see how they engaged their linguistic repertoire during their interactions to make meaning and stylize identities. This method was used to complement the other data collection methods. As a migrant myself and a member of the Cameroon migrant community, my active participation in these activities was an added advantage and thus also complimented the other methods. A digital voice recorder was used during the individual and the focus group interviews.

## 1.5 Data analysis

Since this is a descriptive interpretive study, I adopted the poststructuralist approaches to analysis while drawing on thematic content analysis, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis and a Multimodal Biographic Approach. A text-based analysis which allows for an in-depth consideration of data (Leedy, 1997:107) was used. The text in this case was the individual and focus group interview data. In the process of analysis, content, context and form were considered. In analysing content, a consideration was made not only about what was said or written but also about what was omitted and why. According to Pavlenko (2007), textual analysis should consider both the immediate or micro context as well as the remote or macro context. Since the study used the poststructuralist approach, I analysed the data with a consideration of the notion of translocality. Translocality (with focus on positioning) was important, since it helps in the examination of the semiotic resources available for self-expression, communication, meaning-making and identification by means of which local and translocal identities are negotiated, challenged and maintained.

## 1.6 An outline of the chapters

### Chapter One

This chapter is an introduction to the thesis where my personal language biography is presented. Here, the objectives, research questions, research assumptions and a brief summary of methodology are presented.

### Chapter Two

This chapter examines literature as well as concepts related to the study. A review of some studies of migration and its impact on identity construction and language use are presented here. Some important concepts such as indexicality, migration, multilingualism, identity, voice, agency and repertoire vital in understanding the study also form part of this chapter. Aspects of Cameroon's sociolinguistic history are also covered in this chapter.

### Chapter Three

This chapter is the theoretical and analytical framework. The theoretical framework for this study combines the social constructionist and poststructuralist approaches to identity. For the analytical framework, a multi-dimensional analytical approach is employed; incorporating Discourse Analysis (DA), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Thematic Analysis (TA) and the Multimodal Biographic Approach. The chapter also reviews literature in which theoretical issues on language and identity are examined.

### Chapter Four

Chapter Four examines the design and methodology of the study. Here, the research design, sampling, and sample selection techniques, data collection procedures, data processing, and the transcription key are presented. The chapter also gives insight into the ethical procedures that needed to be followed with my human subjects.

### Chapter Five

Chapter Five is an exploration of the uneven and heterogeneous linguistic profiles of my research participants - how they describe and present their languages or language profiles as well as ways in which their multilingual repertoires have influenced their lives as migrants in Cape Town. The chapter examines briefly the influence of language ideologies and attitudes on the linguistic profiles of my respondents.



## Chapter Six

This chapter looks in more detail at their ideologies and attitudes regarding English, their home languages, French, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. How have these beliefs about languages been shaped in Cameroon and modified in South Africa? How have they contributed towards the active modification of linguistic identities, if at all, and what are the consequences of this for their actual language use? The chapter explores the feelings and attitudes participants have about their linguistic repertoires and what value they place on these languages especially as migrants in Cape Town. It shows how people move not only with their languages but also with their attitudes, artefacts and symbols. All these undergo some modification as they come into contact with 'others'.

## Chapter Seven

This chapter discusses the communication challenges faced by migrants in Cape Town as well as their strategies to overcome such challenges. The chapter discusses the communicative strategies (also known as communication tactics) that migrants employ daily in their lived spaces. The data is drawn from the focus group discussions, which was analyzed thematically.

## Chapter Eight

The chapter offers an analysis of the trajectories of migration followed by the participants in moving from Cameroon to South Africa, and the city of Cape Town in particular. The chapter also presents responses of participants comparing their life experiences in the two countries especially in the area of forming friendship, work, employment, schooling for children and the South African way of life. The chapter also focuses on the related issues of language, culture and identity as they affect these migrants. Above all, the chapter examines participants' migration experiences, what they have learned as migrants and how they see their future as migrants in Cape Town.

## Chapter Nine

This is the concluding chapter and discusses some of the implications of the study's findings for certain linguistic theories and concepts. The chapter is a response to the objectives of the study. It summarizes the research findings based on the questions that were asked in chapter one. The implications of the study and the contribution it has made in the field of study are also addressed

in this chapter, together with some recommendations for future research in this specific research field.

### 1.7 Summary of chapter

The chapter looked at the background and context to the study, aims and objectives, research problem and research questions. As a way of introducing the thesis, a personal narrative which captures my own trajectories and changing linguistic identities as a migrant was presented in this chapter. The chapter also sketched the research methodology and chapter outline.



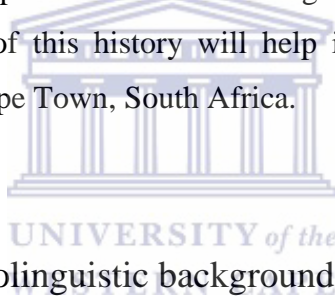


## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

Given the focus of this study, the literature review examines studies on migration by Africans to South Africa, specifically Cameroonians, and the impact of such migration on identity construction and language use. It is important to mention that there are a number of studies conducted on Cameroon migrants in Cape Town. Most of these studies have focused on language practices, attitudes and identity among Black African migrants in Cape Town, including Cameroonians. To contextualize these studies, I first present a brief sociolinguistic history of both Cameroon and South Africa. An understanding of this history will help in understanding the dynamism of migrants' linguistic practices in Cape Town, South Africa.



#### 2.1 A brief historical and sociolinguistic background of Cameroon

The World Bank Institution, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) (2015) declares that Cameroon is a lower middle-income country with a population of 21.7 million people. Situated in Central Africa, it shares a border with Nigeria, Chad, Central African Republic (CAR), Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon. Two regions are Anglophone (the northwest and southwest regions that border Nigeria) while the rest of the country is Francophone. There are ten administrative regions, two of which are English-speaking and eight French-speaking.

Historically, the European acknowledgment of Cameroon is noted as around 1472 when a Portuguese navigator called Fernando Po arrived the Bight of Biafra, then sailed up the Wouri River situated in the Coastal region (Echu, 2004). The navigator was surprised to see shrimps in the river, and so baptized the river "Rio dos Camarões" (river of shrimps). This name which was to be associated with the country became "Kamerun" during the German colonial period and "Cameroon" or "Cameroun" during British and French colonial rule (Echu, 2004). In the area of education, two sub-systems exist in Cameroon: The Anglophone system of education based on the

Anglo-Saxon model and the Francophone system based on the French model. Although the two are used side by side, a bilingual system of education is also operational at the university level where studies are carried out in both English and French (Echu, 2004).

According to Anchimbe (2011), to really understand the complexities of Cameroon sociolinguistics it is important that one traced the history of Cameroon which is not only complex but also diverse. The starting point of the linguistic trajectories of Cameroon migrants in Cape Town explored in this study is Cameroon sociolinguistic history. Modern Cameroon, like other African countries, is a European creation (Awasom, 2004:90). Cameroon became a German protectorate in 1884 after the Scramble for Africa. During the First World War in Africa, German Cameroon was defeated by the Allies and was unequally divided by the British and the French. The British acquired just one-fifth of German Cameroon, while the remaining four-fifths went to the French (Awasom, 2004:90). This unequal division ultimately gave rise to an Anglophone minority and a Francophone majority in the new Cameroon nation-state that emerged after reunification in 1961 (Awasom, 2004:90). According to several scholars (Anchimbe, 2005a, 2005b, Awasom, 2004, Echu, 2004), the Anglophone/Francophone debate has come to define Cameroon's sociolinguistic and ethnic affiliations. Most of the authors have argued that Cameroonians have given up their African mother tongues and have opted to be identified as simply Anglophone or Francophone. The fact that many have written on this Anglophone/Francophone divide indicates that there is a problem. Cameroonians carry some of these sociolinguistic problems to places they migrate to. A brief understanding of Cameroon sociolinguistics will pave the way for a better grasp of the linguistic trajectories and practices of Cameroon migrants into and around Cape Town, South Africa. The following sub-section presents a brief sociolinguistic history of Cameroon before, during and after colonialism.

### 2.1.1 Pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial Cameroon sociolinguistics.

#### *Pre-colonial Cameroon*

To better understand the sociolinguistic practice of migrants from Cameroon in the post-apartheid South Africa, it is worthwhile to examine its language history and development during the pre-colonial period and the effect of this on the present language practices of Cameroonians in Cape Town. Before the coming of the Europeans there was no Cameroon as it is known today. What is generally admitted by historians is that the first contact that Cameroon had with the Western

world was with the Portuguese around 15Bc (Fanso, 1975). With the visit of Fernando Po Cameroon got its name (Azeyey, Hansel Ndumbe, Lyonga, 2013). What was known of the country during this period was limited to the coastal region (Anye, 2008). According to Anye (2008), on the eve of colonization there were basically two types of political organizations operating in Cameroon, a centralized and uncentralized political system. Ngefac (2010) also argue that most Africans and Asians already had a well-organized established, political, social, economic and communicative system before the colonizers came. He added that linguistically, most of these areas already had complicated multilingual landscapes and colonialism only came to add to these complexities by introducing additional languages. Even with this complicated multilingual landscape, most Africans did not see a problem as they could still function normally in their numerous languages. Even the use of the English language and CPE which had been introduced prior to Colonialism by some European traders had no impact on the indigenous population as it was limited only to the coastal area.

Anchimbe (2007: 3) joins Makoni and Meinhof (2003: 1) to confirm that many African and Asian countries were already multilingual before the arrival of the colonialists. A lot of activities happening at the time brought about the multilingual nature of Cameroon. The displacement of people caused by wars, slave trade and other intertribal activities such as marriages, trade and the search for fertile land all aid in Cameroon becoming multilingual. Multilingualism therefore existed in Cameroon long before the introduction of colonialism.

### *Colonial Cameroon*

The colonial era in Cameroon was marked by the signing of the Germano-Douala treaty in July 1884 that made Cameroon a German protectorate. With the defeat of Germany in 1916 during the First World War, Cameroon was divided between Britain and France, and administered first under the League of Nations mandate and later under the United Nations trusteeship. Britain got two discontinuous strips of land of about 90,000km<sup>2</sup> along the Nigerian border: the strip to the north was called "Northern British Cameroons" and that to the south was called "Southern British Cameroons". The French got the lion's share and administered it as an independent territory, whereas the British administered theirs from Lagos in Nigeria (Echu, online). Following the defeat of the Germans in Cameroon, there were some changes in the language policy since the country was now under the French and the British rule. The British practiced the policy of 'Indirect Rule' whereby the use of indigenous languages was almost an imperative since the British administrators

governed through traditional authorities (Echu, online). French-speaking Cameroon on the other hand aimed at transforming Cameroonians into Frenchmen and thus implemented the policy of Assimilation (Echu, online). The complex language question in Cameroon can thus be traced as far back as the colonial and pre-colonial period.

The dehumanizing practice referred to as colonialism involved the total domination and transformation of African and Asian nations by some Western nations (Ngefacs, 2010). According to Ngefacs (2010), the political, economic and social life of the colonized nations were invaded, transformed and controlled by the colonizers through the practice of colonization. The languages and cultures of the colonized people were downgraded and the people were made to look inferior. This type of inferiority complex, referred to by Bokamba, (2007: 41) as “ukolonia” tendency, changed the lives and thinking of many people during this colonial period. Many see their cultures and languages as of low-standard and that of the colonialist as high-standard and the only medium through which effective communication can take place (Ngefacs, 2010). Some are even ready to negotiate their own identities to embrace one that strongly links them to the Western world (Ngefacs, 2010). No doubt most Cameroonians today treats CPE and their local languages with disrespect and resentment. The influence of colonialism in Cameroon has changed the attitudes of most Cameroonians regarding the indigenous languages. It is left to be seen if Cameroonians in Cape Town have maintained or changed this attitude.

### 2.1.2 Problematizing language and identity in contemporary Cameroon

Anchimbe (2005:40) claims that Cameroonians are trapped in a complex linguistic system with various kinds of unhappiness. The 11<sup>th</sup> province issue (since the province is neither Anglophone nor Francophone), the Anglophone problem (since the Anglophone part of the population is marginalized by the populous Francophone) and the Southern Cameroons secession issue (since the political union at independence has failed to guarantee equity for Anglophones, are some of the issues that Cameroonians especially Anglophones) are unhappy about. In spite of the fact that English and French are considered to be equal in status as per the new Constitution, French has a *de facto* dominance over English in the areas of administration, education and the media (Echu, 2004). Echu (2004) maintains that the policy of official bilingualism in French and English has created an Anglophone/Francophone divide which to him constitutes a serious problem. The policy of official bilingualism instituted in Cameroon as a way of fostering unity between the two unequal parts has instead created disunity and conflict among the Anglophones and the Francophones. This

disunity that Echu, (2004) points out has also created a sense of cultural identity among the Anglophones simply because they speak English. English to the Anglophones is a symbol to stay united against the hostilities of the French system operating in Cameroon. How does this sense of unity divide play out in the context of Cape Town?

Cameroonians are not only discontent but also linguistically confused (Anchimbe, 2011). Anchimbe (2011) holds the view that Cameroon's multilingual background has created this identity confusion as many are confused as to which language to identify with. Is it the national language identity, official language identity, ethnic identity, bilingual identity and individual identity that a typical Cameroonian struggle to identify with? This confusion is blamed on the linguistic system instituted by colonialism. Bird (2001) also testifies to this linguistic confusion when he came up with his argument about the 'African confusion of tongues'. Most agree on the fact that Cameroon's peculiar heterogeneous language situation does not facilitate linguistic communication; on the contrary, it constitutes a major handicap to linguistic communication in view of the absence of a nation-wide lingua franca that serves as a common linguistic idiom.

Another area of discontent manifested by Cameroonians is the issue of the 11<sup>th</sup> province. The 11<sup>th</sup> province refers to those from the Western region of Cameroon who by virtue of their origin are considered Francophones but who have lived and worked all their lives in the South West region. They are Francophones by origin but Anglophone by upbringing and linguistic expression. They are referred to as the 11<sup>th</sup> province because they are neither Anglophones nor Francophones which is expressed as a state of being "in between". Cameroon has ten provinces that are generally categorized as either English- (Anglophone) or French- (Francophone) speaking. The 11<sup>th</sup> province group is extensively bilingual and does not fit squarely into any of these linguistic categorizations (Anchimbe, 2011). Anchimbe (2011) observes that children born in the so-called 11<sup>th</sup> province had difficulties returning to the Francophone region, where they are treated as outsiders, while they are also considered outsiders in the same Anglophone region where they were born. He adds that although they may own property in the South West province, they are not treated as part of the tribal heritage and so have no claim to it. Most of them do not even speak French, but since their parents or grandparents came from a French-speaking zone, they are considered Francophones. This group therefore feels marginalized and separated from the other provinces and so identification and belonging becomes critical and problematic.

It was the Southern Cameroon (South West and North West region) that attempted to break away from Cameroon, as they believe that the political union at independence had failed to guarantee equality for Anglophones. This group of Cameroonians feels the best way to end this marginalization is to separate and create their own state or province from the rest of the country. If this secession were to happen then English will be the language of Southern Cameroon. From the subtle complaints of the Anglophones to the declaration of independence of the Federal Republic of Southern Cameroon, one thing is made quite clear - the quest for a modest and worthy identity is intricately linked to one's language and the strong attachment to it (Anchimbe, 2011). Do Cameroonians in Cape Town construct identities that link them to the languages they speak or do they construct a unified identity despite their different linguistic backgrounds?

## 2.2 Sociolinguistic practices in contemporary Cameroon

### 2.2.1 Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE)

The unification of Cameroon in 1961 gave birth to the Federal Republic of Cameroon which adopted the colonial languages English and French as official languages. According to Dyers and Abongdia (2015:2), "French became the lingua franca in the Francophone territories of Cameroon while Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE) served the same purpose in the Anglophone territory". Most of the participants in this study have a mastery of these languages such as English, French, Cameroon Pidgin English or Cameroon Pidgin French (CPE/CPF) which are also considered as lingua franca. The origin and influence of CPE in Cameroon sociolinguistics is important in understanding the current linguistic practices of Cameroon migrants in Cape Town.

CPE has existed in Cameroon for more than 500 years (Kouega, 2003) and its significance can be felt almost everywhere in Cameroon especially in the North-West and South-West provinces, but also in the Littoral and West provinces. Presently, even its influence can also be felt in several major towns of the Francophone provinces. Thus, CPE is no longer perceived exclusively as a lingua Franca of the English-speaking population, but a language that has a possible national dimension (Echu, online). Kouega (2012: 212) establishes that CPE is present in the daily socio-economic lives of the people, a role it began to play as far back as the German colonial period. He claims that when the Germans claimed Cameroon as a colony in 1884, CPE was a fully developed language. The influence of CPE is therefore evident in the lives of most Cameroonians.

The linguistic features of CPE are believed to have been drawn from the colonial languages as well as the indigenous languages. Ngefac (2010) claims that there are even traces of Portuguese in



the language, given that the language was born out of contact between the indigenous population and Portuguese businessmen who came to the coastal regions of Cameroon in 1472 in search of slaves and raw material. In addition, it has even become the mother tongue of many children in Cameroon (Koenig et al., 1983; Schröder, 2003; Neba et al., 2006). Anchimbe (2011) believes that CPE is still considered as broken and uncivilized English, although it is spoken by many people in Cameroon. This negative appraisal he adds stems from the fact that CPE is a non-literate code and is not taught in schools like English and French. It has therefore become the target for accusations of fallen and falling standards in English and education in general. Although no one wants to identify with it, everyone seems to use it. CPE forms part of the communicative resource that Cameroon migrants possess in Cape Town and hence has an influence on their language practices.

### 2.2.2 Cameroon Pidgin French (CPF)

While (CPE) functions as a lingua franca in the Anglophone region, (CPE) does the same in the francophone region. CPF is a type of French spoken in Cameroon mostly by school dropouts or those who have never had the opportunity of learning French in a formal school setting Echu (2004:1). Some even believe that CPF is used in the political sphere by politicians as well as in some official domains. CPF is a mixture of English, French and Creole (or CPE) and is mostly visible in urban towns like Douala and Yaoundé. It is a new linguistic practice in Cameroon. The origins of Camfranglais, CPF or Franglais as it is variously called are much more recent than those of Cameroon Pidgin English (Ngefac, 2010). These developing languages are actually in-group languages with well-defined boundaries (Ngefac, 2010) and most of its lexical items are taken from French and English. It is interesting in the present study to find out if (or not) Cameroon migrants in Cape Town make use of this language.

### 2.3 The influence of globalization on Cameroon sociolinguistics

Globalization as used in this study refers to social, economic, cultural and demographic processes that take place within nations but also transcend them (Kearney, 1995). In the last decade, multilingual Cameroon has awoken to a new linguistic reality characterized by reconstructing linguistic identities in order to fit in the global space (Fonyuy, 2010). This is seen in contexts where it is reported that more and more urban Francophones are pursuing English medium education and the Anglophone population seems to be consolidating their identity alignment with the English language (Fonyuy, 2010). The growing dominance of English as a supranational language seen in

its use not only as a language but also in communication and technology (Anchimbe, 2005a) has added to this quest for English by Cameroon francophone. Anchimbe (2005a) observes that the globalization of English and its status as key to doors of international opportunities has aroused an unprecedented rush for English by Francophones. With the status of English, its internationalization and the opportunities of employment, interpersonal interaction, and cross-national integration, Cameroonians have realized that the official bilingualism system decreed in 1961 was a total failure (Anchimbe, 2005a).

Francophone Cameroonians need English to benefit like others from the opportunities offered by the commonwealth organization and other world opportunities. Thanks to the influence of globalization, the change of attitudes towards English is reflected in the linguistic practices of French Cameroonians today.

## 2.4 Migration and the issue of trajectories

Migration is a broad topic and due to its interdisciplinary nature some specialists in international migration studies have noted how difficult it is to come up with a comprehensive theory of migration. Castells (2010:1566) reiterates that the quest for an agreed migration theory remains elusive. Castells (2010: 1565-73) advances five reasons to justify these obstacles in developing a sound and acceptable theoretical model or framework in migration studies. Based on the lack of a comprehensive migration theory noted by international migration specialists, Castells (2010) suggests that a possible solution does not lie in seeking to come up with a comprehensive theory of migration but rather, migration researchers should aim to develop moderate theories. These moderate theories he notes, can help to integrate the insights of the various social sciences to understand the regularities and variation of a range of migration processes within a given historical and spatial context. The idea proposed by Castells is that a middle-range theory can form the basis for a conceptual framework which takes contemporary social transformation processes as a starting point for understanding the dynamics related to migration. It is for this reason that the present study focuses on the linguistic aspect of migration paying attention to what happens to people and their languages when they travel or migrate to other places.

Like many developing countries in the world, the socio-political situation of Cameroon is the major factor leading to the migration of some of its citizens to countries considered to be of a better economic standard. Cameroon like most developing countries has been experiencing development difficulties since the 1980s due to poverty, economic crises, soaring population growth, an external



debt burden, the poorly controlled urbanization of cities and adjustment policies that are often not suited to the national situation (Cameroon Migration Profile, 2009:23). Furthermore, there have been political instability, internal conflicts, high unemployment and socio-political tension due to the high cost of living. The analysis of poverty indicators shows a 55 percent incidence of poverty among the population in 2007, which is far from the objective of 25 percent that the state hoped to achieve by 2015 according to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cameroon Household Survey (ECAM111, 2007).

Due to economic and socio-political unrest in some African countries, Africans, including Cameroonians, have migrated to South Africa in search of better living conditions. Their movement into South Africa is not only a physical one but also psychological one. They have not moved single handed but with their baggage. How they migrated and the consequences of their migration is important. Cross, Gelderblom, Roux and Mafukidze (2006: 104) believe there is no single definition of migration and that in essence, migration should involve change of residence, and must accompany the crossing of the boundary of a migration-defining area. Migration therefore takes into account simple events in the life cycle of the individual, such as moving from one place to another. Distance covered or borders crossed qualify one as a local, national, regional or international migrant according to these authors. Migration, as defined by Vigouroux, (2005:243), refers to a change of both physical and geographical space. In attempting to explain the causes and consequences of migration, scholars have come up with some explanations. Cross *et al.* (2006:104) declare that the longest-established migration models put economic gain first, emphasises rational choice, and define-out other considerations. According to Cross *et al.* (2006: 104), alternative models from the political left have emphasized on international power relations stressing the internal workings of the household. Cross and colleagues cite Massey *et al.*, 1998) who pointed out that decisions to migrate are not always made by isolated individual actors *per se*, but sometimes by families of such individuals, their relations and even their communities.

Most recently, concern for human rights issues in migration has widened the spheres of migration debate but none of these theoretical positions dealt sufficiently with forced migration resulting from war, conflict and natural disasters, or from political and administrative decisions (Cross *et al.*, 2006:104). Lekogo (cited in Cross *et al.*, 2006:210-211) advances some reasons why migrants choose South Africa as their destination. In his study of Francophone Africans Lekogo summarizes the reasons why many Africans migrate to South Africa citing South Africa's strong and diversified economy, good academic and health infrastructures and good democratic system

amongst many others. These factors are attractive to most African migrants who respond by migrating or by sending family members to South Africa.

To understand the dynamics of migrants' journeys as well as the shifting destinations Schapendonk (2012:31) believes the unit of analysis should be *trajectories*. Schapendonk (2012: 32) contend that "migrants' trajectories are not closed-off corridors but open and process-like phenomena as they are influenced by, among others, the trajectories of other people, objects, capital, rules and information". He thinks that it is important to look at the motivation for the journey, facilitation of the journey and the velocity of journeys. He explains how the facilitation of the journey is largely found in migrants' connections with other people, and while motivation and facilitation give journeys a certain direction, these factors do not reveal how fast or slow the journey is (Schapendonk, 2012). In such contexts, "migration trajectories are not only about mobility, but even about periods of rest, re-orientation and (un)expected and (un)intended temporary or long-term settlements" (Schapendonk, 2012:32). A critical exploration of the language biographies of selected Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town is therefore possible by tracing their linguistic trajectories, starting with their language practices in post-colonial Cameroon.

In order to understand migrants' linguistic trajectories en route to Cape Town, spatiality or the issue of space is another critical consideration. Space, its ownership and the way it is occupied is a profound semiotic for the politics of post-apartheid South Africa (Ndebele, 2007:104, cited in Mpendukana, 2009:25). Studying the linguistic biographies of Cameroonians in Cape Town is incomplete if one does not take into consideration the racial classification of the Cape Town community. In South Africa, different spaces occupied by different ethnic groups are commonly referred to as suburbs, townships, locations and informal settlements. This ethnic or racial classification of the linguistic landscape is important as it shapes people's linguistic practices and attitudes. The act of dividing citizens by ethnic group is always aimed at creating the impression of superiority and enforces an ideology of White supremacy at the top of an ethnic hierarchy, with Black people at the bottom of the ladder (Farquharson, 2007:1). Murray (2010) argues that almost everywhere you go in South Africa you are presented with a spatial and architectural reminder of the colonial and apartheid past - there are monuments and buildings that are symbols of power and wealth; while on the other there are the spaces of underdevelopment - townships and informal settlement at the margin of the cities. This gives an idea of the kind of society Cape Town or South Africa is.

The present study adopts a multiple data collection technique. The sampling of participants in this study takes this approach into consideration. Respondents from the suburbs and the locations or townships will be included in the study. In order to better understand these spatial practices, a brief historical and sociolinguistic overview of South Africa is necessary and is presented later in the chapter.

## 2.5 The influence of transnationalism on Cameroon sociolinguistics

Cameroonians were transnationals from the time of colonial exploitation. According to Bird, (2001:7) the European powers which penetrated Cameroon came not just with new ideas but with new cultural baggage. These colonialists came with the notion of “nation-states” which created new identities in Cameroon. They carried the idea of “nation states” with them to Cameroon and Cameroonians had to learn and take up these identities whether they liked it or not. The multiplicity of identities witnessed in Cameroon becomes more complicated not only with the increase in transnational migration, but also with the explosion in technology, media and communication. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:2) therefore believe that a closer look at the concepts of language and identity in contexts of transnationalization will x-ray some of these complexities.

The idea of migrants’ “transnationalism” arose in the early 1990s when anthropologists observed strong connections between the sending and receiving countries of international migrants (Snell, Engbersen and Leerkes, 2006: 285). Schiller, Basch, and Blanc, (1995) assert that modern immigrants cannot be regarded as the “uprooted.” Many are trans-migrants, becoming strongly entrenched in their new country but keeping multiple connections to their motherland. Transnationalism is concerned with the crossing of cultural, ideological, linguistic, and geopolitical borders and boundaries of all types but especially those of nation-states (Vertovec, 2004, 2009). Anthropologists Basch, Glick Schiller, and Blanc-Szanton (1994:6) first defined transnationalism as the “process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement”. The personal histories, trajectories, aspirations, and mobility of transnationals have become central themes in identity research that focuses on immigrants, international sojourners, internal migrants in multiethnic or multilingual societies, asylum seekers, diaspora members, distance learners, and other mobile users of language (through face-to-face and digital contact) across increasingly porous geopolitical and ethnolinguistic borders and across spaces and places, both real and imagined (Duff, 2015).

Multilingualism and transnationalism are also tied to identity that is, how people see or imagine themselves, how they relate to the social world, and how they are seen or positioned by others in their various social, cultural, and linguistic settings, and thus their sense of belonging to and legitimacy within particular social groups near and far (Block, 2007; Hornberger, 2007; Norton, 2013). Transnationalism is also useful for examining the effects of polycentricity which is a common phenomenon in globalized and superdiverse communities. The study of Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town is the study of transnationalism since the participants are expected to live in more than one place. Their language and other social practices cut across many local and global contexts. Translocality is used to describe socio-spatial dynamics and processes of simultaneity and identity formation that transcend boundaries – including, but also extending beyond, those of nation states. As such, the term usually describes phenomena involving mobility, migration, circulation, and spatial interconnectedness not necessarily limited to national boundaries (Greiner and Sakdapolrak, 2013:373). Central to the notion of translocality is a holistic perspective on mobilities, movements and flows, and the way in which these dynamics produce connectedness between different scales (Greiner and Sakdapolrak, 2013). These authors also claim that although movement of people is of prime concern in many studies, this is but one aspect of translocality. The concept also refers to material flows, such as those of remittances (Long, 2008) and goods (Verne, 2012), and symbolic flows such as movements of styles, ideas, images and symbols (Lange and Büttner, 2010; Ma 2002; Reetz 2010).

*For an understanding of these connections, networks are of particular concern, as they facilitate repeated flows of knowledge and communication and of political, cultural and economic activities between places (Hedberg and do Carmo 2012a). Migrants and nonmigrants are embedded in these networks, which are as much an outcome of as a precondition for translocal practices (Steinbrink 2009) (Greiner and Sakdapolrak, 2013:377).*

An important aspect of the examination of translocal perspectives in research is how places are connected. Heller (2007:2) believes the use of approaches such as poststructuralism and translocality are essential because they consider languages in multilingual settings as a set of resources that circulate in an unequal manner within social networks and discursive spaces.

## 2.6 A brief historical and sociolinguistic overview of South Africa

South Africa is a medium-sized country with a total land area of slightly more than 1.2 million sq. km making it roughly the same size as Niger, Angola, Mali, and Colombia. It is one-eighth the size of the U.S, twice the size of France and over three times the size of Germany (South African Yearbook 2010/2011). South Africa has nine provinces, each with its own legislature, premier and executive councils (South African year book, 2011/2012: 5). My focus is of course on the Western Cape Province, with Cape Town as its capital, as this is where I carried out my research.

Some 25 languages are used in South Africa on a daily basis by more than 44.8 million people (Statistics South Africa, 2003). The majority of South Africans, almost 80% of the population, use an African language as their home language. South Africa's language diversity is supported by arguably the most progressive constitutional language provisions on the African continent (cf. Bamgbose, 2003: 5 in Beukes, 2004). According to Beukes (2004) a large number of the South African population belongs to two major language groups: Nguni (which includes the languages isiXhosa, isiZulu, siSwati and isiNdebele) and Sotho-Tswana. The South African constitution acknowledges linguistic plurilingualism and official multilingualism. In addition to providing for the status of the 11 official languages, the Constitution also addresses the transformation of the historically marginalized languages (Beukes, 2004:5). Beukes posits that the priority given to these marginalized languages is reflected in the provision for the establishment of a dedicated language development agency, the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) which is charged with developing and promoting the use of all the languages of South Africa, including the ancient indigenous languages of South Africa's "first people", the Khoe and San (Beukes, 2004).

With the advent of democracy in 1994, 11 languages, including English and Afrikaans, were selected as official languages. Similar to what is happening in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon; English in South Africa is also considered as the main lingua franca. It is seen as such since it is the preferred second language in school education and is widely used in the media (Beukes, 2004). Many believe that South Africans, as a result of the dysfunctional education system which continues to menace the country's democracy do not have a good command of the high status languages (English and Afrikaans) to enable them to compete for good paid jobs. Like Cameroon sociolinguistics, it is necessary to examine the history of South Africa before, during and after colonialism as this is important in understanding the present language practices of Cameroon migrants when they migrate to South Africa.

## 2.6.1 South African pre- and post-colonial sociolinguistic history

### *Pre-Colonial South Africa*

The southern tip of the African continent is home to a great variety of languages and cultural groups. The diversity in South Africa is the result of the influx of various groups of people to the region over the centuries (Beukes, 2004). Beukes (2004) claims that the very first to inhabit the Southern African region was the Khoe and San people who have lived in this region for many centuries. Beukes (2004) explained further that sometime around the 12<sup>th</sup> century the Bantu presence was felt in the continent and to the southern part of the continent. Shortly after, other ancestors including Europeans could also be seen in the southern tip of the continent. Dyers and Abongdia (2015) also summarize some key points related to the situation in South Africa in the pre-colonial era. According to these authors, three dominant groups could be found in the Southern African region. The original inhabitants, the Khoe and San people who have lived in the region for a very long time, and the Bantu people who migrated to this region from the Great Lakes area around the 12<sup>th</sup> century.

Ethnic divisions characterized and sometimes defined the pre-colonial period (Hamilton, 1982). Like Cameroon, pre-colonial South Africa was also controlled by tribal authorities that ruled by a hereditary monarch or a royal lineage. Their ideology and power could not be undermined as people often identify with these tribal authorities. For example, there existed the symbol of unity of the nation amongst the Zulu, the *ubukosi* of the kingship, and the *inkatha* (Hamilton, 1982).

### *Colonial South Africa and the apartheid regime*

Like Cameroon, South Africa is also a product of colonialism. Activities that characterised this era amongst others were the presence of Europeans especially the British. Dyers and Abongdia (2015: 3) summarise some key activities of this period as follows. The British colonisation after the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815), made English the language of the law courts and education (Beukes, 2004). The arrival of Europeans (Portuguese, Dutch, French, German, and British) in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries as well as Asians (Malay, Indonesian, and Indian) brought in as slaves, political prisoners and indentured labourers from the 18<sup>th</sup> century “diversified the population even more” (Beukes, 2004). The period of Dutch settlement and rule (1652-1795 and 1803-1806 respectively), left South Africa with its own local variety of Dutch which was to develop into the hybrid contact language which is known today as Afrikaans (Roberge, 1995:73). Like Cameroon,



colonialism as well as apartheid in the South African situation came to complicate the language situation in South Africa, although British colonial language policy met with more resistance in South Africa than it did in other Anglophone African countries (Heugh, 2003). As in Cameroon where the British ruled indirectly, in South Africa, their attempt to turn the country into an English country was rejected. The commonality between South Africa and other states on the continent lies in the separate and dual ways in which most of the states were ruled. According to Mamdani (1996) in Ramutsindela (2001), the South African case was compounded by the apartheid regime. To him, this double divide along racial or spatial dimensions is still very much present in South Africa today. Education during this time was administered through the medium of Bantu Education that was not only distorted but also contributed towards ensuring a state of socialized inferiority (Hamilton, 1982). The distortion of the history of Bantu education stems from the fact that the early society was believed to be primitive and without any political institutions or structure (Hamilton, 1982).

The colonial period in South Africa also saw the Great Trek into the interior of South Africa by the Boers, sparked by the freedom of the slaves in 1835, which led to further colonisation (Dyers and Abongdia, 2015). During this period, several wars with the indigenous nations particularly the Xhosa and powerful Zulus, as well as the Anglo-Boer War were fought and this finally led to the Union of South Africa in 1910 (Dyers and Abongdia, 2015). The British imperial factor was finally eliminated when Afrikaner nationalists converted South Africa into a Republic in 1961 (Ramutsindela, 2001).

All these key historical events helped to spread the Afrikaans and English languages amongst speakers of other languages. English and Afrikaans were granted equal status in the Act of Union and Afrikaans began to be taught in schools from 1925 (Dyers and Abongdia, 2015). According to Heugh (2004), developments in South Africa are not entirely different from those of its neighbors during the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (1948-1990). However, the particular features of apartheid took developments in South Africa in a different direction from other African countries which were busy separating themselves from colonial powers. One of the differences is evident in separate and unequal language policy and planning especially in education. Language policy during colonialism in South Africa therefore differs from other sub-Saharan African countries (Heugh, 2004).

Furthermore, the reign of the Afrikaner Nationalist Party from 1948 to 1993 (also known as the “apartheid era”) was accompanied by the enforced use of Afrikaans, often to the detriment of English (Dyers and Abongdia, 2015). Despite this, English continued to dominate in education and finance, while 70% of South Africans spoke one or more of the South African indigenous languages (Kaschula and Anthonissen 1995 cited in Dyers and Abongdia, 2015). Just like the colonialists set speakers of indigenous Cameroon languages against each other, the indigenous South African languages were continuously kept separate from one another through lexical and other corpus planning manoeuvres as the apartheid government pretended to be developing these languages through separate language boards (Alexander, 1992; Heugh, 2003).

### *Post-Apartheid South Africa*

Many in South Africa still believe that the post-colonial state was erected artificially on the foundations of the colonial state, and that this artificiality is evident in the national space that has been enclosed within colonially inscribed boundaries (Ramutsindela, 2001). That is to say that colonialism is still very much felt in South Africa. Also, there is strong evidence that the ‘legacies of Apartheid’ remain in place in South Africa’s education system, entangling economic inequality, racial categorization, and *de facto* language hierarchy (Collins, 2015). The Pan South African Language board (PANSALB) was set up in 1994 to address language rights issues. Language as a resource was offered as a tentative solution to the language rights paradigm complemented by Stroud’s notion of linguistic citizenship (Stroud, 2000; 2001).

Collins (2015 citing Alexander, 2002:8) declares that post-apartheid South African education policy has been effectively Anglophone, in that nearly all school children are expected to be taught and tested in English after grade three. He explains that in the current era, despite the formal status of eleven official languages, English is dominating the other languages, it strengthens middle-class dominance in society, in the economy, and in politics, marginalizing the majority of the South Africans who do not speak English. This is similar to the case of Cameroon where priority is given to colonial English and French. These two nations have both committed to multilingual education and opportunity, only to shift rapidly to education systems in which elite international languages are given priority (Heugh, 2002). The symbolic status of English as the ‘language of global business’ and ‘educational opportunity’ make most South Africans, just like Cameroonians, want their children to be educated in English. Collins (2015) advances many reasons why a robustly multilingual country wants English-medium education for its children. There are many associations between language education and the history of apartheid, including suspicion of



mother-tongue education in African languages because of the legacy of Bantu education, a negative association of Afrikaans with apartheid oppression, and a positive association of English with the anti-apartheid liberation struggle (Heugh, 2002 cited in Collins, 2015).

According to Statistics South Africa (2011), South Africa's eleven official languages have the following percentage distribution:

Zulu	22.7%
Xhosa	16%
Afrikaans	13.5%
English	9.6%
Sepedi	9.1%
Setswana	8%
Sesotho	7.6%
Tsonga	4.5%
Swati	2.5%
Venda	2.4%
Ndebele	2.1%
Other	2.1%
Sign Lang	0.5%

*Table 1. Percentage distributions of South Africa's eleven official languages*

These include nine indigenous African languages, namely isiVenda, isiNdebele, sePedi, seSotho, siSwati, xiTsonga, Setswana, isiXhosa, and isiZulu, in addition to the two former official languages, Afrikaans and English (Thorpe, 2002). IsiXhosa is one of the official languages of South Africa. This language is spoken by approximately 7.9 million people, or about 18% of the South African population (Statistics South Africa, 2011 Census). Like most Bantu languages, isiXhosa is a tonal language characterized by the prominence of click and stop consonants (Jessen and Roux, 2002:1). Such click consonants can be noticed right from the pronunciation of the isiXhosa name itself. IsiXhosa belongs to the Nguni languages, and is therefore related to Zulu, Swati and Ndebele (Jessen and Roux, 2002:1). According to Statistics South Africa's 2011 Census, IsiXhosa is the most widely distributed African language in South Africa and is the second most common home language in South Africa as a whole, while the most widely spoken is isiZulu, spoken by 22.7% of the total population. The isiXhosa language is represented in all the provinces of South Africa but a greater percentage of the Xhosa people live in the Eastern Cape followed by

the Western Cape. Just like any other language with varieties, the isiXhosa language has several dialects.

## 2.7 Review of related literature

This literature review helps in situating my study and in answering some of the key questions such as the communicative strategies that migrants employ to negotiate language differences. It also helps to establish what has been written with regards to migrant language practices and identity construction in Cape Town. It is a qualitative sociolinguistic review where attention is paid to methodology as well as theoretical issues. The literature review focuses on research conducted on sub-Saharan African migration to South Africa with particular attention on Cameroonian migration to South Africa. The literature review follows a number of themes that are presented below.

### 2.7.1 Thematic review

#### *Territoriality*

The study explores the trajectories and linguistic identities of selected African migrants into Cape Town, South Africa focusing on the different spaces they might have lived in. Territoriality is a key notion that helps one understand the relation between language and space and how they are connected. Vigouroux's (2005) paper examines the relationship between language and space and discusses identity display among Francophone Black Africans in Cape Town focusing on their language practices and attitudes, both approached in relation to space, which is conceived of multi-dimensionally. Vigouroux shows to what extent language practice and attitude can be approached as a dynamic and continuously negotiated (re)production of territorialities. This dynamic view of how people use language is also mentioned in Mba's 2011 Ph.D. thesis where she alludes to the notion of territoriality to show how Cameroonian migrants construct different identities in the multilingual and multicultural contexts in which they find themselves. The choice of a linguistic code by a speaker in a multilingual interaction where interactants share more than one linguistic resource can be analyzed as a claim of symbolic territory (Vigouroux, 2005). Considering space as both physical and symbolic, Vigouroux (2005) shows how speakers claim territory; make use of it and what benefit they get from claiming this territory. How do others even recognize that this territory belongs to someone? Are there territories that are created as a result of a migrant's interaction in Cape Town? All these questions are asked against the backdrop of black African migration to South Africa and in the South African political and cultural context. When one deals

with the issue of territoriality then such questions need to be answered. Does one need to relocate physically to claim a territory?

According to Vigouroux (2005) one cannot deterritorialize (exit a territory) without at the same time reterritorializing (situating oneself in a new territory). As such, one needs not relocate geographically in order to experience deterritorialization. Nyamnjoh's (2013) research shows that people can claim territories in virtual spaces. The result she obtained from researching the Pinyin and Mankon migrant population in Cape Town showed that the public-sphere activities that these migrants engage in miles away from home, gave them the chance to engage in critical discussion and self-expression through which participants (re)define their sense of identity, community and agency and creating their own spaces. The spaces or territory these migrants claim is not physical but exist in their minds or sub-conscious. While the Pinyin and Mankon migrants in Cape Town create an online space not bounded by territory but by common identity, shared values and ideas of a common place, i.e. home, the black African francophone migrants in Vigouroux's (2005) research in contrast create a space that is bounded by territoriality. The dynamism in the way migrants use language in their new space calls for the interrogation of the concept of territorialism believed to show how speakers negotiate their position in spaces that constrains and limits the use of language.

While Vigouroux (2005) explores the concepts of territoriality using the two Cape Town markets, Green Market Square (GMS) and the Pan African Market (PAM) traders vis a vis the locals, Mba (2011) uses the concept to explore how Cameroonian immigrants constantly reconstruct their Anglophone/Francophone identities in their surrogate space, while at the same time negotiating new Cape identities. The concept of territoriality used in the present study helps in showing how Cameroon migrants construct and reconstruct their linguistic identities in and across different spaces in their life course trajectories into and around Cape Town. The communicative strategies they use in constructing these identities are significant.

### *La Francophonie*

Previous research on African migration to South Africa shows that the language practices of African migrants are constantly changing and so do their identities. Vigouroux' study on black Francophone migrants in Cape Town brings to light the issue of 'la Francophonie' which is an international organization representing countries and regions where French is the first ("mother") or customary language. Vigouroux's (2008) paper is not about migrant's attitude and language

practices but it is to explore what it means to belong to 'la Francophonie' in the South African context. To Vigouroux (2008), the notion 'la Francophone' which has too often been undervalued in the literature suggests that the indexicalities of 'la Francophonie' is the same across contexts, so any country that meets the criteria is a member. The 'la Francophonies' ideology is to see their members, whether national or transnational, as one body. That is to say member states must share the same values and cultures like the common French language that unites them. Is it the same ideology that guides its members in Cape Town? To search for an answer to this question Vigouroux takes the notion of context or social environment seriously.

### *Identity issues*

Identity is the theme that features prominently in most of the literature on African migration to South Africa pertaining to their language practices and attitudes. The setting is highly multilingual and so issues of identification, personal or social, becomes critical. The literature about how African migrants negotiate and display their identities in Cape Town has been explored against the backdrop of the historical, socio-cultural, economic, and political context in which these identities are negotiated or displayed. Most have shown that while migrants strive to maintain their old identities, they have also acculturated and adapted to some identities of the host. How this has been done is one of the areas to which this study makes a contribution.

Mba (2011) focuses on language as localized practice and different interactional regimes investigating how Cameroonian immigrants maintain and redesign the Anglophone/ Francophone identity options in novel and hybrid ways. Based on her research and findings, she takes the stand that whatever people do or believe in, are supported by some historical or cultural frames of meanings in their lived world, which often gives room for some manoeuvre to do things in new ways. The fact that they are now in a new context has shaped the perceptions about their Anglophone / Francophone identity. Her study is guided by the poststructuralist theory that sees reality as socially constructed and based on symbolic and material structural limitations that are challenged and maintained in interaction, a view that is also adopted in the present study. The present study combines the social construction and poststructuralist theory to unearth the power relations and identity options of Cameroon migrants as their linguistic identity dynamically changes across different spaces and trajectories.

Mba's (2011) study suggests that Cameroonian migrants have a multiplicity of identity options, which are manifested and negotiated performatively through language, dress code, song, food,

business, and other practices that comprise their lifestyle. The present study hopes to add to these identity options as it is not only limited to identities in Cape Town but also those they might have picked up in the course of their trajectories. Mba further shows that these identities are not only mobile but also translocal and transnational in nature and sometimes combine South African ways with that of Cameroon. These identity descriptions are also echoed differently in Nyamnjoh's (2013) PhD thesis that looks at the consequences of ICT appropriation in relation to people's mobility. ICT (information and communications technology - or technologies) is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications. Nyamnjoh's triangular study that spans South Africa, the Netherlands and the respective Pinyin and Mankon home villages in the Grassfields of Bamenda in Cameroon, articulates how mobile communities criss-cross the globe virtually or in person in order to create linkages not only with the home country but with wider migrant communities mediated by the Internet and wireless communication. She uses Bourdieu's notion of habitus to explain how participants in her study consciously or unconsciously engaged in certain activities (especially cultural ones) to express their identities and belonging while at the same time still maintaining connection with their home and host countries. Her study shows the importance of networking and connectivity (which is also important in the present study). The issue of networking and connectivity has not been fully exploited in research on African migration to South Africa and so the present study hopes to pay attention to this as more and more people travel and as they do so they build networks in real and virtual space.

Vigouroux (2008) also focuses on identity issues, exploring the identity dynamics within a population of Black African Francophone migrants living in Cape Town, South Africa. She shows how a locally rooted notion of "Francophone identity" as shown above differs from that of the mother organization. She argues that this identity is largely determined by the sociopolitical context of post-apartheid South Africa in which the migrants now evolve and situate themselves in relation to native Black South Africans.

*The emergence of a "Francophone identity" in the South African post-apartheid context highlights social dynamics between the migrants and the host population and their perception of their status in South Africa. In the language of Bourdieu 1991, Francophone identity seems to function as a sign of distinction in a society where African migrants feel*

*unwelcome and threatened, especially by some South African Blacks, simply because they are outsiders* (Vigouroux, 2008: 425).

In addition to the emergence of a different Francophonie identity in Cape Town contrary to its institutional one, Vigouroux (2005) seeks to understand how language practice and identity repertoire (Blommaert, 2004) are constructed among Francophone Black Africans who came to Cape Town, South Africa in the mid-1990s. Vigouroux concludes her paper by stating that although migrants are confronted with their own intolerance and mistrust of each other, one can however speak of a Francophone identity constructed in the particular setting of South Africa. Her findings with regards to a 'changed' Francophonie identity in South Africa is similar to that of Mba (2011) who also found that the Anglophone/ Francophone identity in Cape Town had been modified.

Cameroonians in Cape Town are a diverse group. It is for this reason that I find Tata's (2009, 2015) thesis relevant. Her study focuses on Cameroonian migrant learners in Cape Town schools. In particular, Tata (2009) examines the multilingual resources of Cameroon migrant learners and how they make use of these resources in the schools they attend as well as in their daily encounters. In Tata's (2009) study, she explored the ways in which immigrant children integrate new linguistic resources into their repertoires and the conditions under which the multilingualism of these children can contribute to their integration and academic success. The study's findings suggest that the learners react in different ways in different spaces, showing complex interactions of language heritage, affiliation, expertise and resistance. How these complex interactions come about is subject to further investigation, as their upbringing might have shaped their present situations. Children's linguistic choices and patterns tend to follow that of their parents. I think the present study will add more light on the influences of the policies and practices related to the languages these children speak at home or in the community in which they live. Their new identities might have been determined by family language practices in this new space.

Tata (2015) traces the trajectories of a group of young Cameroonian learners (in a Cape Town school) as they engage in new social and educational spaces in two South African primary schools. She structures her work within the tradition of Linguistic Ethnography that orients towards post-structuralism and late modernity. The study's data are drawn from observations, interviews and more than 50 hours of recorded interaction. The findings suggest that learners positioned



themselves differently amid the discourses of inclusion and exclusion. Tata's (2015) thesis joins a growing body of literature which points to the ways in which young people's language choices and practices are determined not only by what happens around them but also by their migration history. This often happens in contexts or situations where inequality exists and issues of power play out. Tata's (2015) thesis also suggests like others that migrants have multiple identity options that are negotiated through different practices, from food choices to language and interactional norms. The dynamism of these different identities implies that people are open to a lot of changes. Changes happen not only within the migrants themselves but also towards "others" in the various spaces of interaction. This leads to the next theme: intercultural communication.

### *Intercultural communication*

Intercultural communication is defined as situated communication between individuals or groups of different linguistic and cultural origins (Language Network for Quality Assurance 2007-2010). It is used to describe the wide range of communication processes and problems that naturally appear within an organization or social context made up of individuals from different religious, social, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. Wankah's (2009) research at Greenmarket Square in the heart of Cape Town reports on intercultural communication in South Africa in an era characterized by increased mobility. Wankah (2009) used Discourse analysis (DA), the notion of spatiality and Saville-Troike's (1989) ethnography of communication to show how different migrants construct their identities in interactions with local people. Wankah's thesis set out to research some of the barriers that prevent people with different cultures from having fruitful communication. As a former trader in this market, Wankah (2009) was able to carry out the research and the results show that spatiality, social constructions of 'the other' and other factors like nonverbal communication and differences between communicative styles in high and low context cultures (LCC/HCC), had a major impact on intercultural communication at Greenmarket Square, frequently leading to complete breakdowns in communication.

Dyers and Wankah's (2010) paper uses the discursive evidence from Wankah's (2009) thesis to show how the discourse of the 'other' in this market setting produces discourses of intra-continental racism, xenophobia, and intergroup stereotypes. The paper applies critical discourse analysis to transcribed interviews to identify and expose this negative stereotyping of the 'other'. Reasons for such negative stereotypes include: dominant ideologies, the dominant political discourses emanating from the South African state itself as argued by Neocosmos in 2008, and the

spaces (real and imagined) in which these different actors find themselves (Dyers and Wankah, 2010). All these create unequal social relationships. This strand of research is important in the context of the present study in that it shows how people communicate and the barriers they face while communicating. Therefore, in investigating the full repertoire of communicative resources and strategies that Cameroonian migrants use in this heterogeneous and diverse Cape Town space, the concept of intercultural communication is highly relevant. This study's findings will not only add to the literature that shows how people from different cultural backgrounds interact but also what barriers hinder such interactions.

### *Sociolinguistics of mobility*

This study is about the movement of people from one location to another. They move with everything including their languages hence the inclusion of the sociolinguistics of mobility. Orman (2012) declares that although the issue of mobility has been largely neglected by language scholars, the handful of studies which have addressed the issues have generated ethnographic data and have raised some questions that are important for the development of theoretical perspectives on the sociolinguistic effects of geographical and social mobility. Orman's (2012) paper on African migration to South Africa argues that mobility is often seen as an event that changes people and which affects people's languages. Regarding African migration to South Africa, mobility is often seen to mean inequality. The black African immigrant languages or varieties are not only less important compared to that of the 'host' but is also an icon that can identify them as migrants and hence reinforce their unequal social status. Orman is saying that when mobility happens, immigrants automatically end up being unequal indigenes.

Vigouroux (2005 cites Tarrus, 1993), who appeals to a paradigm of mobility, arguing that migration processes involve three discontinuous territorial level movements within the neighbourhood, movement within the city or to its periphery, and the journey from the country of origin to another. Vigouroux's (2005) research on Francophone African migrants in Cape Town shows that migrants' language practices and attitudes are greatly influenced by the many geographical spaces in their trajectory, which can be direct, semi-direct, or transitional. Moving from one space or location to another is crossing social organizations and hierarchies and from a linguistic point of view, it amounts to crossing regimes of languages (Vigouroux, 2005). To Vigouroux, issues of mobility in the South African context are unique and interesting since geographical space and language distribution are still organized according to racial and



socioeconomic divisions inherited from the apartheid era. The issue of mobility is related to that of trajectory which is important in understanding the linguistic identities of Cameroonian migrants in all the spaces they have visited or lived in.

Mba (2011) also touches on the issue of mobility in terms of how Cameroonians identify themselves and are in turn identified by 'others'. She dwells on the issue of 'insider vs outsider' where the minority Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town do not constitute part of the politically integrated society (or the inclusive 'we'), but rather are the 'others' whose mobility across national boundaries is closely related to (or corresponds with) the needs of the domestic labour market (in the new 'territory' or 'space'). She however also notes that some of these migrants from Cameroon undertake technical and specialized jobs with good salaries, while others get involved in low-skilled, high risk and poorly paid jobs or simply set up their own enterprises and, as such, are generally referred to as 'commercial immigrants'.

Nyamnjoh (2013) in her research on the Pinyin and Mankon community (Cameroon North West Community) in Cape Town looks at the notion of mobility. She believes that studies on mobility and migration contain extensive scientific data that enhance our understanding of connectivity and flows. She states that the last two decades have seen a rise in studies on transnationalism that shows migrants having a foothold in both their home and their host countries. These studies have been further complemented by the growing appeal of studies on mobility and ICTs that show how, in today's global world, mobility is being enhanced and informed by ICTs. The notion of mobility often encompasses physical displacement. She defines mobility as an all-encompassing form of movement that is not mutually exclusive to persons but seen as the perceptible and simultaneous shifts in both spatial (place) and social locus. Mobility and migration are often seen to be synonymous.

*It presupposes that one kind of movement is not the focus, given that there is a mobility of ideas. And as humans, they are mobile with their habitus – practices, ideas, beliefs and social and material culture. In conformity with Adey's (2010) notion of being "mobile with" migrants seek to reproduce or re-invent customs that they are familiar with to suit the host context. These include cultural practices as birth (born house) and funeral (cry die). The notion of mobility has gone past the idea of physical displacement. The term mobility, as such, cannot simply be used to denote the movement of persons but rather by looking at it from the notion of constellations of mobilities – persons, goods, ideas, social,*

*cultural, virtual, and emotional mobilities. These forms of mobilities have been enhanced by the new communication technologies. They 'connect the analysis of different forms of travel, transport, communications with the multiple ways in which economic and social life is performed and organized throughout time and across various spaces' (Urry 2007: 6). I also use the concept of mobility to refer to the itinerary of migrants, as well as the various things they carry to their host country – the movement of food, photos, objects and ideas to reinforce the notion of cultural mobility. By so doing, this permits me to adopt, on the one hand, an historical geographical approach that will enable an in-depth analysis of the 'formation of movements, narratives about mobility and mobile practices', by looking at mobility holistically (Cresswell 2010:17). On the other hand, this also allows me to ascertain to what extent communication technologies have enhanced mobility and connectivity (Nyamnjoh, 2013:4-5).*

Nyamnjoh's (2013) notion of mobility is a combination of many things as seen in the quote above, and it will be interesting to find out how Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town use technology or virtual space to construct their linguistic identities.

In line with the work of others, Tatah's (2015) thesis on the linguistic ethnography of Cameroonian migrant children in and out of South African primary school spaces shows that issues of mobility and migration are among the most salient topics in Africa today, not only with regard to the various social and cultural dimensions, but also with regard to learners entering and negotiating new linguistic spaces as a result of new migration patterns. She believes that the new focus on mobility is as a result of the effects of globalization, defined as the construction of world systems that merge finance, trade, media and communication technologies (Jones, 2006). She agrees with Nyamnjoh that mobility involves the interconnection of linguistic, cultural and social ideologies across multiple economic, cultural, social, and political fields (Marginson, 1999). We live in a world that is characterized by accelerated flows, mobilities and connectivity so issues of transnationalism become important.

## 2.8. Summary of chapter

Chapter Two has examined literature on African migration to South Africa, focusing particularly on Cameroonians and the impact of such migration on identity construction and language use. The chapter has reviewed a number of studies that have focused on issues of language practices,

attitudes and identity among Black African migrants in Cape Town. To contextualize the study, a brief sociolinguistic history of both Cameroon and South Africa formed part of this chapter. An understanding of this history will help in understanding the dynamism of migrant's linguistic practices in Cape Town South Africa.



## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study. The theoretical framework for this study combines the social constructionist and poststructuralist approaches to identity. It examines the traditional socio-psychological and interactional sociolinguistic approaches to identity as well as more recent poststructuralist and trans-local perspectives in which identities are viewed as interactive and performative and become economically, socio-politically and historically embedded (cf. Blackledge, 2008:298-299; Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:4-27 and Widdicombe, 1998:192- 206). The chapter also examines theoretical trends related to language and multilingualism as a social practice and global cultural flows and permeability of social structures which could be negotiating geographical/national, linguistic, cultural and even gender and racial boundaries. The chapter reviews concepts from these theoretical perspectives in the field of language, identity and multilingualism that relate to the present study.

#### 3.1 Language and identity

The languages we use in our interactions with others form an important part of how we portray our identity or identities. Given the focus of this study, the links between language use and identity are crucial elements of its theoretical framework. Two key works in this field are Giles' (1977) Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) and Le Page and Tabouret-Keller's (1985) studies on creole languages. Giles (1977) believes that speakers change their identities during interaction in order to associate or distance themselves from others. The Speech Accommodation Theory model propounds that speakers are "actively exploiting linguistic resources available to them in order to project differing identities for different contexts" (Dyers, 2007:104). When speakers do this, they are seen to be "acting out" their identity. The "Acts of Identity" model of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985: 181) stipulates that an individual creates for him/herself the patterns of his/her linguistic behavior so as to resemble those of the groups which from time to time s/he either wishes to be identified with, or distinguished from.

While our social identities and roles are to a great extent shaped by the groups and communities we belong to, we as individual agents also play a role in shaping these identities (Hall, 2013:34). Individual agency is a semiotic activity, a social construction, “something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual” (Giddens, 1991: 52). Hall (2013:35) explains that in locally occasioned social actions, individual agents shape and at the same time are given shape by social structures via conventionalized, established ways of doing things. The main argument of Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) is that speakers are not simply products of a social structure, but that they can create particular identities in specific interactions by exploiting the linguistic resources in their repertoires. In this case, identities are regarded as dynamic and not as fixed phenomena (cf. Johnstone, 2008; Pennycook, 2010; Blackledge and Creese, 2010). It is from this understanding that Banda (2009) argues that social identities should not be assigned beforehand but rather they should be left to emerge from social interactions. The context of interaction is therefore critical in the present study as it hopes to find out how Cameroonian migrants’ identities are shaped in different contexts.

### 3.2 Identity and indexicality



Blommaert and Rampton (2011, citing Scollon and Scollon, 2003, 2004 and Kress, 2009) explain that sociolinguistic researchers are compelled to move from ‘language’ in the strict sense towards *semiosis* as a focus of inquiry, and from ‘linguistics’ towards a new sociolinguistically informed *semiotics* as the disciplinary space. According to semiotics, we can only know culture (and reality) by means of signs through the process of signification. In the context of this study, it is also important to look at the notion of indexicality because one cannot understand who moves, why they move, or what happens to them when they move without attending to the ways people occupy separate and hierarchical positions through various processes of social differentiation without including indexicality (Dick, 2011). Indexicality connects language to cultural patterns and considerations of multilingualism thus also become considerations of multiculturalism. The indexical nature of language means that what we say and how we say it provides information about us (information such as social roles, occupation and age. When people of different sociocultural background come into contact, communities become more and more aware of and reflexive about their language and their related “groupness” (Silverstein, 1998: 415). Therefore, indexicality is

fundamental to the way in which linguistic forms are used to construct identity positions (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005:595).

In identity formation, indexicality relies greatly on ideological structures, as associations between language and identity are rooted in cultural beliefs and values (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005:595). Different indexical processes of labelling, implicature, stance taking, style marking, and code choice combine to construct identities, both micro and macro, as well as those somewhere in between (Bucholtz and Hall, 2005:598). Indexicality is therefore important in discussing language and identity as language or a mere linguistic form can become an index or a marker of an individual's social identity as well as of that individual's traditional activities (Milroy, 2000; Johnstone, 2008; Bucholtz and Hall, 2005).

Dyer (2007) notes that indexicality is often observed in code-switching where speakers shift between different languages that may carry different social meanings in their community. Johnstone (2008) and Dyer (2007) argue that social identities can be indexed by styles of discourse. For example, an individual would adopt a certain way of talking associated with a particular group if s/he wants to identify with that category and others may use a person's speech style in categorizing him/her in gender terms. The current study looks at how Cameroonian migrants index their social identities by the styles of discourse they adopt, as well as the different aspects of social life which leads to a variety of indexicalities in their linguistic repertoires.

### 3.2.1 Orders of indexicality

The argument that transnational migration is characterized by migrants' interaction with multiple regimes of social difference is usefully explored through the concept of an indexical order (Dick, 2011:228). Dick (2011:229) states that nation-states are not the only producers of indexical orders; migrants (across borders, as well as within a country) also produce such orders, but at scales of interaction and group formation that are not equal to that of the nation-state. While performing language use across a wide spectrum of purposes and motives, speakers display orientations towards orders of indexicality-systematically reproduced stratified meaning often called norms or 'rules' of language, for example, standard versus non-standard forms (Blommaert, 2005: 73). Such systemic patterns of indexicality are also "systemic patterns of authority, of control and evaluation, and hence of inclusion and exclusion by real or perceived others, that every register is susceptible to a politics of access and that there is an economy of exchange, in which

the values attached by some to one form of semiosis may not be granted by others” (Blommaert, 2010:38). An example of such an ordering phenomenon is provided by the phenomenon of “style shifting”, which is widely reported in variationist research (Collins, 2007:6). Do Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town practice such style shifting and if so, why do they do this, for example, for inclusion or exclusion?

### 3.2.2 Polycentricity

Blommaert (2010) adds another sociolinguistic tool to discourse analysis apart from the orders of indexicality: polycentricity. Blommaert (2010:41) explains that “orders of indexicality and polycentricity suggest a world of linguistic, social and cultural variation and diversity, one in which differences are quickly turned into inequalities, and in which complex patterns of potential-versus-actual behavior occur”. Both concepts are designed to observe forms of linguistic and cultural variation that characterize Late Modern diasporic environments. Dick (2011) argues that polycentricity is the principle of organizing a region around several political, social or financial centers, that is, behavior (including language) is patterned by particular authorities holding power within particular spaces. For Blommaert (2010:39), authority emanates from real or perceived ‘centres’, to which people orient when they produce an indexical trajectory in semiosis. That is, whenever people communicate, in addition to their real and immediate addressees, they orient towards what Bakhtin (1986) called a ‘super-addressee’: “complexes of norms and perceived appropriateness criteria, in effect the larger social and cultural body of authority into which people insert their immediate practices vis-à-vis their immediate addressees” (Blommaert, 2010:39).

Polycentricity is therefore a key feature of interactional regimes in human environments. ‘Interactional regime’ stands for behavioral expectations in relation to language and physical conduct (Blommaert, 2014:40). The notion of polycentricity and interactional regimes are imperative in understanding the superiority of certain spaces in relation to others (as well as the people in the spaces) (Blommaert, 2010:41). As South Africa is a country still marked by racial and spatial stratification, the spaces occupied by the migrants in my study will therefore impact their language practices as well as how they express their identities.

### 3.3 Multilingualism and the negotiation of identities

In a multilingual setting, it is believed that the use of language(s) brings about hybrid identities in



and among interlocutors. In such multilingual contexts, identification becomes complex. To understand such complexities, a number of studies on multilingualism have used different approaches in understanding how people negotiate and construct new identities in multilingual contexts. Some of the approaches that have been used to show how identity and language are related in a multilingual setting are found in Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004). Some of these approaches are examined in the following sub-sections.

### 3.3.1 The socio-psychological approach

Although this study did not follow the socio-psychological approach, it is described here as it provides an interesting contrast to the actual approaches adopted. The socio-psychological approach assumes a one-to-one correspondence between language and ethnic identity. According to Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:4) this approach consists of a number of inter-group approaches, with insight from Tajfel's (1974, 1981) theory of social identity and Berry's (1980) theory of acculturation to explain language contact outcomes through group membership (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:4). Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:4) define ethnic identity as "a subjective feeling of belongingness to a particular ethnic group" and negotiation as "a transactional interaction process in which individuals attempt to evoke, assert, define, modify, challenge, and /or support their own and others'" desired self-images, in particular ethnic identity.

Furthermore, they cite Giles and Byrne's (1982) theory of ethnolinguistic identity that sees language as a key marker of ethnic identity. Where minority groups come into contact with majority groups, they may assimilate to the language of the majority group if their own group has weak in-group identification, low in-group vitality, open in-group boundaries and strong identification with other groups. This theory has been criticized for its monolingual and monocultural bias, which sees people as members of homogenous, uniform and bounded ethnolinguistic communities, instead of considering that people could have hybrid identities and complex linguistic repertoires living in the present world (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:5). They add that ethnographic investigations of multilingual contexts challenge the homogeneous view of minority communities and show significant in-group differences in patterns of language contact and social organization.

In addition, the socio-psychological theory assumes that there is always a direct relation between identity and aspects of social reality. That is to say, there are real groups that make up structures



or nations (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). The over-simplification and unrealistic nature of categories such as acculturation and ethnolinguistic vitality in this approach has also been criticized by many scholars. This over-simplification means the complex sociopolitical, socioeconomic and sociocultural factors that shape relations between interlocutors in a multilingual setting have not been made visible. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:6) also state that this approach prevents researchers from looking at the many ways in which social context hinders people from accessing linguistic resources or adopting new identities. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) however, acknowledge these approaches for being an eye-opener for people studying minority and majority groups in contact situations.

### 3.3.2 The interactional sociolinguistic approach

The second approach discussed by Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) is the interactional sociolinguistic approach. While the socio-psychological approaches focus on identities in second language learning and language use, the interactional sociolinguistics examine negotiation of identities in code-switching and language choice. This approach conceives of social identities as fluid and constructed in linguistic and social interaction (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:8). Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) cite the work by Gumperz, (1982) and Fishman (1965) who see code-switching as a resource through which speakers express social and rhetorical meanings and index ethnic identities. For Gumperz (1982), code-switching and language choice are foregrounded in the process of identity negotiation. As such, code-switching is used by participants in narration to claim membership and express solidarity with the group, while excluding outsiders. For Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:9), the best known sociolinguistic model of negotiation of identities through code-switching is the Myers-Scotton's (1983, 1988) markedness model. Her model view talks as a negotiation of rights and obligations between speaker and addressee and assumes that speakers have an implied knowledge of indexicality, that is, of marked and unmarked language choices in a particular interaction.

According to Myers-Scotton (1998), speakers opt for a language that would symbolize the rights and obligations they wish to enforce in the exchange in question and index the appropriate identities. She explains that when speakers make unmarked choices, they identify the status quo as the premise for the speech event. In contrast, when they make a marked choice, they indicate an attempt to negotiate a different balance of rights and obligations. If such a choice is indexical of solidarity, it can narrow the social distance between interlocutors. In turn, "if it is used to index

the power differential, anger, or resistance, it could serve to increase the social distance” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:9). Moreover, “people may also make marked options to encode deference and also because of the inability to use the unmarked choice” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:8).

Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:8 citing Heller, 1982) and Le Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) add that “multilingual speakers move around in multi-dimensional social spaces and that each act of speaking or silence constitutes for them an ‘act of identity’”. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) also cite Rampton (1995) who after studying adolescents and their culture claims that identity negotiation occurs through code-crossing. This involves code alteration where young people use aspects of a second language of a group in which they are not generally accepted as members. But to use such aspects successfully involves an understanding of the codes used by the group, which are often context and people-oriented. With the increased cultural and linguistic diversity witnessed today, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:2) see the need for a closer analysis of crossing in a multilingual context, as this study attempts to do.

Criticisms of the interactional sociolinguistic approach have come from different sources. According to Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:9), critical sociolinguists argue that identity cannot and should not be used as an explanatory concept in the study of linguistic practices, as it is itself in need of explanation. They also criticize the essentialized links between language and specific national and regional groups which obscure the fact that individuals may also construct particular identities through the linguistic resources of groups to which they do not normally belong. Another criticism is the concern of researchers about the notion of indexicality and the unproblematic links it posits between languages, identities and speech events. In relation to the interactional sociolinguistic approach, many scholars acknowledge that identity is not the only factor influencing code-switching and that in many contexts, the alteration and mixing of the two or more languages are best explained through other means, including the linguistic competencies of the speakers (cf. Auer, 1999 in Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:9).

### 3.3.3 The social constructionist approach

The social constructionist approach focuses on how languages are appropriated to legitimize, challenge, and negotiate particular identities. New identity options for oppressed and subjugated groups and individuals are the main focus of this approach (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:13 citing Davies and Harré (1990); Edwards,1997); Gergen, 1994)

and Harré and van Langenhoven, 1999), point out that while variationist and socio-psychological approaches view identities as relatively stable and independent of language, social constructionists conceptualize identities as an interactional accomplishment, produced and negotiated in discourse. By conceptualizing how individual identities are socially produced by means of available resources (Antaki and Widdicombe, 1998), this approach shows that identities are connected to discourses and power relations. Similarly, Heller (2007:2) explains that the social constructionist approach views languages as sets of resources which circulate in unequal ways in social networks and discursive spaces, and whose meaning and value, are socially constructed within the conditions of social organizational processes, under specific historic conditions. Norton (2006) adds that as language users negotiate identities, they might find new social and linguistic resources available to them that enable them to resist undesirable identities, leading to the creation of new identities.

Another important aspect of identities for the social constructionists is their *multiplicity*. While early studies of language and identity privileged a single aspect of identity – most commonly ethnicity or gender – at the expense of others, poststructuralist inquiry highlights the fact that “identities are constructed at the interstices of multiple axes, such as age, race, class, ethnicity, gender, generation, sexual orientation, geopolitical locale, institutional affiliation, and social status, whereby each aspect of identity redefines and modifies all others” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:16). Since individuals often shift and adjust ways in which they identify and position themselves in distinct contexts, identities are best understood when approached in their entirety, rather than through consideration of a single aspect or subject position (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:16).

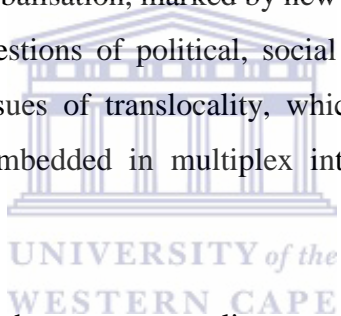
The question therefore for this study is whether the migrants being studied shift and adjust their identities depending on the contexts in which they find themselves. The present study therefore follows the social constructionist approach that emphasizes multiple ways in which social identities are constructed.

### 3.3.4 The poststructuralist approach

The poststructuralist approach explains how languages are appropriated in the construction and negotiation of particular identities. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:10) point out that many scholars now “consider language choices in multilingual contexts as embedded in larger social, political, economic, and cultural systems”. The works of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu for example inspired Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) in their conceptualization of the notion of

language and power. Bourdieu (1994) views linguistic practices as a form of symbolic capital convertible into economic, cultural and social capital and distributed unequally within any given speech community. Bourdieu further explains that the official language (or standard variety), seen as the language of institutions become hegemonic because both the dominant and subordinate group misrecognizes it as a superior language (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:10-11). This demonstrates that people's beliefs about languages are not only about those languages alone (Woolard, 1998), but are always socially situated and tied to questions of identity and power in societies (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:11).

An important point made by Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:12), citing the work of scholars like Bhabha (1990) and Hall (1990), is that the poststructuralist approach “points to splits and fissures in categories previously seen as bounded or dichotomous and brings into focus hybrid, transgendered, and multiracial identities that have previously been ignored”. This perspective becomes necessary in the era of globalisation, marked by new economies, migration and the rapid circulation of information and questions of political, social and educational concerns (Heller, 2007:1). This also entails that issues of translocality, which emphasises mutability, and the performative role of identities, embedded in multiplex interpretive sites, become important considerations in the present study.



This study therefore also drew on the poststructuralist approach to examine how Cameroonian migrants' linguistic repertoires are socially practiced, and whether these language practices give rise to hybrid and multiple identities in the setting of Cape Town.

### 3.4 Identity negotiation through narratives and performativity

Narratives play an important role in accounts of the negotiation of identities, as is also the case in this study. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:18) note that unprecedented transnational migration, displacement and the creation of new diasporas often lead to tensions between the fragmented, decentered and shifting identities of groups and individuals who desire meaning and coherence in their lives. To these authors, identity narratives offer “a unique means of resolving this tension thereby (re)constructing the links between past, present, and future, and imposing coherence where there is none” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:18). Consequently, identities are no longer just discursive options – they are also “the names given to the different ways people are positioned by ‘others’ and how the same people positioned themselves within, the narratives of the past (Hall,

1990: 225), as well as the narratives of the present and future” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:19). The present study draws insight from this perspective to examine how participants construct identities of the past, present and future through their personal narratives.

To analyze how identities are shaped, produced, and negotiated through narratives, the ‘positioning theory’ of Davies and Harré (1990) and Harré and van Langenhoven (1999) is used, which views identities as located in discourses and as situated in narratives. Positioning, for Davies and Harré (1990: 48), is the process by which “selves are located in conversation as observably and subjectively coherent participants in jointly produced story lines, informed by particular discourses”. Interactive positioning assumes one individual positioning the other, while reflective positioning is the process of positioning oneself. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:21) propose three types of identities that can be negotiated in a multilingual setting: *imposed identities* (which are not negotiable in a particular time and place), *assumed identities* (which are accepted and not negotiated), and *negotiable identities* (which are contested by groups and individuals). How participants in the present study position themselves and others and how they negotiate the different identities that might have been imposed on them is an important aspect to examine. It is also important to mention the linguistic means of negotiation discussed in Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004: 22-3), which “expands this understanding of negotiation and illuminates a wide variety of linguistic practices which individuals and minority groups may appropriate – or even invent – to position and (re)position themselves examining not only code-switching and code-mixing, but also invention and use of new linguistic varieties, second language learning, literacy learning, appropriation of new rhetorical strategies, and creation of new identity narratives”.

Closely allied to identity construction via narratives is the notion of *performativity*, a term for the capacity of speech and communication not simply to communicate but rather to perform an action or to construct and perform an identity (Loxley, 2006:2). The concept of performativity places emphasis on the manner in which identity is brought to life through discourse. Most bilinguals and multilinguals see their languages or repertoires as linguistic resources to perform different identities (Heller, 2007:8). As Agha (2007:250) puts it, an individual’s register range, equips him or her with many “performable identities”. Bailey (2007: 259) and Heller (2007:2) note that because identities are seen as performative, the hegemonic view of nation-states becomes questionable while at the same time also offering a better account for the way speakers draw on available resources at a time when boundaries are often deliberately played with. The performative

role of identity draws on the notion of translocality, which emphasizes the constant change in people's identity as well as the performative role of these identities in different contexts. The performativity aspect of the Cameroonian migrants in this study is also closely examined.

### 3.5 Multilingualism as a social practice and language as a local practice

The notion of multilingualism as a social practice and language as a local practice forms an important aspect of this study. This is to understand the debate around the nature of multilingualism and multiculturalism in which the use of multiple languages and hybrid identities are the norms rather than exceptions in most postmodern societies. Localized language practices also call into question long-established sociolinguistic concepts, such as domains and speech communities, which are now seen as porous social constructs (Dyers, 2013:8). It is important to acknowledge that in spite of its porousness this concept is still important (and is in fact used in this study) to understand the language choices made by multilingual speakers, even if not from an essentialist/deterministic perspective.

There is therefore a need to revisit the notions of language and multilingualism in order to rid our understanding of them of monolingual/monoglot biases (Dyers, 2013:8). Dyers (2013:8) further notes that acknowledging the *actual* language practices of urban Africans in late modernity has serious implications for language planning and policy.

#### 3.5.1 Language as a local practice

The recent shift in sociolinguistic thinking has seen a new conceptualization of 'language'. The notion of language as an autonomous system or as something one can count has been criticized by many who argue that language should be seen as a social construct. Makoni and Pennycook (2007:2) argue that language should be seen as a social construct and that notions like 'speech communities' and language speakers be replaced by a different vocabulary which includes "communities of practice", "institutions" and "networks" as these concepts capture the mobility and flexibility of late-modern communications. The principal argument in this paradigm is that language should not be seen as a bounded system but rather as a social practice (Pennycook, 2007, 2010; Heller 2007, Blommaert 2009; Makoni and Pennycook 2007). The present study follows this argument and attempt to show how migrants' linguistic practices are analyzed and evaluated based on the social practices within the local context or spaces in their trajectories. Miguel (2015:6) captures this shift as follows:



*Linguistic and cultural practices are no longer examined against the background of abstract standard languages, uniform views of speakers and stable group identities. Rather, such practices are investigated with reference to the fragmented repertoires that people acquire, construct and mobilize by positioning themselves and others in ways that have consequences for their distinct degrees of control over access to different social spaces (e.g., formal versus informal), symbolic resources (e.g., institutionalized forms of recognition through certificates) and materialities (e.g., jobs) throughout the course of their life trajectories.*

Miguel explains how new terms like “transidiomaticity” (Jacquemet, 2005), “polylingualism”, “translanguaging” (Garcia, 2009) or “metrolingualism” (Otsuji and Pennycook, 2010) have emerged describing how language should be conceptualized. It is however important to note that the word ‘translanguaging’ was not originally coined by Garcia but by Williams in the 1980s in the context of bilingual education provision in Wales.

Blommaert and Rampton (2012) however state that language as a system (in traditional linguistics) is just one (important) semiotic resource among a number that are available to participants in the process of local language production and interpretation.

### 3.5.2 Language and locality

According to Pennycook (2010:2), language is best understood as an emergent social act, rather than something external that we acquire and reproduce: “a material part of social and cultural life rather than...an abstract entity”. Pennycook is interested in how meaning comes out of social interactions involving language in different physical and symbolic spaces and equally, how language as a social act can interpret and transform locality. He looks at locality in its complex manifestations as ‘place’, and practice as “mediated social activity” (Pennycook, 2010:1). He further maintains that everything that happens locally also happens globally and vice versa and that to think of practices is to make social activity the focal point, by asking questions such as why people do things the way they do, how activities are established, regulated and transformed. He believes practices should not be restricted to the things one can do but to “bundles of activities that are central to social life” (Pennycook, 2010:2). He thus supports a paradigm shift away from the idea of treating language as an object to something people do in their daily encounters.



### 3.5.3 Language as a resource

In line with Pennycook's theorizing of how language should be conceptualized, Heller (2007:15) views language as a set of resources that social actors draw on in their social environment which impacts negatively or positively on such social actors. In Heller's view language should therefore not only be seen as a social practice but also as a resource. Conceptualizing language as a resource means that what people do with language should be at the center of every linguistic analysis. She also argues that people tend to understand the linguistic resources within their communicative repertoires as whole, bounded systems called 'languages' because nations and states have produced powerful discourses of national belonging, which construct 'languages' as emblems of nationhood. For example, some Cameroonians in South Africa continue to identify themselves as Anglophones or Francophone based on the colonial division of their country. This study follows Heller's (2007) and Pennycook's (2010) conceptualization of language as social practice and as a resource.

In a similar argument about how language should be conceptualized, Makoni and Pennycook (2007) propose a disinvention and a reinvention of languages that recognize language differences, adding that "languages are discursive constructions which perpetuate social inequalities". It is also important to mention Rampton's (1995, 2006) work in urban settings among adolescents that show how individuals appropriate and invent linguistic practices to stylize their identities. Rampton (2006:27) refers to stylization as "a particular kind of performance in which speakers produce an artistic image of another's language". Such studies have demonstrated that in postmodern ways of thinking "sets of languages rather than single languages perform the essential function of communication, cognition and identity for individuals and global communities" (Aronin and Singleton, 2008:4).

In support of this view, Makoni and Mashiri (2007) argue that it is necessary to pay particular attention to the perspectives of language users, instead of placing restrictions on their practices. Blackledge and Creese (2010:31) propose a constructivist approach to language which works with the "agency of a situated speaker explaining language use as contextually embedded". Makoni and Mashiri (2007:84) thus recommend a move away from understanding "multilingual" speakers as proficient in two or more languages towards the notion of "verbal repertoire" that does not acknowledge competence in particular languages. They explain that in a "verbal repertoire", a speaker may have control over some linguistic forms associated with different "languages", but

this does not necessarily mean that the speaker has anything approaching full competence in the language from which the speech forms are drawn. A more comprehensive discussion of linguistic repertoire can be found in section 3.7.

#### 3.5.4 Multilingualism as a social practice

The ongoing debate about language as a social practice naturally impacts our understanding of the concept of multilingualism. Heller (2007) argues for the conceptualization of multilingualism as a social practice. Conceptualizing multilingualism as a social practice privileges the notion that speakers do not only use linguistic resources for communication but also to perform different identities, in different contexts for different roles and indexical values (Banda, 2005; Harris, 2007; Rampton, 2006). In this regard, a number of studies have attested to the creative ways in which speakers deploy linguistic resources in their social spaces (see Moody, 1985; Heller, 2007; Makoni and Pennycook, 2007; Aronin and Singleton 2008; Higgins, 2009; Banda, 2005, 2010; Pennycook, 2010). Therefore, the recent thinking of multilingualism is about the ways in which people can access and engage their linguistic resources in different spaces. Banda (2010) notes that current perspectives on multilingualism is not a new phenomenon in Africa. According to Banda, it has been observed that patterns of trans-tribal commerce, trade, the closeness and concentration of related and not-so-related dialects in many parts of Africa point to the fact that multilingualism has been the norm in Africa for centuries, even before colonialism (Banda, 2009, 2010).

Studies of Cameroon's sociolinguistics have shown that it has always been a richly multilingual country. Colonialism only added to this multilingualism by adding 'languages' like German, French and English. This linguistic diversity is also present among the respondents in this study.

#### 3.6 Multilingualism: An African perspective

The literature on multilingualism in Africa is particularly rich, with important work having been done by scholars like Banda (2000, 2009), Makoni (1998), Myers-Scotton (1993), Anchimbe, (2007) and many others. Most of these authors believe that studying multilingualism in Africa using models from the West is totally wrong and that an African perspective is crucial. The multilingual discourses analysed in this study reflects African experiences and so it would be systematically and sociolinguistically inappropriate to analyse them from Western perspectives. Myers-Scotton's (1993) extensive research in Africa not only enumerates the differences between multilingualism in Africa and that of the 'West' but also concludes that speaking more than one

language in one conversation is the rule rather than the exception in Africa, but not always the case in the 'West'.

Studying multilingualism from an African perspective is crucial because multilingualism and multiculturalism have become the norm in discourse practices across domains and modalities (Dyers, 2013:2). According to Dyers (2013:2, citing Banda, 1999), what is needed to capture this multilingual African reality is “a theoretical position that places multilingualism, plurilingualism and multiculturalism at the center of the African language and sociolinguistic debate, in which the extended (hybrid) linguistic repertoire is seen as linguistic dispensation rather than made up of fragments or from different linguistic systems”. The present study however did not adopt the African perspective but it nevertheless acknowledges the importance to recognize the need to adopt an African perspective in the study of multilingualism. Banda (2009) declares that there is need for the democratization of multilingual community spaces so as to enable hybridity, temporal and spatial identities to be exhibited through multiple languages or dialects. Also, multilingual models are needed which are based on natural linguistic repertoires of the speakers concerned and for the cross-border configuration of such models and policies that account for border-crossing multilingual landscapes (Banda, 2008, 2009a, 2009b). Multilingualism is therefore not interpreted in this study as the sum of several distinct ‘languages’, but rather as “linguistic resources and repertoires” (Weber and Horner, 2012: 3) that participants appropriate and make use of in their diverse and heterogeneous environment.

Multilingualism should therefore be viewed as a social practice where people interact, assume new social identities and index their social experiences (Heller, 2007). Multilingualism as a social practice in Africa allows greater permeability of identities as it enables people to adopt and discard identities when there is need to (Prah, 2010). Heller (2007:1) proposes a different approach to researching multilingualism which shifts away from “a highly ideological view of coexisting linguistic systems, to a more critical approach that situates language practices in social and political contexts and privileges language as social practice, speakers as social actors and boundaries as products of social action”. The presence of migrants in an urban environment not only affects the multilingual repertoires of the migrants (confronted with the task of acquiring the communicative resources of the local population), but also those of the local population (confronted with linguistic-communicative processes and resources previously alien to their environment) and of local and national institutions (now facing administrative subjects with widely varying degrees of

competence in the required communicative skills for administrative practice) (Blommaert et al., 2005:201). These challenges have been captured in the experiences of the respondents in this study.

### 3.7 Linguistic repertoire and effective multilingual communication

Linguistic diversity in most African countries has been a normal way of life for ages except that currently it is taking a new dimension considering globalization, technological developments in communication, shifting populations, social upheavals, diseases, easy and improved accessibility to new media (Banda and Bellonjengele, 2010; Higgins, 2009; Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006). In view of the current debate on linguistic diversity, it is useful to go back to the origin of the notion of a linguistic repertoire (Busch, 2012:503). Transcultural communication in migration contexts is associated with highly complex linguistic practices (Busch, 2010). According to Canagarajah (2011), multilingual communicative practices have always been vibrant in non-western communities. Canagarajah notes that developments such as diasporic communities, transnational relations, migration, and digital communication have created more multilingual interactions which traditional models of language acquisition and competence lack the capacity to explain. His research conducted on South Asian communities is based not on the co-existence of shared language (or a speech community), but on shared space. Such a space can

*Accommodate many language groups living in the same geographical space. Such communities assume diversity and contact. Language diversity is the norm and not the exception in non-western communities. In such communities, people are always open to negotiating diverse languages in their everyday public life. Their shared space will typically feature dozens of languages in every interaction. They do not assume that they will meet people who speak their own language most of the time. This mind-set prepares them for negotiating different languages as a fact of life. When they meet a person from another language group; furthermore, they do not look for a common language that will facilitate their interaction. In most cases, such a search will be futile so they usually start the interaction in their own languages, but both parties retain their own preferred codes in the conversation. Such a practice makes us wonder how communication is possible when no common code is shared (Canagarajah, 2011:2).*

Canagarajah also explains that what enable people to communicate is not a shared grammar, but communicative practices and strategies that are used to negotiate language differences and that these strategies are not a form of knowledge or cognitive competence, but a form of

resourcefulness that speakers employ in the unpredictable communicative situations they encounter. Two of such strategies that Canagarajah (2011, citing Khubchandani, 1997) describes are what he calls *serendipity* and *synergy*. With serendipity; interlocutors are always open to codes they are not familiar with in their conversations. To achieve intelligibility and communication in a context of diversity, interlocutors use synergy to find a common ground between the codes and resources to achieve their interests. When these strategies are adopted, even deviations can become norms. To achieve communication out of such diversity, multilinguals also bring certain attitudes that are helpful; they do not depend only on the verbal medium to accomplish intelligibility, but also on the non-verbal medium.

Spromberg (2011) defines communication strategies as techniques used by language learners to overcome communication difficulties and breakdowns due to a lack of available linguistic resources. The theoretical perspectives from which communication strategies are studied have prevented researchers from agreeing upon a universal definition of communication strategies or its taxonomy. Based on transcribed data, Dornyei and Scott (1995) created taxonomy of communication strategies or “coping devices” that the participants used to overcome language difficulties. Nayar (1988:63) also proposed some criteria to identify a number of communicative strategies namely: repetition, repair and appeals, to name but a few. In addition to communication strategies such as code-switching, crossing, language choice and others used by interlocutors, Bialystok (1990: 39) also examines other communicative strategies such as message abandonment, topic avoidance, circumlocution, approximation, word coinage, literal translation and appealing for help. The present study also examines the communication strategies adopted by the Cameroonian respondents to cope within the multilingual spaces of Cape Town.

What is important to consider as far as communication in transcultural contexts is concerned, is the gap that exists between the migrants and the host society (Bush, 2010). Busch (2010) also believes there is a need to bridge this gap. She proposes that this can be done by making the plurilingual repertoires of the migrants visible which will lead to their voices being heard.

### 3.7.1 A closer look at linguistic repertoires

Busch (2015) foregrounds her discussion on linguistic repertoire with Bakhtins’ (1981) concept of heteroglossia (Bakhtins’ 1981a). She cites Todorov (1984), who sees the concept of heteroglossia

as a combination of a number of dimensions of multidiscursivity, linguistic diversity, and multivoicedness, found in any form of living language. As such, a ‘dialog of languages’ (Bakhtin, 1981: 294), is established regardless of whether this dialogue plays out within what is referred to as one language, or between different languages in contact (Busch, 2015).

In examining the multidialectal lives of migrants, it becomes clear that the mobility of people also brings about the mobility of linguistic and sociolinguistic resources (Blommaert, 2010). Canagarajah (2011) further argues that the multilingual paradigm does not see communities as homogenous but rather as heterogeneous. He argues in favour of repertoire-building rather than mastery of particular languages.

Blommaert and Backus (2012:2) describe how the notion of repertoire originated. They state that the term ‘repertoire’ belongs to the core vocabulary of sociolinguistics and cite Gumperz (1972) as the scholar who listed ‘linguistic repertoires’ as one of the ‘basic sociolinguistic concepts’. Gumperz (1986:20-21) defines repertoire as “The totality of linguistic resources (i.e. including both invariant forms and variables) available to members of particular communities” (italics added). According to Busch (2015), Gumperz’s conception of linguistic repertoire is rooted in linguistic anthropology and interactional linguistics, and it is based on the observation of linguistic interaction.

For Blommaert and Backus (2012), repertoires describe all the “means of speaking” i.e. all those means that people know how to use while they communicate, and such means range from linguistic ones (language varieties) to cultural ones (genres, styles) and social ones (norms for the production and understanding of language). “Repertoires are thus indexical biographies, and analyzing repertoires amounts to analyzing the social and cultural itineraries followed by people, how they manoeuvred and navigated them, and how they placed themselves into the various social arenas they inhabited or visited in their lives” (Blommaert and Backus, 2012:26). Repertoire is important in this study because it has allowed me to document the trajectories followed by my respondents throughout their lives: the opportunities, constraints and inequalities they face, the learning environments they had/have access to (and those they do/did not have access to), their movement across physical and social space, their potential for voice in particular social arenas.



Linguistic repertoires are not fixed acquisitions that remain static throughout life. They expand in relation to each person's biographical development and in the same trend can diminish and fade if not in use (Blommaert and Backus, 2012:9). In similar vein, Busch (2015) posits that repertoire is understood as encompassing those languages, dialects, styles, registers, codes and routines that characterize interaction in everyday life. It is seen as a means of positioning which speakers use in situated interactions. In studying repertoires, Busch (2012:510) believes "the communities' own theory of linguistic repertoire and speech "must be taken into account, in other words, the language ideologies and metalinguistic interpretations of speakers".

Working in the South African context, Coetzee-Van Rooy (2012: 89) defines language repertoire "as the range of 'languages' known from which multilingual people draw the resources they need to communicate in multilingual societies." Coetzee-Van Rooy's study was done in a South African multilingual urban society and the repertoire expansion in this setting appears to be crucial for adjusting towards improved quality of life in general. In the place of fixed repertoires, Blommaert (2010:23) proposes what he calls "truncated multilingualism" or repertoires which consist of specialized but partially- and unevenly-developed resources. He claims that people "never know all of a language; they always know specific bits and pieces of it... In this case multilingualism is not so much a collection of languages, but rather a collection of specific resources which includes concrete accents, language varieties, registers, genres and modalities such as writing - all ways of using language in particular communicative settings" (Blommaert, 2010: 102). These truncated repertoires are then grounded in people's biographies (Blommaert, 2010: 102). In sum, repertoire approaches focusing on individual biographies also take into account the notion of space, while approaches focusing on space also acknowledge the importance of the biographical dimension (Busch, 2015:6).

It is generally accepted that most of the 'normal' patterns of social and cultural conduct that were central in the development of social-scientific theories have now been complemented with a wide variety of new, 'abnormal' patterns, for which many are obliged to provide adequate accounts (Blommaert and Backus, 2012:5). Thus, as a result of the numerous networking practices among other things in media spaces, speakers participate in varying and deterritorialized communities of practice (Busch, 2012:3). Busch (2012) has called for more work to be carried out on the notion of repertoire while taking into consideration of multimodal representations of language repertoires. It is interesting to see how she adopts a biographical approach to empirically explore the linguistic



repertoire and suggests drawing on a poststructuralist approach which acknowledges the normative power with which language and categorizing discourses in particular constitute the speaking subject (Busch, 2015).

The approach which links repertoire to an individual life trajectory is prominently represented by Blommaert (2008). He uses an example of a refugee from Rwanda to argue that linguistic repertoires do not primarily give information about a person's place of birth, but about his/her journey through life. Someone's linguistic repertoire reflects a life, and not just birth, and it is a life that is lived in a real sociocultural, historical and political space (Blommaert, 2008: 17). Busch (2015) elaborates on how a phenomenological view of the lived experience of language helps one to understand the discomfort or confusion that ensues if one suddenly finds oneself in an unknown sociolinguistic space. She proposes that the concept of the repertoire needs to be expanded to include at least two further dimensions, that of linguistic ideologies, and that of lived experience of language.

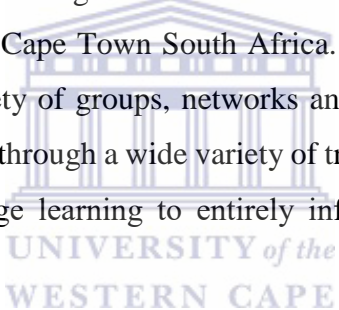
### 3.7.2 Superdiversity

The concept of superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007) aims to capture the worldwide phenomenon that people are more mobile than ever before, both physically as migrants and tourists, and virtually as travellers in cyberspace (Stroud, 2014:15). "The quantity of people migrating has steadily grown, the range of migrant-sending and migrant-receiving areas have increased, and there has been radical diversification not only in the socioeconomic, cultural, religious and linguistic profiles of the migrants but also in their civil status, their educational or training background, and their migration trajectories, networks and diasporic links" (Arnaut, Blommaert, Rampton, Spotti, 2015). Blommaert (2010:7) defines superdiversity as the complex multilingual repertoires in migrant neighborhoods which house a diversity of different people. Blommaert and Backus (2012:5-6) describe the impact of superdiversity as follows:

*superdiversity ... forces us to see the new social environments in which we live as characterized by an extremely low degree of presupposability in terms of identities, patterns of social and cultural behavior, social and cultural structure, norms and expectations. People can no longer be straightforwardly associated with particular (national, ethnic, sociocultural) groups and identities; their meaning-making practices can no longer be presumed to 'belong' to particular languages and cultures – the empirical*

*field has become extremely complex, and descriptive adequacy has become a challenge for the social sciences as we know them.*

In order to examine repertoire in the context of super diversity, Blommaert and Backus (2011: 5) have moved the concept of repertoire forward from the original Hymesian definition of “a means of speaking” to accommodate contemporary settings in which mobile subjects engage in a broad variety of groups, networks and communities. They provide an example where ‘ethnic’ neighborhoods have turned from relative homogeneity into highly layered and stratified neighborhoods, where ‘old’ migrants share spaces with a variety of ‘new’ migrants now coming from all parts of the world, involved in far more complex and unpredictable patterns of migration than the resident and diasporic ones characterizing earlier migration patterns. They also believe that while social life is primarily spent in such local neighborhoods, the internet and mobile phone afford opportunities to develop and maintain social, cultural, religious, economic and political practices in other places. Their findings are similar to Nyamnjoy’s (2013) study on ICT appropriation by Cameroonians in Cape Town South Africa. In a super-diverse context, mobile subjects engage with a broad variety of groups, networks and communities, and their language resources are consequently learned through a wide variety of trajectories, tactics and technologies, ranging from fully formal language learning to entirely informal ‘encounters’ with language (Blommaert and Backus, 2012:1).



### 3.7.3 Globalization and global cultural flows

Globalization is another concept critically examined to help explain the reality of the local and the global impacts on the lives of Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town. As a theory, globalization is “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (Giddens, 1990: 64). While this definition is generally accepted, there is considerable disagreement about related issues. For instance, Block (2004:75) considers globalization as an expression of Western hegemony, and as an extension of American imperialism. It should therefore come as no surprise that there should be a multitude of definitions of globalization, each of which comes from a particular theoretical, political or ideological perspective (Scholte, 2000:41-2). From these definitions and assertions one may see globalization as increased interconnectedness between countries, people and events. This further implies that events that are happening in remote areas will be perceived locally and globally.

However, Blommaert (2010) is not of the view that relates globalization to what many people will call the ‘global village’ or what Pennycook (2007:593) calls the ‘homogenization of world culture’. Instead, Blommaert acknowledges Appadurai’s (1996:11) central argument that globalization is not the story of cultural homogenization since different societies interpret the new world differently. Blommaert (2003) provides two theoretical suggestions in the study of sociolinguistic of globalization: the notion of the world system and that of second linguistic relativity. He believes that discourses on globalization need to be analyzed against the backdrop of Wallerstein’s world system theory (Wallerstein, 1983, 2001), because the world is not a uniform space as most people generally believe.

*This world system, as Immanuel Wallerstein has extensively argued, is a system built on inequality, on particular, asymmetric divisions of labor between ‘core regions’ and ‘peripheries’, with ‘semiperipheries’ in between... the system is marked by both the existence of separate spaces (e.g. states) and deep interconnectedness of the different spaces, often, precisely, through the existence of worldwide elites. Inequality, not uniformity, organizes the flows and the particular nature of such flows across the ‘globe’. Consequently, whenever sociolinguistic items travel across the globe, they travel across structurally different spaces, and will consequently be picked up differently in different places. The interconnectedness of the various parts of the system creates the previously mentioned issues of scale and levels of analysis: what occurs in a particular sovereign state can and must be explained by reference to state-level dynamics, but needs to be set simultaneously against the background of substate and superstate dynamics, and the hierarchical relations between the various levels are a matter of empirical exploration, not posing (Blommaert, 2003:612).*

A sociolinguistics of globalization thus needs a comprehensive and world-systemic view in which local events are read locally as well as translocally, and in which the world system with its structural inequalities is a necessary (but not self-explanatory) context in which ‘language’ occurs and operates (Blommaert, 2003). The world system perspective is important because it takes into account the ‘scalar’ and ‘layering’ aspect of the society. Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck (2005: 198) believe that people with highly developed multilingual skills can feel, and be, communicatively incapacitated when they are out of place. “One can find oneself struggling with

the most basic and mundane tasks in a foreign country because they don't speak your language, they don't speak any language, or, from a different perspective, because you lack the specific multilingual resources and skills required in that place" (Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck, 2005:198). A change in our spatial environment clearly affects our capacity to use our existing linguistic resources and skills, to the point where we are rendered helpless, and this study will provide more evidence of how normally articulate Cameroonians struggle to make themselves understood in Cape Town.

Blommaert (2003:613) also emphasizes that the sociolinguistics of globalization within a World Systems perspective, should pay attention to the relative value of semiotic resources in new and different spaces, as well as how social and cultural forms of capital travel across geographical and social spaces. In similar vein, Bucholtz and Skapoulli (2009:1) explain how in contemporary plural societies (owing to migration and the global circulation of information), commodities, and visual images, the ranges of identities available to individuals have become more flexible and complex. They argue that what were previously thought of as large-scale, all-encompassing, or homogeneous collective identities, such as those of nationality, social class, race, ethnicity, and gender, have undergone fragmentation and erosion in an increasingly compressed world. Subjects and objects in motion, including people and their artifacts, images and texts, technologies and techniques, ideas and ideologies rapidly navigate across national boundaries and shape the construction of self and others.

This interconnection between countries, events and people is as a result of what is happening around the world's borders and boundaries. "While geographers have sought to place the notions of boundary within other social theoretical constructs, other social scientists have attempted to understand the role of space and, in some cases, territory in their understanding of personal, group, and national boundaries and identities" (Newman and Paasi, 1998: 190-191). Morley and Robins (1991:1) agree with this stance when they write: "Patterns of movement and flows of people, culture, goods and information indicate that it is now not so much about physical boundaries, the geographical distances, the seas or mountain ranges that define a community or nation's 'natural limits' but rather in terms of communications and transport networks and of the symbolic boundaries of language and culture as providing the crucial, and permeable, boundaries of our age".

### 3.8 Summary of chapter

This chapter has dealt with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning the study. The theoretical framework combines the social constructionist and poststructuralist approaches to identity. It examined the traditional socio-psychological and interactional sociolinguistic approaches to identity as well as more recent poststructuralist and translocal perspectives in which identities are viewed as interactive and performative and become economically, socio-politically and historically embedded. The chapter has also examined theoretical trends related to language as a local practice and multilingualism as a social practice, leading to a more detailed discussion of the concept of linguistic repertoires. In addition, it has looked at the theories of global cultural flows and permeability of social structures which could be geographical / national, linguistic cultural and even gender and racial boundaries. The chapter reviewed concepts from these theoretical perspectives in the field of language, identity and multilingualism that relate to the present study.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGY

#### 4.0 Introduction

The study seeks to address and analyze the language biographies of selected Cameroon migrants in Cape Town. It explores the full repertoire of communicative resources that migrants use in this heterogeneous and diverse space and show how the space of Cape Town has influenced and modified their personal and linguistic identities as well as the effect their presence must have had on the linguistic and socio-cultural nature of the city. In all, the study intends to make visible participants' polylingual repertoires and associated attitudes and beliefs. To achieve these, the study focuses on the social lives of migrants through individual interviews, focus group discussions and observations.

#### 4.1 Analytical frameworks

This study has made use of a multi-dimensional analytical framework which draws on discourse analysis (DA), critical discourse analysis (CDA), thematic Analysis (TA) as well as the application of a multimodal biographic and narrative lens to the discourses of my participants.

##### 4.1.1 Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis (henceforth DA) can be defined as the act of showing how certain discourses are deployed to achieve particular effects in specific contexts (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006:328). Terre Blanche et al. posit that discourse analysis can be done in different ways some of which includes identifying the discourses that operate in texts and how particular effects are achieved in texts as well as explaining the broader context within which the texts operate. To Fulcher, (2010:1) discourse analysis is a qualitative method that has been adopted and developed by social constructionist as a way of understanding social interactions. Because I seek to understand human experience in relation to language, I see DA as an appropriate tool in analyzing the data generated in this study.

Some researchers apply discourse analysis to identify the semiotic processes and rhetorical means by which identities are constructed and negotiated in linguistically diverse contexts. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:26), for example, make use of literary and rhetorical approaches to examine how socio-historical circumstances and ideological forces shape the content, dominant tropes, metaphors, silences and omissions in immigrant autobiographies and to understand how some 20<sup>th</sup> century immigrants managed to make their voices heard, while others never got a chance. The present study draws from this perspective to discourse analysis.

Cameron (2001:12) also suggests that we make sense of discourse partly by making guesses based on our knowledge about the world. Of course, the message we have in any text depends on the context, and once again, its interpretation relies on real-world knowledge that is not contained in the text itself. Interpreting whatever these migrants said was based on the context in which the interaction took place which is shaped by world events. No text is original and so information from other texts must be considered in interpreting the original text. Researchers who favor discourse analysis over supposedly more ‘objective’ methods argue that paying attention, not merely to *what* people say but to *how* they say it, gives additional insight into the way people understand things (Cameron, 2001: 14). Discourse analysis can therefore be seen as a method for investigating the “social voices” available to people who participate in studies (Cameron, 2001:15). Cameron also holds the view that many social researchers believe that people’s understanding of the world is not merely expressed in their discourse; instead, it is actually shaped by the ways in which they use ‘language’ that is available to them. This is to suggest that reality is “discursively constructed” as it is made and remade as people talk about things using the “discourses” at their disposal (Cameron, 2001:15).

According to Gee, Michaels and O’Connor (1992:229-230): “Some researchers take as their starting point the discourse of text and attempt to use it as evidence in their investigation of some larger social, cognitive, cultural, political, or psychological processes”. The discourse of text includes the explicit attempts at investigating individuals’ perception of the relationship between language and culture that is manifested in their interviews as well as the interactional component of “language-in-action” (Foucault, 1984) that exists in the multilingual conversations the informants have with other people.



#### 4.1.2 Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is another analytical tool adopted in this study. Critical discourse analysis is well suited to this study as it places emphasis on the social aspects of speaking and how people position themselves and “others” in interaction. The purpose of CDA is to analyze “opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (Wodak, 1995:204). More specifically, CDA studies real, and often extended, instances of social interaction including linguistic forms (Wodak, 1995). “The critical approach in CDA explores “the relationship between language and society, as well as the relationship between analysis and the practices analyzed” (Wodak, 1997:173).

CDA is a recent school of DA that concerns itself with relations of power and inequality in language (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000). It sees ‘language as social practice’ (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997), and considers the ‘context of language use’ to be crucial (Wodak, 2009). The definitions of terms related to CDA, such as ‘discourse’, ‘critical’, ‘ideology’, ‘powers’ and so on are important in exposing discourses of inequality and bias (Wodak and Myers, 2002:5). Since CDA is so broad with divergent perspectives, Weiss and Wodak (2007:12) believe that any criticism of CDA should always specify which research or researcher they relate to because CDA as such cannot be viewed as a holistic or closed paradigm. The present study is not focusing much on the critical approach to discourse but draws on the various approaches to dissect the texts and bring out any instances of power and inequality.

Fairclough (1992:64) argues for a critical perspective in order to deconstruct what he denotes as the “three aspects of the constructive effects of discourse”. In the first aspect, discourse contributes to “the construction of what many refer to as “social identities” and ‘subject positions’ for social ‘subjects’ and types of ‘self’ (Henriques *et al.*, 1984; Weedon, 1987)”. In the second aspect discourse “helps construct social relationships between people” Thirdly, discourse “contributes to the construction of systems of knowledge and belief” (Fairclough 1992:64-75).

The present study draws on Fairclough’s (1992:75) three dimensions in CDA approach to analyze participants’ texts. The three dimensions are; discourse-as-text, discourse-as-discursive-practice, and discourse-as-social practice. Discourse-as-text refers to linguistic features including vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure. This dimension is interested in discursive constructions and is similar to those Pavlenko (2007) mentioned in her narrative analysis. The second dimension, discourse-as-discursive practice, places emphasis on the interactional consequences and implications of textual features. A “textual feature is concern with the ‘forces’

of utterances, i.e. what sorts of speech acts (promises, requests, threats etc.) they constitute, the ‘coherence’ of texts and the ‘intertextuality’ of texts” (Fairclough, 1992: 75). Discourse-as-discursive-practice focuses on the “processes of text production, distribution and consumption” and how “the nature of these processes varies between different types of discourse according to social factors” (Fairclough, 1992: 78). This dimension links text to context because the consumption of texts varies depending on the social context Fairclough (1992:79). The third dimension is discourse-as-social-practice in which discourse is related to ideology and to power. In this dimension, Fairclough (1992) explains that discourses shed light on how power relations develop. Fairclough highlights the importance of intertextuality, which he describes as “the property texts have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth” (Fairclough, 1992:84).

Fairclough (1992) explains CDA better when he says that it is “consolidated as a 3-dimensional framework where the aim is to map 3 separate forms of analysis into one another: Analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (processes of text production, distribution and consumption) and analysis of discursive events as instances of sociocultural practice” (Fairclough, 1995: 2). In the process of analysis, he pays particular attention to vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, text structure, speech acts, coherence, and intertextuality. The present study draws on Fairclough’s (1992) approaches to help expose some of the inequalities experienced by the research participants due to power differences in their context of interaction.

#### 4.1.3 Narrative analysis

In exploring the linguistic trajectories of Cameroonian migrants into and around Cape Town, accounts or narratives featured strongly in the descriptions of their linguistic journeys. Narratives play an important role in people’s account of their negotiation of identities (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:18). Pavlenko and Blackledge, (2004:18) believe that identity narratives offer a unique means of resolving this tension by (re)constructing the links between past, present and future, and imposing coherence where there is none. Since a large portion of my data is based on the interviews conducted with the informants, and since these interviews can be considered personal life narratives with a focus on language, narrative analysis is the analytical tool that highlights the voices of my respondents.

Narratives told in interview data have become a central tool of qualitative research (De Fina, 2009). De Fina (2009) states that the popularity of the narrative turn in social science research is related to it being supported by many claiming that such genres as the life story and the narrative of personal experience are pivotal to a rich and nuanced understanding of social phenomena. De Fina's paper provides arguments for a contextualized approach to narrative data, arguing that more attention needs to be paid to the notion of genre in narrative analysis, while at the same time grounding the study of genre in an interactional perspective. Pavlenko (2007) also claims that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, narratives became the focus of the growing interdisciplinary field of narrative study, influenced by developments in structuralist literary theory. "At the intersection of these approaches, is the narrative" (Hardy, 1968: 5, cited in Pavlenko 2007:164). Pavlenko (2007: 164) believes that narratives emerged not merely as an oral or literary genre, but as the central means by which people give their lives meaning across time: "we dream in narrative, daydream in narrative, remember, anticipate, hope, despair, plan, revise, criticize, gossip, learn, hate and love by in narratives".

Pavlenko further argues that some analytical approaches, in particular content and thematic analysis, are insensitive to the interpretive nature of autobiographic data. She also observes that researchers are now relying on linguistic biographies, autobiographies and life histories to explore the languages in speaker's repertoire and that through interviews, researchers learn how and why languages are acquired and used and the motivations and attitudes behind these acquisitions and uses. She recommends a systematic analysis of bi- and multilinguals' narratives on macro- and micro-levels in terms of content, context, and form.

#### 4.1.4 Linguistic and discursive features

In order to effectively dissect discourse through narrative analysis and CDA, one has to focus on specific linguistic and discursive features. Like the poststructuralist approach adopted in Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004), this study is informed by Discourse/Text Analysis in which verbal and non-verbal text or conversation is analysed to ascertain how people's linguistic identities are constituted and constructed in interaction. Pavlenko (2007) pays attention to features such as lexical borrowing, language play, code-switching, deixis, and intertextuality which I find relevant to the present study. Paying attention to these features enables one to expose and explain the formulation of multilingual and hybrid identities in relation to the larger context (Pavlenko, 2007).

#### 4.1.5 A Multimodal biographic approach

As noted in the introductory sentence of this chapter, a multimodal biographic approach (MBA) is another analytical framework I made use of in this study. “For a broad description and interpretation of the situations, events and activities in and across which repertoire construction occurs, it is vital to adopt a multidimensional approach, where each dimension provides a different perspective on the object of study and where the researcher alternates between questioning what is going on and under what circumstances, and how that is being achieved” (Gubrium and Holstein, 1997: 205- 211). For Roberts (2002: 1), biographic research “seeks to understand the changing experiences and outlooks of individuals in their daily lives, what they see as important, and how to provide interpretations of the accounts they give of their past, present and future”. With Maybin (2006:13), adopting MBA in sociolinguistics research means that biography functions “as an ethnographically informed lens through which to view selected phenomena”.

To take a biographical approach is to adopt a speaker-centered perspective and a view on repertoires as dynamic, situated and historical: as representing people’s complex daily lives and their multiple identities (Blommaert and Backus, 2011). Such an approach focuses on speakers and their experiences and enables one to capture shifts, changes and reconfigurations in repertoires as affected by historical, social and political factors (i.e. ‘macro’; as can be seen in the works of Heller (2001), Busch (2006, 2012) and Pavlenko (2007). When the biographic approach is adopted, the researcher is able to reveal the challenges that people face, and to address the tensions between the linguistic norms and ideologies which people need to tackle in order to survive in a globalized world. Busch (2006:9) claims that with a biographical approach it is possible to link the macro-level sociolinguistics of the roles and functions of languages and the micro-level of the individual interaction.

Since the linguistic repertoires of Cameroon migrants are explored, it is important to examine the notion of the biographic approach. How these migrants conceive and represent their heteroglossic repertoires makes the biographic approach relevant in gathering this type of data. The main questions of interest to biography-theoretical research are how people ‘produce’ a biography in different cultural contexts and social situations, and which conditions, rules, and patterns of

construction can be observed in this process. Combining the biographic approach with narratives, I believe, delivers a better analysis.

## 4.2 Research design and methodology

### *Research design*

The research design adopted in this study is the qualitative method. The qualitative research method is particularly relevant to this study since it deals with human beings - their personal values, meanings, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings. Qualitative research methods aim to answer questions about the what, how or why of a phenomenon rather than ‘how many’ or ‘how much’, which is quantitative (O'Connor and Gibson, 2003). This study is also informed by the interpretive paradigm. Geertz (1973) cited in Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006:321) argues that the purpose of interpretive analysis is to provide “thick description”, which is a thorough description of the characteristics, processes, transactions, and context that constitutes the phenomenon being studied.

The study adopted a qualitative research design because the linguistic structures and actions explored were subjected to descriptive analysis using the data from interviews, focus groups discussions and participant observation techniques. All these were accompanied by copious notes to enhance the reliability and credibility of the study. Qualitative research was preferred because it clearly shows what happened, why it happened, and how social agents act the way they do.

### *Sampling and sampling selection techniques*

Sampling is the selection of research participants from an entire population, and involves decisions about which people, setting, events, behavior, and /or social processes to observe (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006:49). Exactly who or what will be sampled in a particular study is influenced by the unit of analysis (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter 2006). The main concern in sampling is representativeness that is, to select a sample that will be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusions (Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006). The study’s use of small sample size is not a weakness but a way of enabling detailed and closer attention to the phenomenon. Because of the qualitative approach and purposive sampling method - no generalization of the findings could be made to a bigger

population. However, the aim of the study is to understand the lived experiences of participants identified for the study. It does not aim to generalize - but to describe the experiences of participants.

In order to achieve representativeness, the study draws on convenience sampling. Cameroonian immigrants from all age-groups and from all walks of life (in social gatherings, business places, schools and homes) who were willing to participate were invited for an interview. Opportunistic samplings were also used. This type of sampling took advantage of new opportunities while in the field. Most of the unexpected and unforeseen opportunities (usually emanating from informal discussions) brought about new insights even after fieldwork (Patton, 1990:2). Such samplings were helpful, because they made it possible to follow new leads during fieldwork or observations.

The research participants selected in this study are 14 Cameroonian migrants from all walks of life, students, ordinary migrants'- males and females aged between 25 and 50. From the 14 participants 9 were from the individual interviews while the remaining 5 were from the focus group discussion. The study purposefully targeted 7 participants whose living condition can be described as 'stable' on the one hand and 7 whose conditions are said to be 'precarious'. According to Brasch (2010:1), living a precarious life means living everyday with instability; it means not knowing if the life you are trying to build will come to an abrupt end. Precarious is a concept that attempts to capture the insecurity and instability associated with contemporary situations. Stability on the other hand is the opposite of precarious, a situation where things are considered secured, stable and comfortable. The study samples these groups of migrants in order to get a better understanding of these different experiences in Cape Town.

#### *Data collection strategies and procedures*

To find my participants, I visited some of the universities around Cape Town, meeting houses and homes to look for Cameroonian migrants and migrant families as well as different areas of Cape Town such as Parow, Phillippi, Kensington, Maitland and Khayelitsha. I also visited local drinking spots known as *shebeens* as well as churches. I approached any Cameroonian in any social gatherings and interviewed them on the spot. Contact numbers of some were taken to call and fix a convenient time to meet for an interview. I also collected data from their business sites or homes for those who found such sites convenient. The selection of Cameroonian migrants was advantageous for me because we share the same languages such as English, Pidgin English and



French. This made it possible for them to participate freely knowing that I was one of them and we shared the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Telling these migrants' stories is, in other words, telling my own story. My own personal story may look simple but it shares some commonality with my research participants which gave me an 'insider' position. My position in relation to my sample is drawn from a range of positions, for example my language, class and personal story which matters in the negotiation of place and subjectivity, and which all influenced how the participants related to me.

During the research period I participated in various leisure activities (like soccer matches and general functions), household activities, political activities, and other Cameroonian meetings in Cape Town, which allowed me to do my observations. The use of multiple interpretative qualitative methods as well as multiple data collection sites helped me to get a better understanding of the research problem. My research participants, in the words of Richards (2003:38), were "unique individuals...actors with different biographies in particular circumstances, at particular times and in different localities where they construct meanings from events and interactions". Guided by an ethnographic-style method, my data was collected through interviews, focus group discussion observations as well as participant's narratives.

One of the aspects that drew my attention to ethnography is its holistic approach, especially in explaining a phenomenon as complex as culture and a concept as broad as identity in relation to language. I got close to the participants and we spent a significant amount of time together, through which I got more understanding of their language practices and other vital information relevant to the study. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004:26) believe collecting data with participants' perspective at heart and acknowledging their views and opinions will lead to the research subjects' voices, opinions and beliefs being heard. I also kept field notes regularly to record particular situations and responses.

### 4.3 Interviews

I considered interviews to be a natural and indispensable method in the exploration of my respondents' language and identity repertoires. Vygotsky and Seidman (2006:7) write: "Every word that people use in telling their stories is a microcosm of their consciousness. Individuals' consciousness gives access to the most complicated social and educational issues, because social and educational issues are abstractions based on the concrete experience of people". Interviews in



sociolinguistic studies also provide an added bonus in that the process of interviewing unearths the very linguistic phenomena that I seek to uncover. I am, therefore, not only accessing attitudes about language use, concrete experiences of language use and acquisition over the lifetime of a subject, or the goals and dreams that these informants have concerning language use in their new country of residence; I am also witnessing language in action.

Interested participants identified during the interview schedule were interviewed and briefed about the research. When the purpose of the research was understood, s/he was then interviewed using specific questions related to the research aims, and these semi-structured interviews were recorded. Additional questions were asked depending on how the participants responded to the interview questions. Participants were asked to reflect on the journey of their linguistic repertoires, codes, languages, and the means of expression and communication that play a role in their lives. In addition to the administration of the research questions, the participants were given a map of Africa to show and describe the route they took into South Africa. They used the map by drawing lines to show the trajectories (routes), and explaining how long they stopped over at various points en route to Cape Town, what their linguistic and personal experiences were in these other spaces and why they kept on moving.

In conducting linguistic research, issues of language are at the forefront and Pavlenko (2007) warns of the inherent problems in collecting stories in one language, even if this language is most convenient for analysis. In the case where information is collected in one language, it limits the speaker's linguistic options. Agreeing with Pavlenko, I instructed the informants to speak in whatever language they felt most comfortable in. They were also encouraged at the beginning of the interview to use multiple languages if they saw a reason to switch from one language to another during the interview. This led to the collection of data in Pidgin English since most of my respondents were comfortable in using it. As Pavlenko (2007) explains, insisting on a single language equates the telling of their life story to a telling of facts, but I was interested in the process of telling a story in which language is the key element. I therefore treated these interviews as one more event in a lifetime of linguistic events.

Pavlenko (2007) also promotes the use of various contextual features, that is macro- and micro-level analysis in which global and local contextual influences are considered. In terms of micro-level influences, the interview interactions and how the respondents engaged in the discussion

were dependent on how they saw me as a person and as a researcher. On the other hand, “macro analysis of form requires that one pays attention to how the speakers’ choices and omissions are shaped by culturally sanctioned topics, modes of expression, interpretive repertoires, and storytelling conventions” (Pavlenko, 2007:178).

#### 4.3.1 Focus group interviews

Focus group interviews were also conducted with a total of 5 participants, 2 females and 3 males a mixture of Anglophones and Francophones. According to Salline and Braidwood (2009), focus group interviews tell one more about the social structure of the community in which one is working, give more in-depth understanding of the context and social fabric of the community, and provide information on how opinion and knowledge are formed in social context. The focus group questions were developed from the research assumptions. During these discussions, I acted as the moderator to see that misunderstandings did not occur and to prevent some participants from dominating others. Participants were given the choice of French, English or Pidgin English (or mixtures of these languages) in which to provide answers to the researches. The choice of these languages allowed the participants to demonstrate their plurilingual and pluricultural flexibility in their narratives as well as their relationship with various languages and cultures. These focus group interviews were also recorded, and additional field notes were taken.

#### 4.3.2 Participant observation

One of the qualitative methods used was participant observation. This included spending some period of time with the participants being studied; participating in both routine and extraordinary activities alongside members of the Cameroon migrant community; ‘hanging out’ in informal settings; and recording observations (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002). While ‘hanging out,’ conducting interviews, engaging in informal conversations, and studying people from afar, I had a small notebook on hand to jot down facial expressions, bodily actions, surroundings, composition of groups, and so on. I tried to be meticulous in writing down observations immediately and then reflected on them again when I got home that same day when the experiences were best remembered. I reflected for example on why people behaved the way they did. My behavior was therefore in line with Guthrie and Hall’s (1984:96) contention that the participant observer “must know what to look for, what to observe, and must try to remain objective”.

### 4.3.3 Transcription

Since I transcribed most of the recorded data, I was able to do an in-depth analysis of the various interactions, unearthing themes that connected different informants. By transcribing the recording within days of the actual event, the data remained fresh in my mind. I used bold type for important sections so I could easily return to them when doing my analysis. Once themes emerged, I created another document with headings for different ideas on which to focus. When dealing with multilingual discourse and focusing on how different languages are used in that discourse, establishing transcription conventions that adequately present the data became paramount. While transcribing, I kept in mind Pavlenko's (2007:173) argument that "additions and omissions, pauses, self-corrections, repetitions, slips of the tongue, false starts and restarts, code-switches, requests for help, paralinguistic features, and temporal variation are crucial cues in analysis of lexical choice problems, in the understanding of speakers' intentions and positioning toward the subject matter".

I tried to convey through writing everything that was uttered. While transcribing, I also followed Gardner-Chloros's (2009:185) explanation of a traditional transcription: firstly, there is a short introduction giving details of speakers and languages used; then each speaker's turn is put in a separate paragraph following an indication of who is speaking; and normal and italic fonts are used to indicate the language of each word/phrase. I made use of Sterponi's (2007) transcription notations:

- . The period indicates a falling, or final, intonation contour, not necessarily the end of a sentence
- ? The question mark indicates rising intonation, not necessarily a question.
- , The comma indicates 'continuing' intonation, not necessarily a clause boundary.
- : Colons indicate stretching of the preceding sound, proportional to the number of colons
- A Hyphen after a word or a part of a word indicates a cut-off or self-interruption.
- (( )) Double parentheses enclose descriptions of conduct (word) when all or part of an utterance is in parentheses; this indicates uncertainty on the transcriber's part.
- ( ) Empty parentheses indicate an inaudible stretch of talk.
- [Separate left square brackets, one above the other on two successive lines with utterances by different speakers, indicate onset of a point of conversational overlap
- // Words between back-slashes are transcribed with the phonetic alphabet for instances in which a language's conventional writing conventions are inadequate.

## 4.4 My role as researcher

With the primary focus of my research on the role that socially constructed identities play in everyday language use and interaction, it is imperative that I address my own identity as the researcher. “Just as social interaction and relationships are never entirely determined by the researcher, reflexivity and the researcher’s positionality is never fully controllable or knowable to the researcher” (Mick, 2011:178). The researcher and the researched “mutually position and reposition each other through discursive encounters, so that the research and the ‘selves’ becomes interactive texts” (Rose, 1997:314). I agree with Mick’s (2011) statement that nothing is too trivial in terms of influence or relationship positions and participants in the field, which have significantly shaped the current study. My own biography for example helped to shape this study. In the process of data collection and interpretation, I was aware that the way(s) in which others view me and how I view myself influenced my access to the informants and to what they were willing to share.

I have therefore reflected on my own personal identity in relation to my topic of investigation. For example, I have always wondered about what it means to speak many languages while living in a multilingual context such as Cape Town. As a member of a linguistic minority group both in Cameroon and South Africa, I have often reflected on how my outward features influenced my linguistic interactions, and with my level of education I often feel empathy towards people or Cameroonians who don’t have the opportunities I might have. Thus, I am fully aware that how respondents related to me was influenced by my own multiple identities.

## 4.5 Data analysis

The data were analysed using thematic content analysis, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, narrative analysis and multimodal biographic analysis.

### 4.5.1 Thematic analysis: a text-based approach

According to Terre Blanche *et al.*, (2006:322-326), thematic data analysis involves reading through your data repeatedly, and engaging in activities of breaking the data down (thematizing and categorizing) and building it up again in novel ways (elaborating and interpreting). After collecting the data, I transcribed the interviews taking note of semiotic signs such as silence, sighs, laughter, posture and gestures which influenced the underlying meanings. After familiarizing myself with

the data collected by reading the transcripts over and over, I established my units of analysis which in this case was the individual interview data; observation data and data from the focus group discussion.

A text-based analysis which allows for an in-depth consideration of data (Leedy, 1997:107) was used. Text in this case refers to the transcribed information from the respondents as well as notes from observation. I coded and categorized the texts looking for emerging themes or ideas that were common in the texts. I looked for commonalities in my respondents as well as the commonalities between the migrants whose living situations could be described as ‘stable’ as against those whose situations were ‘precarious’. I also looked at commonalities and differences between the individual interviews and the focus group discussions. Granheim and Lundman (2004: 106) look at codes as manifest (surface meaning) and themes as latent content (deeper meaning). Coding, categorization and thematization helped in determining the different themes that came up relating to respondent’s linguistic biographies as well as their language use patterns and practices. In addition to what has been described above, I also adopted Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis framework. In the process of analysis, content, context and form were considered. In analysing content, a consideration was made not only about what is said or written but also about what is omitted and why. Here I was guided by my specific research questions.

According to Pavlenko (2007), textual analysis should consider both the immediate or micro context as well as the remote or macro context. Micro context considers things such as the interviews or manuscripts and the lexical choices used, while the macro context looks at how people structure their life stories based on the kind of atmosphere that prevails at the time.

#### 4.5.2 Discourse analysis

Blackledge (2004:26) declares that researchers who appeal to ‘discourse analysis’ do so to identify the semiotic processes and rhetorical means by which identities are constructed and negotiated in linguistically diverse context. The study is guided by the social-constructionist approach to discourse analysis since it is “interested in ways, in which talk is used to manufacture experiences, feelings, meanings, and other social facts in the first place” (Terre Blanche et al., 2006:328).

Based on the interpretive and social constructionist tradition, data analysis started from the data collection where an inductive approach was followed. In order to analyze the study’s data, I

followed the steps proposed by Terre Blanche et al. (2006) for doing an interpretative data analysis. The process starts with the researcher familiarising and immersing him/herself in the data from interviews, field notes from observations and focus group discussions. Before the coding process actually started, I had some themes in mind (from the literature) that I expected to find in addition to the themes that emerged from the data. What I observed as themes were derived from the language of the participants and not just from summarising the content. I paid attention to processes, functions, tensions and contradictions that emerged from the texts. As I was identifying the themes in the data, I was also checking if the ones I had in mind came up in the interview texts. I code sections of the texts that showed these themes.

According to Terre Blanche et al. (2006:328) there are many ways of doing a constructionist analysis, but all share the same aim of revealing the cultural materials from which particular utterances, texts or events have been constructed. In the case of this study the transcribed data became texts and discourses were drawn from them. In order to identify such discourses in the texts, I immersed myself in the culture of the participants and took note of how they used language. For example, did they have a particular way of speaking in particular situations or with particular people? As a Cameroonian myself, I was aware of some of these cultures but as a discourse analyst, I needed to reflect more on the texts to be able to identify discourses in participants' responses. To do this I looked for binary oppositions, recurrent terms, phrases and metaphors that were present in the texts and the effects they were trying to achieve. Another way that discourses were identified in the text was trying to understand the relationship with human subjects spoken about in the texts. In the course of the interviews and focus group discussions, respondents referred to other people. Critical discourse analysis was applied to why, how and to what effect these subjects were talked about. Again, the context where the data came from became important in doing a discourse analysis. A reflection was done on the context where the data emanated from and the atmosphere reigning at the time.

Moreover, as a linguistic study it was also important to identify linguistic and rhetorical mechanisms as this helped in identifying discourses in the texts and how they work. For example, I looked for common words or vocabulary such as nouns, verbs and adjectives that were regularly used in the texts. Such regularities could shed light on some vital issues or arguments in the texts. Analysis was not only limited to word level but also to sentences and grammatical features. I also took a closer look at the main and auxiliary verbs found in the texts, checking what tense they



appeared in. The use of pronouns such as “we, they us, them” for example, were identified in the texts and analyzed to see to what effect they were used in the texts. A look at adjectives and adverbs could also reveal more about judgments passed on groups identified in the texts by the use of pronouns. I also paid attention to rhetorical and literary devices, modalities such as “should” or “could” which may create a sense of urgency, serve as a call to action, or imply hypothetical scenarios. In addition to engaging in detailed readings of texts, Terre Blanche et al. (2006:336) posit that “we should read many different texts to show patterns of variation and consistency in discourse”. Thus, I tried to explain the broader context within which the immediate text operated.

After going through all these processes I then interpreted and presented the findings. While doing the interpretation, I constantly asked myself the following questions: who created the material I am analyzing? What is their position on the topic examined? How do their arguments draw from and in turn contribute to commonly accepted knowledge of the topic, in the place that this argument was made? And maybe most importantly: who might benefit from the findings of this study?

#### 4.5.3 Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis was another tool used in the study. The analysis of narratives started from the transcription process. Care was taken not to omit or add anything to the data that could distort the narratives that were embedded in the interview data. I had to go over the transcripts several times, reflecting on what was going on with the participants, with me and between us. I looked out for similarities and differences in participants’ narratives and the themes that came through them.

Rosenthal and Fischer-Rosenthal’s (2004) method of narrative analysis was adopted, which I found useful as they made a distinction between actual events and narratives, arguing that narratives must be based on some form of perception or observation of real events. Their six stage analysis includes an analysis of biographical data, thematic analysis, re-construction of the case history or life as it was lived, an analysis of individual texts, a process of comparison between a narrative and life as lived, and the formation of different types of narratives. While I did not use all their processes, I focused on aspects like the analysis of biographical data and individual texts.

I analyzed the data biographically by tracing participants’ journeys from Cameroon to Cape Town South Africa, paying attention to where they stopped and why. I conducted a thematic analysis by coding significant sections relating to themes and narratives about particular incidents or stories



they told in the course of the interviews, using participants' own language to describe each theme. These were in the form of quotes or by highlighting those sections. I constructed a life history for each participant by reducing and re-ordering their narratives into a brief summary of their stories told in their own words and how they constructed their sense of self. In all, I paid attention to issues of language choice, context, content and form in the narratives.

#### 4.5.4 Critical discourse analysis

CDA strongly relies on linguistic categories. This does not mean that topics and content play no role at all, but that the core operationalization depends on linguistic concepts such as actors, mode, time, tense, argumentation, and so on (Wodak and Meyer, 2009:28). For the Critical discourse analysis, I looked specifically at linguistic forms used in various expressions. I also paid attention to textual metaphors. To further dissect the texts, a toolbox consisting of framing, foregrounding, textual silence, voice, labels, naming, topicalization, agency, modality and register was critically exploited and analysed. In order not to limit the scope of my analysis, I also followed O'Halloran's (2003) textual analysis of transitivity; sourcing; lexical choice and presupposition.

In analyzing these grammatical resources, I paid attention to patterns that emerged across these linguistics functions and confirm or contradict one another. Halliday (1985:101) believes the most powerful conception of reality is that it consists of going on, of doing, of happening, of feeling, and of being. These are sorted out in the semantic system of the language, and expressed through the grammar of the clause.

The contradictory discourse as seen in participants' narratives and their discourses expressed allows one to believe that even the system of pronouns is not stable. It is for this reason that the study has employed Critical Discourse Analysis to reveal the intricate system of hegemony and domination in society (Halliday, 1994). O'Halloran's (2003) textual analysis of transitivity was applied in this study to examine the fundamental property of language that enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of the experience of what goes on around them and inside them. O'Halloran's transitivity deals not only with verbs and the tense in which they appeared as in Discourse Analysis, but also with the verbs associated with participants and circumstances (Halliday, 1967, 1973, 1985). As such, I paid attention to the relationships between the processes which were indicated by the verbs and the participants involved with it. Who the participants were (relational process), what they were doing (material process) and feeling (mental process) were critically analysed.

To strengthen objectivity in the study I quoted participants' words in some instances as well as researchers in the field of study. I followed Van Dijk's (1993:252) suggestion that when there is a reported speech, it is always accompanied by the reporter's voice in words like claim, alleged, argued, insisted, which signify the reporters' orientation towards the message he/she is quoting. Sourcing my participants' voices improves the trustworthiness of the findings. In analysing the lexical choices, I paid attention to individual lexical items, their connotation and denotation. This is because naming and lexical choices are value-laden and ideologically charged (Pasha, 2011: 123). By analysing these lexical choices, the different meanings expressed by the participants were constructed as findings.

Since I was dealing with a migrant community that I happen to be part of, I applied implicature or presupposition since I share some common knowledge with the research participants. I therefore interpreted participants' texts based on the context of the utterance.

#### 4.5.5 Linguistic and discursive features

In order to effectively dissect discourse through narrative analysis and CDA, one needs to focus on specific linguistic and discursive features. It is interesting to note that while Pavlenko (2007) is mainly concerned with features such as lexical borrowing, language play, and code-switching, Fairclough (1992) pays particular attention to vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, text structure, speech acts, coherence and intertextuality. Elements of code-switching, deixis and intertextuality were identified in the texts and analyzed. These features are important as they have the ability to expose and explain the formulation of multilingual and hybrid identities in relation to the larger context. A fuller explanation of each of these elements is provided below.

##### *Code-switching*

Participants in the present study were instructed to speak in the language of their choice, resulting in the production of multilingual texts with many examples of code-switching (CS). These were analyzed as they offered some insights into the connections between language, society, culture, and identity, with CS often acting as a marker of identity. In my analysis, I drew insights from Myers-Scotton's markedness model (1993) which offers taxonomy of four related types of switching: CS as a sequence of unmarked choices, CS itself as the unmarked choice, CS as a marked choice and CS as an exploratory choice (Myers-Scotton, 1993:114). The Markedness Model is important in the context of this study because it provides a comprehensive theoretical ground for analyzing code-switching in both in- and out-group interactional situations. Instances

of code-switching were identified from the audio recording from interviews and focus groups discussion as well as from field notes from observation.

### *Deixis and intertextuality*

In addition to analyzing code-switching I also paid attention to the use of deixis and intertextuality. Deixis is an important linguistic feature, especially when speakers talk about ethnic categories and personal pronouns in their interaction (Pavlenko, 2007:169). Deixis is a phenomenon that indicates the subject position of a speaker in discourse and can be categorized by personal deixis, social deixis, temporal deixis and spatial deixis. I paid particular attention to how participants made use of pronouns and the different categories of deixis.

Regarding intertextuality, Bakhtin (1986:104) contends that “there can be no such thing as an absolutely neutral utterance” and that “the speaker’s evaluative attitude toward the subject of his speech (regardless of what this subject may be) also determines the choice of lexical, grammatical, and compositional means of the utterance”. The participants while explaining their linguistic trajectories into and around Cape Town drew on other discourses (i.e. they included the voices and experiences of others) and such discourses were identified in their texts.

In a context such as Cape Town, where the language practices of migrants and those of the host communities collide, leading to complex hybridity, an analysis of intertextuality is relevant. Fairclough (1999:151) argues that “working across differences is a process in our individual lives, within the groups we belong to, as well as between groups. Working across differences entails semiotic hybridity - the emergence of new combinations of languages, social dialects, voices, genres and discourse”. Therefore, as speakers use language; especially multiple languages through code-switching, words are juxtaposed with other words in new and innovative ways (Smith, 2013). In addition, Fairclough (1999:151) notes that “hybridity, heterogeneity, intertextuality are salient features of contemporary discourse also because the boundaries between domains and practices are in many cases fluid and open in a context of rapid and intense social change”.

## 4.6 Ethical statement

Strict research ethics were adhered to this study. It is important to note that migrants are a potential

vulnerable population. Firstly, I explained to each participant what my research was all about and I stated clearly that their participation was voluntary. They then signed two letters of informed consent (see Appendix D), which provided detailed information about the aims and objectives of the study. One letter was for an individual interview, and the other for participating in a focus group interview. I also informed them that they could withdraw from the study at any time they wished. In this manner I ensured the following conditions of ethical research:

Privacy and Confidentiality: Participants in this study were ensured that their right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity will be protected. This means their real names were not mentioned while writing up the paper.

Recording: A voice recorder was used for recording the data and when the study was completed all recordings were destroyed. The collected data was securely stored until used.

Reporting: Participants in this research study were informed that copies of the final thesis would be made available to them upon request after it had been assessed.

Integrity: I made sure I protected people's dignity and care was taken not to discriminate based on sex, age, race, religion, status, education background, or physical abilities.

#### 4.7 Summary of chapter

In order to explore the full repertoire of communicative resources that migrants use in Cape Town's heterogeneous and diverse space, how this space has influenced and modified their personal and linguistic identities and the effect their presence has had on the linguistic and socio-cultural nature of the city, a carefully designed methodology was developed. The study focused on the social lives of migrants through individual interviews, focus group discussions and observations. To analyze all these, a multi-dimensional analytical framework was used, namely: Discourse Analysis (DA), Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Thematic Analysis (TA) and the application of a Multimodal Biographic and Narrative lens. Through these methodological and analytical approaches, the study has made visible participants' polylingual repertoires and associated attitudes and beliefs.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE LINGUISTIC PROFILES OF THE RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

#### 5.0 Introduction

Drawing on Bakhtin's concepts of heteroglossia and heterogeneity (Bakhtin, 1981), this chapter is an exploration of the uneven and heterogeneous linguistic profiles of my research participants - how they describe and present their languages or language profiles as well as the ways in which their multilingual repertoires have influenced their lives as migrants in Cape Town. These participants' linguistic identities are clearly not only multilingual, uneven, complex, multivoiced and multifaceted, but also constantly changing and subject to constant re-negotiation.

As a starting point, participants were asked to list all the languages in their repertoires, irrespective of the degree of competence with which they could use these languages or codes. This was followed by an examination of particular domains in which these codes are used, their particular language preferences and the reasons behind their intentions for learning more languages or not. These latter factors are described and discussed in this chapter after a presentation of the participant's linguistic repertoires and the major factors influencing these uneven profiles: family, ethnic/community, institutional multilingualism, migration and structural similarities between codes.

Table 5.1 below shows a range of the different languages my participants reported as being part of their full linguistic repertoire. Following their names (not their real identities), the languages or codes includes those acquired in Cameroon as well as those in South Africa. It is important to note that although the languages were presented as named entities; in reality people do not name these languages as some of these languages are structurally similar as shown in 5.2.4. In addition, people often make use of only features in some of these languages.

Range of languages/linguistic repertoires of the research participants								
Name								
Caronis	French	English	CPE	Bafang	Bangangte	Xhosa	Afrikaans	
Fellos	CPE	English	French	Bafut				
Premos	English	CPE	Moghamo	French	Xhosa	Afrikaans		
Rosa	Bafanji	CPE	English	French	Bakossi	Xhosa	Afrikaans	
Silvy	French	CPF English	Bamileke	Bassa	Ewondo		Xhosa	Afrikaans
Tisia	English	CPE	Bafut	French	Xhosa	Afrikaans		
Jude	English	CPE	Pinyin	French	Bali Ngembalgs Banso Bakossi			
Tjubis	English	CPE	Aghem	Weh	French	Xhosa	Afrikaans	
Jerome	English	Pinyin	CPE	Ngemba- languages	Xhosa	Zulu	Sotho	
Cosmos	French	English	Dschang,	Bafang	Bangangte Spanish		Xhosa	Afrikaans
Bari	English	CPE	French					
Nini	English	CPE	French	Bafouchu		Afrikaans	Xhosa	
Aweh	English	CPE	Mbesa	Bambili		Xhosa	Afrikaans	Zulu
Melissa	French	English	Batchingou	Baligou	Bangangte			

Table 2. Participants' reported linguistic profiles

When people migrate to other areas the expectation is that these migrants will be 'speechless' since they will not be able to use the language(s) of the host community. Such claims are contrary to what this study has found as participants showed that they are able to communicate with others both in their Cameroon languages as well as the South African acquired languages no matter how little they could communicate in these languages.

From the table above one can see that many of these participants listed more than one language which means they can use more than one language. This can be explained by the fact that they come from a multilingual country and migrated to another multilingual country. According to Ahmed (2014), how participants become multilingual is dependent on factors such as their psycho-social situation, opportunities for language learning, quality of the language contact in respect of the linguistic complexities in both their host and country of origin, their future aspirations and their affective level. The multilingual nature of the participants is due to their language contact in the course of their migration trajectories which will be explained in the rest of the thesis as well as their language biographies which are greatly influenced by the linguistic situation and language policy in their country of origin Cameroon as well as South Africa, their country of destination.



Generally, the linguistic profiles of the study's participants seem to be 'heterogeneous' in nature and 'uneven'. Linguistic heterogeneity is common among migrants because they have different linguistic biographies, different cultures and the languages in their country of origin and new languages they have learned as migrants enjoy different statuses. The list of languages included in the repertoires of the participants presented in table 5.1 indicates the potential for heterogeneity in terms of the participants' multilingual profiles. The details of the multilingual profiles and what influences these multilingual profiles is examined in the following section.

## 5.2 The major factors influencing my participants' linguistic profiles

It has been argued in the literature that the multilingual dispensation is organized around language biographies in time and space (Blommaert, 2005; Busch, Jardine and Tjuoutuku, 2006; Busch, 2012, 2016). Cameroon is a multilingual country with two official languages, English and French, with over 200 local or national languages. The multilingual nature of Cameroonians is reflected in its citizens wherever they go. Fasold (1990) suggests that multilingualism serves as an interactional resource for the multilingual speaker. This means that one particular language may be used at home or with close friends, whereas another language may be used for business and trade, and even a third one for dealing with government agencies.

Many of the claims that Blommaert and Backus (2011:9) make regarding the life changes that takes place in people's linguistic repertoire is evident in the present study. It is important to state that the present study does not pay attention to how well or how competently participants can speak the languages or varieties in their repertoires, but rather to how they make use of the full or partial repertoires in their possession (cf. Blommaert, 2005; Busch, 2012). Not paying attention to how well participants can speak these languages concurs with Blommaert's (2010a:23) proposition that in place of fixed repertoires, "truncated multilingualism" or repertoires which consist of specialized but partially- and unevenly-developed resources be used. Blommaert claims that people "never know all of a language; they always know specific bits and pieces of it. In this case multilingualism is not so much a collection of languages, but rather a collection of specific resources which includes concrete accents, language varieties, registers, genres and modalities such as writing - all ways of using language in particular communicative settings" (Blommaert, 2010a: 102). These repertoires are then "grounded in people's biographies" (Blommaert, 2010a: 102).



## 5.2.1 The influence of ethnic, family and community multilingualism

### *Ethnic Identity*

Ethnic identity surfaces and becomes a strong part of the migrants' persona when they arrive in a host country that is dominated by a different ethnicity or culture (Zimmermann, 2007). It is assumed that a migrant who arrives in the host country moves along a plane formed by two axes representing commitment to his/her host country as well as the country of origin (Zimmermann, 2007). Zimmermann believes that the horizontal axis is the measurement of commitment to and self-identification with the country of origin, while on the vertical axis is the measurement of commitment to and self-identification with the host country. In focusing on migrants' language use and practices in Cape Town, ethnicity becomes important as it is a salient marker of identity. The table below shows participants' expressed ethnicity and reasons for such a choice.

Participants	Ethnicity	Reasons for Ethnicity
Fellos	Anglophone	Because I speak English
Premos	Anglophone	Because I am from English speaking side that speaks English
Rosa	Anglophone	My parents are English speaking
Silvy	Francophone	I grew up as Francophone
Tisia	Anglophone	Born in English dominated area/grew up speaking English
Jude	Anglophone	Because of my cultural heritage
Tjubs	Anglophone	I went through the Anglo-Saxon education/I speak English
Jerome	Anglophone	Because I was born in Bamenda
Cosmos	Cameroonian	Because I want to avoid division
Bari	Anglophone	Anglophone
Nini	Anglophone	I come from the English side
Aweh	Southern Cameroon Ambazonian	because I was robbed of my nationality

Melissa	Francophone	because I speak French / I am coming from the French side
Caronis	Francophone	because I speak French

Table 3. Ethnic affiliation (as Cameroonians) of the participants

From the table above one can see that Cameroon identities are linked to the national politics of Anglophones versus Francophone rather than their indigenous ethnolinguistic background. The participants in most of the cases as seen above either linked their ethnolinguistic identities to either speaking French or English. It is important to mention that this is a colonial construction which the participants have fallen prey to.

In discussing the influence of ethnic identity on my participants, I chose to focus on extracts from the focus group discussion which was much richer in terms of the discussion on ethnic identities. I commence with Cosmos, whose response is very different from the rest and who resists particular labels assigned to groups in Cameroon.

Interviewer: As a Cameroonian, do you consider yourself Francophone or Anglophone? Why?

*Cosmos: No I think I am a Cameroonian. And then this thing of Anglophone and francophone... .... This barrier of Anglophone/ Francophone this is the thing which brings diversity and division between Cameroonians. But when you say that you are Cameroonian and then you associate yourself with each and every one. Because when you are already able to speak English and French mean that you are a real Cameroonian because Cameroon by nature or maybe by origin you can speak English and/or French and then when you say that Anglophone or Francophone you are already dividing again Cameroonian whereas they say that Cameroonian is one. And when they say Cameroon is Cameroon. So I consider myself a Cameroonian, Anglophone or francophone even though I am coming from French speaking and then I consider myself like a Cameroonian.*

Although Cosmos in answering the question chooses not to be identified as an Anglophone nor a Francophone but a Cameroonian, he still relates his choice to the issue of language. The fact that he is able to speak both English and French means he is a Cameroonian, and he feels that asking of Cameroonians to identify themselves as either Anglophone or Francophone sows divisions in what is supposed to be a united nation that uses two official languages. Otherwise if he were to

speaking only French he would want to be identified as a Francophone. He believes that such categorization brings division. Cosmos is also saying - a "real Cameroonian" uses both languages. That is, he is criticizing the question that was asked: do you identify as either Anglophone or Francophone. He seems to be saying: asking me to identify with one (Anglophone / Francophone) is an old fashioned / colonial way of asking the question of the national identity of contemporary Cameroonians.

He further compares Cameroon's situation to that of South Africa where the former Transkei and Ciskei territory (based on ethnicity) were reincorporated into South Africa on 27 April 1994, and the area became part of the Eastern Cape Province. *This thing of Ciskei and Transkei does no longer exist. Now is only South Africa.* Cosmos feels there is no use for Cameroonians to be identified as Anglophones or Francophones because this will mean going back to the old system where movements from the French provinces to the English province were restricted.

However, Cosmos was clearly the exception in this group. Melissa, for example, prefers to be identified as a Francophone, her identity since birth. *You know Cameroon is a bilingual country whereby there are two sides of Cameroon. There is English side and there is French side so for me I can't say I am a Cameroonian but a Francophone Cameroonian. There is no way I can say I am an Anglophone when I am not... I feel I am a Francophone because except French I am coming from the side of Francophone in Cameroon. In Cameroon there are two side French and English side so am coming from the French side.* She based her ethnicity on the fact that she speaks French and also the fact that she comes from the French side of Cameroon. Melissa's response concurs with Mai's (2011) findings where to be Anglophone or Francophone is sometimes equated to the ability to speak either English or French and to live either in the Southern (former British) Cameroons or East (former French) Cameroon (Anchimbe 2005; Alobwed'Epie 1993).

Nini identifies herself as an Anglophone because she comes from the English side. Here again she relates her ethnicity to the fact that she speaks English. She does not only identify herself as an Anglophone but also feels she does not belong to the Francophones because they stereotype Anglophones as '*anglofool*' and '*Biafra*' which are derogatory labels. She said this stereotyping kind of tendency in the environment is still ongoing and she wonders why the Francophones cannot yield to the Anglophones' ongoing quest for separation.

The only participant who refused to identify himself as either an Anglophone or a Francophone but as a Southern Cameroonian – an Ambazonian – was Aweh. An online blog (BaretaNews) explains the meaning of Ambazonia as follows:

*Many of you have been asking the meaning of the name Ambazonia. Like I said, whether you call it Southern Cameroons, West Cameroon, Anglophone Cameroon or Ambazonia, the territory has not changed. It means the same; it is just a matter of semantics. It represents that same state which voted in 1961 to join La Republique in a supposed Union. Now, you should be aware that, those who coin the name decided to bring a name that has nothing to do with "Cameroonian". Some felt that using the term Southern Cameroonian still pegged them to La Republique so the name Ambazonia to represent what we now have as NW and SW regions were generally accepted by all groups fighting for the restoration of Southern Cameroon's statehood. So what is Ambazonia?*

*The term "Ambazonia" is derived from the word Amba Bay, the bay at the mouth of the Mungo river, considered the natural boundary between the Republic of Cameroon and Southern Cameroons.*

Explaining why he prefers to be identified as an Ambazonian, Aweh states *'I was robbed of my nationality, I was fooled and deceived that I am a Cameroonian but until of late then I realized I was robbed, deceived, treated badly to neglect my own ....my own nationality of birth to .... with the colonial system to say that I am a Cameroonian so my point of view is as much as I have suffered all these deceptions I have come to realize that no my history has been erased. Now I am tracing my history and I have found my history. I am an Ambazonian not a Cameroonian'*. The maltreatment and marginalization of the Anglophones by the majority Francophones is echoed in Aweh's response. This is confirmation for the literature that argues that Cameroonians are trapped in a complex linguistic system with various kinds of unhappiness (Anchimbe 2005:40), some of which includes the Anglophone problem (since they are marginalized by the populous Francophone) and the Southern Cameroons secession issue (since the political union at independence has failed to guarantee equity for Anglophones).

The other respondents in the focus group discussion were perturbed by Aweh's arguments, to the point where Bari asked Aweh if he would accept South African nationality if the opportunity is given to him.

*Aweh: Yes, I will accept that because the reason why am here if I was comfortable in my home territory I wouldn't have left in the first place. I left because of the torment and tough times that I*

*went through and I came to South Africa. So for me to make a life out of the misery that I went through so I will gladly accept the South African nationality.*

*Bari: So it means if we fix the problem that made you to flee away from Cameroon and to come to SA you will certainly be a Cameroonian? Will I be right to say that if they fix that problem you will accept Cameroon nationality?*

*Aweh: Yes, as long as Cameroon or La Republique accept that Ambazonian is a territory on its own then I will go back.*

In addressing the question of ethnic affiliation, Bari feels that in today's world people really do not care about their nationality but they just want to be comfortable wherever they are. Bari feels ashamed that 55 years after achieving independence, Cameroon is still haunted by the legacy of colonialism. *I will even tell you that the world as we see today has even come to a point where Nationality is not even really an issue. People just want to be comfortable. I must first of all comment by saying I regret so badly that 55 years after independence Cameroon is still colonial... I am not an Anglophone or a Francophone because those are colonial heritage.* To this effect he says he is not an Anglophone or a Francophone because those are part of the colonial heritage. Cosmos agrees with Bari, and feels that because of the different languages, it is difficult for people to support one another and in instances of tension people will make statements like '*Vraiment tu n'es pas mon frère*' [Really, you are not my brother] since they do not speak the same language.

Analyzing the ethnic affiliations of the research participants, one can draw the conclusion that while some try to maintain their identities as Anglophones and Francophones, others have redesigned or changed their identities and as such opted to be identified as Southern Cameroonians, Cameroonians and Ambazonians; even opting strongly to accept South Africa citizenship if it becomes available. The fact that they are now in a new context has sharpened rather than reduced their perception of their ethnicity or identity for some participants which often happens when migrants feel overwhelmed by the cultures and languages of new spaces, and makes them cling to their earlier acquired identities. Such interpretations are guided by the poststructuralist theory that sees reality as socially constructed and based on symbolic and material structural limitations that are challenged and maintained in interaction (Mba, 2011).

### *Family and community identity*

According to Fishman (1963), many studies of multilingual behavior have shown the importance of the family domain in shaping its members' linguistic repertoires. The families of my participants speak the local language of the area plus the lingua franca Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE), as well as the indigenous languages of the neighboring villages. This scenario also applies to participants who came from homes where French is the main language, whose lingua franca was Cameroonian Pidgin French (CPF). This can be seen in the language biographies of four of the participants in table 5.1, which are described here. In the following sections, I present the descriptions that I compiled from the data gathered for the study. These descriptions could be viewed as vignettes that summarize the positions expressed by participants on specific issues.

#### Participant 1

Jude is from the North West region of Cameroon in the predominantly English speaking Anglophone region. From what he says, his father was a trader and could move from place to place and as such could speak many languages. His family mobility meant that each time they move to a new place they learn the language of that place and that made him to learn languages like Bali, Bansa, Bakossi and others listed in his repertoires. Jude's linguistic trajectories were shaped by that of the family and that is why he could speak most of these languages.

Although Pinyin is his mother tongue, Jude considers Bansa as his second mother tongue since he can communicate in the language so well. Structurally Pinyin and Bansa have no similarity but he lived in Bansa with his family and learned the language. The family later moved from the Northwest region to the South West region and it is here that he learned how to speak Bakossi as he interacted in the community. Apart from his mother tongue, Jude also started making use of English and CPE as he interacted with the different communities he lived in.

At university he continued to encounter other languages like French. After graduating from the university Jude struggled to get a job and he ended up as a private teacher to survive. His life became so difficult that he decided to come to South Africa for greener pastures and again his linguistic repertoire expanded with the addition of Cape Town local languages. He added some Xhosa and Afrikaans, South African languages since he arrived in Cape Town.

#### Participant 2

Fellos' linguistic profile is not as extensive as that of the other participants owing to the fact that she is not educated and also a newcomer in Cape Town. The multilingual nature of her family has an influence on her present linguistic repertoire. The mother spoke a different language from that of the father so she was exposed to these different languages. Since the parents came from two different linguistic backgrounds and resided in an urban center, the children largely communicated in CPE, the language that she is most fluent in. She married a speaker of Bafut, which she then acquired as she interacted with her husband's family. Her knowledge of French improved when she relocated from the North West region of Bamenda to join her husband who was working in Yaoundé, a predominately French



region. Disappointed with the turn of events in her business and marriage, she decided to join her junior sister who has been living in Cape Town for two years. Although she does not list any language in South Africa as part of her linguistic repertoire she however said some people who come to her tailoring workshop in the suburb of Maitland speak Xhosa, Afrikaans and especially Lingala.

#### Participant 3

Silvy's linguistic repertoire also shows her family influence and the different communities she has lived in either with her family or as an individual. She is from the West region of Cameroon but lived in Yaoundé in the center region for the greater part of her life. In addition to her mother tongue, Bamilike, she can also communicate in other central region languages like French, Ewondo, Beti and Etone. She also sometimes visits her aunt who lived in the Littoral region so can also speak a bit of Bassa. Coming to Cape Town Sivy is trying to pick up some Xhosa and Afrikaans words because according to her these languages can help you in very ugly situations.

#### Participant 4

Rosa who comes from the North West region of Cameroon can communicate in her native Bafanji, CPE, French, Bakossi English and some Cape Town languages. When her father took the family to the South West region she learned Bakossia. Like Fellos, Rosa is also a secondary school dropout and her competence in English is low. Besides her mother tongue she can also easily communicate in CPE. Apart from learning French in school, she most of the time learned it from her friends in the community who attended a bilingual school. She does not really speak the Cape Town local languages since she is also a newcomer in Cape Town. But at least she says she can understand one or two words in Xhosa and Afrikaans.

The examples above show that the families and communities that the participants lived in played an important role in building their linguistic repertoires. Most of the participant's language biographies are shaped by their individual life trajectories as well as that of their families. They live multidialectal lives either as expatriate Cameroonians, nationals and migrants to South Africa. Even in their home country most of the participants have moved from one region to another or from one institution of learning to another and in these moves they have passed through different regimes of language. As they go through these different linguistic environments, they pick up or learn new languages or varieties. Migration to Cape Town has added to their already multilingual nature. In examining the multidialectal lives of migrants, it becomes clear that the mobility of people also brings about the mobility of linguistic and sociolinguistic resources (Blommaert, 2010).

#### 5.2.2 The influence of institutional multilingualism

The multilingual repertoires of these participants were also influenced by the different institutions they have been to from the primary through to the university. Jude's linguistic repertoires changed



as he started making more use of English and CPE although he started picking up these languages at home and in the community. His competence in these languages grew as he used them more in school. From what Jude says French was only introduced in his repertoires at the level of the secondary school since French was not taught at the time in most primary schools. While in the secondary school he studied French as a compulsory subject and it is at this time that French entered his repertoire.

He later moved to the University in a French dominated area and his French competency improved since he needed French to survive in the community as well as in his academic journey. Studying in a French university was not easy for him as lectures were mostly offered in French and you have to constantly look for people to translate the notes from French to English so that you can have a better understanding. As an Anglophone it was not an easy journey but nevertheless his competence in French grew.

It is important to emphasize the role of academic institutions in shaping the linguistic repertoires of the research participants. Most of the participants listed English and French as part of their linguistic repertoire because most of the schools they attended instituted a bilingual type of education especially in the urban areas. French is also offered as a compulsory subject in most schools so it is not surprising that most of the participants can communicate in both English and French. In some of the rural schools especially at the primary level it is not unusual to see sections of the lesson being taught in the local language of that area and at times in CPE. Sometimes CPE is used in most cases where the class teacher does not speak the local language of the area. Academic institutions therefore impacted on the multilingual nature of the participants and have added to their linguistic repertoires.

### 5.2.3 The influence of migration

Migration is another factor that accounts for the participants' multilingual repertoires. As a result of his family's constant moving from one place to another, Jude had to learn all the languages that his father could speak as well as those of the different places the family stayed. Even as he became an adult he also stayed in different places in Cameroon. Jude's linguistic trajectories were thus shaped by those of his mobile family and that is why he could speak most of the languages he listed.

His migration journey that started back in Cameroon made him learn languages like Bansa, Bali, Bakossi and many others. His repertoire expanded with his migration to Cape Town in South Africa. He is currently trying to learn some isiXhosa and Afrikaans to add to his linguistic repertoire. Similarly, the linguistic repertoire of Fellos grew as she became more exposed to French when she moved to Yaounde to join her husband who was working there at the time. Unlike in the academic setting where French is only studied as a subject, in the Francophone community you are confronted with the language in most domains, making the acquisition of this language essential. Migrating to South Africa has naturally exposed her to the local languages which she will need to acquire to ensure her survival in this space. Similar patterns can be seen in the language biographies of Silvy and Rosa, who both show a keen interest in the local languages in Cape Town.

The examples above show that besides learning languages from family, community and schools, migration also plays an important role in building the linguistic knowledge of people (Lanza, 2007:46). Their individual life trajectories, their families, communities and places they have visited or lived in shape most of the participant's language biographies. For Bakhtin (1981), the reality of language and speech is not to be found in an abstract system of linguistic forms but in the social event (in this case, migration) of verbal interaction from which knowledge emerges. In examining the multidialectal lives of migrants, it becomes clear that the mobility of people also brings about the mobility of linguistic and sociolinguistic resources (Blommaert, 2010).

The role of migration in shaping the repertoires and trajectories of my respondents is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 8.

#### 5.2.4 The influence of encountering structural similarities in languages

In analyzing the language profiles of some of these Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town, I noticed that their multilingual nature partly came about as a result of the fact that some of the languages or varieties in their repertoires are structurally similar or mutually intelligible. The speaker of one such variety usually understands the other to a high degree. These languages are also usually geographically located close to one another, such as the Ngemba cluster, which includes the dialects Bafut, Mankon and Pinyin in which participants like Jude and Jerome could communicate. The example below shows how mutually intelligible or similar some of the languages in the Ngemba cluster are. While some are similar or different in terms of spellings, others are related in terms of pronunciation or intonation.

House		Thank you		How is it?		Are you there?	
Ndap	Bali	Miya	Mbili	Abene	Mankon	Ngebale?	Mbili
Nda	Mankon	Miya	Pinyin	Abela	Chomba	Ngeba?	Mankon
		Jika	Bali			Ngeba?	Pinyin

Similarly, Cosmos and Melissa could communicate in mutually intelligible dialects like, Dschang, Bafang, Baghante and other languages they listed as part of their repertoires.

Shoe		Dog		Car		Goodmorning	
Tap	Balengou	mvou	Banjoun	metou	Banjoun	Olia	Balengou
Tape	Banjoun	memvo	Bamoun Bamessing Balengou	matoir	Bamoun	Otia	Banjoun
Tapp	Batoufam			metoir	Bamessing		

The multilingual nature of these participants is thus partly due to such structural relatedness.

### 5.2.5 The influence of language ideologies and attitudes

Negative or positive attitudes towards a language may reflect linguistic difficulty or simplicity of learning, degree of importance and social status (Cru, 2016). Showing a positive or negative attitude towards a particular language or languages can lead to being motivated or de-motivated in learning and using that language. Individual language attitudes cannot occur in isolation from societal ideologies about language – how those in power decide which languages are important. There is therefore a clear link between language ideologies and power (Dyers and Abongdia, 2010), and people are influenced by what the broader society tells them to think or believe about

languages. I found that ideologies and attitudes helped to shape the language profiles of my respondents, and that this was an ongoing process in their migration from Cameroon to South Africa. However, this justified a chapter in its own right, and will therefore be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

To conclude, in section 5.2 I have discussed the factors leading to my different research participants' level of multilingualism – the type of multilingualism that Blommaert (2010) describes as 'truncated'. It is clear that their individual repertoires have been shaped by these different influences. The next section provides an analysis of the different domains in which they use the linguistic resources at their disposal.

### 5.3 Functions and domains of language use for my participants

Examining domain of language use is dealing with the issue of language choice – an important aspect of what Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) refers to as the negotiation of identities in a multilingual context through code-switching and language choice. Language choice may be constrained by a number of factors which include language proficiency, language policy, ethnicity, gender, profession, socio-cultural background and in particular, the domain in which language is used (Rahman et al., 2007). The theoretical framework of domain analysis addresses the issues of “who” speaks “what language” to “whom” and “when” (Mei, et al., 2016). “Who” refers to the bilingual or multilingual speaker, “what” refers to the language(s) of that speaker's linguistics repertoire, “whom” refers to the interlocutors in different specific domains and “when” refers to the contexts or the domains of language use. Talking about domain in language research is examining “how particular languages or varieties of language are assigned to particular function or space and particular participants in the society, such as language used in the work domain, family domain or religious domain” (Spolsky, 2012).

Language choice and domain becomes important in understanding how people make use of their languages, the opportunities, constraints and inequalities they may be going through in their daily encounters. As Coulmas (1997) explains, people make linguistic choices for various purposes. Individuals and groups choose words, registers, styles, and languages to suit their various needs. Linguistic choices concern the communication of ideas, the association with and separation from others and the establishment or defense of dominance. People are endowed with the ability to adjust their linguistic repertoires to ever new circumstances and construct their languages for certain purposes (Dweik and Nofal, 2015).

It is based on these claims that the following section discusses how the participants practice their multilingualism in a linguistically diverse environment like Cape Town. My participants were asked which of the languages/codes they prefer to speak in particular domains and their reasons for such choices. Generally, most of the participants made use of the languages in their repertoires based on who they were interacting with as well as where they were. The first domain examined is that of family and home.

### *1. Home /Family domain:*

Home as used here is referring firstly to Cameroon and secondly to where the participants live or reside in Cape Town. I examine the different languages used in the different domains by the different participants. For an example, Jude makes use of his mother tongue 'Pinyin' mostly when he is with his family here in Cape Town or when conversing with his family back home in Cameroon. He communicates mostly in Pinyin with his wife at home and with other Pinyinians who come to visit him. Apart from his mother tongue he also sometimes speaks French with his wife who is an Anglophone but whom he describes as '*purely francophone*'. Although the wife is also from Pinyin Jude says she can speak French very well because she grew up in Nkongsamba a Francophone region. He says she is '*more French than English*'. He and the wife usually communicate in French especially when they have visitors in the house and they want to hide certain information. Using French in such situations is for the purpose of exclusion.

He also mentioned that initially, he was not teaching the son his mother tongue but has come to realize that he was making an error when he started studying language education at the university. While at the university he saw the importance of the mother tongue in a child's education and development and since then he decided to teach the child Pinyin although he understands more than speaking. The rest of the Cameroon local languages in his repertoires he speaks only back home in Cameroon because there are few or no speakers of the languages in Cape Town.

Caronis and Silvy make use of French when they are chatting on the social network *Whatsapp* or phoning their families back home in Cameroon. They also explain that they do not regularly use their Cameroonian local languages in Cape Town because there are very few Cameroonians who speak these languages here. Silvy said she is even forgetting her mother tongue and will hardly sustain a conversation in her home language for long when she meets someone that speaks the language or when her sister in Cameroon phones her. It is interesting to note how in an individual's life trajectories some languages are learned while others not in use are forgotten and discarded.

Tjubis, who is married to a Xhosa lady, says generally at home they speak English because to him English is important for education purposes. He justifies the reason for the choice of language as follows: *'The condition at my home actually works well for us when we speak English because like I said my wife's first language is Xhosa mine is English and our kids coming now there are mostly speaking English so we are forced in a way to speak English at home throughout and there are more comfortable in English than the Xhosa which is their mothers first language. And then secondly, we use English especially like we are assisting them with homework and then yeah'* English is thus the convenient language for use at his home since he and the wife have different linguistic backgrounds.

Furthermore, he makes use of CPE once in a while and especially when Cameroonians come to visit him at his home in Goodwood. He says when they come normally they speak English but from time to time they switch to CPE. He also notes that their children are also picking up a few words in CPE, which started when they visited Cameroon. He seldom speaks French except when he comes into contact with someone who speaks French or visits him. He speaks local languages when he talks to his family back home on phone. As Gal (1987:287) notes, "A speaker's choice between varieties is structured; it is systematically linked to social relationships, events or situations". Therefore, one of the fundamental issues in socially oriented linguistic disciplines is why a given linguistic variety is chosen to be used in a particular array of situations, while another variety is preferred in other circumstances.

## 2. Work domain/business:

Another domain of language use identified was the work or business domain. Apart from saying that English is the language that dominates or she makes use of the most in Cape Town, Tisia also mentioned that she speaks isiXhosa in contexts where she is trying to influence Xhosa speakers to buy from her as she is an informal trader. She also speaks it when she needs a service from the person and will speak isiXhosa to accommodate that person. Such statements resonate with the arguments by Mufwene (2002:3, 25) and Vigouroux (2008a: 239) that in migratory contexts, language choices are affected by the cost, benefit and the symbolic power that particular languages offer. Tisia's use of isiXhosa is echoed by Jude and Premose who say they make use of the Cape Town languages Xhosa and Afrikaans in their businesses. They have learned some terminology in isiXhosa and Afrikaans relating to the items they sell and this helps them to sell their products.

Caronis, a Francophone Cameroonian, says while in Cape Town she interacts most of the time in English and mostly with people that speak English. When customers come to her hair salon she



speaks English to them most of the time. Living in Cape Town, she has improved her communicative skills in especially CPE and English, even though she often mixes English, French and CPE with some of her friends. French is used with other Francophone Cameroonians, Congolese, Senegalese and in situations when newcomers to Cape Town cannot speak English. Although she is not competent in the local Cape Town languages she is at least trying to speak isiXhosa and Afrikaans with South African customers.

Silvy, who is working as a caregiver, says she communicates in English when at work. She said it was not easy for her when she just came to Cape Town as she could barely understand or speak English. She had to enroll in a school to learn English. *'I speak English at the worksite because there are no French people around so I have to speak English'*. Even though she may love to speak French, the context in which she lives in or works determines the language that she will use. As such, she is expected to communicate in English while at work especially as she explains that most of the people she works with are South Africans and *'they don't care if you can understand or not, they are always busy talking their language then you have to follow them if you want to be one of them'*.

### 3. School /institutional domain:

When it comes to the use of English in Cape Town Jude speaks English mostly in a school context. He is currently doing his Masters' degree at the University of the Western Cape. Since the university is multilingual, with people from different linguistic backgrounds, Jude is expected to communicate in English most of the time. Nini on her part makes use of the isiXhosa language with her friends in school. She said her friends always speak isiXhosa to her and that each time they speak she will ask them what it means and that is how she learned the language. Just like Nini, Aweh also learned isiXhosa from his classmates, some of whom were isiZulu speakers. He used to work as student assistant at the audio-visual department of the university and everybody in that department was Afrikaans speaking. *'So I had no choice than to learn how to make some phrases in Afrikaans, Zulu and Xhosa'*.

### 4. Community /socialization/friendship domain

It is also important to note what languages the participants make use of in their daily interactions in the community or for socialization. Tisia makes use of CPE while in the community with other Cameroonians because according to her CPE *'is like a language of socialization. We accommodate each other with we tolerate each other. Our community is not all intellectuals, some people are*



mostly business oriented and the other people are French speaking which sometimes the pidgin English is the one that socializes everybody'. She also communicates in French with French speaking Cameroonians as well as people from Congo, Gabon and Senegal who speak French. Jude who is from Pinyin says it is very common to see people from Pinyin communicating in their language in Cape Town. *'I speak Pinyin with my Pinyin community too no, we speak Pinyin very well'*. Like the isiXhosa speakers in South Africa, people from Pinyin also like speaking their language. It is very common to hear people from Pinyin communicating in their local language since they are among the larger groups of Cameroonians in Cape Town.

Besides his mother tongue Pinyin, Jude sometimes makes use of the other languages in his repertoires such as Mbili, Bansa and Bali when he meets speakers of these languages. Speaking Bansa to him for example reminds him of his childhood days while Bali is used for making jokes with his friends. In addition to the other languages he listed as part of his linguistic repertoires, he has picked up a few words in isiXhosa and Afrikaans which he uses mainly for greetings and to make some jokes when he meets some isiXhosa or Afrikaans friends. In reference to CPE Jude says he speaks it with the Cameroon community but not at home. When questioned why he does not want to speak CPE at home he says CPE is not a language of wider communication. *'I know it, my wife knows it, but is just that we don't want our child to know it'*. Even though Jude says he does not want the child to know CPE, it is possible that the child will still pick up this language when he speaks it to the wife or with other Cameroonians.

Like Jude, Premose also makes use of his mother tongue in Cape Town when he comes in contact with people from his Moghamo who speak this language. He says speaking Moghamo in Cape Town is their own way of interacting with one another and feeling at home especially *'when one is out of the country'*. He mainly speaks CPE with other Anglophone Cameroonians. He also makes use of some isiXhosa words when he meets isiXhosa speakers and especially if he wants to feel comfortable around isiXhosa speakers. Most often when he speaks isiXhosa it is usually for fun and also for socialization.

Cosmos from the focus group listed Spanish as one of the languages he uses in Cape Town, but only with tourists. He speaks English with people around him who can speak English, but with French *'I speak it just with people from home country and also people like Congolese who also speak French, also French people from France and then Chadian tous ca [all those]'*. His mother tongue is Bazou, which has only a few speakers in Cape Town. In contrast, he speaks Bangangte

frequently since it is a lingua franca in the Qwest region of Cameroon so many people in Cape Town speaks the language.

##### 5. *Interacting with children:*

It was also interesting to examine what languages participants made use of when communicating with their children, as this would show which languages were strongly maintained and which languages might with the passage of time be remembered only in single words and expressions. My data showed that most parents want their children to speak mainly English, and therefore do their best to communicate with them in this language. Like most Cameroonians, Premose did not want his children to learn CPE while they were in Cape Town: *I think for me for academic reason is not too good to expose children to that language at an early stage especially if they don't need it. It will be complication because they are here they don't have friends that will actually require them to speak that language so there is no need to allow them speak CPE.* He feels it is a good idea to expose children to many languages and that his daughter could speak a bit of Afrikaans since she attended an Afrikaans school. But he was unhappy with the type of informal Afrikaans the daughter picked up from her school friends, which contained plenty of swearwords.

##### 6. *The domain of cultural association:*

It was also important to examine the language (s) used in the Cameroonian associations in Cape Town. Since they are out of Cameroon, these associations are important resources for them and help them to maintain their national identity. Tjubis makes use of Aghem his mother tongue mostly during his group's tribal association meeting (*MenFA [Menchum family] association*) held at his home. During this meeting they speak the local Aghem language together with English to accommodate other Cameroonians who do not speak Aghem. English and Aghem are used in his meeting but if the association was made up of only people from Aghem, they would have preferred the local Aghem to dominate their discussions. This is however not the case as they most often make use of English and CPE to accommodate those who cannot speak the native language.

Premose for example says they speak their mother tongue Moghamo in their cultural association here in Cape Town as a way of socializing and for cultural identification. *'Is like part of our identity, it gives us a sense of belonging'*. Tisia shares the same sentiment and she says in their traditional association in Cape Town they mostly communicate in their home language Bafut. Melissa says their Bangangte family meeting in Cape Town is held every Monday and when they

come together they do communicate in Bangangte. Here is an extract from my interview with Melissa:

*Melissa: Most of the time especially when you live far from home, far from your people sometime you lose completely to speak your language but this meeting is also helping us a lot to not forget where we come from. At the meeting we speak with the language, we also talk about the village also encourage ourselves to speaks the language.*

*Interviewer: Do you also speak French....in the meeting?*

*Melissa: Yes, we speak French*

*Interviewer: What about English?*

*Melissa: We don't want to speak English. We refuse English .... the role of our meeting is that when we are in the house of the meeting we don't want English; we want to keep our village language or some French for those who don't know how to speak the local language. There are people in South Africa who have made 15 or 20 years they can't even speak their mother language so to excuse them we gave them a chance to communicate in French when we are in the meeting.*

Speaking the local language in their association is a way of not only discussing what is happening back home but also a way of not losing their family lineage and their heritage. By speaking the language, it will help them not to forget their mother-tongue or where they come from. It is a way of staying connected to your roots even as they are miles away from home. One of the rules of this association is that no English should be spoken because they want people only to speak the local language. At least French can be spoken to accommodate those who cannot speak the mother tongue or those that have forgotten to speak the language. This resonates with the literature which argues that linguistic repertoires are not fixed acquisitions that remain static throughout life. They expand in relation to each person's biographical development and in the same trend can diminish and fade if not in use (Blommaert and Backus, 2012:9).

In a multilingual community, the multilingual speaker needs to make the right language choice which principally depends on the domain of usage and the linguistic repertoire of speech participants. Language choice is informed by the kind of participants in a communication situation, the topic, social distance, and also location (Ansah, 2014). The language in use at a particular time or place may be to accommodate, associate or distance oneself from others. The accommodation theory states that "speakers tend to accommodate their speech to persons whom they like or whom

they wish to be liked by” (Myers-Scotton, 2006: 131). Myers-Scotton argues that this theory can provide a potential explanation for members of minorities choosing to use the mainstream language as a way of assimilating within the new community, which in turn could result in language shift (Myers-Scotton, 2006). The research participants occasionally make use of some of the Cape Town local languages as a way of socializing or to be accommodative and hence negotiating belonging and identity.

From the analysis of the question of domain of language use which by extension involves language choice as shown above, one can conclude that multilingualism allows people to access two or more languages and this allows them to choose what language to use, where, with whom and for what purpose. Thus, the languages in the participants’ repertoires have both functional and contextual allocations. For example, the Cameroon local languages were mostly used when relating with their families back home or in their cultural association here in Cape Town. Likewise, English was used in the academic domain as well as in the work and business domain. With regards to such domain analysis, Fishman (1966, 1968a) suggests that one language may be more appropriate than another in certain domains and usually it is the standard or prestigious language that is used in high domains as nuanced in the context of this study. This dynamic use of language relates to the findings of Vigouroux (2005) on the language use and practices of Francophone African migrants, which is seen as a dynamic process and a continuously negotiated (re)production of territorialities.

To conclude this section, most of the migrants I interviewed and observed appeared to construct multilingual identities for themselves, with each language fulfilling a specific function in their biography and their communicative practices, making full use of their multilingual repertoires.

Krumm (2012:51-52) believes it is difficult to describe such multilingual behaviour as code switching, because it is, in part, not even defined by different functions. To this author, such multilingual behaviors can be captured by Jørgensen (2008:166) notion of polylingualism, where language users employ whatever linguistic features they have at their disposal to achieve their communicative aims regardless of how well they know the involved languages (Jørgensen, 2008:163). Perhaps these findings support the argument by Jørgensen (2008) that the notion of ‘multilingualism’ should be replaced with ‘polylingualism’ because speakers use *features* of specific codes instead of whole languages (Jørgensen, 2008:166). An example of how people use features and not languages can be seen in the phone conversation in 5.5.

The migrants selected for this study live in spaces that can be described as centers, ‘peripheries, semi- ‘peripheries’ and this has implications for their language practices. They use different languages in different spaces and as such the position each language or variety takes is not fixed. For example, English may take a central position when they are doing business or are in school and a periphery position when they are in their cultural meeting.

The following section looks at my participants’ readiness to learn the local languages of Cape Town as well as the factors influencing their motivation to learn these languages.

#### 5.4 Learning new languages-how ‘ready’ and ‘motivated’ are my respondents?

In this section, I firstly consider the participants’ ‘readiness for action’ (Baker, 1992:12) to learn the local languages of Cape Town. Secondly, I look at their motivations and demotivations for wanting to learn these languages. Their particular context of language learning can be captured as follows: “In a context of superdiversity, mobile subjects engage with a broad variety of groups, networks and communities, and their language resources are consequently learned through a wide variety of trajectories, tactics and technologies, ranging from fully formal language learning to entirely informal ‘encounters’ with language” (Blommaert and Backus, 2012:2). Language learning is widely recognized as an essential and integral element of integration and its importance has been repeatedly highlighted at national and international levels.

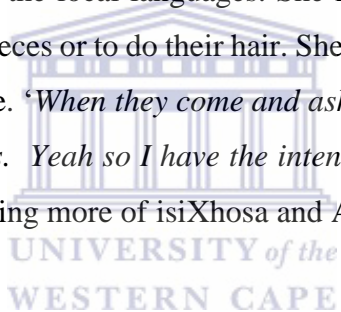
##### 5.4.1 Readiness for action to learn the local languages of Cape Town

Taking a decision to learn a new language especially as adults usually happens when one finds oneself in an environment which offers different languages from the ones one is acquainted with (Blommaert et al., 2005) and where the mobility of the language one knows is insufficient for specific communication goals. In describing the three components of language attitudes (the first two being the cognitive and affective components), Baker (1992:13) describes ‘readiness for action, as “a behavioural intention or plan of action under defined contexts and circumstances”. He is however quick to point out that the relationship between attitudes and action is neither straightforward nor simple.

Most of my participants showed a willingness to acquire the main languages of Cape Town, and this can be interpreted as either being for purely instrumental purposes or as a sign of wanting to

integrate with the host culture. Anderson (1991:6) originally coined the term “imagined communities”, observing that nations are “imagined communities” “because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion”. It is for these reasons that participants’ aspirations or future intentions about learning the host languages are important. The fact that participants showed the intention of learning the Cape Town languages I could be seen as imagining ‘selves’ speaking the local languages and feeling a sense of belonging.

Generally, as migrants in Cape Town, most of the research participants had the intention of learning the local languages like isiXhosa and Afrikaans. The context required them to do so as well as their wish to integrate with the South African community. The participants had different reasons for wanting to learn these languages - for their businesses, work, school and for general communication which could lead to integration. Caronis says it is because of the nature of her business that requires her to know the local languages. She is a hairdresser and South Africans come to her hair salon to buy hairpieces or to do their hair. She explains that sometimes when they come they just speak their language. *‘When they come and ask me how much is this, how much is that? I understand some few words. Yeah so I have the intention of learning the language’*. She therefore shows an interest in learning more of isiXhosa and Afrikaans but is not sure of how she will do that.



For Tjubis, his intention for learning isiXhosa and Afrikaans is because they are the official languages in the Western Cape and that it is very important that one knows these languages. As a lecturer, he also feels that it is important for him to know how to communicate in the local languages because most of the students he lectures are isiXhosa speakers and just by constructing a sentence in their mother tongue *‘makes them see you or look at you in different light, they (know you) are also interested in their language’*. He says they are times one can break an ice just by speaking the language of the host community. He gives an example of how just saying the word ‘Thula!’ (‘Be quiet!’ in isiXhosa) in class can control the level of noise while lecturing. When they listen to you speak their language *‘they are happy and everybody becomes quiet. So you see the power of language. If I say ‘be quiet!’ it is different from when I tell them ‘Thula!’ They first smile and then everybody becomes quite now it gives you the power of language now it works quickly than just telling them stop noise be quiet you know’*.



It is for such reasons that he has the intention of learning or improving on his knowledge of the local languages in Cape Town. When questioned how he intends learning these languages, he says his hands are currently full but that attending the 101 conversational isiXhosa organized by his university helps him learn some isiXhosa. Going for formal classes to learn is practically not possible not only for him but for most of the research participants.

Having the intention to learn these languages is not sufficient. Tisia, for example, is worried about the fact that one may have the intention, learn the language and not have the audience to communicate with. Jude also shares such sentiments when it comes to learning South African languages. According to him, one of the problems migrants face in learning South African languages is a lack of socialization with local people. *'We don't really socialize with them... most of the migrants they don't stay in the location because of the xenophobic attacks'*. He explains that migrants are afraid to stay in the informal settlements otherwise that would have been where they could get closer to the locals, mix and socialize with them and learn their languages. *'But because of the xenophobic attacks we are afraid of them... we tend now to form our small camps like when you come to Parow it is occupied mostly by foreigners. Yeah you see so a migrant is protecting the other. So that is why it is very difficult for us to learn their languages. This is the problem'*. When he talks of migrants forming small camps as a result of xenophobic attacks it could be interpreted as a claim of physical or symbolic territory (Vigouroux, 2005).

Interviewer: But at least you have the intention of learning the language?

Jude: *Yes, I would have love to; I would have love to, am somebody I easily capture languages if I had that opening to actually mix with them it will change.*

These xenophobic attacks are affecting the socialization process between migrants and the locals and as such the learning of the local languages is affected. Access to language is shaped not only by learners' own intentions, but also by those of the others with whom they interact (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:221).

In contrast to Jude, Silvy sees no reason why she should learn these languages. She feels English is okay for her in Cape Town, and thus isiXhosa and Afrikaans are not needed. Although with all these problems and feelings affecting the acquisition of the local languages here in Cape Town, most of the participants however indicated they have the intention of learning or knowing more of the Cape Town languages.



## 5.4.2 Motivations and demotivations for learning the local languages

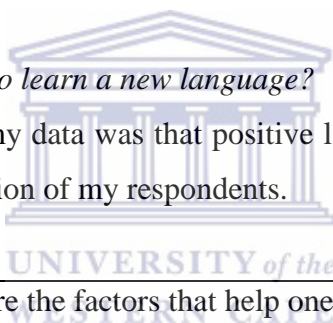
Richardson (2003) summarizes the two constructs that deal with language learning motivation: Instrumental motivation is the learning of the target language for some practical benefit whereas integrative motivation is the craving of the learner to learn the target language to better interact and value the host community.

Showing the intention of learning the Cape Town languages can be interpreted as imagining being part of the community. Learners' dispositions toward language learning are indeed highly variable and closely related to both real and imagined belongings within communities of practice (Norton, 2001). As already established, participants showed the desire of learning isiXhosa and Afrikaans. It is therefore important to find out if their desires or wishes translated into motivation and/ or demotivation for language learning as shown below.

### 5.4.2.1 Motivations

*What makes my participants want to learn a new language?*

The first factor I picked up from my data was that positive language attitudes could play a very strong role in the language acquisition of my respondents.



Interviewer: What do you think are the factors that help one to learn or keep one from learning a second language?

Tisia: *first to have positive attitudes towards that language secondly, you should .... you should see... have awareness that that language can do something in... it can contribute something in your life. If you don't think that language can contribute something positive, then you will not want to learn that language. And then thirdly if ...if you are exposed in a positive manner and given the tools to see that this language is worth knowing and.... Facilitated to know it then you will want to learn the language.*

Tisia raises three important issues in the quote above that can make one learn a new language, positive attitudes towards the language, the benefit of the language in one's life and positive exposure to the language. This corresponds with the view expressed by Vigouroux (2005) that people learn languages because of the benefit they will get from knowing the language.

Silvy on her part believes that to speak a language one must enjoy speaking that language and also because one never knows what the future holds. She further explains that even with isiXhosa she initially showed no interest in learning can be needed in certain places or situations. *You can be in a situation where you are with only a Xhosa person and you must explain yourself so that is the importance of knowing the language.* So fear of the unknown can make someone learn a new language. She also talks of learning a language if that language gives you opportunities and that in the context of Cape Town if she gets the opportunity she will not hesitate to learn English because to her English offers her many opportunities. She is also not happy because the possibility to pay and learn more of English is not available and that she would have wished to go to school again and again just to learn English.

Wishing to belong and integrate with the host community (also referred to as integrative motivation by Gardner, (1977) was another strong factor, as in the case of Tjubis:

Interviewer: What do you think are the factors that help one to learn (interruption...) or keep one from learning a second language?

Tjubis: *Now if you look at another language I mentioned like Xhosa am looking at it as a foreigner in a strange land, my wife is Xhosa I need to make an effort to be able to study the language so that I can be able to communicate with her also. And then it is also some sort of belonging, it gives you language gives you belonging because if you are able to speak in a language it gives you some sort of a lead way into entry into the culture or affairs of that particular community. If you go to the Cape flats and you speak Afrikaans even if you were supposed to do something by the virtue of the fact that you speak their language they can look at you and say this one! You know language makes you to belong so studying Xhosa is also a form of belonging, and a form of communicating between me and my wife.*

Another important factor that was seen as a form of motivation was that acquiring a new language could expand one's social networks – of critical importance when trying to survive in a new country. The following extract of the interview with Jude shows his response to the link between improved social networks and language learning.

Jude: Okay errh.... *your social networks as I said earlier your social network can help you learn a language. For example, if especially the South African blacks if they were really receptive we would have so many close friends with them so many close friends who are South Africans and that would help us to learn their language. I mean we turn to adapt to even if their type of food*

*that they eat, the type of way that they dress, so all those things now will build your confidence in learning their language.*

Like Gardner (1977), who talks of social factors that can influence language learning, Jude acknowledges the fact that foreigners have adopted some elements of the South African way of life such as eating their food, eating habits and dressing. He also feels this could have been the gateway for social interaction that would subsequently have led to language learning.

Another motivating factor was being surrounded by speakers in the target community who only speak their own languages. Fellos says what can motivate her to learn a new language is *'because at times when you are with them they speak their language it seems as if you are lost. You are not part of them'*. She needs the language to interact with others and to *'live nicely'*.

Cosmos, who was always creating fun in responding to the question, says what makes him want to learn Cape Town languages are to date beautiful women. He feels that in order to have a relationship with women you must speak their language. He also said what make people to learn languages is to avoid being looked at as different from 'them' that will lead to the use of derogatory names like *'amakwerekwere'* (a derogatory term used to describe black foreigners in South Africa). *'To avoid these things you must speak at least one of the languages'*. Another respondent, Bari, claims South Africans who always refer to migrants as *'amakwerekwere'* are those who are uneducated or those who cannot speak English, as educated people will always try to understand what one is saying and not how one says it. Such statements make one see the power of language in the lives of people and how even issues of xenophobia are linked to the fact that people cannot speak certain languages or that people speak with a distinctive accent. Bari adds that the locals get frustrated when they cannot communicate with you in English. *'The reason why he will call you Kwerekwere is because he is cross by the fact that you come to him and you speak the language that he can't speak. He is struggling to speak the English whereas if you were a South African you will speak his language so is complex. For me I am way beyond those things'*.

Aweh, on the other hand, holds a different opinion on the question of motivation to language learning.

*Aweh: To me I don't see any reason why I shouldn't learn any South African language because the fact that I live in South Africa I have to interact with South Africans so by me interacting with them I had to learn how to speak their languages. So I don't know if I will say it was default for me that I was enrolled in one of the University where all my friends were South Africans, my classmates and my colleagues so there are moment where we are having a conversation then suddenly the conversation will switch from English to maybe Zulu or Afrikaans so in that click of friends I will be the only one that is left out. So for me to understand what is happening I was forced to learn the language or maybe watch soapies and then learn how to speak the languages and then ask questions as well. So I think is imperative for us to learn how to speak any of the languages around here.*

Learning a new language based on Awehs' response above is a combination of many things.

In as much as he feels foreigners need to learn the language of the host community, he was forced to learn the language because he was being excluded when he interacted with his friends from the university due to his inability to speak the local languages. As such he decided to learn the language to blend in with his clique of friends.

To sum up, the main motivations for my respondent to learn the local languages of Cape Town were positive language attitudes, fear of the unknown, seeking belonging and integration in the host community, expanding social networks, a sense of exclusion caused by being surrounded by speakers of a different language, seeking personal relationships, xenophobia and fitting in with a chosen group of friends.

#### 5.4.2.2 Demotivation for language learning

*What makes my participants reluctant to learn local languages in Cape Town?*

In order to understand and create an awareness of the social and linguistic opportunities, constraints and inequalities migrants may be facing, I also wanted to find out what keeps people away from learning new languages. The question is by extension what the migrants themselves are going through in South Africa with regards to linguistic issues.

Firstly, negative language attitudes towards a language can keep people from learning that language. Tjubis feels that bias against or hatred for a language can keep one from learning it. He gives an example of how his hatred for French made him fail French at the university until he had

to repeat the French exam. This is because he never loved French and always questioned the importance of Formation Bilingue (Bilingual education or training in Cameroon). He adds that he never saw any value in French although it is a beautiful language on its own. After leaving Cameroon he said French to him was a non-existent language in Cape Town although there are Congolese and some French Cameroonians here. He prefers them to speak English to him and not French. He gives his main reason as follows: *'I really want to qualify it, a very strong biased towards French because of the way we were being marginalized as Anglophones by the Francophones as we grew up in Cameroon'*. His statement above shows that negative attitude can keep one away from learning a language just like it kept him from learning French while in Cameroon.

He also related his negative attitude to the fact that, in his view, English is superior to French. This is in line with the literature that acquiring and using a language is easier for individuals who have a positive attitude to the language and its speakers (Garrett, 2010; Karahan, 2007; Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe, 2009), as language attitudes can not only influence the reactions to the speakers of the language, but also help predict others' reactions to the choice of language, and hence influence this choice (Garrett, 2010).

A second demotivating factor pointed out by Fellos is the issue of exposure. She says the fact that she cannot communicate in isiXhosa or Afrikaans is because she is a newcomer in South Africa and she is not living around the speakers of these languages. Caronis also points to the difficulties of acquiring the clicks in isiXhosa as a demotivating factor. *'Those click neh! (Laughs) Like keep me away like very difficult I feel like yoh! I will never make it'*. She also feels the same sentiment with Afrikaans as she recalls how during her secondary education she found it difficult understanding Dutch. Since Afrikaans is similar to Dutch she also feels she will never know Afrikaans as she feels it is also difficult like Dutch.

Furthermore, what can keep one from learning a language is the status of that language and how global that language is. Tisia feels if the language is such that it cannot market her or take her globally then she will not be motivated to learn the language. When she talks of the language marketing her she is referring to the opportunities that the language can offer to her. If a language cannot give people opportunities both local and global then people do not see the need to learn that

language. The implication of her statement is that she does not believe that Afrikaans or isiXhosa has the status of global languages and as such she is not motivated to learn them.

Lastly, the issue of social networks also came up as a hindrance to language acquisition. When Fellos makes statements such as, *'I cannot communicate in South African languages because most of my clients are not South Africans'* it goes to show that who you interact with can aid or prevent you from leaning a new language. The fact that most of her clients are not South Africans means that she will find it difficult learning their language. She said even the few that come to her speak English to her. Jude shares similar views that when the social network is not there then learning a new language becomes difficult.

There is clearly a lot of overlap between the factors that aid motivation for language learning and those that cause demotivation: negative language attitudes, a lack of exposure to the target languages, the status and global value of a language and the languages used in one's social networks were the main demotivating factors pointed out by my participants.

The next section looks at the languages preferences of my research participants.

## 5.5 The language preferences of my participants

Ferrer and Sankoff (2004) suggest that the language preference of a speaker is influenced by dominant languages. Most bilinguals and multilinguals may choose a dominant language as a medium of communication because it provides them greater advantage, economic benefits, social networks expansion and better opportunities. Ferrer and Sankoff (2004) add that the choice of a dominant language can be triggered by the wider acceptance and functions of that language. Exploring participant's language preferences is a way of understanding their language use and practices amidst the different languages in their repertoires.

In the case of this study, most of the participants preferred English due to its global status, its importance in the Cape Town context and above all its functional value especially in businesses and for work purposes. Social superiority has always been highly associated with English (Phillipson, 1992; Pennycook, 2007) and therefore the symbolic power of English as "the dominant language in the global market" cannot be undermined as most of the participants preferred English to other languages in their repertoires.



Participants were asked what language (s) they prefer to speak and why. It is important to mention that generally, most of the participants preferred English in the context of Cape Town. There were also some contradictions when responding to the issue of language preference as some showed their preference for more than one language.

### *English as a preferred choice*

Many scholars consider language choices in multilingual contexts as embedded in larger social, political, economic, and cultural systems (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:10). The global status of English and the context in which they are in has led the participants preferring to prefer the use of English in Cape Town. The following excerpt shows Tjubis's response on the question of language preference.

Interviewer: Which of the languages do you prefer to speak and why?

*Tjubis: I think... you know, to me English because not only I don't want to use the word status but am looking at it from the level of conveying information. If I want to look at it from perspective of conveying information at home, then English would have been the most effective language to use because my kids understand English they speak English. At times they speak English and I start to think where they get some of these words. Their English is becoming more polished than mine you know they listen to TV they come out with some of the words like just to give you an example.*

Although Tjubis does not directly want to mention the global status of English as the reason for his preference, it is clear from his statement that the status of English is what is making him prefer it over others. However, he directly links the reason for his preference to the fact that for convenience and for the purpose of communication English is the language that he prefers to use at home with the wife and kids who are from South Africa.

Furthermore, Silvy and Caronis although Francophones prefer to communicate in English because according to them they grew up speaking French but now in Cape Town they will go for English since it is one of the main languages spoken in Cape Town. In addition, English is an international language and if they can speak it then they can travel all over the world without problems. They

also prefer English to the other languages because they want to improve on their English proficiency.

Woolard (1985, in Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004:11) pointed out that Bourdieu's notion of 'symbolic domination' (Bourdieu, 1986: 250) is grounded in the wide acceptance of the value and prestige of a particular linguistic variety, rather than in numerical disparities between majority and minority communities. She also expanded Bourdieu's marketplace metaphor, showing that, in any given context, there may be several alternative market places which assume different language norms and assign different values to particular language behaviors and linguistic varieties. Some of the research participants gave ambiguous answers to the question of which language they prefer to use. Tisia for example did not give a clear or definitive answer about what language she prefers to speak in Cape Town. Her response is found in the tool box below.

Interviewer: Which of the languages do you prefer to speak the most and why?

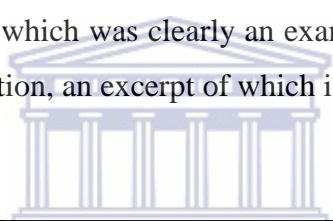
Tisia: *Now errh... I really don't prefer any but unfortunately, the one that I am almost always exposed to is English. I would like to speak my mother tongue but I do not have a lot of my people here. I feel comfortable when I speak it. I feel like I know where I come from but because the people around me don't speak it then it becomes like err...like type of isolated type of thing like when am speaking like am greedy or I don't want to socialize so unfortunately, English is most the... is mostly the language that its accommodating to everybody so the language that I speak most is English, is followed by the other language that is pidgin English which sometimes we use in social gatherings to be able to accommodate and tolerate everybody.*

The issue of language exposure came as a determining factor for her to choose English as the preferred choice of language to use. Relatively, Premos on his part feels language preference depends on the context one is. To him, academically he will prefer English and in normal social situations Moghamo his mother tongue. The choice of his mother tongue is for identity, pride and culture.

Language preference is also made visible in people's responses and attitudes to the issue of code-switching or language mixing. Gumperz (1982) sees code-switching as a resource through which speakers express social and rhetorical meanings and index ethnic identities. For him, code-switching and language choice are foregrounded in the process of identity negotiation (cf.

Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). Rampton (1995:280) sees code-switching as “an in-group phenomenon limited only to those who share the same expectations and rules of interpretations for the use of two languages”. As such, code-switching is used by participants in a narration to claim membership and express solidarity with the group, while excluding outsiders. Based on these claims related to code-switching I wanted to share my conversation with one of the research participants that revealed her knowledge of code-switching. As Gumperz (1982) states, people code-switch to negotiate certain identities, show belonging or distance to a group or simply to practice their multilingualism. People may code-switch consciously or unconsciously.

While I was interviewing Caronis, I wanted to find out if she sometimes code-switched when she communicates with others and her answer was negative. She then contacted me one day and asks if I wanted to buy a phone because she was in financial difficulty and wanted to sell her phone. I decided to pay for the phone and when I went to collect the phone from her she was still struggling to delete her chats on the phone. As we were deleting her messages, she stumbled on a *Whatsapp* conversation she had with a friend which was clearly an example of code-switching. She agreed to let me make use of this conversation, an excerpt of which is printed below:



30/05/2016, 6:06 pm –Caronis: Hi

30/05/2016, 6:59 pm Friend: Hello who I am speaking to?

30/05/2016, 8:04 pm Friend: ? ? ?

30/05/2016, 8:18 pm-Caronis: Tespoils [*insult her hair*]

30/05/2016, 8:18 pm -Caronis: Tespoils violets [*insults the colour of her hair*]

30/05/2016, 8:19 pm - Caronis: Tu parle le grammar a lo meme [*to whom are you speaking that your grammar*]

30/05/2016, 8:19 pm - Caronis: Is Caroline

30/05/2016, 8:21 pm - Friend: 😊😊😊😊

30/05/2016, 8:21 pm - Friend: Sauvage😊😊😊 [*insult her jokingly*]

30/05/2016, 8:22 pm - Friend: Sa dit quoi ma cooo [*what is the meaning of that my friend*]

30/05/2016, 8:22 pm - +Friend: Et mespoilssont noirs peutêtr blanche dans quelques années[  
*And my hair is black now but maybe there will be white in some years to come* ]

30/05/2016, 9:26 pm - Caronis: Ma soeur [*My sister*]

30/05/2016, 9:26 pm - Caronis: G vaisbien [ *I am fine*]

30/05/2016, 9:27 pm - Caronis: G viensdechaper a l aggression [ *I just escaped an aggression now*]

30/05/2016, 9:44 pm - Friend: Who👁👁👁👁

30/05/2016, 9:44 pm - Friend: Ousa ma soeur a Parowoubiendans ton quartier [ *where is that my sister, in Parow or in your quarter?*]

30/05/2016, 9:45 pm - Caronis: Sur Durban road [ *on the Durban road*]

30/05/2016, 9:46 pm - Caronis: Eish ma soeur thank God for my life [ *Eish (exclamation!) my sister thank God for my life*]

30/05/2016, 9:46 pm - Caronis: IL etait 7 [ *there were seven of them*]

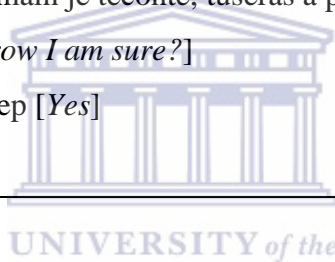
30/05/2016, 9:48 pm - Friend: Thanks God demain je viens et tu m expliquett [ *Thank God tomorrow I will come so that you explained all to me*]

30/05/2016, 9:49 pm - Caronis: Ma soeur G te dis [ *my sister, I am telling you*]

30/05/2016, 9:49 pm - Caronis: Comment pour tes 5mil? ?? [ *What about that your 5000?*]

30/05/2016, 9:51 pm - Friend: Demain je teconte, tuseras a parow non? [ *tomorrow I will tell you. You will be in Parow tomorrow I am sure?*]

30/05/2016, 9:52 pm - Caronis: Yep [ *Yes*]



It is important to mention that various aspects are involved in the phenomenon of code-switching, sociolinguistics (reasons for codes-witching), the grammatical aspects, language choice and language proficiency (Cantone, 2007) though this study is not focusing on these aspects.

The conversation is full of contractions, unconventional spellings and a lot of switching between English and French. It is a typical example of not only how Cameroonians use more than one language in their daily interactions while interacting face to face but also in online chats. As French Cameroonians they are making use of both English and French to show their new acquired identity as English speakers as well as the fact that they are multilingual. They may also be using switching because they are not competent in English and that is why they use French in instances where the English word is difficult to find.

From the above, one can conclude that code-switching needs to be examined not as a unique phenomenon but as a part of a range of linguistic practices which people employ to achieve their goals and to challenge symbolic domination (Heller, 1992). Caronis' use of multiple languages in

the above chat goes to confirm the multilingual reality of Cameroonians. It also illustrates the use of specific codes instead of whole languages (Jørgensen, 2008:166).

## 5.6 A summary of main findings on my participants' language profiles

The traditional or monolingual thinking embedded in the socio-psychological paradigm in favour of a one-to-one correlation between language and ethnic identity is not reflected in the present study. The language repertoires of the participants are clearly complex. They use different sets of languages for different purposes. In this way, the data challenge simplex views of the relationship between language and social identity (also found in other studies in South Africa). One can say that the study resonates with the poststructuralist paradigm that privileges multiple identity options and shifting power relations (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:12). In the context of this study being an Anglophone in the Cape Town context places those who opt to be identified as such in a powerful position over the Francophones. Taking such categorization back to the context of Cameroon, it will be the reverse. It also came out that ethnicity is a strong marker of the respondent's linguistic identities, that individuals are agentive beings who are constantly in search of new social and linguistic resources which allow them to resist identities that position them in undesirable ways, produce new identities, and assign alternative meanings to the links between identities and linguistic varieties (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:27).

An exploration of the linguistic identities of the participants in this study (especially from observation) shows that they are multilingual; speaking three or more languages although they are not proficient in all of the languages in their respective repertoires to the same extent. One is also made to understand that linguistic repertoires are not fixed acquisitions that remain static throughout life. They expand in relation to each person's biographical development and in the same trend can diminish and fade if not in use (Blommaert and Backus, 2012:9). Likewise, different people have different roles and ways of contributing to the language learning process of others- parents, relatives, community members, peers, teacher's and media all contribute in different ways to the language learning done by the participants. The languages in the participants' repertoires were learned from different sources. Blommaert (2010) and Busch (2012) believe that different dimensions of linguistic environment and socialization context as well as socialization practices, all come together to shape the linguistic repertoires of people. The data in this study confirm that notion.

Most communities in Cameroon are not only multilingual but are also linguistically complex. The linguistic profile of Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town as shown from some of the participants originates from their language practices in Cameroon. Cameroon's sociolinguistics has been described by many linguists as complex. The linguistic diversity of Cameroon is the root cause of these complexities. The existence of these many languages facilitates the learning of many languages by its citizens and hence their multilingual nature. Cameroonians always have to choose from all these different languages and varieties that exist in the communities they inhabit. As such, people are always faced with linguistic challenges because either people are forced to learn some of these languages against their wish or they encounter challenges due to language barriers. They need to learn some of these languages in order to carry on with their daily activities or to survive. In Cameroon pidginized varieties such as CPE and CPF exist alongside standard varieties in this case English and French plus the many local languages. Thus, their multilingual nature is as a result of the complex linguistic history of Cameroon. Identifying with a particular language at a particular place becomes complex as will be shown later in subsequent chapters.

Cameroonian migrants carry with them these linguistic complexities as they migrate to other countries such as Cape Town South Africa. They come to an environment that is also multilingual and they have to learn new languages in order to cope or function in their new ecology. The new environment they find themselves in is also a complex one with eleven official languages and three of these official languages (isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English) are used extensively in Cape Town which is the main setting of this study. As seen above, most of the participants have picked up a few words here and there in isiXhosa and Afrikaans. Some of the participants especially those that live in the location (informal settlement) can actually communicate well in these languages. It becomes necessary for them to learn some of the local languages because the languages in their repertoires cannot meet certain expectations in the new space. The acquisition of these local languages as some of them testify seems inevitable. This shows that they are sensitive to the language use of others and extremely open to new language experiences. Most of the participants for example, reported that the locals '*like speaking their language*' so in such situations it becomes difficult to function in the communities without knowing these languages.

The Cape Town communities are not only linguistically complex but also stratified. That is why it is common to see contradictory statements made by some participants such as 'I don't need isiXhosa in Cape Town' but at the same time acknowledging the importance of knowing isiXhosa as a foreigner.



Blommaert's (2010(a) thinking about languages as mobile banks of concrete resources is relevant as this study explores how the participants use the languages they speak to construct meaning and identity. Even though many of the participants readily admit to not speaking all of the languages in their repertoires either fluently or well, they nevertheless use them as resources. With regards to their language learning experiences, their preferences and intentions, the economic and academic importance of English and the communicative power of English in the new context was very high on the participants' lists of linguistic priorities or preferences. They all regard English as essential in their businesses, jobs, academics life and for general communication in the Cape Town context. Such thinking resonates with Bourdieu's (1991:14) notion of symbolic and cultural capital where people's languages become cultural capital (which in this case is English) converted into economic capital. That is to say, the participants' knowledge and skills in English which can be seen in their qualifications can be converted into economic capital as they will use the qualification to get jobs and the knowledge of English to boost their business.

As seen above, the languages in the participants' repertoires are used to perform different functions as they go about their daily routines. The languages are used based on the domain, the interlocutor and the situation. The participants use the languages in their wide range of repertoires to create spaces that can be described as dialogic. According to Bakhtin (1990:261), dialogism presupposes the 'I' and the 'you', and every instance of discourse is immediately linked to a specific shared situation. The participants thus make use of the languages in their repertoires to create discursive spaces, negotiate language and cultural differences with 'others' and construct multiple and hybrid identities. They also use the space to position themselves in relation to groups and communities that they wish to be a part of or belong to for their professional lives and for general communication purposes. They need to negotiate their language differences and many other things as they go about their daily activities in and around Cape Town. One can hear some of the participants making statements like '*it is a must*' to learn the local languages as the locals '*like to speak their language*' especially the isiXhosa people. The participants therefore make use of the languages in their repertoires irrespective of the various levels of proficiency that they hold in the languages in their repertoires, making sure that it helps them in whatever situation they are in. The fact that the participants hold a variety of proficiency levels in the languages included in their repertoires does not hinder them in carrying out their day to day activities.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE SHIFTING LANGUAGE PRACTICES AND ATTITUDES OF MY RESPONDENTS

#### 6.0 Introduction

*“In the context of global studies, linguistic identities may refer to the sense of belonging to a community as mediated through the symbolic resource of language, or to the varying ways in which we come to understand the relationship between our language and ourselves”* (Anheier and Juergensmeyer, 2012:1080).

Chapter Five contained a short section on the influence of language ideologies and attitudes on the linguistic profiles of my respondents. This chapter looks in more detail at their ideologies and attitudes regarding English, their home languages, French, Afrikaans and isiXhosa. How have these beliefs about languages been shaped in Cameroon and modified in South Africa? How have they contributed towards the active modification of linguistic identities, if at all, and what are the consequences of this for their actual language practice and use? I explore the ideologies and attitudes participants have about their linguistic repertoires and what value they place on these languages especially as migrants in Cape Town. I show how people move not only with their languages but also with their attitudes, artefacts and symbols. All these undergo some modification as they come into contact with ‘others’.

#### 6.1 Language attitudes and ideologies among the participants

Having analyzed my participants’ linguistic profiles in Chapter Five, this section examines their attitudes towards the languages in their repertoires, how these are influenced by societal ideologies about different languages, and whether migrating from Cameroon to Cape Town has influenced their language ideologies and language practices and whether there is any evidence of changed attitudes about these languages.

##### 6.1.1 English

Ideologically, English is positioned both in Cameroon and South Africa as a language of power, the international language of wider communication (LWC), the main language for education internationally, and an important factor in attaining good employment and a higher status in

society. It is clearly the ‘language of prestige’, and as such, these ideologies about it have impacted the attitudes of my respondents to a large extent, even those who come from the Francophone part of Cameroon. In analyzing their different responses to English, it is therefore important to note that most of them had already formed positive attitudes towards it in Cameroon and that its status in South Africa only strengthened such beliefs. There were however exceptions to these positive attitudes.

The Cape Town context and how they have positioned themselves as foreigners have contributed to this positive attitude. Most of them especially the Francophones said they felt pride when they communicate in English. The feeling of pride speaks to the literature on the global discourse on English as a symbolic marker of social class and prestige. In addition, while English has taken a very important position in many education systems around the world, it has also become a gatekeeper to positions of prestige in society (Pennycook, 1994, 1995). Silvy’s response re-affirms this when she said she feels proud that she speaks English. Being able to speak English, something she could not do while in Cameroon, is something she is proud of. She adds that she never thought that one day she would enroll in school to pay and learn English but she did that in Cape Town. Her perception of English has changed while in Cape Town, where it is clearly the most important LWC, and she now sees the importance of knowing how to communicate in English.

Caronis also feels proud when she speaks English in Cape Town. She is especially proud because she has been able to learn how to speak not only English, but also CPE as well as the Nigerian Pidgin. She explained that she could not speak these languages when she was in Cameroon but now in Cape Town she is able to communicate better in these languages. Her attitudes to these languages are therefore positive ones. She went further to say that the mere fact that she can now communicate in English and CPE has made her a full Cameroonian, as she now sees herself as a true bilingual French and English speaking citizen of her country. In Cape Town, she has not only improved on her communicative skills in English but also her grammatical skills as well. She says: *‘I can speak English with no fault’*, even though she still struggles with her accent and pronunciation.

The economic value of English is another factor that accounted for the positive attitudes towards English among the respondents. Bourdieu’s (1977, 1991) notion of linguistic capital is instrumental in the conception of English as a form of linguistic capital convertible into economic capital. Fellos’ attitude towards English is a positive one because English is beneficial to her in her business as a seamstress and especially in the context of Cape Town. She says English helps

her communicate with South Africans since most of them also understand and speak English. English is also important to her because she needs to interact with her clients and also ‘*to live nicely with the people*’. She says at times ‘*when you are with them and they speak their language, it seems as if you are lost. You are not part of them*’. It is because of this that she sees the importance of communicating in English so that she will not be excluded. Knowing how to communicate in the main language of the host community can narrow the gap between the two communities.

English is not only important for its communicative value but also for its global status. Tjubis’ feels that its importance in the South African context and globally cannot be underestimated:

Interviewer: What importance do you place on English especially as a migrant in Cape Town?

Tjubis: *It is the language of education, business, general communication with friends and colleagues and others. Remember we come with our own culture and language. I just mention to you that I speak English and pidgin; I speak my Aghem (mother tongue) now if I want to speak in pidgin and Aghem with my South African friends they will not understand. That is what i am saying so English actually bridge that gap as far as language is concern. A child that has a mastery of the English language hardly suffer in school not when it comes to hard sciences but when it comes to liberal science or arts they will do well because mastering English gives you a one step ahead just to be able to understand the work that is being done in class.*

Both Cameroon and South Africa are countries in which the ex-colonial languages are the main languages of power and mobility. This is why, although Tjubis is married to an isiXhosa woman, his children attend an English-medium school instead of one where isiXhosa is the medium of instruction. English is also the preferred language used at home not only for its accommodative purpose but also because of its global status. The symbolic status of English as the ‘language of global business’ and ‘educational opportunity’ makes most South Africans, like Cameroonians, prefer their children to be educated in English. His response also captures the fact that mastery of the English language can help children in liberal arts although such children may struggle in hard science.

“Language attitudes and ideologies are also always not static but are in a state of flux as people constantly negotiate and change their views about languages based on their situation and context”

(Baker, 2006: 133 citing Pavlenko, 2002a). Despite the market value of English and its high status in Cape Town, some respondents were found to harbour negative attitudes towards South African English owing to the way local people responded to their Cameroonian variety of English. Tisia, for example, feels that she has not mastered the language, especially in the Cape Town context where she feels judged as an outsider as soon as she speaks the language:

*The community is always being conscious about the type of English you speak. Yeah. Sometimes you are corrected even at the train station that you come and the.... ticket controller ask you a question when you answer then the ticket controller turn and start correcting your English then I start to say but I learn this English in school up to the university so this English to me is not my English because sometimes it makes me feel insecure. I have hardly spoken my mother tongue to my people and get corrected or get emm... funny remarks. Actually they ... am applauded for what I say to them but English is a language that each time I communicate in it if the message is not clear it comes back on my face as if am not the master of that language but which unfortunately, I still have to communicate. So sometimes I don't feel like English is a language that I feel comfortable with but it is like a necessary evil it is like the language of the market, it is like the language of the day and if you don't speak it then you don't belong to the.....the normal world. You don't belong to what is...to the global errh... like the convention of what is happening. So that is the only thing that pushes me to speak English.*

Tisia's situation highlights the fact that there are differences between Cameroonian and South African English, especially the spoken varieties. She laments the fact that wherever she goes in South Africa her English is always corrected and she wonders if it is the same English she learned from primary school up to the university. Contrary to the praises she gets when she speaks English back in Cameroon, such praises have shifted to criticism in the context of Cape Town. Her particular variety of English has less value in South Africa than the local variety. Following Bourdieu's (1977:651) arguments, the market value of her English has dropped in the Cape Town context. The Cape Town context which in Bourdieu's terms becomes 'field' is a space where linguistic discourse is seen as 'symbolic assets' which can receive different values depending on the market in which it is offered. Consequently, Tisia does not feel comfortable or is not confident when speaking English in Cape Town, where she is obliged to use it as the local lingua franca.

Tisia's response also raises the issue of English as an identification tool in Cape Town where migrants are easily identified by their variety of English or noticeable accent which is different

from that of the locals. She said when this happens they immediately look at you *differently* and the consequence can be ugly. She says migrants are always caught in the middle especially because South Africa itself is a divided country in terms of its languages, and feels more confident when she speaks her mother tongue instead of English and French. The language issues in South Africa always make her feel *uncomfortable*. Thus, from having strong positive attitudes towards English in Cameroon; Tisia now harbours negative attitudes towards South African English because she has had to endure constant criticism for the way she speaks the language. The Anglophone Tisia's experiences are similar to those of the Francophone Melissa, who reported that when she had just arrived in South Africa and spoke English; she was laughed at by South Africans. The linguistic basis for the inequality and disadvantage experienced by many African migrants resides not only in their lack of competence in South African languages (Boullion,1996:10) and the often drastically reduced functionality of their homeland languages, but also in the reception and evaluation of the varieties of English spoken by them in the South African context (Orman, 2012). Melissa used to work at Jabula (a shop where wigs are sold) and it was not easy because of her inability to speak English:

*I realized if I want to recall my beginning was not so easy because of my English. As I was saying earlier on that am a French speaking person and I didn't learn English in Cameroon even to say good morning I learn good morning in South Africa. So my beginning wasn't easy with my English where South Africans use to laugh at me and I use to have colleagues there in Jabula I can never forget that girl I have a lot of fight with. She is a South African she always criticizes my English you know this type of things that somebody undermine you like you can never cope or reach that extend that you can communicate as she is doing. So she felt that her English is better than mine. But I did not take long I took like six months to learn the language and I was the best seller in Jabula. I was the first person in Jabula to get a work permit because of the way I sell. I was pushing because you can't sell if you cannot communicate. You know so I just give myself some pressure, I bought dictionary, I use to go to the library here in Goodwood, I push myself to know how to write English and to know how to speak the English you know because the challenge was like I can't communicate.*

Melissa's case is a reflection of what most Francophone Cameroonians go through in South Africa especially in the early years. She now prides herself on the fact that today she can speak English even better than South Africans- a clear shift in her linguistic identity.



Aweh shared similar experiences and explained how his colleagues at work use to laugh at his accent or the way he speaks English. He said they always complain that his accent is 'funny' and they even make it a whole topic of discussion. He says when they mock or laugh at him he usually takes some time to explain to them that people's accents depend on their geographical location and that if they have to leave South Africa and go maybe to Europe and speak English immediately they will ask them where they are coming from. *'So I told this guy look we are from different geographic location, we attended and have different educational system what I was told there is different from what you are being told here. So my accent and your accent is different so what makes you think that yours is the top notch? English is something that came from somewhere into South Africa even to me as well it is something that came from somewhere so we just developed or learned how to speak this thing. So my accent will definitely not be the same as yours so if I say 'apple' you say 'epple' as long as the spelling is okay is the same'*.

The experiences of Tisia, Melissa and Aweh regarding the value of their Cameroonian English in Cape Town remind us of Blommaert's (2003:613) assertion: "What works in one place does not appear to work elsewhere, and the kinds of 'flows' usually associated with globalization processes involve important shifts in value and a reallocation of functions" (Appadurai 1990; also Bourdieu, 1990). "When people move across physical as well as social space (and both are usually intertwined), their language practices undergo re-evaluation at every step of the trajectory and the functions of their repertoire are redefined" (Blommaert, 2003:613). Thus, while for some of my respondents their experiences in Cape Town have re-affirmed the value of English, for others it has led to a devaluing of their Cameroonian English in this new context. This has bred a sense of insecurity about this aspect of their linguistic identity, and may lead to some actively striving for a type of English that is closer to the Cape Town version.

### 6.1.2 French

Participants also revealed their attitudes towards French, which in most of the cases was a negative one, especially from the Anglophones as a result of the colonial history of Cameroon which was discussed in the literature review chapter. Tisia's negative attitude towards French is shown below:

*French reminds me again of the corrections; it reminds me that I am not French so my French will not be like the person that comes from France speaking the French. So if I still speak the French and there are some errors I will still be reminded that I am a second class citizen which still makes me not to have that value that I am a normal human being. So I just speak the French if I find myself in a situation that I need to speak to go I will speak it. But really I don't value French like errh... language to me.*

The marginalization of the Anglophones by the dominant Francophones in Cameroon comes out in Tisia's response. The Anglophones are being treated like second class citizens in a country where everyone is supposed to be equal whether you speak English or French. The French system has dominated the system and if you do not speak French you are not seen as a real Cameroonian. Even when the Anglophones make an attempt to speak the French the 'correctness' of their French is still questioned. As with her English in South Africa, she is again reminded that she is not speaking the standard variety of French. Tisia sums up her attitudes towards French in South Africa as 'uncomfortable'. Thus, people's beliefs about languages are not only about those languages alone (Woolard, 1998), but are always socially situated and tied to questions of identity and power in societies (Pavlenk and Blackledge, 2004:11).

Tjubis shows similar attitudes of resentment towards French, pointing out how the Francophones have marginalized and robbed the Anglophones of their rights to resources. Back in Cameroon he said the Anglophones are voiceless but now in South Africa that attitude has changed and there is no way he can allow a Francophone to marginalize him. As such, he does not want to speak French in Cape Town. *'I don't even want to speak French here that is why when I meet people from Congo if they can't speak English to me that is their problem because to me I can't come here and speak French. Whenever I see French I see marginalization you know that is the way I look at it'*. He is more comfortable when he speaks English than any of the other languages.

In the following lines Jude summarizes his attitude to French, a hatred that was instilled in him by his father.

*When I think about French I think about corruption. Yeah is a language of my country that is true but when I think about French I think about corruption yeah. I happen to have been grown*

*with very strict parents who also hated French so much and they told me so much that I don't like French. Generally, English is the language of administration yeah... French is the language for Crooks or errh...crookery So when I think about French I think about negativity. Yeah that is the way I look at French.*

The influence of families in shaping people's multilingual practices is clear in Jude's words. He does not only hate French but also sees French as a language of corruption or crooks unlike English which is a language of administration. It is clear from these narrations that even in the context of Cape Town; these Anglophones have not been able to modify their negativity towards French.

### 6.1.3 Cameroonian Pidgin English (CPE)

When it comes to attitudes towards CPE, most of the participants seem to have no negative attitude, except for the fact that they do not want their children to speak the language. Everyone sees the language as a non-standard language, a language that influences people's English negatively, but they have no problem using it. This confirms earlier findings by Mba (2011) on attitudes towards CPE among the Cameroonian community in Cape Town. Clearly, the standard language ideology (Weber and Horner, 2011) is at work here, which argues that only certain varieties are suitable for formal usage. This ideology affects the resurrection of negative attitudes towards CPE prominent in certain spaces in Cameroon (Dyers and Abongdia, 2014), which are transferred to the space of Cape Town.

The extract in the box below reveals Jerome's attitudes towards CPE.

Interviewer: Do you have a language policy at home with your children?

Jerome: *Not really it is an unwritten law that English is the language here if I have to be involved.*

Interviewer: Do the children speak Cameroon Pidgin English?

Jerome: *No except waah when she came back from Cameroon when she wants to feel like she is a Cameroonian she wants to speak pidgin.*

Interviewer: And she hasn't forgotten?

Jerome: *No she learned a bit of pidgin at home early this year when we went home. Yeah she learned a bit of pidgin. Anytime she thinks about Cameroon she speaks pidgin because she was there for one month.*

Interviewer: If I may ask I understand your wife is a South African but she speaks pidgin like fluently when do you commonly communicate with her in pidgin?

Jerome: *She is actually the one who wants to speak pidgin to me. I am not used to speaking pidgin to her.*

Interviewer: Why don't you want to speak pidgin to her?

Jerome: *Is just a practice that I don't want the children to speak pidgin? I only speak pidgin to her when am forced to. If she speaks it to me then i am forced to. You know is something I don't do often. But she likes speaking it. But I don't want the children to speak pidgin*

Interviewer: Any reason?

Jerome: *Because it confuses their >>>it polarizes their grammar*

*I don't have a negative attitude towards pidgin. The reason why I will not want to promote it is just because it confuses the children*

Unlike other participants who did not give any reason why they should not speak CPE except for their children's sakes, Jerome openly said he does not like speaking CPE. Maybe this contrary attitude is because he is married to a South African and since CPE is a stigmatized language he would not want to speak it to her. If the wife were a Cameroonian, they would obviously communicate in CPE. Cameroonians have placed a stigma on CPE but everyone seems to be using it. When I went to conduct the interview at his home, this was our actual medium of communication. I only switched to English when the interview process started. His wife is a Sesotho speaker but has learned to speak CPE fluently – a clear example of the crossing or linguistic appropriation that must have taken place when she married Jerome.

Based on the perception they had about CPE with regards to their children, I became curious and visited one of the participants, Mary, at her home to conduct an individual interview with her. Like others, she said she does not want the children to speak CPE. I took note of that and decided to have a friendly chat with the children in her absence. I asked them how many languages they know how to speak. Interestingly CPE was not amongst the list of languages they named and they explained that it was forbidden by their parents '*because it will spoil our English (laughs)*'. However, the daughters added if you want to hide anything from me don't '*speak CPE because I understand everything*'.

At a later focus group meeting, I was able to question the mother about this. This was her response:

*You know I really don't mind them speaking CPE or speaking any other language. Being a linguist myself it's a privilege to have them excel in different languages but you see what happens in their case is the time you are discussing something very serious to them pidgin English is more of fun. You get what I am saying. Is more of fun, but if you are in a social space and then they are speaking Pidgin English and they are asking me things I really don't mind it. I talk to them we share it. But I only have one problem when we are discussing serious things maybe I am following up on something and given that they don't know the language then they start you know is like mixing business and fun then they start struggling with pidgin and then at one point they start laughing. Then you know what I say my friends stop that thing speak in English you get what I am saying. You need to get it serious. So they see pidgin like language for fun so that is my point.*

As she explains above, her reason for not wanting the children to speak CPE is because they see the language as only suitable for use in informal situations. Even when Cameroonians visit her, she said they will not speak CPE to the children and when the children make an attempt to speak the language the visitor will laugh because they speak with a different accent. She believes that the children need to know CPE for visits to Cameroon where they will need to identify with their cousins and nieces.

Since it was a focus group discussion, other participants like Bari reacted to her response as shown below:

*Bari: Are you not worried that by speaking pidgin it will damage their English you haven't mentioned that so am just asking? Because that is what we were told when we were growing up we knew that when you speak pidgin it will destroy your English.*

*Mary: you know what as a linguist I would not say that. In the past I would say that. Our arguments back home use to be that the children should not speak pidgin because it will interfere in their English proficiency you know but now what is happening is the more we learn about languages the more you understand that it may not mare their English depending on the exposure of the child to the language. And if you see what is happening with my children there are more exposed to English. How often do they speak the pidgin? If they are speaking the pidgin it is more for identity reasons. But you see in Cameroon the situation is different. Is the opposite*

*there they have more exposure to pidgin because you see language in the real sense of it you become competent and proficient in a language based on exposure.*

Again, the issue of language exposure is captured in the above extract, and the argument that using CPE will harm the children's proficiency in English if they are exposed to it too often (like in Cameroon). Mary related the issue of language exposure by making a comparison with the South African context where she said people from the Eastern Cape struggle with English because they were never exposed to English. She concludes by saying the language children are most exposed to influences their proficiency in other languages that may come into their repertoires.

Melissa was rarely exposed to CPE when she was still in Cameroon, but now in Cape Town she has made friends with Anglophones who always speak CPE. She said for the past 11 years in Cape Town she has been interacting with the Anglophones but at the same time is worried because most of the Anglophones that she interacts with do not always speak or write good English. She always feels disappointed when she sends a message in English and someone replies in CPE. She said she has come to realize that most Anglophones in Cape Town are used to communicating in CPE, and that they have continued this practice in Cape Town, where many find it difficult to write or communicate in good English. It therefore appears that communicating in CPE in a foreign environment is a tool for identification with fellow Anglophones, which may have been strengthened by the need for a sense of belonging to a particular group. The variety therefore is strongly maintained in the Anglophone community.

#### 6.1.4 Cameroonian home languages

In the context of Cape Town, the only value of the Cameroonian home languages is when people communicate with other Cameroonians who speak those specific languages. For many, the positive attitudes they have towards these codes have nevertheless continued to be used in Cape Town because it provides their speakers with a sense of belonging.

Tisia says when she speaks or sings in her mother tongue (Bafut) she feels she knows where she comes from. She feels a '*sense of freedom, a sense of being liberated from a space she is trapped in*' that is not hers. The feeling of 'difference' and frustration is echoed when she uses the word '*trapped in a space that is not yours*'. There is a clear indication here of the relationship between



language and identity, with the home language seen as a tool to identify with one's ethnic group. Premose also feels a sense of 'home' when he speaks his mother tongue Moghamo. He said it reminds him of where he comes from, his belonging. Speaking his mother tongue does not only link him to his ethnic affiliation but also helps others to identify him. He also feels people should be proud of speaking their home languages as well as where they come from.

People's attitudes are not only affective in nature (Baker, 2012), but also cognitive - the beliefs of the language learners about the knowledge that they receive and their understanding of the process of language learning. Jude's attitude towards his mother tongue is positive owing to the fact that it is the language that helps him learn or understand other languages. *'When I think about Pinyin you see there are certain things I write in English that I first think them in Pinyin. I first reason them in Pinyin before translating to English because my vocabulary is richer in Pinyin than in English'*. This cognitive competence is helping him learn or use other languages and he urges that people should know their mother tongue first before any other second language. *'Let somebody be rich in your mother tongue, be able to think in your mother tongue before you try to see whether you can translate what you are thinking into any other language'*.

#### 6.1.5 South African languages: Afrikaans

It was interesting to note how many of the attitudes towards Afrikaans mirrored those of the Black population in South Africa. For Jude, Afrikaans is associated with oppression and apartheid. He recounts a story how he came to realize that there are people who speak Afrikaans but hate it at the same time. As an informal trader he sells music CDs. On one occasion he tried to sell an Afrikaans CD to a 'coloured' man, who responded that Jude should give the CD to a 'Boer' and that he is not a 'Boer'. *'But there is no language like Boer (laughs) the language is Afrikaans. So you actually see that even though he speaks Afrikaans he doesn't really like it. They are still with that... operation that I am talking about yeah. So that is what made me to say if they can hate their language what more of us'*. From the above, it is clear that his attitude towards Afrikaans is a negative one, which he explains is even more evident within the Afrikaans speakers themselves.

Caronis' attitude towards Afrikaans has been influenced negatively by what she perceives to be racist behavior towards her by speakers of Afrikaans in her workplace, which was in a predominantly White area. She said once white customers come and see a black person serving they *'wish you are not behind that counter to serve them. And my boss is a white, always like you*

*black, you monkey or those types of things but (sighs)'. She said at times the boss will start throwing insults to her in Afrikaans and she will just laugh because she does not even understand Afrikaans and is not even interested in learning it. She went further to explain how even on the street in the area where she used to work, blacks are looked upon as thieves. 'At times when you walk there, you are walking and then there is a white person coming you just feel like maybe he is afraid of you or maybe when he sees you he just thinks that maybe you gonna rob him or what something like that (laugh) you just feel like that kind of thing yeah'. When I questioned her if this is only done to blacks rather than coloureds, she agreed. 'No they are friendly ...because we use to work with 'coloured' they are friendly with 'coloured' maybe 'coloured' they think they are white something like that. But we are just different'.*

When people face such racial discrimination from a particular race, the tendency is that the victims are likely to show negative attitudes towards the perpetrators' language. That is why Caronis believes that besides the fact that Afrikaans is a difficult language to learn (from her own experience of learning Dutch while in high school in Cameroon), she is also not interested in learning the language. Maybe her demotivation would have turned into motivation if the speakers of Afrikaans like most whites would have treated her kindly. Her responses also go to show how geographical space and language distribution is still organized along racial and socioeconomic divisions inherited from the apartheid structures in South Africa (Vigouroux, 2005).

Premose in responding to the question on attitudes, talks of how people always start learning languages by picking up swear words. He recounts a story back then in his secondary school days how a friend tricked him and taught him the negative and insulting words in his language as if these were forms of greetings. He only found out that he was tricked when people he greeted started chasing him. In all this he says sometimes when you try to learn the language you always start with the negatives. *'Sometimes people intentionally try to do that to you'*. He then related it to Afrikaans by saying while his daughter was still in Cape Town; she was struggling to learn Afrikaans and what she managed to learn were the negative and swear words.

According to Tjubis, he places more value on English especially from an educational perspective, but Afrikaans has become important to him because his daughter attends an Afrikaans medium school. He adds that it is unfortunate when the children come home with an assignment that needs knowledge of Afrikaans and the parents cannot help. We actually struggle at home especially when

she comes home with assignments. *'I don't even know where to start. At times I used to look at it when I read she just starts laughing (Laughs)'*. He may not openly declare his intention of learning Afrikaans but his statement above shows he has no negative attitudes towards Afrikaans and will therefore not hesitate to learn the language.

Attitudes towards Afrikaans are still largely influenced by its apartheid history where many still see the language as the language of oppression, discrimination and power. Besides the fact that Afrikaans is linked to the history of apartheid, it is also a difficult language to learn as Caronis states above. Tjubis's response also raises the issue of people learning a language based on how important the language is to them.

#### 6.1.6 South African languages: isiXhosa

Participants in general held mixed attitudes towards isiXhosa and its speakers. Tjubis who is married to an isiXhosa lady says his attitude towards isiXhosa is positive. He said he really loves the isiXhosa language and always encourages the children to learn the language so that they will not be excluded in their own community. Jude feels very contented knowing all the various languages in his repertoires and if he was a linguist and had the opportunity to know many languages he will be very happy. He feels that knowing many languages makes you not to have a fixed identity but rather multiple identities. Having multiple identities will also make one fit into many societies, go anywhere and feel at home. You will also be able to interact with many people. His attitudes towards all the languages he can speak including isiXhosa and Afrikaans is positive and that if given the opportunity he will learn them more. He went on to say he does not really care what people say about his accent, pronunciation or use of wrong words. His concern is whether what he says has been understood and that he is not afraid or shy to make mistakes because what scares people from speaking certain languages is the fear of making errors during communication. He quotes the case of Cameroon where most Anglophones are more bilingual than Francophones because Anglophones do not shy away from speaking French unlike the Francophone who are shy to speak English. So he urges people to have confidence when speaking any language.

In addition, Jude says when he hears the word 'Xhosa', what comes into his mind is the xenophobic attacks. *'To be very categorical yeah I can't find myself in between two, three Xhosa without watching my back, am I safe, so (laughs) but that is the truth when I have an opportunity to even utter one word with them the first thing that comes in my mind is whether I am safe'*. His statement

captures how language can relate to issues of safety and security. Caronis narrated a story that happened to her in 2009 when a South African lady came to her hair salon and was speaking isiXhosa to her. She told the lady she does not understand nor speak isiXhosa and the lady told her she must speak isiXhosa because she is in South Africa. The lady left without having her hair done just because she could not communicate in isiXhosa. *'I feel so bad that day yoh! I just say she should say ok sisi you should learn neh! the language then next time when I come I want you to speak. Or maybe she starts to teach me some few words than to tell me that No you must learn it. I know I must try to learn because am in South Africa'*. In her view, the South African lady used her inability to speak the South African local language to discriminate against her.

Tisia on her part says she has no attitude towards South African languages but a concern. The problem she has is with the South African language policy, which to her is problematic. She feels the equal status given to all the eleven official languages in South Africa poses a problem since some of the languages have more speakers than others and so are more widely spoken than others. The implication is that those languages with more speakers are considered superior to the others that have fewer speakers and therefore it is a problem. Since language is organized along racial lines, Tisia feels people will always want to be associated with their language groups hence it becomes a source of disunity rather than unity. Migrants are caught in between this dis-unity and do not always know which group to identify with. She is trying to compare the South African language situation to that of Cameroon where instead of creating unity by means of giving equality to all the languages, it is rather the opposite.

Tisia recounted the difficulties she went through understanding South African languages. She started with the Zulu language in Pretoria where she first lived, and after coming to Cape Town she again encountered challenges learning the local languages in Cape Town. She describes her experience as traumatic, *'because in Cape Town everywhere you spoke English you had a problem because in Cape Town it was either Afrikaans or isiXhosa. So if you don't errh... if you are black you should be IsiXhosa if you are coloured you should be Afrikaans or white. If you are black and not isiXhosa already you are in a problem'*. She says language problems in Cape Town was and is still a challenge to such an extent that even *'a description that you want to ask if you meet a black person immediately you start they expect you to greet them in Xhosa and to ask in Xhosa'*. Even when you start asking for example directions in English then they will start questioning you where you come from, making comments like *'these foreigners who have come to take our jobs'*. She says all these can even end up in a very bad way. To avoid

being identified or being stigmatized as a foreigner, she tries to speak the local languages. She has therefore extended her linguistic repertoire to avoid some of the linguistic challenges that foreigners go through in South Africa on a daily basis.

Silvy's story about language was about the isiXhosa people. She recounted a story that happened to her in Cape Town when she was going to work. She missed the train and was running late for work so she decided to take a taxi. She lost her way, got out of the taxi and started stopping people on the way to ask for direction. When she stopped a Xhosa man the first thing the man did was to greet her in isiXhosa because he thought she was isiXhosa speaker. *'I replied in Xhosa then I ask him my way in Xhosa. You see only that made him stop and listen to me. You know they are like that Xhosa people if they see that you are one of them they are able to help you. Yes, he listened to me and even helped me find my way. Imagine if I didn't know how to speak Xhosa maybe I will be lost'*. She reiterated the importance of knowing how to communicate in isiXhosa and how knowledge of it can save you from ugly situations. She continued by saying the fact that she cannot speak more than basic isiXhosa is affecting her especially as isiXhosa speakers like speaking their language. She always feels rejected because of her inability to communicate in isiXhosa. Desiring to learn or speak isiXhosa is a sign that she wants to belong or to integrate in the society. When you speak their language they know you want to be with them. *'But if they speak Xhosa and you speak English they don't care about you'*.

Tjubis' memories about languages as a migrant in Cape Town relates to the click sound in the isiXhosa language which is different from clicks used in some Cameroon languages. The clicks used in some Cameroon local languages are used mostly used for insults or to scold someone whereas that of isiXhosa is part of the phonetics of the language. He said when he just came to Cape Town he went to buy from a shop and when leaving he heard an isiXhosa speaker making a click sound. He said to himself why are these people insulting me, why they hate us like this and that only later did he realize that click sounds in isiXhosa are not insults but part of the phonetics of the language. Like other participants he also said that isiXhosa people like to speak their language and that when they visit his wife's family in the Eastern Cape they always speak isiXhosa to him. Unfortunately, he cannot sustain the conversation for long and the wife always intervenes and tells them that he cannot speak the language. He feels as a migrant there is always that need to speak the languages of the host country in order not to be excluded.

Participants in the focus group discussion also talked about their attitudes towards this language and its speakers. What they said is summed up in Bari's comments in the box below:

*Bari: if I can just comment. I think the importance that he is trying to attach to the languages that he speaks is opportunities. You see one of the problems that most South Africans have and I mean particularly black South Africans they are limited to access to job market and opportunity because of lack of languages. They cannot speak English ...they speak Xhosa. Most of the places require you to speak English because not everyone understands Xhosa but at least everyone will understand English. They assume that everyone will understand English that is why anywhere you go if they speak the local language to you and you don't understand the next language will be English. Assuming that you will understand English whether you are a local or a foreigner. So it is about opportunities. Language again now our days is about opportunities that is why china has become one of the powerful countries in the world today. Even their languages have become important and that is why many people are learning Chinese or Mandarin. I mean in the 60s Cameroon use to give aid to China and during those times who cared to learn Mandarin... so the problem is just to make life good and comfortable to people.*

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What is captured in his comments above is the fact that people learn languages because of the opportunities that language will offer them. The power of English is seen here and that is why even in the Law Firm where he is working, his boss has instructed them to only treat cases that are written in English. The dominance of English over the local languages has a significant effect on my participants' language practices and attitudes, particularly with regard to languages like isiXhosa and Afrikaans.

## 6.2 Observing Cameroonians interacting in their own association in Cape Town: Evidence of modified linguistic identities?

Blommaert (2003:613) emphasizes the fact that within a World Systems perspective, the sociolinguistics of globalization should pay attention to the relative value of semiotic resources, the value of which is often connected to translocally realizable functions as well as "the capacity to perform adequately in and through language in a wide variety of social and



geographical spaces and across linguistic economies”. My study is an exploration of the practices of the Cameroonian translocal migrants against the backdrop of globalization, consumerism, and material culture, all of which are embedded in the notion of identity *stylization* processes (Mbembe and Nuttal, 2004). That is to say Cameroonian migrants sometimes style local, translocal and global identities facilitated by advanced technology. Their identities blend Cameroonian and South African identities in a skillful way.

As such the concept of multimodality is important in analyzing text or images other than language. In this respect, Iedema (2003) argues that the concept of multimodality was introduced in order to demonstrate the importance of taking into account semiotics other than language-in-use, such as image, music, gesture and so on. In as much as language is considered to be a fundamental mode of communication, especially in areas such as education, communication and representation often draws on a multiplicity of modes (see Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006; Iedema, 2003). These modes all play an important role or have equal potential in contributing to meaning making. This implies that multimodality considers all modes as important aspects in the process of constructing meaning. Consequently, the primary assumption of multimodality is that meanings are made and distributed, received, interpreted and remade in interpretation through many representational and communicational modes (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006; Van Leeuwen, 2008; Prior and Hengst, 2010). Thus, multimodal research focuses on analyzing and describing the “full repertoire of meaning-making resources which people use to communicate and represent and how these are organized to make meaning” (Jewitt, 2009:15). This means that, from a multimodal point of view, language is just one mode among a multimodal organization of modes (cf. O’Halloran 2004 Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001; Martin and Rose, 2003). This theory is important in the analysis of data in this study as it considers many aspects of communication in which language is just one of the modes of communication in the process of meaning making. While my interview and focus group data provided me with valuable insights regarding the linguistic identities of my participant, I was keen to see what actual language practices and attitudes were revealed in action.

For this reason, I made a number of visits to the Cameroonian Association in Cape Town in order to observe Cameroonians use language or communicate as a whole in their social gatherings. I observed Cameroonian social activities like Graduations, born house (birth

celebrations), Cry-die (Death celebrations), and Cameroonian cultural group meetings. While doing the observations I took into consideration Lane's (2009) argument that "people's communicative encounters should be approached as constellations of various identities and that, the particular identity or set of identities that becomes significant depends on the activity itself, goal, and the identities of the other participants". The linguistic identities that emerged from the observations depended on the type of activity or the purpose (whether birth or death celebration or graduation) and the audience. Lane (2009) adds that how we enact any particular identity is also responsive to contextual conditions. Any activity that I observed I did so bearing in mind the context of Cape Town especially in relation to migrants.

Generally, it was observed that the language practices and identity construction of Cameroonian migrants in these social activities were not fixed but dynamic. Such dynamic practices speak to the literature which states that identities in the social constructionist tradition are not fixed but rather are 'multifaceted in complex and contradictory ways; tied to social practice and interaction as flexible and contextually contingent resources; and tied to processes of differentiation from other identified groups' (Miller, 2000: 72). The choice of language in these social activities depended on who the interlocutors were, which in some cases included Cameroonians, South Africans and people from other countries. It also depended on the different Cameroon ethnic groups, Anglophones or Francophones. Attention was also paid to the literature that argues that in a social constructionist approach language should not be seen as merely expressing identity but as mutually constitutive (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). Thus identities are not perceived as fixed and stable, but rather as multiple, fluid and dynamic, and seen as both shaping and being shaped by cultural expressions (Lane, 2009).

### 6.2.1 The Nuka Association

The first Cameroon cultural activity I attended was the Nuka association where I did two observations, a normal sitting and a born-house (birth celebration). Initially this association was created for indigenes of the Ngoketunjia sub-division in the North West region of Cameroon. As is the case in most of the Cameroonian cultural groups in Cape Town, the group soon started accepting membership even from people who are not from this division owing to their small numbers. Nuka is therefore a group with people from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. As such English and CPE are the languages that dominate in this association although other languages do filter in momentarily but often in informal conversation among members.

This association meets fortnightly on Fridays and the first meeting I observed was a normal sitting that started with a prayer that was offered in CPE by a member appointed by the chair. The association does not have a fixed venue to host their meetings but alternates them in members' homes. They have a Whatsapp group with all the members and everything related to the association is discussed in this Whatsapp forum. The language that dominated as earlier mentioned is CPE with a few moments of English depending on who is speaking. The chair of the setting was appointed and when she started speaking it was a mixture of English and CPE. By switching between English and CPE she wanted to portray the identity of an educated person but when she speaks CPE it is a way of identifying with others who are not educated and thus accommodate everyone. The dominant use of English and CPE is also a way of portraying the Anglophone identity, given that CPE is seen as a strong marker of identity especially among the Anglophones. Many other people take turns and when they speak they do so predominately in CPE.

#### 6.2.2 Birth celebration (Born-House)

The second observation I made was a birth celebration also known as 'born-house' in pidgin. When a member gives birth then the meeting will fix a day to go celebrate the birth of the child in the member's house. In this particular birth celebration, the child was not born in South Africa but in Cameroon and since the father was in Cape Town the celebration was done as if the child was present. Such activities resonate with Giddens' (1990:64) argument that globalization is 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa'. The child may not be present but the activity was happening as if she was physically present. Before the celebration day all members were levied a sum of money to contribute as gift for the child. When the ceremony started, a chair was appointed followed by a word of prayer from a member. The minutes of the last sitting was read followed by matters arising. Since it was a special sitting dedicated for the birth celebration the proceedings of the day were different from the rituals that normally happen in an ordinary setting.

Consequently, the host was given an occasion to address the house. He started his speech by addressing the house in CPE. He announced the name of the child and the reason behind that name. How names carry symbolic meanings was captured in the host speech as will be presented below.

Below is an excerpt from the host's speech in CPE:

That we pikin hi name naTyembi...hi never bi Christian and hi never bimuslim. When hi go grow hi go chose hi own side wey hi go go. That nukapikin hi name naTyemb, Tyembi mean say this world dey so hi under deep plenty. The reason bi say they bi di cry my first woman hi die on the 5<sup>th</sup> on the 4<sup>th</sup> my uncle them come create wonderful problem for deyweyyi no believe. The one them weyi move them for prison. So hi want be on the 5<sup>th</sup> they born this pikin. I gather that my uncle them talk for them say this pikinwunadey so wuna bi devil all. I no di fear different people i di fear nawuna.

*[That our child's name is Tyembi and she is not yet a Christian nor a Muslim. When she will grow up she will choose where she wants to belong. That Nuka's child's is named Tyembi. Tyembi means that this world is very deep. Why I say so is because when they were celebrating the dead of my first wife on the 5<sup>th</sup> and on the 4<sup>th</sup> my uncles came and caused a lot of problems there in such a way that I could not believe. Some of them I even took out from the prison. By the 5<sup>th</sup> this child was born. I gathered my uncles and told them that with the birth of this child I see all of you as devils and I do not fear other people but you people].*

All laugh

They talk say they no go cry that die. I tell them say for this country na we and Mbe them di talk. And that pikin di grow how way that hi name dey. Hi waka wey hi dey seven months so i di beg hi say make hi no talk quick quick because if hi talk quick hi go talk talkwey hi fit worry place. So i thank wuna plenty as wuna don come make we share this one word of joy. Mami don first talks for here say one man di come giam then hi go shidon hi. No na only say man pikin their heart to strong plenty. Manpikin no fit talk that day wey hi bi happen.

*[They said they will not celebrate the dead of my wife. I told them that I and the chief's control this country (village). That child is growing just as the name reflected. She started walking when she was seven months old so now am begging that she should not talk quick because if she does she will say things that can cause problems. So I thank you very much as you have come so that we share this moment of joy. Mami has earlier said that a man's job is only to get the wife pregnant and when that is done then the man's job ends there. But I want to say here that it is not true. The problem is just that men have a stronger heart. As you wanted to know how it happen men cannot explain how it happened.]*

Names can carry symbolic meanings and the host narrated the events that led to the naming of the child. It was the death of his first wife and the problems that occurred due his uncle's refusal to

perform the death celebration that led to the naming of the child. Because of the problems he had with his uncles and the child born around the same period, he decided to name the child Tyembi which in their culture means ‘the world is deep’. The name symbolizes all the negativity one can use to describe the world, complexities, futility and wickedness.

After his speech many other members reacted to it and all these reactions happened in CPE. Next on the item was the handover of the cash gift to the child’s father. This had to be done by the latest mother in the house and this announcement was done by the chairlady. This time she did not speak in English as she did at the beginning but she addressed the house in CPE as shown below:

Chair: We di call papa and mamipikin even sisi them make them stand then the newest mamipikin we go send nanyi make hi gipikin hi parcel. There after no body no go put hi bumbs for down as we di call am for South Africa. We go sing pikinyi song, we go dance pikinyi dance. If we never dance well well chop no go commot. After the dance we go call item 11 we start di chop di dance. I di ask people wey they come make wuna di look eye for here. Some of we dey so me no 1 i never married i di find man i di find pikin. Wuna shine wuna eyes look man pikindem.

*[We call on all fathers and mothers to stand then the newest mother will give the child’s parcel. There after nobody will be allowed to sit down. We will sing and dance for the child. if we do not dance well there will be no food. After the dance then we will call for food then we will eat and dance. I will also ask the ladies who are here present to open their eyes especially those who are not married as well as those looking for children].*

From the speech above I can notice that not only English or CPE is used but the participant’s occasionally made use of some South Africans local words. Even from the speech above the speaker make use of the word *sisi* and *bumbs* which are South African words for ladies or young females and buttocks respectively.

Before the presentation of the gift to the child’s father, it was agreed that the mother of the child who is in Cameroon be phoned to ask how the child is doing. A phone was given to the chair to make the call. Meanwhile the phone was put on speaker so that everyone can hear what she is saying. The reason for phoning her was also to inform her that a gift for the child had been handed



to the father. Following the father's short acceptance speech, two birth songs were sung and then it was time to eat and drink. The songs were sung in CPE and Metta, a language spoken in the Momo division of the North West region of Cameroon. The food that was served was Achu, a traditional dish in the North West region eaten mostly by people from the Ngemba tribe. The menu also included South African food.



Figure 2. Members eating Achu (traditional meal from the North West Region, Bamenda)

Apart from language or food as seen above, dressing is also a tool for identity construction. For someone with the knowledge of the Bamenda culture, a glance at the man wearing a cap in Image 1 is enough to identify him as an Anglophone from the North West region of Cameroon. The cap



he is wearing is typical North West attire, which automatically labels him as a ‘Bamenda man’. The food eaten is Achu which is a traditional meal from the northwest region of Cameroon also indicating that the host’s identity as a North Westerner. The food is served by a woman wearing a loin cloth popularly known as ‘rapper’ with a baby on her back. This is how a typical traditional woman from the North West region is expected to dress, behave and acts when she is hosting an occasion. Thanks to the concept of multimodality, the various texts and images which constitute the material resources for the study are analyzed through what Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006, 2001) call 'the grammar of visual design' to distinguish it from grammar as it is understood in general linguistics. This design helps us to understand how different modes are used for particular events as well as being a tool for interpreting and analysis of "semiotic resources and semantic expansions which occur as semiotic choices combine in multimodal phenomena" (O’Halloran, 2011:121).

### 6.2.3 A wake/death celebration (Cry-Die)

The second observation is a death celebration also known as *cry-die* in CPE. The occasion took place in Parow in what is popularly known among Cameroonians in Cape Town as Nji’s hall. The hall is owned by a Cameroonian by name Nji and many Cameroonians rent the hall for their ceremonies of any kind. The host for the death celebration was an elderly Cameroonian (I will call him Mr Joe) who has been in Cape Town for quite a while. He lost his elder sister back in Cameroon and decided to organize a wake that coincided with the actual wake back in Cameroon, as he was unable to attend her funeral. Here, one can notice how experiences are shared across time and space. Many people of diverse origin came to sympathize with him. Mr Joe is an Anglophone but is married to a Francophone and as such there were also many Francophones present. The ceremony began with a word of prayer offered in English by a Cameroonian who is a pastor and owns a church in Maitland. Mr Joe is a co-pastor at his church in Philippi. With this diverse population, English was the preferred choice of language to accommodate everyone.

The deceased was a member of the Christian Women Fellowship (CWF) of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon as seen in the uniform she is wearing in Image 6.2. The fact that Mr Joe used candles and white material to dress the table signifies his spiritual presence in the funeral in Cameroon. Like other modes in the study the image below is also analyzed with the lens of multimodality. The candles, white clothes, the picture frames, the white colour all helps to create or give meaning to the practice. Organizing funerals as such provides one with a lens through

which we can understand the emotional trauma in times of loss as many migrants are unable to go home to bury their loved ones due to financial or documentation challenges.

Religious practices, like funerals, create space for migrants to engage simultaneously in the home and host countries.



Figure 3. The deceased lady

As the ceremony proceeded, the MC took over the microphone and started speaking in English occasionally making use of French CPE, some local Cameroon languages as well as some isiXhosa

and isiZulu words. He constantly switched between these different languages to accommodate all the different people present, diverging or converging.

Also present to grace the occasion was a DJ playing different varieties of Cameroonian music. There came a time when the DJ started calling on some important personalities identified from the crowd to dance in front of everyone and to give some financial support to the host. The moment the MC announced someone's name, the DJ immediately played the music from the area or province from which the person was. For example, when he called a person from Doula, the music from that area was played and the person danced to the front to give his or her donations.

The messages in the different music were in French, some in English while others were in the local languages or mixture of the different languages of Cameroon. As mentioned above, the MC spoke mostly in English but occasionally switched to other languages like French, CPE Cameroon's local languages and isiXhosa. At one moment the MC started shouting South African slogans and the people responded:

*MC: Amandla! [Power]*

*People: Awethu! [Power is ours]*

*MC: Viva Mandela Viva! [Long live Mandela long live]*

*People: Viva [long live]*

*MC: We have come here; we will live here, marry here, have children here and die here.*

By doing this, the MC was in a way negotiating belonging by appropriating these South African or isiXhosa words. By making use of the isiXhosa words he was performing solidarity with the South Africans in the audience. The MC also frequently spoke French to accommodate the Francophones who were present. This simultaneous use of languages is important as it highlights the flexibility and adaptability of identity performance.

After exhausting the list of important personalities spotted in the crowd it was time for anyone who felt like supporting the host financially to dance in front and make his or her contribution. Apart from the Cameroonian music that was played to grace the occasion, the South African choir from Mr Joe's church in Philippi also graced the occasion with songs and dance. Many people were expecting that once the choir started performing they would do so in the South African local languages but that was not the case as their songs were mostly in English. This may indicate that they also wanted to accommodate all that were present. What also caught my attention to this choir

was the fact that they were all dressed in black (which from my Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) grammar of visual design) symbolizes mourning, while other people were dressed in colourful outfits or in traditional Cameroonian attire. Here, multiculturalism is displayed as one could see the South African choir from Phillippi gracing the occasion, dancing eating and enjoying Cameroonian cuisine.



Figure 4. The South African choir from Phillippi

The president of the Cameroon Association in Cape Town was also present and was called upon to make a speech. He spoke in a blend of English and CPE, as he is not highly educated. He also wore a football shirt with Cameroon's national colors as a mark of identification.

#### 6.2.4 Observing a graduation celebration

I also attended and observed two graduation ceremonies - one in Nji's Hall and the other in the Maitland Sports-field Hall. The first graduation in Nji's hall was a lady from the Pinyin ethnic group in Cameroon who was graduating with a nursing degree. Like the dead celebration, the graduation was also made up of people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As such, the language that was mostly used was English to accommodate everyone. There were however some moments when the Pinyin dialect as well as CPE was used. There were some visitors from Cameroon who are Pinyin indigenes who came to attend the graduation, so their language was used to acknowledge their ethnic identity. There was even a moment when her maternal aunt who



was visiting in Cape Town was called upon to make a speech, which was made entirely in the Pinyin language without any translation done.

The second ceremony in the Maitland Sport-field Hall was that of another young lady from Cameroon who was graduating with a PhD. It was mostly attended by people from the academic field and for this reason; English was the preferred choice of language since there were people from all over Africa, including South Africans. The host mother who came all the way from France to attend the graduation was called upon to make a speech by the MC (master of ceremony) who was also a PhD student. The mother of the host who is a Francophone Cameroon but has been living in France for more than 25 years, made her speech in French and the MC did the translation into English. Although coming all the way from France she chose to dress in a traditional attire to identify with the African tradition particularly the Cameroon tradition of dressing in Kaba. Kaba is a traditional dress worn by women all over Cameroon but believed to have its origin in the coastal regions of Cameroon namely, the South West and Littoral regions of Cameroon. The MC also occasionally made use of some Cape Town local languages like isiXhosa.



Figure 5. The graduate, mother, MC and some guests

Context, audience, situation and interlocutor shaped the type of language practice in the different

activities observed. It was a mixture of different languages and varieties based on the particular activity, who and what is constituted in the activity. Dealing with all these differences therefore meant that language choice also depended on a number of factors. It depended on the nationalities present, the different ethnic groupings such as Anglophones and Francophones, and also the different individuals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Language choice was a dynamic process especially because they wanted to be accommodative and do some justice to all the different audiences present.

### 6.3 A summary of the main findings

The findings of the observation showed that while attitudes towards certain languages and varieties changed across time and space, others are maintained. Generally, most of the participants showed a positive attitude towards English not only because it is a lingua franca in Cape Town but more importantly it holds high international status. Most of the francophone Cameroonians' attitudes towards English shifted in the Cape Town context as they could now speak English even better than some South Africans and even the Anglophones. Respondents like Melissa and Caron reported that they felt pride because they can now speak English something that became possible only in Cape Town. It is important to mention that attitudes towards English came about because of the different varieties of English. Tisia's positive attitudes towards English in Cameroon changes to a negative attitude in Cape Town not because she cannot communicate in English but due to the fact that the variety she speaks in Cape Town is different and as such she gets criticism or corrected all the time when she speaks English in Cape Town. Her negative attitude towards English is not per se about English but about a particular variety that makes her look different in a context where 'difference' is a sensitive issue and as such most migrants make an effort to speak like the locals to avoid looking differently. The positive attitude towards English was translated into their language practices in the observations as English was the preferred choice of language to use owing to its status and the fact that it is a lingua franca in the Cape Town context.

With regards to the Cameroon local or home languages they all had a positive attitude towards the languages and see the languages as a reminder of where they come from, their roots, culture and identity. In as much as they desire to learn other languages they always try to keep or maintain their mother tongues. Unfortunately, some of them reported that they are in the process of losing their mother tongue because they do not have people in Cape Town to speak the language with. Caronis and Silvy say they are even forgetting their home languages. The Cameroon local



languages were used mostly for identification purposes and a show of ethnic belonging. Even in the observation one could see the different ethnic groupings in Cameroon represented in the dead celebration and all this was for identification purposes.

Attitudes towards French for the Anglophones were negative as they see it as a continuation of their marginalization by the popular francophone. They all say that marginalization will not happen in Cape Town and as such they do not want to speak French as seen in Tjubis and Jerome's responses. The 'voiceless' Anglophones in Cameroon have now become the 'voiced' in the Cape Town context. The negative attitudes most Anglophones have towards French has continued unchanged in Cape Town.

Interestingly, in the context of Cape Town some of them make use of French if they want to hide certain information from South Africans. This again comes down to the question of people making use of languages that will benefit them. The Francophones on the other hand have shifted their attitudes towards English by showing their preference to use English in Cape Town rather than French. The context they are now in has forced them to change their perception towards English which they previously neglected while in Cameroon. Their attitudes have not only changed towards English but also towards CPE as most of them have learned in Cape Town how to communicate in English and CPE. With regards to Anglophones and CPE they do not seem to have any negative attitude toward the language except in relation to their children. Everybody seems to like and speak this variety, but do not want the children to speak it. Most Anglophones believe CPE is only good for informal purposes but this informal usage is affecting their formal language use hence their poor communication in English. This is a belief expressed by the participants. Even with the bad influence on their English, CPE is still strongly maintained in Cape Town. The positive attitudes towards CPE were reflected in the observation as CPE featured as the preferred choice to use except in instances where you find people who do not understand or speak the language like South Africans and even some Francophone Cameroonians.

Coming to the Cape Town's local languages, isiXhosa and Afrikaans, most of the participants showed a positive attitude even though they do not speak the languages fluently. Some respondents showed a mixed feeling towards the South African languages. The positive attitude towards isiXhosa was confirmed in the observations as one could hear some isiXhosa words being used in the death-celebration. Some however showed negative attitudes towards the languages. For

example, the clicks in isiXhosa are making it difficult for them to learn the language and the apartheid connection to Afrikaans also makes them see it as a language for oppression. The poor treatment some of the respondents get from white South Africans is further discouraging them from learning the language and hence they maintain a negative attitude.

The issue of xenophobia and the fact that migrants are being labelled as '*Amakwerekwere*' is affecting their attitude not only to the languages but also to the speakers of these languages. Crime and insecurity is also affecting the participants' language practices as most of them have resorted to creating their own spaces far away from the locals. This attempt of isolating themselves from the locals is also affecting their attitudes towards the languages.

In sum, their linguistic identities have undergone some modifications and this therefore has consequences for their language practices. These changes can be seen in their cultural practices which are affecting and are also being affected by the context of practice.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### PARTICIPANTS' COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES AND THEIR STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING LINGUISTIC AND SOCIO- CULTURAL BARRIERS IN CAPE TOWN

#### 7.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the communication challenges faced by migrants in Cape Town as well as their strategies for overcoming such challenges. The question was asked if they were affected in anyway by their inability to communicate in the Cape Town local languages. This was followed by the question of what strategies they normally put in place to overcome such challenges. The chapter thus discusses the communicative strategies (also known as communication tactics) that migrants employ daily in their lived spaces. The data is drawn from the focus group discussions, which was analyzed thematically.

#### 7.1 Negotiating language differences: Communication challenges and survival strategies

Communication is an essential component in today's globalized world with people who are different in many ways coming in contact with each other. The assumption modern linguists have about language acquisition and competence is based on homogeneity and monolingualism, which has failed to take account of multilingual realities in diverse contexts and communities.

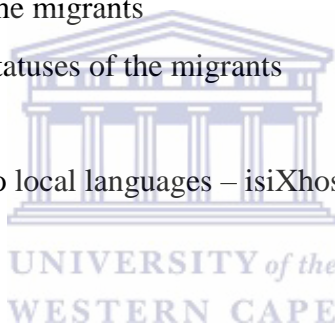
Globalization has put different communities into greater contact with each other and compelled us to understand multilingual communication (Canagarajah, 2011). Canagarajah draws from the works of Khubchandani (1997) and other researchers from the South Asian region to explain how people communicate in communities which are linguistically heterogeneous. For Khubchandani (1997), communication is based on a 'shared space' and not a 'shared language' as stipulated in the traditional/ monolingual speech communities. This study is also based on the notion of shared space, accommodating many language groups, with dozens of languages in every interaction and people always open to negotiating diverse languages in their daily interactions. According to Canagarajah (2011), what enable people to communicate is not a 'shared grammar', but communicative practices and strategies that are used to negotiate language differences. These

strategies are not a form of knowledge or cognitive competence, but a form of resourcefulness that speakers employ in the unpredictable communicative situations they encounter.

Blommaert (2005) also believe people with highly developed multilingual skills can feel, and be, communicatively incapacitated when they are ‘out of place’. One can find oneself struggling with the most basic and mundane tasks in a foreign country because one lacks the specific multilingual resources and skills required in that place. As Blommaert (2005: 198) puts it: “A change in spatial environment clearly affects our capacity to deploy linguistic resources and skills and imposes requirements on us which we may fail to meet”.

In analyzing the different communicative and socio-cultural barriers confronting my respondents, I identified the following as being the ones most likely to create serious challenges:

- Cape Town’s spatial demarcation
- How South Africans label the migrants
- Differences in the official statuses of the migrants
- Problems with English
- Problems with the other two local languages – isiXhosa and Afrikaans
- Xenophobia.



#### 7.1.1 Cape Town’s historical spatial demarcation – the influence of apartheid planning

Where one lives or resides in Cape Town determines ones’ need to learn the local languages, be it isiXhosa or Afrikaans. The city still largely follows the spatial planning of the apartheid years, with different ethnic groups dominating in particular suburbs or townships, as well as informal settlements. This ethnic or racial classification of the different spaces is important as it shapes people’s linguistic practices and attitudes, even the forms of transport into and out of such spaces. Most of the participants who do not stay in the townships did not really see the need to learn the local language, and the consequences of this are affecting them negatively. Caronis feels it affects her especially when she is commuting by taxi:

*Yeah sometimes you take a taxi and you going somewhere and then they ask where you going in Xhosa and is mostly like Xhosa people in South Africa that make you uncomfortable with the language things but when it comes to other people they speak English. So at times when you take the taxi like to go to Khayelitsha for example when you reach Khayelitsha at times they will ask you if you are going to maybe to Makaza you must add 50cents or something like that. So they will say it in Xhosa (yeah) they just like maybe err...as you there you know how to speak the language so they will just speak in that language and then you have to ask somebody sorry, what are they saying? Otherwise you will find yourself going in another side of Khayelitsha because of not being able to understand what the taxi driver is saying. Yes it affects me practically.*

Commuting with public transportation is a problem if you cannot communicate in the local language and especially if you are working or staying in the townships or informal settlements of Cape Town.

Fellos recounted a story where she took a taxi from Bellville going to Goodwood, gave R50 to the driver's assistant. She was expecting change of R40 but the taxi assistant refused to give her change. She had to get out of the taxi because she did not want to get into trouble with the driver and his assistant, fearing violence from these two men. 'A South African will not hesitate to wound or even kill you just for a little change'. She believes they did that because they identified her as a foreigner from the dress she had on. Others in the taxi were given their change but when it came to her turn they did not want to give it to her. Migrants in Cape Town are not only identified by their inability to speak the local language but also by their way of dressing – this tends to make them more vulnerable to ill-treatment and xenophobic attacks.

#### 7.1.2 How South Africans label the migrants

If you are Black in Cape Town, there is a common tendency to assume that you are part of the isiXhosa community unless they hear your speech or note your style of dress. For Melissa, not being able to communicate in the local languages does not really affect her, because even when the locals come and greet her in their language she replies in English. She used to ask them why they always speak isiXhosa to every black they meet on the way or why they feel *everybody* must speak their language. She explains that when she meets Xhosa speakers and they insist on speaking

isiXhosa to her she always stops them and lets them understand she cannot speak isiXhosa. In general, conversations then continue in English.

### 7.1.3 Differences in the official statuses of the migrants

The length of time spent in South Africa is important in the life of a migrant and may limit the amount of stress or challenge encountered as Tisia insinuates above. Rosa who is still a newcomer in Cape Town is also facing some challenges as she cannot communicate in the local languages. She said she cannot do what she likes to do in contexts where you find South Africans. She is an asylum seeker and travels regularly to Pretoria specifically to Musina for the renewal of her asylum documents. *'At Musina you find only the locals there and when they start speaking their language you are lost. They just come and speak their language to me then I will tell them I don't understand'*.

### 7.1.4 Problems with English

Melissa, like many of her fellow respondents, believes that most people speak English or at least know the basics. She argues that English is a global language and people cannot afford not to speak it. However, English does not solve all the communication problems the migrants face. Premose, for example, had the following to say:

*There are some Xhosas that don't even know anything in English. Sometimes you meet someone who doesn't know English I need to communicate you can't communicate because of that barrier so it also affects me.*

He says that most South Africans when visiting his business ask for the price of an item. However, when he tries to engage them in English, they leave without saying anything. He feels that this is making him loose customers. Many South Africans do not have a mastery of the English language and this adds to the communication woes of the migrants. The fact that most South Africans cannot communicate in English is attributed to the dysfunctional education system which continues to menace the country's democracy, and most South Africans do not have a good command of the high status languages (English and Afrikaans). It is therefore common to find young South Africans who do not speak good English.



### 7.1.5 Problems with the other local languages: isiXhosa and Afrikaans

The inability to communicate in the local languages of Cape Town affects migrants in many ways, especially in terms of finding and keeping employment. Jude once lost a job because of his accent and also because he could not speak isiXhosa and Afrikaans. Just like Jude, Premose also cannot communicate in these languages. It affects him in that when a job is advertised it may only be in one of the local languages and so he remains ignorant of what the job requirements are.

Social exclusion is another problem. Silvy often feels rejected because when isiXhosa speakers speak to one another in her presence, she feels shut out. However, she also mentioned that isiXhosa speakers are always happy when you try to speak their language because they feel that you want to be like one of them or you want to belong. But when they speak isiXhosa to you and you respond in English, *'they don't care about you'*. This also applies to Afrikaans speakers who laugh at you when you try to speak their language. Caronis feels frustrated when the isiXhosas speak isiXhosa to her and she cannot respond. Even when you visit the townships she says there is always this feeling that you really need to learn the language, and it is always a process of negotiating with your interlocutor. She also notes that it is mostly the isiXhosa people in South Africa that makes one feel uncomfortable with language issues especially since they like speaking their language to anyone that is black.

Tjubis gave both a negative and positive response to this question. He is married to an isiXhosa South African and would have loved to communicate in isiXhosa with her, but since he cannot it is affecting him. He feels that his inability to speak isiXhosa makes it impossible for them to hide certain information especially when they have visitors around them. *'It would have been an advantage for us to speak in Xhosa so that people don't hear what we are saying but I am not fluent in that and she cannot speak any of my languages'*. The isiXhosa wife cannot speak any of the Cameroon languages and he would have loved if she could speak even his mother tongue or CPE so that when South Africans visit them they will not understand what they are saying. Secondly, he feels not being able to communicate in the local languages have limited him in many ways. It will be a bonus or added advantage to him if he knows these languages as his performance will be better. *'Like I gave you an example when my students make noise in class instead of telling them stop noise I tell them tula. So I try to be able to learn their language because by learning their language you are bringing them closer to you and they start identifying with you more they don't see you more as a foreigner'*.

Jerome who is also married to a South African confirms that his inability to communicate in the South African local languages is affecting him. *'Most of the times when I want to know exactly what others are saying especially when they talk and call your name you doubt what is going on'*. He adds that not being able to communicate in a language affects every area of life and when we have to interact with others. From jobs to schooling, to simply finding your way around or buying food, he believes learning the local language of the place you live in is essential.

Cosmos like the other participants in the focus group also agrees that he is being affected by his inability to communicate in specifically isiXhosa and Afrikaans. He says the consequences are such that foreigners are being labeled as *'Amakwerekwere... because if you don't speak the same language with them they are going to say wena! Amakwerekwere'*. If migrants know how to communicate in at least one of the local languages, then the locals will see them *part of us*. Rather than not speaking the languages at all, it is better to *'speak some few words like good morning...greetings and then continue in English'*. It is important to know the basics so that you can start a conversation in isiXhosa or Afrikaans before switching to English. The sense of 'us' and 'them' emerged in his response, and he continued by saying foreigners are even teaching South Africans how to speak English. *'Us foreigners we are even teaching South African people to speak English because they want only to speak their Xhosa'*. He says when you are with the isiXhosa speakers and you start speaking English they are lost and feel uncomfortable. They only want to speak their language and foreigners are pushing them to improve their level of English.

Fellos feels very challenged and vulnerable especially when she travels in taxis and trains. Her inability to communicate in isiXhosa or Afrikaans affects her so much that she always remains silent when using public transport, because she fears being identified as a foreigner. Such challenges confirm the arguments by Vigouroux (2005) that the search for visibility or the attempt to become invisible in the host community can affect language and social practices. Like Fellos, many of Vigouroux' interviewees said they always remain silent on public transportation, like the trains or in collective taxis, in order not to be identified as foreigners. They also desired to learn isiXhosa in order to blend with the local black Africans population or pass as South Africans. This they did by dressing like locals, eating their food or acting at times like them.

Clearly, there are many challenges for effective communication in the space of Cape Town for these Cameroonian migrants. Their inability to use these languages can lead to greater vulnerability in times of social unrest, violence, even natural disasters. In addition, a limited ability to understand local languages and cultures could lead to persons being labelled illiterate or given the wrong information.

The question now is: what strategies have they adopted to survive in communicative situations here? This is addressed in the next section.

## 7.2 Respondents' strategies for overcoming linguistic and socio-cultural barriers in Cape Town

Transcultural communication in the context of migration is associated with highly complex linguistic practices (Busch, 2010). Canagarajah (2011) notes that developments such as diasporic communities, transnational relations, migration, and digital communication have created more multilingual interactions and traditional model of language acquisition and competence lack the capacity to explain contemporary experiences. Spromberg (2011) defines communication strategies as a technique used by language learners to overcome communication difficulties and breakdowns due to a lack of available linguistic resources. The theoretical perspectives from which communication strategies are studied have prevented researchers from agreeing upon a universal definition of communication strategies or its taxonomy. Based on transcribed data, Dornyei and Scott (1995) created taxonomy of communication strategies or “coping devices” that the participants used to overcome language difficulties. Nayar (1988:63) also proposed some criteria to identify a number of communicative strategies namely: repetition, repair and appeals, to name but a few. This study may not have realized some of the communicative strategies mentioned by these scholars, but it however throws some light on how the research participants overcame their language challenges. The participants were asked what communicative strategies they normally use to overcome language challenges.

The various strategies identified by my respondents fall into the following categories:

- Making use of an interpreter
- Switching to English as a common language
- Using non-verbal communication – hand signs, facial expressions, body language, laughter
- Making the effort to acquire essential bits of the local languages
- Positioning oneself in terms of the languages present.

•

Interestingly enough, these strategies are similar to the following pragmatic strategies proposed by Canagarajah (2007):

- code-switching, crossing (Rampton, 1995)
- speech accommodation (Giles, 1984)
- interpersonal strategies: i.e. repair, rephrasing, clarification, gestures, topic change, consensus-oriented, mutually supportive (Gumperz, 1982, Seidlhofer, 2004);
- attitudinal resources, i.e. patience, tolerance and humility to negotiate differences (Higgins, 2003).

### 7.2.1 Making use of an interpreter

This is a common strategy, especially in the early days of living in Cape Town. Caronis said that she looks for someone who can translate what her interlocutor said. When that person translates to her what has been said for example in isiXhosa then she will make sure she masters the words used so that in the future she will not ask for any translation. The lessons learned in one encounter “may help to reconstruct the schema and monitor future communication of similar or different participants and contexts” (Canagarajah, 2007:927).

### 7.2.2 Switching to English as a common language

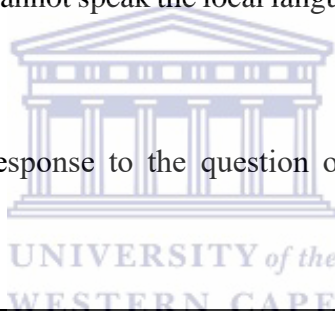
A strategy Tisia employs to negotiate her communication difficulties is to speak her own language when someone approaches her and speaks their language to her. Then when the person apologizes, she will know the person can speak English and will say *‘oh so you can speak English? I thought you cannot speak English. When you speak your language I speak my own then the person will just say sorry! What did you say? Then you start communicating yeah’*. Speaking her own language while the interlocutor speaks his or hers can be interpreted as a form of receptive bilingualism where people use their own language while speaking to each other. It can also be seen as a form of language negotiation since she is trying to influence the language to be used which in this case is English.

Her strategy is similar to the South Asian community cited in Canagarajah’s (2011) article, who do not look for a common language that will facilitate their interaction with other groups but usually start the interaction in their own languages, with both parties retaining their own preferred

codes in the conversation. The speakers negotiate their differences to construct norms that work for them in their conversation. There is also a caution that while these norms will work in one context and situation they may not work in others. The norms that are thus operational in a multilingual interaction are hybrid, and accommodate the languages the different persons bring to the interaction (Canagarajah, 2011).

When Rosa finds herself in the midst of isiXhosa speakers and cannot understand what they are saying she goes closer to any person that can understand English. If she needs or wants something, she will ask that person. In order to cope in an environment where you find only the locals she said it is important to tell them that you can only speak English. She set the rules from the beginning just like Tisia above. To solve such communication difficulties, she says she normally just become more attentive if she really wants to understand what they are saying. The fact that she cannot really communicate in the local languages does not really affect her business because once they (locals) discover or notice that she cannot speak the local language they are forced to speak English to her.

The following box is Melissa's response to the question of strategies or techniques to solve communication challenges.



*Melissa: For me I don't allow that to affect me because when I go to the office in South Africa if the person starts to greet me with Xhosa then expect me to return back in Xhosa and I return in English and when the person continue am like please can you speak English? That is what I do most of the time. They will always say oh sorry I thought that you can speak Xhosa. I say no why do you always...I use to debate even for three minute with the person even before we start discussing what I come for. I use to like ask why all the time you people like to speak this language/. You are supposed to speak English... then they will say Sisi we are used to our language then I say no what about me also speaking my mother tongue language>? > I say if I just come in now and start to say....she speaks her mother tongue) then they will be laughing.*

Melissa explains above that she is not affected by the fact that she cannot communicate in the local languages; she always speaks English even when the locals speak their language to her. She does not hesitate in debating with the isiXhosa speakers why they always like speaking isiXhosa.

### 7.2.3 Using non-verbal communication – hand signs, facial expressions, body language, laughter

Non-verbal communication is also used to overcome language and communication barriers as seen in Fellos' case. The strategy she usually puts in place to solve some of these communicative challenges is that she points to things she wants to buy if she does not know the names. She also makes use of her phone in situations where there is miscommunication. For example, if she wants to buy an item and does not know the name of the item then she shows the item on her phone. It is important to note how technology such as phones can help one solve language or communication challenges. Silvy further explains that in a case where the locals speak and she does not understand or can't communicate with them she normally just laughs and says wena! [You]. She does not let them know or discover that she didn't understand what they are saying. She says this will actually make them feel that she actually understood what they are saying. When she is in the taxi and cannot communicate with the locals when they speak, she just laughs and makes them think she is with them.

Tjubis is also affected by his inability to communicate in the Cape Town local languages. He provides some strategies to overcome such communication challenges in the box below.

*I usually make sure I interact only with people who speak English. But for those who cannot speak English the very first thing is to listen be able to listen attentively and then body language just to get an idea of what the person is trying to say. Even if am not understanding what the person is trying to say just by listening I will say oh it might be what this person is saying then that is one way of dealing with the situation.*

*Secondly, you know they say language is always very important. I use language in learning their culture because if you start trying to understand what they are trying to say by first looking at the body language. Secondly you might also want to push them a bit to go out of their comfort zone even if they don't speak competently in English they can be able to speak in such a way that you can be able to understand what they are saying without which it makes them feel guilty that they are unable to speak English.*

Tjubis feels listening attentively to the person you are communicating with can help you get an idea of what the person is trying to say even if you do not understand his or her language. He also feels watching someone's body language can help you make out what that person is trying to say.



He also negotiates these communication difficulties by pushing his interlocutors out of their comfort zone. In this case he tries to push isiXhosa or Afrikaans speakers to speak English.

Cosmos' strategy in overcoming communication challenges depends on the purpose of the communication. He explains that if he is visiting an office for something important, he will make sure that the person listening to him understands what he is saying. *'And then even if I can go by gesture or sign language so that the person can understand what I am saying or I call maybe somebody near to him or her to translate what I am trying to communicate to the person. Language is for communication and if there is no communication between the two of us then there is no service'*. He said in such a case he cannot leave the office unless the person gets what he is trying to say otherwise he will be the loser.

#### 7.2.4 Making the effort to acquire essential bits of the local languages

Not being able to communicate in the local languages in Cape Town affects migrants in their businesses negatively. Jude's business is affected by this language barrier. In order to overcome these challenges as a business man he tries to learn all the terminologies pertaining to his business. He tries to know the names of all the items on sale in his shop in isiXhosa and Afrikaans. When isiXhosa customers come and say how much is this? (Says in isiXhosa) then he will know what they want because he has mastered the names of all the items in isiXhosa and Afrikaans. Even when taking a taxi, he faces challenges and what he normally does is to call out his destination since he cannot even ask a question in isiXhosa or Afrikaans. He also makes sure he has enough cash on him so that he will not get into problems because of change or something.

Premose on his part feels as a migrant it is important to learn the basics of the language of your host community. Knowing the basics in the host language can minimize communication challenges. He also thinks people should try as much as possible to use simple language to pass their message across to others. *'Sometimes people can use different ways may be by action, maybe trying to put the language as simple as possible if you can'*. As an informal trader selling in the flea market, Premose recounted a challenge he had with a Chinese customer. When he told the customer the price of an item, this Chinese client did not understand. The man asked him to write the amount on a piece of paper. He did that and it was only then that the customer understood the price of the product. He could see that the man was able to read English but could not speak or communicate in English. *'So there are always different ways of communicating. So at times you write what you want people to understand what you are saying'*. His inability to communicate in

the Cape Town languages has forced him to learn how to say the prices of articles in isiXhosa and Afrikaans. Like Jude he also makes sure he learns the names of the items he sells.

Silvy like Premose also believes overcoming communication challenges is to try and learn the basics of the language of the host community which in this case are in isiXhosa and Afrikaans. She also said when she is around the locals or with ‘them’ she must be clever, pay attention try to get one or two words they are saying then figure out in her head what they may be saying. When she figures out what they are saying then she can reply in English and the conversation will then continue from there in English. By doing this she is negotiating the terms of the conversation by moving towards the language she can comfortably communicate in.

Aweh said most of his friends and colleagues are South Africans and they will always approach him and will ask him if he speaks isiZulu or isiXhosa. *‘They always approach you like do you speak Zulu... (he says it in Zulu)? Then I will say no.... (says it in Zulu) then they will say okay sorry. Then we carry on with English but I always tell my colleagues like I don’t care whether you call me Amakerkwere...is got nothing to do with me. I don’t care you can brand me whatever as long as you don’t take what is duly mine (Laughs)’.*

Interviewer: And what is duly yours if I may ask?

*Aweh: I use to work in audio visual so my colleagues I tell them look you can call me whatever I don’t have any feelings or whatever to be angry me am cool. You can call me daky whatever am okay so long you don’t take what is duly mine in the sense that maybe I come to your office for services and you say no I will not assist you because you are a black or this or that that is where I have a problem. But if it is about calling amakwerekwere I don’t have a problem with that it got nothing to do with me. If they are eating here and my own share is there you can call me what ever you want, I don’t care as far as my own food is there. So that was my point of view. My pointy of view is I understand that I am in your country you have the right to speak your language because you are in your territory so if I don’t understand your language is not your problem, it’s my problem. I am a visitor I am the one that has left my own place and come to your own place if you speak your language I shouldn’t hold you responsible for speaking your language. It is my responsibility to learn to speak or understand your language so I don’t see why I should be angry when you speak your language to me.*

#### 7.2.5 Positioning oneself in terms of the languages present

Tisia's strategy to solve problems in communication is to first understand which language the person speaks. When you recognize the language of your interactants then you will be able to position yourself. She also believes the context and environment in which one is matters and she explains in the following box the strategy she adopts to solve such language challenges.

*I have now understood the different environments how to place myself. If it is an informal context I know how to act there, if it is a formal I already know from the beginning set the rules that I am not Afrikaans speaker, I am not isiXhosa speaker, I am English speaking. If it is an informal place where I know I can like maybe struggle to accommodate the isiXhosa or that level of communication, I will do it. So from the beginning now I try to understand the context then I set the rule then I just follow the communication from there. When I meet a Xhosa or Afrikaans speaker who can't speak English I start with the greeting like now I can greet in Afrikaans, I can ask in Afrikaans what is your name? I can ask a little bit of direction in Afrikaans so if I meet a 'coloured' person that is the strategy I will take then now at a certain point where I cannot communicate I now bring in some gestures to indicate what am trying to say.*

Context to her is very important as it determines what follows next. She explains that she behaves differently in different contexts. In an informal context she tries to speak the local language to accommodate the locals who cannot understand or speak English. Just like the other participants she learns how to greet, ask for directions and other basics in the language. In situations where she cannot communicate verbally she uses gestures to explain herself. In a formal context she makes her interlocutors understand from the beginning that she is not an Afrikaans or isiXhosa speaker but an English speaker. She feels that knowing the basics in the languages will be able to help one communicate his or her message.

### 7.3 A summary of main findings

The reality of multilingual societies is that people are obliged to learn and use more languages. Survival in a new space is the driving force leading to language acquisition and attempts at assimilation, but it can also be a creative force leading to greater linguistic hybridity. The spaces that these migrants live in are shared spaces that feature many different languages. The presence of different languages means that there will be communication challenges. The study findings show that participants' inability to communicate in the Cape Town local languages is affecting

them negatively. It is not only affecting their communication with the locals but also their businesses and jobs. They are also excluded, stigmatized and labeled as foreigners by the locals.

Despite these challenges there are many strategies multilinguals use to negotiate their differences. The participants treat all the codes in their repertoire as important and thus draw from all of them for their communication (Garcia, 2009). In the midst of such diversity, “meaning does not arise from resorting to a common grammatical system, but through negotiation practices in local situations” (Canagarajah, 2011:6). Participants are always open to re-negotiation and reconstruction as they mix other codes in their repertoire for voice. They make use of both verbal and non-verbal communication to transmit their messages. Above all, their inability to communicate in the local languages does not prevent them from going about their daily activities, businesses.



## CHAPTER 8

### MIGRATION – TRAJECTORIES AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

#### 8.0 Introduction

This chapter seeks to answer the following research question: How has the process of migration to a new environment influenced the migrants' in terms of their identities and their linguistic practices? In doing so, the chapter offers an analysis of the trajectories of migration followed by the participants in moving from Cameroon to South Africa, and the city of Cape Town in particular. To guide their responses some domains such as work, school, home and community were identified. I also wanted them to compare their life experiences in the two countries especially in the area of forming friendship, work, employment life, schooling for children and the South African way of life. The chapter also focuses on the related issues of language, culture and identity as they affect these migrants. Above all, the chapter examines participants' migration experiences, what they have learned as migrants and how they see their future as migrants in Cape Town.

#### 8.1 The migration trajectories of my respondents

To understand the dynamics of migrants' journeys as well as the shifting destinations Schapendonk (2012:31) believes the unit of analysis should be *trajectories*. Schapendonk (2012: 32) contends that “migrants' trajectories are not closed-off corridors but open and process-like phenomena as they are influenced by, among others, the trajectories of other people, objects, capital, rules and information”. He thinks that it is important to look at the motivation for the journey, facilitation of the journey and the velocity of journeys. He explains how the facilitation of the journey is largely found in migrants' connections with other people, and while motivation and facilitation give journeys a certain direction, these factors do not reveal how fast or slow the journey is (Schapendonk, 2012). In such contexts, “migration trajectories are not only about mobility, but even about periods of rest, re-orientation and (un) expected and (un)intended temporary or long-term settlements” (Schapendonk, 2012:32). The table below summarizes my participants' migration trajectories.

Participants	Status in SA	Reasons for Migration	Year of migration	Transit
Caronis	Asylum seeker	Greener pastures	2008	No transit
Fellos	Asylum seeker	To experience different culture and search for a better life	2015	Zimbabwe
Jude	Asylum seeker	Bad governance in Cameroon	2009	Swaziland
Premos	Refugee	Adventurer	2000	No transit
Silvy	Asylum seeker	Family problems	2014	Mozambique
Rosa	Asylum seeker	In search for a better life	2015	No transit
Tisia	Refugee	To join the husband	2000	No transit
Tjubis	Permanent resident	For Greener pastures	1999	Zimbabwe
Jerome	Permanent resident	Frustrated with life in Cameroon	1995	Congo,
Aweh	Refugee		2006	Lesotho
Cosmos	Asylum seeker	Business	1998	Mauritius
Melissa	Permanent resident	To join the husband	2004	No transit
Nini	Asylum seeker	Study	2009	Mozambique
Bari	Work permit	Study	2006	No transit

Table 4. Respondents' migration trajectories

Looking at the table above one can see that participants have different statuses, different migration trajectories and different reasons for migration. Lekogo cited in Cross et al. (2006:210-211) advances some reasons why certain African migrants choose South Africa as their destination. In his study of Francophone Africans Lekogo summarizes the reasons as being (until fairly recently) South Africa's strong and diversified economy, good academic and health infrastructures, good democratic system, and so on. I will now attempt a closer analysis of my respondents' migration trajectories.

In this era of globalization, Heller (2007:137) writes that migration is no longer understood as a 'one-time displacement'. Instead, globalization implies an increased local diversity that is affected by cross cultural interactions (Kubota, 2002:13). Migration and contact between people is therefore of interest to researchers who want to determine how people interact with others in contact situations where many languages coexist. In this sub-section, I present the migration



experiences of four of my respondents. The experiences of the rest of the respondents can be found in the Appendix.

Caronis is originally from the West region of Cameroon, a predominantly French speaking region. Caronis flew to South Africa in the year 2008 planning to stay in Pretoria but later decided to come to Cape Town. Her flight from Cameroon to Johannesburg was a direct flight and from Johannesburg to Cape Town she took a bus. Caronis had originally planned to migrate to Equatorial Guinea, but on learning about xenophobia happening against foreigners in that country, decided to come to South Africa. She contacted a cousin living in South Africa who advised her to learn some hair dressing skills which could help her survive in South Africa. She knew nothing about South Africa before she travelled there, apart from the story of apartheid she learned in school. She only came to discover in South Africa that there are more than two races and not only black and white as she initially thought. This was her first shock and the second was the currency, which used rands instead of dollars. She also thought English was the only official language in South Africa only to find out that there are 10 other official languages.

Jude is from the Northwest region of Cameroon. He flew to Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2009, but first went to Swaziland for one week. While in Swaziland he did not learn any language because he was confined to his hotel room so there was no possibility to interact. He however noticed that Swaziland's language is not very different from South African languages. From there he took a bus to Johannesburg and a train to Cape Town. For Jude, it is easier to make a living in South Africa when you are hardworking than in Cameroon and that is why he decided to come to South Africa. He narrated the circumstance that made him leave Cameroon below.

*In the real sense of it is eh... what actually remove me in Cameroon is the bad governance yeah is the bad governance that made life to be so difficult to some of us. I left university in 1988 taught in a private school. As I left university in 1988 struggled to enter public service no way. Struggle no way but the option they gave me was that if I want to enter public service I must dance the CPDM dance. And I hated CPDM I mean I wouldn't right to the last drop of my blood I don't want to. I don't want CPDM. I had brothers who were... I mean who had respect, who were responsible, who had professions I mean you get it professions that they could have just pushed me to go there but they told me if I didn't join them in the CPDM they would not do anything to me. Then I told them to hell with your CPDM. I taught in different private schools here and there and you know our private secondary schools in Cameroon how*

*they do. [CPDM- Cameroon People's Democratic Movement is the ruling political party in Cameroon. The party has dominated Cameroon politics since independence in 1960 with Paul Biya as the national president and president of Cameroon].*

Bad governance and all the circumstances narrated above made him to leave Cameroon for South Africa. After failing to secure a public service job he resorted to private teaching. The salary he got from all these private teachings was too small and despite moving from one province to the other, things still did not work out. He taught for fifteen years but there was nothing to show for it.

Silvy is a French Cameroonian who came to Cape Town three years ago. She came to Cape Town because she was running away from family problems. She first flew to Mozambique (which is visa-free for Cameroonians) where she stayed for a week before going to the city of Pretoria in South Africa. In Pretoria she learned that she could attend a Caregiver school in Cape Town so she decided to come to Cape Town. While in Mozambique she did not learn any language but noticed that they spoke a different language from the French and English she could identify. While in Mozambique she could not hear or understand anything they were saying. *'We were just talking only with gestures. If they cook, they bring me food and tell me this is that... this is that if I want something I point to it. I did not learn any language; they speak Portuguese'*. The Mozambican authorities made use of her daughter, who is based in Angola and Portuguese-speaking, to act as an interpreter for her once she made it clear that she wanted to migrate to South Africa. She also wanted to go to a country where English is spoken.

Jerome came to Cape Town immediately after the first democratic election in 1994. It took him 16 months from Cameroon to Cape Town. He used various means of transportation to reach Cape Town from climbing trucks, horses and even crawling on his stomach to avoid detection. He left Cameroon and travelled through Central African Republic, Zaire, Chad and Angola before reaching South Africa. In the course of the journey he picked up some languages like Lingala because he stayed in Kinshasa for 12 months and also some Portuguese because he stayed in Angola for 6 weeks.

He had this to say with regards to his journey or migration trajectory:

*My journey to South Africa was planned in a book. I picked up an atlas and drew my itinerary even though we didn't quite follow that. We just kept on going the situation and time dictated which direction to take even though when I was going to Zaire the whole idea was to get a visa because at the time there was no South Africa Embassy in Cameroon nor in Gabon. So Zaire was the only nearest place. But this didn't happen yeah is a lot of stories. Finally, I got to Upington in the Northern Cape and when the truck driver came and knocked saying we are in South Africa I was instead hiding myself inside the truck carrying boxes and hiding myself thinking that we are at the border that they will deport me again. At Upington they dropped me somewhere and for my 21 years in South Africa I have not been able to see or recognize that place again.*

His reason for leaving Cameroon was economically and politically motivated. Besides coming to do business, he was also looking for greener pastures as well as staying away from the situation back home then. Failing to become a lawyer after graduating from the university, he ended up going into business until the business collapsed. Frustrated at the time, he sold his car and took the decision to leave Cameroon. Like the other participants, his original plan was not to stay in South Africa but to use it as a stepping stone to get to Australia. It is therefore misleading to consider all these Cameroon migrants as a homogenous group given the multiple migration motives involved in the decision to migrate.

During the focus group discussions, I noted that respondents were unwilling to talk about the topic of immigration, with some clearly fearing arrest and deportation back to Cameroon. This was indicative of the insecurity some felt about their legal status in South Africa. Here is a short excerpt from the discussion:

Cosmos: *[Non. C'est une question d'immigration] No, This an immigration question. So You are immigration ? So are you immigration? You want to arrest us are you a private investigator. You want to send us back to our country Vampire. Elle nous enverra au Cameroun. [She will send us back to Cameroon]*

Nini: *Donc, vous ne voulez partie? [So you do not want to go back to Cameroon?] You only want to remain here?*

Bari: *It is because what we will give her she will use it.*

From the four respondents' stories above, it is clear that for most migrants, social networks play an important role in the decision to migrate. However, the networks are also important in language maintenance and language acquisition for these people. The networks span their families and relations back home, other Cameroonians in South Africa, the few South African friends they have made in South Africa and their respective Cameroonian cultural associations. The majority of our respondents already knew someone in the destination country before they migrated, meaning they had access to social networks in South Africa. Like many other studies, my findings have confirmed the relevance of social networks in facilitating migration. Many of the respondents reported that they were home-sick in a country where they were always made to feel like foreigners, but they could not go back to Cameroon because of their status and documentation.

Jude, for example, is an asylum seeker and cannot use his passport to travel home. He recounts how his appeal for refugee status has been rejected many times and as such he only has asylum which is renewed on a six months' basis. When asked if he feels at home in Cape Town his response was that if it were not for the issue of insecurity he would have been feeling at home. Tisia also wishes and prays every day that the South African government should look into the issue of documentation for migrants especially for students. Her wish is to get proper documentation so that she can travel freely between the two countries, finish her education and go back home to contribute to her own country. Responding to the question of whether she feels at home in Cape Town, she said that she had decided to build a mechanism of happiness around her. She said it is like she has stored happiness in a box when she is feeling down or sad she simply opens the box and takes out happiness. She cites Cameroonians who have died in Cape Town without having an opportunity to go back home.

Reviewing the main points discussed, the respondents had heterogeneous migration trajectories as well as different reasons for migrating. The unfavorable socio-economic and political climate made most of them leave Cameroon hoping for a better life in South Africa which to many of them is a dream that is yet to be fulfilled. Thanks to their social networks, the process and challenges that often come with migration were less cumbersome. They took different migration routes, some transiting in other countries while others simply entered South Africa directly.

While the journeys were smooth to some, others encounter some language challenges and some picked up bits of new languages on their way.

## 8.2 Respondents' comparison of life in Cameroon and in Cape Town

Transnational migration studies have documented what has been termed bifocality (Rouse, 1992; Vertovec, 2004) or a dual frame of reference (Guarnizo, 1997; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001)- that is, the tendency of migrants to compare life experiences and situations from different points of view from their native and adopted societies (Lam and Warriner, 2012: 195). A question was also asked about participants' perceptions and life experiences in Cape Town and Cameroon. The migrants' past experience in their homeland has a significant impact upon how they settle into their new space (Ramsden and Ridge, 2012). Lam and Warriner (2012) gives an example of some researchers who have noted how migrants represent their sense of double belonging through sharing narratives of events and displaying material goods that come from both the home and host countries.

My respondents were asked to compare their life experiences in Cape Town with that in Cameroon. The question directed them to certain areas like forming friendships, employment life, looking for schools for their children and the South African way of life. This question is important since it is believed that people always compare the 'self' to the group they feel they do not belong to. Juxtaposing their experiences in Cape Town with that lived in Cameroon is a way of understanding their identities and how their selfhood has been affected in the context of Cape Town. Below, I provide data related to the experiences of four of my respondents.

For Caronis, life in Cameroon was very difficult. In South Africa she has learned to be independent, to pay her rent, feed herself and take care of her family back home, something she could not do while in Cameroon. With regards to forming friendships in Cape Town she feels as a foreigner there is no time for friendships. She however acknowledges that she used to go out a lot with friends when she just came to Cape Town. *'I thought maybe I will live that same kind of life in Cameroon but is not easy actually. We have a lot of things to think about. We have to remember that we are in a foreign land you need to prepare your going back home, one day you need to go back home you see. You need to save. Then you got a lot of responsibility, you can say rent to pay and other things. Time and money, you don't need to spend anyhow'*. Caronis is so busy in her hair salon that by the time it is evening she is already exhausted and just needs

to go home. She however acknowledges the importance of social media like Whatsapp and Facebook through which she can at least communicate with her friends without necessarily meeting them physically. Although not being able to make friends in Cape Town due to her tight schedule and commitments, she has however taken up some South African ways of life like eating some South African food, buying take-away food and adopting some South African dance styles to the point where she is even forgetting Cameroon dance styles. *‘I completely dance like them. I have already forgotten Cameroon dance style (Laughs). We speak like them here neh! Like neh! (Laughs) you know. Ah... is automatic (laughs)’.*

Trying to speak or act in certain ways like the locals in the literature as ordinary behavior by migrants who need to adjust or adapt to the ways of living, being and behavior in their new space (Friedman, 2005). In this case, Caronis has been able to learn new words, new dance styles and new behaviors. She said when she visited Cameroon some years back she was even using some of the South African expressions or words such as ‘neh’. She did that one day and her cousins in Cameroon asked her the meaning of ‘neh’ since the word was foreign to them. This goes to show how language can be transported from one location to another (Blommaert, 2007; 2010:79). As much as she wants to feel at home in Cape Town, she is at the same time worried about issues of insecurity and crime.

Fellos’ experience in Cape Town is a negative one especially in relation to her business. She does not feel happy when people come and speak languages she cannot understand or speak. She sometimes feels frustrated. She says when South Africans come to her tailoring workshop they just start speaking their language especially the black South Africans. They think that everybody that is black is supposed to speak their language. Apart from the South African languages spoken by South Africans, it is also common to hear languages like Swahili and Lingala mostly spoken by the Congolese. To her these are some of the challenges she faces at her work place that troubles her. She wanted to come and experience life in Cape Town, and regrets having left Cameroon. It is however important to mention that she is not well-educated and therefore it is difficult for her to get a job in Cape Town. She is managing her tailoring workshop in Maitland which is not even profitable because the rents are high. She interacts mostly with Cameroonians, making it harder for her to acquire the local languages.



Jude feels Cape Town in general is good for hardworking people. According to him, South Africans are not as hard-working as the migrants. He used himself as an example: he has been able to go back to school, send his wife to school and also bring in his son from Cameroon. Comparing life in Cameroon to that in Cape Town, he says making a living in Cameroon is very difficult especially because it is difficult to study and work unlike in South Africa where you can be studying and working at the same time. He says even with the cost of the tuition fee they pay in South Africa people are still able manage. *'I mean we didn't have that opportunity if I had that opportunity I would not have gone out. That opportunity was not there. So here I want to think that some of us the migrants who are hardworking, South Africa is near paradise if I compare it with my life back home is paradise that's true'*. If it were not for the issues of xenophobia and the corruption in the immigration sector of South Africa (where officers accept bribes to assist migrants in various ways) he would have no problem with South Africa. He says the fact that he can get a part-time job and not be denied because he is a foreigner means that South Africa is a good place. *'I want to think that even though some of the people may hate us, some are very receptive; some are good so I think I mean I don't really have any negative apart from that xenophobic issue I don't have me any negative thing to say'*.

He feels migrants may be saying negative things about South Africans but they actually pushed the South African Government to change their immigration laws. Comparing Cameroon to South Africa, Jude also mentions the fact that Cameroon is more welcoming to foreigners than South Africa, and that there is more respect for life there than in South Africa with its high rates of crime.

*You see, most of the friends that I have here, if I really have a friend are coloureds. I don't have a South African friend a black South African friend just because of what I told you that they hate us so yeah but I have eh... some few coloureds but they are just friends, business friends that we just meet and do business not that not really friends in that real sense of it. Most of my friends here are foreigners too like me more or less Cameroonians. I said that they hate us so they push us now to fall into arms of one another for protection.*

Due to the hostile attitudes of some South Africans most migrants do not want to make friends with the locals. The hatred for foreigners has made migrants create spaces they feel are safe for them. He also talks of the issue of crime and insecurity and how people get pleasure just by

killing others. He has formed the opinion that the 'coloured' people cannot be trusted because some of them are thieves. *'Yeah I mean to them it seems as if it is part of their culture, is part of their life that stealing is not a crime until you are caught. Even when you are caught it is still not a crime to them. Even parents say nothing when their children get caught for stealing, they do not discipline the child'*. The parents even laugh when their children get caught for theft and to him such behavior would not be tolerated in Cameroon. People in South Africa have the freedom to do anything, and this is actually leading to a lack of discipline and crime. Like many other Cameroonians, he feels that South Africa is not a good place to bring up his children and plans to send them back to Cameroon. He feels the education given to children in South Africa is not a proper one. *'If the child goes to school in South Africa he/she may learn academically like having a rich vocabulary but he/she will also learn certain things that are against our morale'*. He added that despite the fact that South Africa is a developed country with a good road network there is still a big gap between the rich and the poor.

Jude's experience in the area of work is also not good. He says in South Africa one can be denied a job because of his/her accent. Migration has taught him many things. He has learnt that the Bantu of South Africa originated not just from Cameroon but from the North West region of Cameroon and part of Eastern Nigeria before spreading to the Congo basin. That is the reason he mocks Black South Africans by telling them that *'we are brothers and not Amakwerekwere'*.

With Premose, one of the positive experiences he has as a migrant in Cape Town is being able to interact with people and learn new ideas. He however like Jude also believes creating friendship is difficult because one is dealing with different groups, different associations and it is very difficult to create friendship unlike in Cameroon. Concerning his work employment life, he feels getting a job in South Africa is much more difficult because they consider your qualification and experience compared to Cameroon where, you need proper connections to get a job. *'There is that small niche of exclusion for us not being South Africans but at least in totality is much better than in Cameroon'*. The school systems are different according to Premose and despite the fact that there are good schools in South Africa; the way children are brought up in these schools one will rather prefer the kids to attend school in Cameroon than in South Africa. He adds that sometimes you want your child to have certain experiences, to grow up in a certain way he said. He says one of the things he has noticed as a migrant in Cape Town is the fact that people focused on themselves: *'every man for himself; God for us all'*. This is

different in Cameroon where neighbors look out for each other and share the happiness or pain of others.

The life of a migrant is torn between these two distinct poles exemplifying two juxtaposed experience. Chambers (1994:27) argues that the migrant lives a life between a lost past and a non-integrated present. Drawing from Bourdieu's concept of habitus, Lam and Warriner (2012: 195) suggest that a transnational habitus is shaped or developed through people's experiences and social positioning in various institutional structures and fields of activity within and across nations, which may lead to different types of dualistic dispositions or comparative perspectives.

The Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town comprise different individuals with different identities and different experiences. Coming to Cape Town has affected their identities and thus their sense of self or subjectivity. They have gone through positive and negative experiences as migrants in Cape Town. To Sheller and Urry (2006), mobility provides opportunities for new forms of subjectivity and emotions to emerge whether positive or negative. In as much as the respondents want to feel that they are welcome in their new space, the feeling of discrimination, insecurity and linguistic challenges cannot be overlooked. The feelings of discrimination from can be seen in labels such as amakwerekwere which is hindering most of the respondents to make friends with the local South Africans. This is also hindering the process of integration as some of the respondents feel they do not belong in South Africa.

The argument from the responses follows the social constructionist approach that emphasizes multiple ways in which social identities are constructed in particular settings as proposed by Pavlenko and Blackedge (2004: 96). Pavlenko and Blackedge (2004: 96) also acknowledge that, while certain aspects of identity may be negotiable in given contexts, others may not be negotiated since individuals may be positioned (Davies and Harré, 1990) by dominant groups in ways they did not choose. Caronis for example had to adjust or negotiate her way of speaking or her dance style to resemble that of being South African.

### 8.3 Maintaining culture and identity in Cape Town

Participants were asked to discuss the things that make them different from South Africans apart from their languages. Blommaert and Rampton (2011, citing Scollon and Scollon, 2003, 2004) and Kress (2009) explain that sociolinguistic researchers are compelled to move from ‘language’ in the strict sense towards *semiosis* as a focus of inquiry, and from ‘linguistics’ towards a new sociolinguistically informed *semiotics* as the disciplinary space. According to semiotics, we can only know reality by means of signs through the process of signification. Indexicality connects language to cultural patterns and considerations of multilingualism thus also become considerations of multiculturalism (Blommaert, 2007: 115). Blommaert et al. (2005:2) further states that physical space and distance become cultural and social, and start having semiotic effects. This means that when people move, they do so with their culture to a new space where interaction is expected to take place between the two cultures in the new environment.

The concept of *performativity* places emphasis on the manner by which identity is passed or brought to life through discourse (Butler, 1990, 1993). Language as well as other social codes such as type of clothing and food can also portray people’s social identities as is the case in this study. Using these different codes or representation can also be a way of categorizing people into groups or the ‘us’ and ‘them’ categorization as seen in Thomas, Wareing, Sing, Peccei, Thornberry and Jones (1999). Apart from language that can differentiate migrants from locals most of the participants feel that the type of food they eat, their eating habits as well as their way of dress plus other social codes like accents, behavior, and lifestyle differentiate them from South Africans.

#### 8.3.1 Food and eating habits

According to Fischler (1988) cited in Koc and Welsh (2002) food is an essential component of people’s culture and is central to their sense of identity. Cultural identity is expressed in various everyday practices, such as religious observations, rites of passage, language, leisure activities, clothing, arts, literature and music (Bramadat, 2001; Bhugra et al., 1999; Sobal, 1998). “By observing cultural practices and preferences, such as food choice, we may gain valuable insights into the levels of individual or collective tendencies for adaptation, diversity, identification,

distancing and integration. By participants mentioning food as an identification tool, it opens up an analysis and question of membership, belonging and integration” (Koc and Welsh, 2002:9). In support of these arguments, I present some respondents’ reactions to this aspect of identity.

Jude noted:

*Our eating habits are different from theirs, yes you see I mean their type of food stuff we are not use to the so we eat our real food. Our eating habits are different and some of them who are very close to some of us are eating our food now. So many South Africans who are close to foreigners especially Cameroonians they are eating, I mean who attend our parties. They attend our parties and they eat our food I mean with a lot of satisfaction. Until some of them prepare the food, they try to prepare to learn some of the food. I mean you need to see Jerome wife preparing Achu. The last time she visited Cameroon she came back with her mortar-pestle (instrument to prepare Achu a traditional meal from the Northwest region of Cameroon.)*

An important aspect of Jude’s response is that food can be one way of bridging the cultural divisions. He mentions that some South Africans who interact with Cameroonians now eat and even prepare such traditional food. He mentions Jerome’s South African wife who has learned to prepare achu (a traditional meal from the Northwest region of Cameroon) using the mortar and pestle she brought from Cameroon when she visited.

Rosa does not really like to eat South African food. ‘*You know they have their own way that they eat. For example, when we make pap (fufu) we eat with something from home like eru (vegetable from Cameroon)*’. When she talks of eating pap (which is the South African name for fufu) with eru (a vegetable from Cameroon) it shows, despite many similarities, that migrants live their lives in two worlds, Cameroon and South Africa – a transnational habitus (Bourdieu, 1991) with different orientations. Food from Cameroon can now be found in a number of shops in Cape Town, especially in places like Parow, Maitland and Mowbray, and these shops also stock South African food. Unlike, Rosa, Caronis explains that in as much as she is eating and preparing food as she used to in Cameroon, she however does not want to stress about things from home. ‘*I have forgotten about those things. The only habit is like that take -away, I eat what they eat at times. I don’t choose like no if I don’t eat this particular Cameroon food No but if I want to cook any*



*Cameroon food I cook that Cameroon way*'. It is important to note that in most Cameroon associations the food one finds there is a mix of Cameroon and South African food.



Figure 6. Food from Cameroon on display in a shop in Maitland

### 8.3.2 Style of dress as an identification tool

People are not only identified by the language they speak or the food they eat, but also by how they dress. Their culture, seasonal and contextual factors and the issue of xenophobia influence how migrants dress. Although Caronis still wants to dress in her traditional attire to display her



Cameroonian identity, she also dresses like South Africans and she said some people often confuse her for a South African or a Congolese. One can see here again how the two cultures are being blended to show how migrants' lives are embedded in two cultures. But for Jude, *'we have our way of dressing that makes us to be different from a South Africa'*. He further explains that in their Pinyin cultural association they used to wear uniforms but stopped doing so during the 2008 xenophobic attacks on foreigners in South Africa. He narrated a story of how he was being referred to by South Africans as a pastor simply because he used to wear suits to work. To them, only pastors wear suits. He said comparatively, in Cameroon it is normal to see people wear suits even when there are not pastors. However, the different climate of Cape Town and Cameroon has led to many foreigners dressing like South Africans.

In the same vein, Promose says sometimes when you dress traditionally a South African will ask you what the occasion is. *'I dress different from them even though some of them dress like me but when I look at myself I have confidence; I dress more than them'*. He says for example that migrants like to dress formally unlike the locals who like what they call casual or semi-casual clothing.

### 8.3.3 Other identifying factors

In addition to the above two factors, some participants also made mention of accent, culture, life style and behavior as some of the things that differentiates migrants from locals. Tjubi for example thinks that accent can betray one as a foreigner in South Africa. Tisia also believes that a lot of things differentiate her from South Africans: *'So apart from my language my customs and values are not the same. The only thing is that we may have... like the black ones may have the same colour like me but the cultures are not the same. Complexion wise some of us are very dark South Africans they are not so dark like us they are fair'*.

### 8.3.4 What does identity and its maintenance mean to my respondents?

Kaja (2003) citing Strauss (1969) states that identity is subjected to constant processes of change. He further claims that though an individual tends to minimize this process and establishes strategies for gaining a sense of personal continuity, transformations of identity are an immanent part of each biography. In order to get more insight on the issue of identity, participants were also questioned about what identity means to them and in what ways they have been able to maintain these identities as migrants in Cape Town. This question was asked to find out how migrants construct themselves and 'others' through language. Maintaining identity to the participants means

different things such as joining a cultural association, associating with others from their part of Cameroon and so on.

With the question of what identity means, Tisia says her identity is unbreakable and that even though she is in Cape Town her heart is in Cameroon. She contacts her family on a weekly or daily basis or as much as she can. Her identity is her Cameroon culture, a culture of respect, love, sharing, hospitality which she misses. *'When I have the opportunity with the Cape Town context I try to still exploit that, I still keep contact with my family home. I miss home because presently the status of my paper cannot allow me to go home and come back so the best I can do is to communicate through the social media. Yes, so my identity to me is everything that still links me back to my home so that is it'*. Similarly, Premose sees identity as where he comes - his nationality. He says he does not hide the fact that he is a Cameroonian and will proudly tell anyone if asked where he is from. He also feels identity can also mean wearing a t-shirt that bears his country's soccer team to show that it is where he comes from.

Melissa also says identity means a lot to her, her tradition, culture, roots and where she comes from. She says though an immigrant in another country she always tells herself that she does not want to lose her identity. That is her cultural identity that is linked to her ethnic or national identity. Her wish is to be able to pass down her identity to her children. *'I wish that my kids can also follow in my footsteps. For example, the food that we eat, where I come from, to know the language that we speak, the dress code you know that is one of the things that even though I live in a different country like South Africa where they also wear their cultural clothes like sometimes going for weddings. So my identity is maintaining my culture in the area of food, dressing and language. That is why when I meet someone like Cosmos I feel so happy because I will speak my language with him for one or two hours. There are things that I have even forgotten so when we meet such words may come up in our conversation or while we are communicating. So I wish to really maintain them'*. She further explains that in their cultural meeting when they always ask who can dance their traditional dance 'Ben Skin dance' she will always put up her hand to dance. She feels that by dancing this traditional dance from the West region of Cameroon she cannot forget the dance and hence her identity.

In contrast to the above respondents, Tjubis says identity depends on the context in which one is. He believes his identity as a migrant in Cape Town is different from his identity in Cameroon. He

feels that if he was in the context of Cameroon he will talk of individual identity and an Anglophone identity. His identity back then in Cameroon will be an individual from the North West region of Cameroon and from Aghem a village in the North West region. In contrast, his identity in Cape Town is first as an outsider who is like a foreigner in a different country who is trying to make ends meet no matter the odds. As a foreigner or outsider in Cape Town as he puts it, his identity is intimately connected to his tribal association MenFa (Menchum family association) - an association for the whole Menchum Division. He says in the Aghem meeting they try to maintain the Cameroonian reciprocal type of relationship of '*I scratch your back you scratch my back type*'. He also feels that identity means associating with people of your social and educational level, which is why he identifies with academics (a professional identity).

Caronis, a Francophone, joined the Buea cultural group because she wanted to identify with the Anglophones. As she explained elsewhere, she did not want to be part of the Anglophone/Francophone divide where people join associations based on their ethnicity. She believed as long as she is in a foreign land she can join any association. '*So I don't choose as long as we are Cameroonians one people*'. Unfortunately for her the association did not meet her expectations as she wanted a group where people can contribute money to help others in need and not just to socialize as was the case with the Buea association. She decided to leave the association since it was not helpful to her. In other words, self-interest was at the heart of social identity for Caronis (Edward, 2009:27). As a Francophone, she decided to join an Anglophone association in Cape Town and once she found out that the association was not beneficial to her she left.

Jude also believed that joining his ethnic cultural association was important to maintain his culture. As he stated, they have a cultural association in Cape Town and when they come together they eat their traditional meals. Although they had abolished the idea of wearing uniforms, people can still wear their traditional regalia. They also dance the Mbaglum (a traditional dance practiced in the North West region of Cameroon). All these things are done to reflect and think of those things they do at home as their bigger culture. '*We practice them we actually practice them here. Then as I said we don't have one culture still in this our meetings when we play music we play even South African music and we dance them like them we dance like them. So you see that part of South African culture is already in us now. So those are some of the things that make me to say there is no individual who will stand and tell you that I have only one culture no. So we should talk about cultures*'.

Jude's description of these activities supports Mba's (2011) findings that suggest that Cameroonian identities in Cape Town are translocal and transnational in nature, and tend to blend South African, Cameroonian, and even American traits. This blending of identities also resonates with Bhabha's (1994) concept of hybridity and 'third space' - a space of new forms of cultural meaning and production blurring the limitations of existing boundaries and calling into question established categorizations of culture and identity. According to Bhabha (1994), this hybrid third space is an *ambivalent* site where cultural meaning and representation have no 'primordial unity or fixity'. It is a space which is neither assimilation nor otherness but represents the history of coalition building and the transnational and cultural diasporic connection (Sangwan, 2016).

Jude on the other hand, in responding to the question of identity talks of identities and not identity since people have multiple identities. He sees identity as a way of life practiced by anyone. He gives an example that when you are going for an interview you know that when you sit in front of the interviewer you put on a different identity. When you are talking to your family back home you put on a different identity, when you are talking to your lover you put on a different identity. So to him people have different and multiple identities that they perform in different places. Since individuals often shift and adjust ways in which they identify and position themselves in distinct contexts, identities are best understood when approached in their entirety, rather than through consideration of a single aspect or subject position (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004:16).

Meanwhile Rosa feels identity is doing what is right in the right place at the right time. To her, identity is who she is in her present space and how she should behave in that space.

Her response to the question of identity is shown in the box below:

*My mother use to tell me that when you are in Rome do what the Romans do. So when we are in South Africa we do only what the South Africans wants us to do. If we take what we do in Cameroon and come and do it here, they will kill us all in this country. We must do what they ask us to do. Like the issue of paper, we must go and renew and without the paper we can't stay in this country even for one day. They will bundle us and send back so we must only do what they ask us to do. We must get the identity, we must get their refugee paper or get their South African ID Yeah because I cannot take Cameroon Id and use here, impossible.*

La Barbera (2014:3) believes that people's perception, representation, and definition of identity especially in migration context shift and change. In this regard identity is better described as something that individuals 'do' rather than something that they 'have' and as a process rather than as a property (Jenkins, 2008). The study shows that patterns of identification among migrants vary greatly ranging from identification with Cameroon cultural associations, identification with the country of origin as well as host community and the fact that identities are multiple fluid and changes with context (La Barbera, 2014).

#### 8.4 Affect and emotion in the responses of my participants

In linguistics, affect is an attitude or emotion that a speaker brings to an utterance (Besnier, 1990). I wanted to determine how my respondents felt about their experiences as migrants to South Africa. What were their individual subjective experiences in relation to their migration trajectories and experiences? My expectation was that what they felt would resonate with what was happening in the society in which they live and the world at large. The main emotions I uncovered as my respondents related their experiences ranged from pride and happiness to sadness, uncertainty, alienation and trauma. Allied to these feelings is the sense of belonging/not belonging in South Africa, which is another emotion-laden form of affect.

##### *Pride and happiness*

Jude spoke with pride about his compatriots as hardworking people, as Cameroonians were brought up to know that they have to struggle before they eat. As examples, he listed the eight Cameroonian lecturers employed at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). Tjubis, on the other hand is grateful to God for what he has achieved so far, especially the fact that he now owns his own house.

*Jude: When I turn around and I look at for example like in CPUT I think if you look at you have about errh...close to about 8 Cameroonians who are lecturers in CPUT alone about eight. About 8 who are lecturers in CPUT then you ask yourself in one single university then you have this number. Then you ask yourself then you turn around then you ask yourself from one small country like that 8 then it means Cameroonians are hardworking. Then you go to UCT they are there, you go to Stellenbosch they are there I mean all the universities here you have Cameroonians and it go round I mean round the whole country you have them. You have them so I think I should be proud to be a Cameroonian.*

Tjubis: *That is one thing and then secondly I am grateful to God for what I have, where I am, what I have achieved so far because I can't just totally say is a bad country if South Africa was really a bad country I will not have reached a level where I could achieve a property on my own.*

*If you actually have the necessary paper work and you do things in a very bigger way you will succeed. I feel I have succeeded and still succeeding. I don't want to go and define what success is, people will define success in different ways.*

### *Shame and sadness*

In complete contrast to the pride displayed by Jude, some of the respondents felt ashamed about some of their compatriots engaged in criminal activities in Cape Town.

Premose: *the dirty businesses that err... some migrants do its shameful. There are some Cameroonians who do it but there are very very few the lazy ones like this drug issue. Those are the lazy ones but there are very very few. Then most of the Cameroonians who are in the drug business are from South West and you know in Cameroon we know South Westerners as the lazy people yeah that's true they are lazy. So you actually see that Cameroonians are not good.*

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Others had feelings of great unhappiness. Tisia describes her situation as *unfortunate* and laments some of the challenges she goes through as a migrant in Cape Town in the tool box below:

*I left my country to look for greener pastures but the challenges I go through here they actually almost break me down rather than make me. They almost break me but to a greater extent again I just come to put God and say God has a plan for everybody. I still feel bless like a young Cameroonian of my age to be here because the challenges have pushed me where I am and eventually I know I will make a contribution in my own economy. The education that I am having is not only my education but is education to change my people. Because for now I know what I am gaining I will eventually give back to my people if I have the opportunity. So as a Cameroonian in Cape Town, is very challenging I don't love it to be here. I really don't like it but I have made up my mind that for now I will just love and appreciate what I have.*



### *Uncertainty*

Some of the migrants are living a precarious life where nothing is certain and they are unsure what their future looks like. It is a state of ambivalence or mixed feelings. Premos describes his feelings as a migrant in Cape Town as 'ups' and 'downs'. As a migrant he says you go through documentation problems like going to the Department of Home Affairs to renew your papers and many other issues that he goes through as a migrant.

Premose:

*There are ups and downs as well. I think sometimes being a Cameroonian maybe, taking the example of home affairs, sometimes they might say okay you are from Cameroon you need this kind of document which you do not have so it also affects me. There are many other things as a Cameroonian you need documentation which at times also frustrate you in many things. You can't progress because of documentation just because you are from Cameroon or any other African country.*

Interviewer: *So it affects you?*

Premose: *Yes it affects your feelings and career.*



### *Alienation*

Rosa says anybody that leaves his or her country to go to another is automatically a foreigner. 'You must know that you are a foreigner in that country and you must live as a foreigner until you go back to your country. Yeah you must live as a foreigner even if you have a South African ID and think you are a member of a South African... is a lie your identity... is showing that you belong to Cameroon even with the South African Id that you have been given. They still write on the ID that you are a Cameroonian'. To Rosa her Cameroon identity remains with her even if she has a South African ID. In as much as she has gained a lot of experience by coming to South Africa, she feels if people are not coping in South Africa then they should go back to their countries. Similarly, despite the fact that he is married to a South African with kids and with a permanent resident, Tjubis feels he is 'still an outsider on the inside' and thus he still remains a foreigner.

### *Sense of alienation from other Cameroonians in Cape Town*

Some of the respondents felt that Cape Town changed the behaviors of their compatriots towards their fellow Cameroonians. Tisia, for example, had the following to say:

*The context has pushed many Cameroonians to think only of what they have. Is very sad but is the truth. People think of their own selves, people push their own agendas, people have struggles and challenges that has almost given them that sense of selfishness so that is how our society is and unfortunately to me I really think nobody really cares what happens to me. The only thing is that we have that culture that if maybe you die or if you are sick to that point they will not allow your corpse to stay here. So they are just doing it in order to maybe have another name or to be seen but not really that it really matters to anybody. Going back home maybe that could be something different, but here in this community if it is not your family I don't think anybody matters to another one.*

Jude narrated that other Cameroonians were not happy or very supportive of him when he arrived in Cape Town because of his age and how fragile he was (due to the hardship he encountered on his way – see below). They appeared to be worried that he may die in Cape Town and they would be asked to contribute money to transport his remains back home as is the practice among the Cameroonian community.

### *Trauma*

Jude had entered South Africa illegally, without the required visa. Even the Nigerian he paid to fetch him from Swaziland did not show up. When he came to the border the officials asked him to pay some money, which he did not have. Denied admission, he wept in his distress. *'I stood there I shed tears like a child. I stood there I say massa just imagine that errh...the distance... I mean you are standing like this, this is the gate I cross that gate that is already South Africa but you are here you can't cross there'*. Denied access, he used a different, illegal route to cross the South African border, an experience that left him ill and traumatized.

All these experiences narrated by some of the participants are significant as it portrays certain aspects of their identities and subjectivities. Subjectivity consists of “an individual’s conscious and unconscious sense of self, emotions and desires” (Weedon, 2004:18). Who they have become in their new space and what they aspire or imagine themselves to be in future is what their subjectivity

has become. It is the self that is fragmented, at one moment it is happiness and at another it is sadness and this captures what a typical postmodern man goes through. Most of the participants find themselves in a vulnerable situation but hope and aspires for a better future. Jungbluth and Meierkord (2007:13-14) makes mention of Goffmann, (1959) who conceptualizes human beings as social actors who display different and emotions through face to face interactions and prepares the ground for an understanding that individuals have multiple identities. This is in line with Widdiecombe's (1998: 202) argument that the 'fragmented self is constructed through the multiple discourses in which they are momentarily positioned'. The research participants thus go through these different stages of 'selfhood' which consequently affects their sense of belonging.

### *The sense of belonging/ not belonging in South Africa*

The question of whether participants feel they belong in South Africa was also asked. This question is related to the politics of belonging which relates to inclusion and exclusion of groups and individuals in the society they live in (Fenster, 2005). According to Antonsich (2010), five factors can contribute to a sense of belonging: auto-biographical; relational; cultural; economic; and legal factors.

Generally, the data captured the sentiment of participants not having a sense of belonging in South Africa, citing the bad treatment and inequality they have experienced. This is the result of the unequal relationship experienced by sub-Saharan Africans in South Africa (Orman, 2012). The question of belonging captures this inequality, and then there is also the issue of xenophobia. According to Orman (2012) with regards to African migration to South Africa, mobility is often seen to mean inequality, and immigrants can never equal indigenes. The black African immigrant languages or varieties are not only less important to that of the 'host' but are also icons that can identify them as migrants and hence their unequal social status.

Mba (2011) also touched on the issue of mobility although not directed to linguistic mobility but in terms of how Cameroonians identify themselves and are in turn identified by 'others'. She dwells on the issue of 'insider vs outsider' where the minority Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town do not constitute part of the politically integrated society (or the inclusive 'we'), but rather are the 'others' whose mobility across national boundaries is closely related to (or corresponds with) the needs of the domestic labour market (in the new 'territory' or 'space'). Most of the

participants did not feel they belong to South Africa because of the way they categorize themselves as well as the way they see themselves and the way the locals categorize them. They see themselves as 'foreigners' and the fact that the locals also call them 'Amakwerekwere' limits their sense of belonging and thus also affect the process of integration or acculturation.

Tisia in responding to the question of belonging says she does not feel she belongs in South Africa because of a number of things she enumerates below. Firstly, she is a refugee without documentation; she does not have rights like South Africans do. She is not free to do whatever she wants to do comfortably. She cannot just go to the bank and open an account or borrow money or get a student loan as a student. All these examples show that she does not belong in South Africa. *'I know I am an outsider in an inside place where I am just like having an education, having a life there for now'*. In a similar vein, Fellos also feels she does not belong in South Africa because of documentation. *'I am not part of them because they don't want to give me papers'*. *'I feel I am not part of them'*. She is an asylum seeker and needs to renew her asylum papers often. She is frustrated because it is not always certain if the papers would be renewed and she fears that one day she will be asked to go back to Cameroon. She told me the last time I was with her that her asylum papers had been cancelled because she failed to follow a legal procedure she was asked to follow the last time she visited the refugee centre at Musina. This basically means that she is living without papers and this is giving her a lot of worry. She however, also feels she belongs in South Africa because some South Africans come to her shop and interact with her.

Caronis started by saying *'how I can belong to South Africa. I am coming from somewhere but am fine here. So I feel like home here. I can't forget where am coming from yeah'*. Even when her friends who are South Africans want her to stay in South Africa, she still does not feel like she belongs in South Africa. Meanwhile, Jude feels as an African it is normal to feel at home in Cape Town but that is not possible since *'they keep on calling us foreigner. South Africans don't feel we belong here they know we are foreigners, they know we have to go and they keep on reminding us when are you going back to your country. No they keep on reminding us especially the illiterate ones. The literate ones don't worry so much but the illiterate ones they keep on asking you when you are going back to your country'*. Even though he feels like he belongs in South Africa, the way migrants are treated in South Africa makes him feel he is not welcome.

Premose says sometimes you can see clearly the facial expression, the economic expression which shows that you do not belong. He believes only a small percentage of South Africans feel foreigners belong in South Africa. *'Some feel that our being here deprived them of certain things*

*while some feel that our being here contributes to the growth and development of the society but very small percentage*'. Silvy also feels South Africans do not make you feel you belong. She feels by definition, a refugee is someone running away from problems in his/her country and thus is supposed to be treated as one. As a refugee she says she is not treated as one in Cape Town and for that reason she does not feel she belongs in South Africa.

Tjubis says his immediate family (South African wife and kids) see him as belonging to South Africa but people who are not close to him sees him as a threat. Tjubis in this case feels a sense of belonging since he is married to a South African. The fact that he is married to a South African can be interpreted as having social capital and thus such a resource has helped him to feel a sense of belonging. He adds that it is not only the uneducated South Africans who show resentment towards foreigners but even the educated as well. *'They always ask you when you are going back to your country and this clearly shows that you are not wanted'*.

Krzyzanowski and Wodak (2007) believe that belonging integrates many aspects of the concept of identification and is anchored in the individual, emotional as well as in the structural bureaucratic process of gaining group membership. Going through my participants' data one could noticed how their responses portray the notion of 'difference' and how they are being categorized in South Africa. As migrants, their experiences are filled with emotions of sadness, pessimism, contradictions and uncertainties. As Krzyzanowski and Wodak (2007:102) put it, discourses of belonging are almost exclusively constructed through highlighting differences and juxtapositions, thus re-highlighting the otherness of migrants.

## 8.5 Migration experiences and lessons learned

The respondents were asked what they have learned from their migration experience, how they see their futures in Cape Town and what advice they would give to others. This is to get more insight into their lives lived as migrants and how it has impacted on their selfhood. Most of the participants' responses show they have learned a lot from their migration experiences. Migration has taught them some life lessons which they have only come to realize as migrants. Tjubis says migration has taught him what no textbook can do. He has learned that there is no food for a lazy man. *'You need to be very hard working; you need to think out of the box, you need to be able to sacrifice. Sacrifice by going back to school and reaping the fruits later you see that your years of schooling have not been wasted. It is worth it. So everything has its pros and cons'*. Caronis say

she has learned how to become independent. She is also now a fully bilingual Cameroonian. *'I feel like if I didn't come to South Africa and be in Cameroon I will never bother) to learn how to speak English'* So the fact that she is able to speak English now is what has paid off in her migration experience. Fellos has learned to be fast and wise in everything she does because she has noticed that if you are slow then you will go back to Cameroon the way you came. Migration has taught her that she needs to be serious in whatever thing she does. She has learned that if you are not wise you will be robbed. Like the other participants she is worried about the problem of crime and insecurity.

The importance of having specific goals for migrating was highlighted by some of the migrants. Premose believes he has gained a lot, academically and socially, and as an entrepreneur, and he thinks his future is going to be bright but maybe at a slower pace. He also said more South Africans are pursuing higher education unlike in the past so in order for migrants to succeed they have to push higher than South Africans in education. *'So the future in some is not bright because of negatives, fears and worries and others'*. As a hairdresser, Rosa has learned the South African way of doing hair. What she has not really learned is the South African languages. She is also worried about the shootings and killings happening in South Africa and even fears that one day a stray bullet may catch her. She is nevertheless optimistic that her faith in God will save her.

Working as a caregiver, migration has taught Silvy that real love can only come from the people she cares for. Travelling to her is like opening up to the world, and she has also learned a lot about sharing a room with someone you may not even know and who may be very different. You are forced to like or accept that person even if you do not want to. She adds that getting accommodation in Cape Town as a foreigner is very difficult as most landlords give their houses on conditions and at times some even refuse to give back your deposit.

Finally, Tisia says migration has changed her mindset and she has come to realize that when people are in their comfort zones they do not appreciate what they have. *'I have also seen that it is only you who can let yourself down. You need to give your best until there is no more best to give. Migration has taught me a tolerant lesson, it has taught me a lesson of survival, it has taught me a lesson that you have to do your best until you cannot do it anymore'*.



What are the future aspirations of these respondents? “Migrants’ views and desires about the future, as individuals and members of families and broader communities, evolve in parallel with their biographies” (Boccagni, 2017:1). According to Boccagni (2017), aspirations are emotionally thick representations of what one’s future *might* and *should* look like, given the present circumstances and the experience of the past as re-enacted from the ‘here-and-now’. By analyzing respondents’ reconstructions of their past experiences and their views of the future, I aimed to make sense of their changing ways of conceiving the future and locating their lives in the host society. “The perceptions of one’s future can be open to all sorts of uncertain attitudes, moods and emotions towards their present and future” (Boccagni, 2017: 13). Boccagni adds that usually migrants’ futures or aspirations and attitudes are characterized by uncertainty, ambivalence, more than pessimism. One way of understanding how migrants make sense of the new and old country is to understand where they have come from and how this influences their ability to forge a future in their adopted country (Boccagni, 2017).

With reference to how she sees her future, Caronis says she is not worried about her future. She lives her life in Cape Town as if she was in Cameroon. *‘I just know am still in Africa and then I can be successful from here’*. She adds that she is not worried about the fact that she is not a South African or that she cannot do certain things else she will not open a shop in Cape Town. She believes that she will be successful in South Africa. Although she is not yet there, her hopes are high and she is optimistic that she will one day be a successful business woman.

Her advice to other Cameroonians who may consider migrating to South Africa is that they must know what they are coming to do and what they are looking for. She says some people travel because friends and relatives who have migrated abroad and are home for a visit are misleading them. She says when they come back home they live a lavish life-style and they paint a beautiful picture of the outside life as if life is so easy. The reality on the ground is different from the picture they paint to those at home who then are motivated to travel out as well. This is the situation that many face as they only meet face to face with the reality when they have made the journey. Caronis is thus sending a warning to those planning to travel that it is not all that easy to leave outside of your country. *‘They must just know that everywhere you must work hard. If you don’t work hard you won’t make it. Everywhere anywhere in the world you must work hard. They mustn’t think I am coming to this country there is dollars, maybe the money is high am gonna get money. You must work to get that money’*. She however believes it is profitable if people are travelling for study purposes or those who have professions. Travelling just for the sake of travelling is not

recommended and people should not just be excited to travel. People must have a purpose for travelling and not just travel because they see others do.

Although Fellos describes her future in South Africa as hopeful, she is at the same time worried about what her future will look like especially as a foreigner. She is scared because foreigners go through a lot of controls and checks in South Africa and her fear is that one day they may decide to send her back to Cameroon. Her last word before the end of the interview was how worried she was about her documentation. She said in Cameroon she never experienced anything like going to the Department of Home Affairs but now as a foreigner she is going through all these challenges. She also mentioned like Jude did earlier on that in Cameroon foreigners do not have problems like in South Africa, they live nicely. She says in Cameroon they even favour foreigners over the citizens and they give papers to foreigners. She will advise any Cameroonian planning to come to South Africa not to do so. They should stay in Cameroon even if it means to stay and farm they will make it. *'There is money in Cameroon, there is everything in Cameroon there is food in Cameroon. Do not go outside unless you are coming to study that is a different thing'*.

Despite all the struggles and difficulties Jude's hopes are high as a migrant in Cape Town. He has hopes because three years back he was not what he is today. Things only began to happen when he decided to go back to school. Before then he didn't have any hope. *'I didn't have any hopes. Even when I took the decision that I want to go to school I was just a saying let me go and try but now I see a brighter future that is the truth about it. I think we should thank God so much I see a brighter future thank God'*. In summary, he thinks travelling is like a book and each time you travel you open a page and that travelling to Cape Town has made him open a page in that book. He prides himself in learning a lot from his migration experience. *'I think if you take me back to Cameroon now and make me a minister I will actually do so many things. I think I will actually bring a lot of change in the life of Cameroonians. If you had made me a minister in the past, I will not be different from Cameroonians who are there. But if you take me and make me a minister or give me a post of responsibility I can initiate change'*.

To Cameroonians who may be planning to come to South Africa he says South Africa is not what it used to be. As days are going by the challenges are increasing at different levels. The currency is not what it used to be. Even for a foreigner to have admission in nursing at university for an example is not easy. They are now refusing to admit people with asylum papers unless you have a refugee status. He says things are tightening up even in Home Affairs. Even the means of living

now is not easy, informal trading now is not paying as it used to in the past. So things have actually changed and he advises anyone planning to come to South Africa to be aware of current difficulties. He thinks Cameroonians planning to travel to South Africa should rather invest their money in Cameroon. Many people have cancelled their plans of coming to South Africa due to his advice. His views are shared by Premose and Silvy, who are also discouraging people in Cameroon from travelling to South Africa. Premose stated:

*From my own experiences I don't think is a good idea, the trouble with documentation first of all, the struggle for survival, competition. For me I think being at home it will benefit them in many ways because like for example I am here, you feel socially excluded, you always feel home sick, there are too many things but by being home it gives them that peace of mind.*

For Silvy, all her dreams for the future have been shattered by her experiences in South Africa:

*Silvy: Yoh! You want me to cry now. A lot of worry because when I was in Cameroon I had a lot of dreams but today I always ask myself when am I gonna die. If I am expecting from you, you are expecting from yourself ... You see I am talking to you with all my heart neh! You see I am 36 years old ...you see the education my parents gave me a woman must be married by this age and have children. By this age she was married with children and could give me the education I had but now I am living alone I don't even know when am gonna go home. I don't even have a future. Future doesn't even exist for me. My wall has just fallen down. I just live for the sake of living hoping that one day things will get better (deep breath).*

She says people like herself just came without really knowing what they were coming to do and that is why they are going through a lot of challenges. Unlike other participants who will not advise any Cameroonian to migrate to South Africa, Melissa holds a different view. *'I will always encourage someone to come to South Africa because you know first of all there is no stability in Cameroon, opportunities are not in Cameroon you know is always about having someone as a leader but you know our country is corrupt. If you encourage someone to come here to further the studies or do business I believe that the person can make a living'*.

Studying language education at the university has taught Tisia that language issues are not as simple as the world and Africa in particular looks at it.

*I have learned and as an educator, as a student what I have learned and understood is that language is a people's identity, language is a way that we think who we are so if the world can tolerate each other's way of understanding meaning which is through language I think the world will be a better place because linguistically we can see that knowledge is not only created through one language. Indigenous languages have created knowledge that have changed many parts of the world which they didn't use only English so to me I will say we should take migration like a positive thing to change the world other than a problem.*

Migration should not be seen as a problem because it exposes people to each other and brings cultures together and it creates opportunities for new knowledge to be created. She concludes that when migration is seen as a negative thing it affects the process of knowledge creation as new knowledge will not be created.

As an academic, Tjubis worries that the SA government may start to cut down on university students thereby also cutting down on the staff. Some university policies now make it difficult for a foreigner to get a permanent position. He is worried about the present state of affairs in South Africa; particularly the disruption at universities caused by the Fees Must Fall Movement, and will not be comfortable to bring any of his relatives or family to South Africa. *'Things are dilapidating the system is really really getting bad. Then again you can also look at it from the point of view that the country is not actually doing well so what do we do now'*? He feels if the worse comes at least they can take away their jobs from migrants but those who are educated will go back to their countries with their qualification and experience that no one can take away from them.

While some Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town have managed to survive the harsh realities of the post-apartheid Cape Town, the majority of them are yet to find their niche in South Africa. They live between idealization and disillusionment both in the receiving country and the country of origin (La Barbera, 2014:3).

## 8.6 A summary of the main findings

The participants in my study all had different reasons for migrating. They took different migration routes and have different statuses in South Africa. They therefore have different migration and life experiences. Most of them testify to the fact that life in Cameroon is difficult compared to that in Cape Town. Most of them also stated that unlike in Cameroon where they had friends, it is not the

same in Cape Town as they are unable to make friends because of a number of reasons. They have cited factors such as not having time, xenophobic treatment by the locals, and other reasons. Their experiences looking for employment or in their private businesses have not been easy. As migrants some say they have been denied jobs because of their accent while others simply cannot get employment because of lack of proper documentation or status as migrants.

The linguistic consequences of their migration become important as migration has affected their actual language practices. Their inability to communicate in the local Cape Town languages as well as their distinctive accents has affected their integration into the host community. The aspiration for integration and belonging has forced them to learn some local languages in order not to be excluded. They see the need to learn some of the Cape Town local languages because the languages in their repertoires are not sufficient for them to function in the community. Furthermore, in line with Blommaert (2010), language practices in such multilingual contexts are characterized by polycentricity - that is to say, the context where people find themselves determines the language to be used, and there are different dominant voices in such contexts.

The respondents' past life and experiences have impacted their present life circumstances in Cape Town. Those who already enjoyed a good standard of life in Cameroon like Cosmos, now regret coming to South Africa. On the other hand, people who were living a precarious life in Cameroon now find life better in Cape Town. They also compared life in Cameroon with that in South Africa and cited some differences especially in terms of cultures. The cultural differences have led to some of them sending their children back to Cameroon as they feel South Africa is not a good place in which to raise children.

Identity is not singular or fixed but rather it is a multiple, dynamic and performed phenomenon realized through discursive acts. The chapter emphasized the agency of individuals in exploiting particular linguistic resources to index varied identities. With regards to identity, the research participants showed their identities have changed and is constantly changing depending on where and with whom they are with. In some cases, their identities stayed the same. They performed these identities through their linguistic choices, dress food and feeding habits. Identity also meant different things for the participants – for some, this means joining a Cameroonian cultural group in Cape Town, doing the right thing at the right time, being black, and to others it is where you come from depending on the context.

How participants feel as migrants also varies. While some have feelings of pride and happiness, others are unhappy and sad. There is also the feeling of uncertainty as most live a life that is characterized by hopelessness and frustration. They also had the feelings of being an outsider or foreigners and all these feelings are affecting their lives and experiences in Cape Town. Generally, most of the participants did not feel a sense of belonging, citing inequality, discrimination and ill-treatment from the locals. Although they feel they do not belong, migration has taught them many good lessons. While some see their future in South Africa as hopeful, others see the future as uncertain and worrisome. None of the participants would recommend migration to South Africa unless people want to study here, and have the required study permit.





## CHAPTER NINE

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

#### 9.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the main conclusions of the study as well the implications for future research. The chapter highlights the key issues that have arisen from the findings of the research. The aim of the study was to do a critical exploration of the language biographies of selected Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town South Africa. The study established how the space of Cape Town has influenced and modified the respondents' personal and linguistic identities as well as the effect of their presence on the linguistic and socio-cultural nature of the city. The chapter is organized as follows: the first section highlights the aims, objectives and research questions that the study had set out to address. In this way, the chapter shows the extent to which these objectives have been addressed. This is followed by the implication of the findings, some limitations and suggested recommendations.

Conceptually, this study has provided further support for the concept of linguistic repertoire (Busch, 2012), which is a move away from languages as distinct categories. Linguistic repertoire best captures the complexity of the heteroglossic practices of my respondents. The biographic method I adopted in this thesis extends our understanding of linguistic repertoire as reflected in the individual life trajectories of my respondents, as well as what Busch calls their "heterogeneous life-worlds and discourses about language and language use" in specific timespaces (Busch, 2016: 2). In addition, my study offers further support for the conception of multilingualism or language as a localized practice (Pennycook, 2010; Heller, 2007) and identities as negotiated and performative (Banda, 2010; Agha, 2007; Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004). Although multilingualism has been a way of life for many Africans for ages (Banda, 2009), existing theories on multilingual research do not capture the African reality. That is, these theories have failed to capture how Africa and its people use language in late modernity. Studying multilingualism from an African perspective is crucial because multilingualism and multiculturalism have become the norm in discourse practices across domains and modalities (Dyers, 2013:2, citing Banda 1996 and 1999).

The study supports the conception of multilingualism and language as a social practice to understand the nature of multilingualism and multiculturalism in which the use of multiple languages and hybrid identities are the norms rather than exceptions in most postmodern societies.

There is a need to re-visit the notions of language and multilingualism in order to get rid of monolingual/monoglot biases embedded in them (Dyers, 2013).

The study has shown that speakers creatively used language to create meaning and construct multiple identities. Conceptualizing multilingualism as a social practice privileges the notion that speakers do not only use linguistic resources for communication but also to perform different identities, in different contexts for different roles and indexical values (Banda, 2005; Harris, 2007; Rampton, 2006). The participants in this study thus saw their languages or repertoires as linguistic resources to perform different identities (Heller, 2007:8). The performative role of identity takes from that of translocality which emphasizes the constant change in people's identity as well as the performative role of these identities in different context as reflected in this research. Therefore, the recent thinking of multilingualism is about the new ways in which people can access and engage their linguistic resources in different and multiple spaces.

### 9.1 A summary of the research Findings

As stated in Chapter 1, the study specifically set out to realize six objectives. Below are the objectives, followed by a summary of how the objectives were realized in response to the specific research questions. The objectives were to:

1. do a critical exploration of the language biographies of selected Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town;
2. investigate ways in which participants' multilingual repertoires have influenced their lives as migrants in Cape Town;
3. establish how the space of Cape Town has influenced and modified their personal and linguistic identities as well as the effect of their presence on the linguistic and socio-cultural nature of this city;
4. investigate the full repertoire of communicative resources that these migrants use in this heterogeneous and diverse space; communication challenges and strategies to overcome such challenges;
5. Investigate how the process of migration to a new environment has influenced the migrants in terms of their identities and their linguistic practices;
6. afford such polylingual repertoires and associated attitudes and beliefs greater visibility in the research domain.

It is important to mention that the research objectives listed above were addressed in different chapters. Objective 1 and 2 for example were addressed in Chapter 5, objective 3 in Chapter 6, objective 4 in Chapter 7 while objective 5 was addressed in Chapter 8. The last objective was to consider the implications and potential recommendations that flow from the findings of the study.

The first and second objectives were discussed in Chapter Five and the following two research questions were answered:

How do participants describe and present their languages or language profiles? In what ways have participants' multilingual repertoires influenced their lives as migrants in Cape Town?

Chapter Five drew on Bakhtin's concepts of heteroglossia and heterogeneity (Bakhtin, 1981), and showed how Cameroonian migrants' linguistic identities are clearly not only multilingual, uneven, complex, multivoiced and multifaceted, but also constantly changing and subject to constant re-negotiation. Based on the questions asked in Chapter One, the findings showed that participants were already multilingual when they left Cameroon and this multilingualism only expanded with their migration to Cape Town, South Africa. This goes to confirm the literature that people's linguistic repertoires are not static but change in relation to time and space. This study demonstrates throughout that all the participants possess several languages or codes in their repertoires which they deploy as needed, depending on the interlocutor and the discursive intention as well as their level of proficiency in a particular language. The findings showed that the linguistic repertoires of the research participants were shaped by a number of factors ranging from family/community multilingualism to migration as shown in Chapter Five, with acquisition of particular codes depending on each respondent's life trajectories. Cameroon migrants have added isiXhosa, Afrikaans (the two South African languages spoken in Cape Town besides English) and even isiZulu and seSotho to their already multilingual status. Jude for an example has been able to pick up isiXhosa and Afrikaans as spoken in Cape Town languages. He says when he meets isiXhosa speakers they always greet in isiXhosa. Even his young son can say Xhosa words like wena [you] when he is communicating with them at home. He has come to realize that the language they speak in Swaziland, siSwati, is not so different from isiXhosa and isiZulu, two of the Nguni family of the languages spoken in South Africa. If one were to describe the linguistic biography of Jude, it will be made up of the two official languages of Cameroon, English and French, CPE

which is the lingua franca spoken mostly in the Anglophone regions. Jude speaks his mother tongue Pinyin and many other Cameroon national languages like Bansa, Bali, Mbili and many others. From the numerous Cameroon languages Jude can communicate in (owing to the different trajectories he has traversed while in Cameroon) to those he has picked up in Cape Town one can clearly see that the Cameroon migrant possess several languages or codes in his repertoires which he makes use of when in need.

The study also showed that the Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town make use of the languages in their repertoires in flexible ways. They assume different identities from the various options afforded by their multifaceted lives. These different identities re-echo and support the concept of multiplicity of identities and shifting power relations in the poststructuralist paradigm in Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004). The migrants style these multiple identities by making use of the languages and other semiotic resources in their repertoires and by so doing dismisses the traditional notion of linguistic boundaries in the socio-psychological paradigm that sees identity as unitary and fixed (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004). The participants positioned themselves through language in response to the different social actors in that specific environment.

I am mindful of Blommaert's (2010) concept of "truncated multilingualism" in which he argues "linguistic competencies are organized topically and people may not be fully competent in all the languages they use" (Dyers, 2012: 114). For Blommaert, people use these truncated repertoires to interact in the community. He further proposes the truncated multilingualism concept to describe repertoires which consist of specialized, but partially- and unevenly-developed resources. He notes: "We never know all of a language; we always know specific bits and pieces of it" (Blommaert, 2010a: 23). Blommaert's concept appears to suggest going back to the traditional notion of countable and autonomous languages. In a way, this argument ironically assumes a traditional view of multilingualism in which people and their repertoires are fixed to spaces and domain. As such, the view of multilingualism that sees people and their languages as fixed in spatially-demarcated places as suggested by Blommaert (2010) is problematic in the context of this study. Rather, the study supports Busch (2010) argument that multilingualism can no longer be seen as an abstract competency, and that 'language crossing', the appropriation of elements across boundaries, becomes a competency in its own right. These competencies can thus be used as a way of constructing a speaker's linguistic identity. Hence, a shift of paradigm is advocated in this thesis. This shift entails the idea of languages as distinct categories is being abandoned in favour of the notion of linguistic repertoire, which seems more apt to grasp the complexity of heteroglossic practices.

The multilingual repertoires of these Cameroonian migrants have influenced their lives as migrants in Cape Town. As shown earlier, most of the participants had to learn some of the local languages, and thus adding to their linguistic biographies. They showed willingness to acquire the local Cape languages, isiXhosa and Afrikaans, and this can be interpreted as either being for purely instrumental purposes or as a sign of wanting to integrate with the host culture. The participants had different reasons for wanting to learn these languages – for the sake of their businesses, jobs, school and for general communication and above all for integration. The participants' desires and wishes for learning the local languages translated into motivation for language learning and demotivation for some. Positive attitudes towards the languages, social networks, exposure and importance of the language motivated the participants to learn the local languages. On the other hand, negative attitudes, lack of social networks, lack of exposure kept the participants demotivated others to learn the local languages.

The economic and academic importance of English as well as the communicative power of English in the Cape Town context has made Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town to show a high preference for English over other languages in their repertoires. A mastery of English is advantageous in their academic, business, jobs and daily interactions. The study draws from Bourdieu's concept of linguistic Capital quantifying English as a form of capital with a market value. In this regard English is portrayed as a human resource, symbolic and cultural capital convertible into economic capital. The study findings have proven that this capital in the form of a good mastery of English has impacted on the migrant's lives positively in areas such as academic, business and jobs. The study confirms Bourdieu's theory of linguistic capital that people's knowledge of a language (which is seen as a resource) can be converted into economic capital which can be related to money, job and academic certificates. The case of Melissa who is originally French-speaking is an example and she has been able to succeed in Cape Town thanks to newly acquired proficiency in English. Cameroonian migrants make use of the languages in their repertoires to create dialogic and discursive spaces (Bakhtin, 1990) as well as negotiate language and cultural differences with others. They also make use of their multilingual selves to construct multiple and hybrid identities (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004).

Every communicative act happens in a particular space. Vigouroux (2005) shows that while space shapes language practice and attitude, *territoriality* (which is a linguistic metaphor for all the spaces - physical, social, and symbolic - in the history of the speaker) is a key notion that helps one understand the relation between language and space and how they are interconnected. The findings

of this study show that respondents were able to select resources from their communicative repertoires (depending on who they are with and where they are) and to combine them in various ways to create meaning without being constrained by structural expectations of the standard varieties. That is why respondents like Jude and Cosmos were not ashamed of their accents. They believed that if people can understand what they are trying to communicate then correctness or competence should not be an issue. It is for these reasons that the thesis does not support Blommaert's (2010) argument mentioned above. It is important to mention that the finding of this study does not support Fishman's (1965, 1972) notion of domain in which language use is constrained by the social setting in which speakers find themselves. From the findings it is clear that speakers' language practices are not constrained by domain but rather, speakers are free to choose and use any linguistic resources in their repertoires regardless of the domain in which they find themselves (cf. Auer 2007; Bailey, 2007). There were however some domains that participants preferred using particular languages or practices, and greater care needed to be taken for communication to take place. For example, in some of the Cameroon associations in Cape Town, like Melissa's tribal association, they insist that people should speak only the local language of their area. This is in order to keep their culture from fading away and it is also a way of identifying with that particular ethnic group. In the academic setting, Tisia also confirms that one needs to speak in English and that in a situation where she is called upon to speak; she normally starts by making it known to others that she is not an L1 speaker of English. The notion of domain is therefore insufficient to account for Cameroonian migrants' language practices in Cape Town and the reason why the study has turned to the notion of linguistic repertoires.

The following sets of research questions to be answered were:

How have participants' beliefs, attitudes and ideologies been shaped in Cameroon and modified in South Africa? How have such attitudes and ideologies contributed towards the active modification of their linguistic identities (if this took place at all)? What are the consequences of this for their languages and actual language use?

The study shows that the participants' personal and linguistic identities have been modified in the Cape Town context. It is important to state that the attitudes some respondents had in Cameroon towards specific languages appeared to change with their migration to Cape Town while with others, these attitudes remained the same. Most of the respondents showed or maintained a positive attitude towards English not only for its international status and economic advantages, but also for



its importance in South Africa in general and Cape Town in particular. They need English for their businesses, schooling and for general communication in the community.

It is also important to note that while Anglophone Cameroonians maintained negative attitudes towards French, their counterparts the Francophones shifted to positive attitudes towards English in Cape Town. Language users choose whether to abide by the rules of a particular space, contest or modify these rules if they have the social and cultural capital to do so (Bourdieu, 1991:63-64). These attitudinal changes appear to have impacted the linguistic identities of the participants, which have undergone some modifications and therefore have consequences for their language practices. These linguistic changes and modification could be seen even in their cultural practices and here again, the context of Cape Town played an important role here.

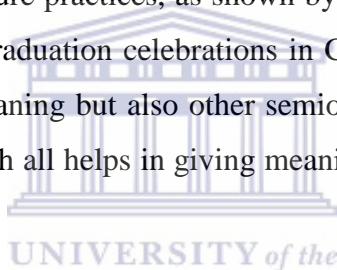
With regards to Cape Town's local languages, some respondents showed positive attitudes towards isiXhosa that translated into the practices observed. An example of this is the death celebration observation in Chapter Six, where some respondents could be heard making use of some isiXhosa and Afrikaans words and phrases. Closely allied to attitudes to English, were the positive attitudes towards Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE). Most of the time, as shown by observations and interview data, both English and CPE dominate their language practices. In as much as respondents would have preferred to make use of their mother tongues, the context could not give them the affordances to do so as many said it is difficult to find people who speak their local languages in Cape Town. They however, make use of some of these home languages whenever the opportunity arises, especially for identification purposes and when they really want to feel at home. The findings support the poststructuralist theory that views language attitudes and practices in multilingual contexts as embedded in larger social, political, economic and historical contexts (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004).

The study then examined the communicative challenges faced by the participants, and how they resolved these. The questions were:

3. How and in what ways have participants been affected by their inability to communicate in the local languages of Cape Town? What strategies do they normally put in place to overcome such challenges?

We live in an era where more and more people are travelling from one place to another and such movements are characterized by new social formations and networking practices. As such, one can

no longer assume the existence of stable communities of practice (Busch, 2011a: 505). Consequently, Busch (2011a) suggests that it is necessary to re-examine the notion of linguistic repertoire following a poststructuralist approach. The study's findings showed that the language practices, attitudes and ideologies as well as repertoires of the respondents constitute their communicative repertoires (Otsuji and Pennycook, 2009:257). These communicative repertoires draw on semiotic resources and are shaped by social practice (Otsuji and Pennycook, 2009: 248). Thus, "linguistic repertoire cannot simply be considered as a toolbox or a reservoir of competences. It is oriented towards the present but it also points towards the past and the future" (Busch, 2016: 7). The language repertoire of my research participants constitute their Cameroonian languages, the ones they have picked up in South Africa and the ones they aspire to learn as provided by their language learning intentions in Chapter Five. Understanding the full communicative repertoires of the Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town was not going to be possible without going back to their language practices in Cameroon as it is their past language practices that help to shape the future practices, as shown by my findings. The various practices observed in the death, birth and graduation celebrations in Chapter Six show that it is not only language that is used to create meaning but also other semiotic modes like style of dress, food, music and other social codes, which all helps in giving meaning to the practices and also portray different identities.



Moreover, the study shows that what constitute Cameroonian migrants' linguistic repertoires in Cape Town are the languages or varieties they listed as part of their linguistic repertoires as well as the *practices* they deploy in interaction (Stroud, 2014). What speakers have in their linguistic repertoires depends on factors such as their birthplaces and life-long socialization (Stroud, 2014). In communicative situations, speakers will select what they perceive as most appropriate for that context from their repertoires as reflected in the study. They draw on "a broad range of earlier voices, discourses and codes, linguistic repertoires (which) thus forms a contingent space both of restrictions and of potentialities which includes anticipations, imaginations, fears and desires" (Martin-Jones and Jones, 2016:53). The languages my respondents had at their disposal and those they did not have influenced their lives as migrants. Some of the participants' inability to communicate in the local languages of Cape Town affected them negatively. As discussed in Chapter Seven, a number of factors accounted for the communicative challenges faced by the participants.

Some of the research participants' inability to communicate in the local languages affected not only their communication with the locals but also other areas of their lives. They faced exclusion, stigmatization and were labeled as '*amakwerekwere*' or foreigners by the locals. However, despite these challenges they were able to strategize and negotiate the language and cultural differences that existed between them and the locals. These challenges did not stop participants from going on with their daily activities. Like the pragmatics strategies proposed by Canagarajah (2007), some of the participants identified strategies such as making use of an interpreter, switching to English as a common language, using non-verbal communication – hand signs, facial expressions, body language and laughter. These were discussed in some detail in Chapter Seven.

The assumption that language acquisition and competence is based on homogeneity and monolingualism is dismissed in this study in favor of multilingualism which according to Canagarajah (2011) has remained vibrant in non-western communities. Communication in such communities is not based on 'shared language' but on 'shared space' where diversity and contact is the order of the day. In such communities, people are always open to negotiating diverse language differences in their every day public life as the findings of this study have shown.

The last research question was discussed in Chapter Eight.

How has the process of migration to a new environment influenced the migrants in terms of their identities and their linguistic practices?

This question dwelled on the issue of trajectory and identity construction by focusing on how the process of migration to a new country has influenced the migrants in terms of identities and their linguistic practices. Migration had clearly affected their actual language practices. Their inability to communicate in the local Cape Town languages as well as their distinctive accents negatively affected the process of integrating into the host community. The desire for integration and belonging forced them to learn some of the local languages in order not to be excluded, because the languages in their repertoires were not sufficient for them to function normally in the community.

It is the dynamics of human interaction, in which speakers recognize their *insiderness* or *outsiderness*, which define the values of the different codes in their repertoires (Vigouroux, 2005).

As mentioned earlier, respondents made use of the diverse languages in their repertoires in functional ways even if they had only limited contact with or exposure to the languages. The thesis also provides further evidence that space affects and determines what languages people are able to deploy although people in interaction also semiotically create and modify space. Apart from styling their identities linguistically, respondents were also able to explore the indexical possibilities to style other aspects of their identities (Rampton, 2011:2). Their style of dress, food and choice of music as observed in Chapters Six and Eight further portrayed respondents' identities. It is important to mention that while participants performed certain identities peculiar to the South African way of life, they also strove to maintain certain aspects of their Cameroonian culture and identity.

An important aspect of the thesis is the issue of trajectories. Schapendonk (2012) believes that to analytically understand the dynamics of migration trajectories, two meanings of the term 'trajectory' need to be interrogated. On the one hand, there is the anthropological notion of a trajectory as a life or career path, suggesting that people have different aspirations and take different decisions at different stages in their lives. This means that similar events have different values for migrants when they occur at different moments in their life paths. On the other hand, there is the geographical trajectory, implying a movement across space. Schapendonk (2012:39) argues that the spatial evolution of a trajectory influences the continuation of the same trajectory. Some of the respondents did not initially plan to come to South Africa but were forced to due to particular circumstances. While in South Africa some respondents' aspirations changed and they now longed to move else where for example, like Silvy, who dreamed of going to Canada. Schapendonk (2012:39) contends that it is not so much the beginning of the journey that matters but rather the in-between parts which is the trajectory itself.

The study's findings show that migration played a vital role in the trajectory of each individual's development of linguistic repertoires. The Cameroonian migrants' language practices and attitudes were largely influenced by the multiplicity of geographical spaces in their trajectories, which could be direct, semi-direct, or transitional (Vigouroux, 2005). The findings of the present study however differ with those of Vigouroux in that while most of her participants appear to see Cape Town as a transition to the USA or Europe, most participants in this study want to stay in Cape Town or have the intention of going back to Cameroon one day. Tisia for example says she is not worried about going home regularly for visits but is rather worried about going home one

day to establish a business for herself. Most of the participants' intentions are to stay in Cape Town, make some money then can go back to Cameroon.

Thus my respondents had different migration trajectories that shaped their linguistic repertoires. It is important to say that these trajectories started in Cameroon and their movement to South Africa only added to their identities as already mobile beings. This heterogeneous group of migrants with different migration trajectories has shown that it is the dynamics of space and time that shapes and re-shapes people's identities and selfhood.

Identity is not singular and fixed but rather a multiple, dynamic and performed phenomenon realized through discursive acts. Chapter Eight emphasized the agency of individuals in exploiting particular linguistic resources to index varied identities. The multiple ways in which social identities are constructed as seen in the life of the participants support the social constructionist approach where languages are appropriated to legitimize, challenge, and negotiate particular identities (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004).

While narrating their language biographies, participants were necessarily also telling their life stories, how and where they grew up as well as their social standing. Their comparison of life in Cameroon to that in South Africa shows that South Africa is better than Cameroon in many ways. The educational, health, political and economic sphere is better than Cameroon. They however made mention of certain Cameroonian ways of life that they prefer to that of South Africa. While many acknowledge that migration has taught them many lessons, others say they would never choose migration to South Africa if given a second chance. As migrants, they go through a number of emotions ranging from pride, happiness, sadness, shame, uncertainty, alienation and trauma as seen in Chapter Eight. The feelings of sadness and unhappiness were also reflected in their sense of belonging and many felt they did not belong in South Africa due to a number of negative factors like xenophobia and work difficulties. Many would not advise anyone to undertake a journey to South Africa unless it is to study.

Objective six of my study, to afford such polylingual repertoires and associated attitudes and beliefs greater visibility in the research domain, is analyzed more closely as part of the implications in the next section.

## 9.2 Implications of the study's findings

What this study has shown is that Cameroonian migrants are social actors who are part of the meaning making process in Cape Town, South Africa. The migrants' social interaction in the Cape Town space has influenced their language use patterns and their presence has also affected the Cape Town space, linguistically and otherwise. Cameroonian migrants' linguistic and identity options are limited in the Cape Town context and as such they go through some challenges which they try to negotiate. Concepts based on the assumption of languages as bounded units and on cultural identity linked to a particular language continue to take a monolingual paradigm for granted and has failed to grasp social heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981). The concept of social heteroglossia that privileges the multilinguality, multivocality and multidiscursivity of our societies is supported by this study.

My study shows that the concept of multilingualism and the meaning of language in sociolinguistics is a complex phenomenon. This complexity is due to the fact that many languages exist in most communities and people who live in these communities possess multiple languages. Multilingualism, more specifically multilingual practices (observed in this study) are seen as situated practices rather than as abstract and absolute competence a speaker acquires (Busch, 2006). Blommaert (2005) dismisses the notion that multilingualism is the mastery of more than two languages in favour of concepts that acknowledges that multilingual competences are organized around activities, situations and topics. Like Blommaert (2005), the multilingualism observed in this study showed that Cameroon migrants' appropriation of the different languages in their repertoires reflects their individual life trajectories, heterogenous life worlds and discourses about language and linguistic practices referring to specific time-spaces (Blommaert, 2008, Busch, 2010). Although they may not be competent in all the languages, they however made meaning out of the little they know in some of the languages. The study follows Busch's (2010) argument that multilingualism can no longer be seen as an abstract competency and that language crossing, the appropriation of elements across boundaries becomes a competency in its own right. These competencies she explains can then be used as a way of constructing speaker's linguistic identities.

The multiplicity or dialog of languages as evident in this study does not support the notion of language as an autonomous system. In support of the multilingual paradigm, the study aligns with Heller's (2007:11) argument that 'the constant emergence of traces of different languages in the speech of individual bilinguals goes against the expectations that languages will neatly correspond to separate domains, and stay put where they are meant to stay put'. As evident in this study,



different languages in the participant's repertoires did not stay put and thus show the flexibility of language use and practices.

In discussing the issue of language and the meaning of it, Pennycook and Makoni (2007) argue for alternative paradigms to multilingualism. They join others to argue against seeing language as a property of individuals. The use of different languages in the different practices such as the death, birth and graduation ceremonies showed that multiplicity is the normal way of life in the Cameroon migrant community in Cape Town. The multiplicity and flexibility in the migrants' repertoires goes to further show that no social group can today legitimately claim ownership of a language and the power to determine fixed boundaries around the language (Busch, 2006). The multiple and diverse ethnicities claimed by the respondents as well as the modification of some of these identities is further proof that the present study does not align with the traditional conception of language or multilingualism.

Cameroonian migrants have proven in this study that they are multilingual speakers whose variety of languages and language use gives meaning to the idea of language as a localized practice (Pennycook, 2010). It is the space that they inhabit at a given point in time that determines how they use language. If for example the same practices are observed as practiced in Cameroon, then the style and practice may be modified in the context of Cape Town, with consequences for how the practices are interpreted. How people live and use language is important and therefore language cannot be separated from speakers' ideological, historical and cultural settings.

What has emerged from the language practices of Cameroonian migrants in Cape Town is the conviction that communities can no longer be viewed as stratified social structures (cf. Aronin and Singleton, 2012) but rather communities should be viewed as complex, translocal spaces with languages seen as repertoires and mobile resources that people use to make meaning of the space. Communities do not own or produce language but rather languages emerged from people's daily interactions and are thus social practices (Banda, 2013; Pennycook, 2010). The study has shown that language is not a fixed commodity; it changes with people and context, as shown by the hybrid language use of the Cameroonian community in Cape Town. A good example here is Jude, one of the research participants, who is not concerned about his accent or how he speaks isiXhosa or Afrikaans, but is more interested in seeing that the message is understood by the interlocutor. This is an indication that full proficiency is less important than the ability to communicate messages.

Cameroon migrants have different migration and linguistic trajectories and therefore occupy many different spaces. Participants' repertoires were not only diverse but also changed in relation to the different spaces in their life journeys. The concept of the heteroglossic repertoire captures phenomena such as the appropriation of language, language shift or linguistic creativity from a speaker-oriented perspective (Busch, 2015). The research participants also made use of different strategies to overcome their linguistic challenges. Respondents drew from both the languages of Cameroon and those they have picked up in Cape Town to meet their daily needs.

The notion of space is important in understanding migrants' linguistic repertoires and the construction of identity. Some of the participants' testimonies showed that it is not only the Cape Town space that has affected them but also their presence has affected the space. These Cameroon migrants experienced many communication challenges as they went about their daily routines. According to Blommaert and Dong (2007) such communicative problems occur not because people lack the competence to communicate or interact *per se*, but because the space which organizes patterns of language in particular ways has changed. Such a change of space results in a shift in the connection between one's linguistic repertoire and the linguistic competence required in that space, and therefore incapacitates him or her. For Tisia, for example, the change of space has affected her command of English, which has been devalued in the space of Cape Town. In order to overcome this type of communication challenge Tisia explained that she tries to speak like the locals in order to fit in or not to be seen as different. Thus space clearly led to people taking different positions and orientations towards the topics and their interlocutors in performative processes (Butler, 1990; Goffman, 1981; Blommaert, 2005a). It is the space of Cape Town that has made some of the participants modify or change their attitudes and behavior towards certain languages.

The study further supports the view that identity is dynamic and subject to re-negotiation across space and time. Cameroonian migrants' identities in Cape Town can be described as complex, fluid, hybrid and performative. The present study suggests that Cameroon migrants' identity options are not only styled through language but also in the food they eat, their style of dress and music. Such multiple identification processes as mentioned earlier do not fit in the traditional notion of fixed and singular identities, but are rather similar to what Blackledge and Creese (2010:37) see as "produced and legitimized in discourse and social interaction, and as multiple, dynamic and subject to change". Therefore, the identities of my research participants are constructed and validated through linguistic practices available or indeed at times unavailable to individuals at

a particular point in time and space (cf. Pennycook, 2010). The study further suggests that there is the need to shift from understanding language as a principal marker of ethno-national identity to an understanding of language as a marketable commodity which is distinct from identity itself (Heller, 2003).

The language practices of Cameroonian migrants presented in the study are in line with concepts such as languaging, translanguaging and more importantly polylinguaging in which speakers ‘shuttle between languages or draw features from linguistic systems’ (Banda, 2013:18). Moreover, the notion of metrolingualism also appears to be in line with the study findings in that “it does not assume connections between language, culture, ethnicity, nationality or geography, but rather seeks to explore how such relations are produced, resisted, defied or rearranged - its focus is not on language systems but on languages as emergent from contexts of interaction” (Pennycook, 2010:245).

Consequently, Pennycook (2010: 252) concludes that “metrolingualism, therefore, can be conceived as the paradoxical practice and space where fixity, discreteness, fluidity, hybridity, locality and globality coexist and co-constitute each other”. Based on metrolingualism providing the space for the mixture and assimilation of various principles, “metrolingualism is centrally concerned with language ideologies, practices, resources and repertoires” – this ultimately locates metrolingualism as a way of describing linguistic practices evoked by specific user ideologies and locations.

The notion of metrolingualism seems to account for the complex ways through which people from diverse backgrounds conduct their daily interactions in the communication practice of that space. For example, the study has shown that the space of Cape Town has altered the way Cameroon migrants perform and style their identities. Although Cameroonians also relate their Anglophone and Francophone identities to the fact that they speak English and French respectively, the present study has shown that such classifications are beginning to be problematic as they no longer hold the same value in the space of Cape Town as they do in Cameroon. Some of my respondents also appear eager to get past the limitations of this type of ethnolinguistic classification.

The overall conclusion of the study is a call for a reframing of the notion of language and identity in society. Language should be conceived as a social practice, and linguists need to pay close

attention to the social environment where interactions take place. It is in such environments where new issues about language emerge or are created.

### 9.3 Recommendations for further study in this area of research

Given that this study was limited to 14 Cameroonian participants; it would be very useful if studies with larger groups of participants could be conducted to verify my findings. Here are a few more recommendations for further studies:

- Studies with young Cameroonians who have passed through the school system in Cape Town should also be conducted to see how their language practices have been affected, and perhaps a comparative study could be done with those children whose parents decided to send them back to Cameroon for their school education.
- More work could also be done on how the presence of a significant Cameroonian community in Cape Town have affected language practices in the areas where they live – how much take-up has there been of expressions in CPE, for example, among young Capetonians? Has there been any take-up in e.g. popular culture, like Hip-hop?
- An aspect that was touched upon in this thesis was the difference between those migrants who are ‘settled’ and those who are still in a ‘precarious’ situation. I would recommend more studies in this area, especially in terms of how these differences impact language and identity issues.
- Finally, the results of this study should be embedded more fully into completed studies on recent migrants from other African countries who have moved to Cape Town and other South African cities.

### 9.4 Summarising the contribution of this study to sociolinguistics

The major contribution of the study to the field of sociolinguistics is that it provides further contextualized insight into the nature of multilingualism and identities in late modern society. In foregrounding the concept of the lived experience of language, the study also makes a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate on the notion of the linguistic repertoire against the background of increased mobility, migration, or participation in transnational networks of communication. The findings of the study also contribute to recent arguments that view language not as an autonomous system but rather as embedded in people’s social interactions. The study further demonstrates that

languages in multilingual societies have no clear-cut borders. Thus, identities, languages and the spaces of interaction are not fixed systems; but are dynamic and in a constant state of flux.

The study also adds new knowledge to our understanding of identity as a performative act which is actively negotiated as people interact in different social contexts. This implies that identity is not fixed as traditionally conceived, but is fluid, complex, and unstable. The study shows how multilingual speakers make use of the localized repertoires to create meaning and style identities. In this way, the study has added new insights to recent theorizing on language as social practice with a biographic lens. The study has also added new knowledge in the area of communicative practices and the strategies multilinguals appropriate to negotiate linguistic difficulties especially in migration context.



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## Appendices

### Appendix A: A Guide to Interview Questions

Below is a guideline of interviews used during field work. The interviews were usually recorded for about 45 minutes to two hours. The questions were semi-structured with some questions as guide as well as some questions prompted by responses from the participants who covered all age groups and came from various walks of life.

#### Interview Question Guide

Topic	Question asked
A. GENERAL INFORMATION BACKGROUND	Here, the questions evolved around participant's background information such as educational level, Ethnicity in Cameroon, whether they consider themselves as Francophone or Anglophone and reasons for the choice. Where they live in Cape Town and reason(s) for their choice was also covered here.
LANGUAGES	Participants were asked to list all the languages they can speak no matter if they can speak them very often, nor even very well. Participants were asked what language(s) they speak at home, school or community, friends, children when and with whom they spoke these languages and which of the languages they preferred to speak the most and why? They were also questioned if

they make use of CPE, CPF/Franglais and other national (local) languages while in Cape Town? Respondents were also questioned if they speak any South African languages and give reasons for their choice.

Those who said they are unable to speak any South African languages were then questioned if they have any intention learning any languages (in South Africa) if yes why and how they intend going about this?

Issues of how participants feel about the languages they could speak was also discussed here. What their attitudes towards these languages are and the value they placed on these languages especially as migrants in Cape Town etc.

How confident they were when using these languages and what they think could be the factors that help one to learn or keep one from learning a second language.

Which memories or stories come to mind when they think about the different languages they can use was also covered here. Respondents were required to say if not being able to understand or communicate in the local languages here in Cape Town affect them in any way and what communicative strategies they normally use to solve problems in communicating with South Africans.

<p>COMING TO SOUTH AFRICA</p>	<p>The focus here was to know when they Cape Town how and why they came to Cape Town and their means of transportation. Also important was if they transited in any country before coming to Cape Town and if they learned or picked up any language while in transit. That is to say Cities visited or lived in along the way. Respondents were required to talk about their experiences/circumstances, perceptions with regards to their ARRIVAL and life in Cape Town? Positive and negative experiences at work, school, home, community etc.</p> <p>They were also expected to compare their life experiences in Cape Town with that of Cameroon in areas such as forming friendships, work or employment life, schooling for their children, South African way of life.</p>
<p>SOCIAL NETWORKS</p>	<p>The aim of this section was to find out who the respondents usually interact with on a daily, weekly or monthly basis and if they have any friends, neighbours, etc.</p> <p>They were also questioned if they miss home or feel at home in Cape Town.</p> <p>Also of interest here was to find out if migrants have any particular names for</p>

	<p>different groups of migrants from other countries or South Africans and if South Africans use particular names to refer to them or other migrants like them.</p>
<p>CULTURE/ IDENTITY</p>	<p>Focus here was to find out what other thing(s) differentiates migrants from South Africans apart from language.</p> <p>The respondents were also questioned on identity issues, what identity means to them and in what ways do they maintain this /these identities as migrants in Cape Town.</p> <p>How participants felt about being a Cameroon migrant in South Africa and what they perceive other Cameroonians feel about them Cameroonians living in South Africa also forms part of this section. They were also asked if they feel that they belong in South Africa and reasons for their choice. Also, if they believe others in South Africa feel they belong in South Africa and reasons for their choice.</p> <p>They were also asked if and what they have learned /gained from their migration experience and to describe how they feel About their future as migrants in South Africa? (Worries, fears, hopes, outlook).</p> <p>Respondents were asked about what they will say to other Cameroonians who may consider</p>

	migrating to South Africa (world of wisdom, advice, helpful to know.

## Appendix B: Sample of an interview session

Age: 47

Gender: Female

Highest level of education achieved: Busy with Masters

Ethnicity in Cameroon: Bafut-Ngemba

Interviewer: As a Cameroonian, do you consider yourself Francophone or Anglophone? Why?

Tisia: Am an Anglophone

Why?

Tisia: I was born in the English dominated area. I grew up in English until at a later stage when French had to come in so I will consider myself an Anglophone.

Interviewer: Okay where do you live in Cape Town?

Tisia: I live in Parow

Interviewer: Why do you choose to live here in Parow?

Tisia: I had to relocate in Parow I have lived most of my life in Cape Town in Somerset West and Strand but when I came study in UWC Parow was like errh... near nearer...the environment where I could easily access the campus since I had no transport anymore Ok. It was easy for me either to get a train or a taxi.

Interviewer: Okay why did you choose to live in Somerset?

Tisia: Errh.... All the years in Cape Town I have always errh... struggle to survive on my own with what is called informal trading so I had what is called a store on the street of Somerset West on the informal trading area. Then I also had a store at the Jet??in Strand beach where I traded on Sunday and eventually I ?? at a small shop in Somerset West which finally made me to stay there because my ...my likelihood was almost surrounded around there



Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: Yeah.

Interviewer: Please list all the languages you speak. It does not matter if you don't speak them very often, nor even very well.

Tisia: Yeah I errh... grow up I spoke my mother tongue which is Bafut. I spoke what we call pidgin English, I speak English er...that we suppose to study in Cameroon which is mostly British English dominated, then I also had to speak French because at the level of errh....you had to be introduced French late primary and early secondary, I was introduced into French and I also went to a French bilingual high school in Yaoundé which from there I got into the university so French is the other one that I have spoken

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: And again travelling to South Africa I became exposed to the South African languages which I erm... IsiXhosa which I had to struggle to speak it because since I was an informal trader I had to try to understand the language??of the people so I sometimes erm...try to express myself in isiXhosa, then again I was still at a certain point exposed to an Afrikaans environment where I worked with Afrikaans speaking people so then again I tried to accommodate them just at least by understanding the greetings and how are you ? and if I am asked to do something all those but not that I actually speak it but at least I understand sometimes when people are tryig to ask for direction so Yes

Interviewer: Okay so as you said when do you speak these languages? For example Cameroon languages and South African languages when do you speak them?

Tisia: Okay I think English is the language that dominates in my life, all the other languages I speak err... Afrikaans when is in the context when I meet Afrikaans people then I speak isiXhosa in the context when am trying to erm.. if am trying to like tolerate or accommodate or try to influence somebody to do buy something from me or for a service that I try to show the person that at least I am accommodating that person. Then errh,, the Pidgin English also is like a language of socialization

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: we accommodate each other with we tolerate each other our community is not all intellectuals, some people are mostly business oriented and the other people are French speaking which sometimes the pidgin English is the one that socializes everybody. So that is like errh...Language of socialization then my... my... My mother tongue is mostly for my family and people coming from the same place with me yeah

Interviewer: Ok so you speak your mother tongue here in Cape Town?

Yes I do speak my mother tongue because I have people from my place when we meet that is a way of err.. Becoming like err.. Friendly and more cultural is like part of my identity. It gives me a sense of belonging

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: Like we have our traditional association here when we are in the meeting we mostly speak erm...Bafut. Then since I don't also speak it in my home in my own house because even though my husband is Bafut he didn't grow up speaking the language so he doesn't know it . So but when I have an opportunity to meet my other home people I speak it

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: Yeah

Interviewer: Which of the languages do you prefer to speak the most and why?

Tisia: Now errh... I really don't prefer any but unfortunately, the one that I am almost always exposed to is English. I would like to speak my mother tongue but my....I don't have a lot of my people here

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: I feel comfortable when I speak it. I feel like I know where I come from but because the people around me don't speak it then it becomes like err..like type of isolated type of thing like when am speaking like am greedy or I don't want to socialize so unfortunately, English is most the... is mostly the language that its accommodating to everybody so >>> the language that I speak most is English, is followed by the other language that is pidgin English which sometimes we use in social gatherings to be able to accommodate and tolerate everybody.

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: But the language that I speak most presently is English.

Interviewer: I know your children were here with you so when they were here what languages did you speak with your children?

Tisia: My children actually speak English.

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: Yeah I even ask that question to my lecturer the other day because my children are born in South Africa of Cameroon born parents only ?my mother tongue but we never spoke that mother tongue in our house because my husband doesn't speak it so my children also when you speak it to them is like is French language so they grew up speaking mostly English then because they were

mostly in White schools so they pick up a little bit of Afrikaans here left right and center, and when they come to the social life they also picked up a little bit of isiXhosa

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: Yeah so presently speaking they are also again picking up a little bit of French which again on their way back here they will have to speak the English again with a little bit of Afrikaans and again isiXhosa so but I think their first language is English because that is where they have always communicated.

Interviewer: But did you like have any policies or practices like family language practices? Did you hinder them from speaking any language?

Tisia: Unfortunately, no, we couldn't do that because we didn't really have a language policy in our house. We just we spoke orientation towards the children. We discovered that the most comfortable language that they understand and feel happy communicating with is English. So we just follow that language. We didn't have a language policy where we... is like you have to speak this when you are at home No even when they also try to speak err... Afrikaans to us then we respond. If they come home with errh... isiXhosa that they have picked up somewhere and they try to speak it to us we just accommodate it

Interviewer: Okay did they speak French or CPE?

Tisia: Not here when they were here with us they didn't but I think k in Cameroon now they should speak it because they have picked it up left, right, center yeah.

Interviewer: Okay Do you use Cameroon Pidgin English (CPE), Franglais and other national (local) languages while in Cape Town?

Tisia: With the children?

Interviewer: I mean you? (Laughs) do you use Franglais here in Cape Town? I know you use CPE what about Franglais?

Tisia: I don't do that because I don't have people to communicate that type of language

Interviewer: (Laughs) Ok

Tisia: Yeah

Interviewer: Do you speak any South African languages? You said isiXhosa and Afrikaans?

Tisia: Hmmm IsiXhosa and Afrikaans

Interviewer: Okay errh... yeah so you have the intention of learning any languages?

Tisia: Yes I have the intention because emrrh... because I would like to use the languages but unfortunately again sometimes is almost difficult if you learn the language and you can't communicate you don't find that audience to communicate with it

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: But if there is an opportunity I always like to practice the communication skills in the language

Interviewer: How do you intend going about this?

Interviewer: How do you feel about the languages you speak? What are your attitudes towards these languages? What is the value you placed on these languages? (Importance of these languages in Cape Town especially as migrants etc)

Tisia: Errh... really coming to language first I place errh... value on my mother tongue because that gives me a sense of belonging when I speak it even when I sing in it I feel like I know where I come from. I feel like I... have a sense of freedom of not being trapped into any other space where which is not my space and then errh... the other language that I have mostly communicated in which is English I also I... sometimes don't feel emrrr... I don't feel like I master of English because I have come into a community where I am always being judged and being conscious of the different types of Englishes that are in this community. Yeah. Sometimes you are corrected even at the train station that you come and the.... ticket controller ask you a question when you answer then the ticket controller turn and start correcting your English then I start to say but I learn this English in school up to the university so this English to me is not my English because sometimes it makes me feel insecure. I have hardly spoken my my mother tongue to my people and get corrected or get emm... funny remarks. Actually they ... am applauded for what I say to them but English is a language that each time I communicate in it if the message is not clear it comes back on my face as if am not the master of that language but which unfortunately, I still have to communicate. So sometimes I don't feel like English is a language that I feel comfortable with but it is like a necessary evil it is like the language of the market, it is like the language of the day and if you don't speak it then you don't belong to the..... the normal world. You don't belong to what is... to the global errh... like the convention of what is happening. So that is the only thing that pushes me to speak English.

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: Yeah

Interviewer: What about errh... French any importance that you placed on French as a migrant in Cape Town?

Tisia: I really don't like French. French is not my mother tongue. French is also not I don't like French because French is also not a language of- of-of-errh... value to me. French reminds me again of the corrections, it reminds me that I am not ... am...not French so my French will not be like the .....the person that comes from France speaking the French so if I still speak the French and there are some errors I will still be reminded that I am a second class citizen which still makes me not to have that value that I am a normal human being. So I just speak the French if I find myself in a situation that needs to be taken out that I need to speak to go I will speak it But really I don't value French like errh...?language to me.

Interviewer: When you talk of second class citizen I mean like in Cameroon who is like the first class and who is the second class?

Tisia: In Cameroon normally we are being looked upon like second class citizens as English speaking because French have dominated the whole system so they make us to understand that if you don't speak French and then you are not emerr,.... A real Cameroonian and not only French if you don't speak the standard French because there is French and there is so if you don't speak the standard French then you are not a real Cameroonian in that that doesn't make you to..... That doesn't seat well with most of us that French was not even our second language

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: That it was maybe our third language so if you try to speak the French and you don't speak the standard French you are being biased. And again now when you turn to speak the English you are also being biased because again English you don't speak maybe the Standard English. So at the end of the day language issue is not (deep breath) a comfortable one

Interviewer: Yeah so how do you feel about South African languages any attitudes towards South African languages?

Tisia: Errh...I don't have any? Attitudes towards South African languages but I have a concern towards South African languages because it is normally err.....the language policy states that there are eleven official languages

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: But to me it's a very ...it's a very problematic policy, it's a very really problematic language policy in the sense that how do you give eleven official languages in a country? How will you give standard to all those eleven official languages? And from what am seeing in South Africa even before I went back to continue my education those languages have really never been spoken all, all of them. At the end of the day it becomes to me it divides South Africa more because whenever I meet a Xhosa person the Xhosa person will say no I want to speak my language?if I don't speak my language Afrikaans have the same attitudes, the Zulu people have the same attitudes so you coming in now like a migrant sometimes you are caught in the...in between because you don't know how to please any of this population. If you have, if you are in a milieu where there is maybe a colored< isiXhosa and isiZulu then once you speak they pick out your English that is the different English and then they place a tag on it. Then they also they start looking at you with other eyes. They don't want to communicate with you so most of the time you are not really in a comfortable situation when it comes to language in South Africa.

Interviewer: Yeah okay How confident are you when using these languages?

Tisia: I will not... am not ...I think the only language that I use confidently to my own understanding is my mother tongue and English but French am not very confident because I didn't like do it as a subject I only did it because I had to do it in school. I dint do French for academic purposes I do French because I had to study French in school like a French subject but French for academic purposes I don't have it

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: So the...language that I know that I can comfortably express is English and the standard that I know I got a variant which is influenced by my mother tongue but to my own extent am comfortable with it

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: Yeah

Interviewer: What do you think are the factors that help one to learn or keep one from learning a second language?



Tisia: Having first to have positive attitudes towards that language secondly, you should ....you should see... have awareness that that language can do something in ..it can contribute something in your life. if you don't think that language can contribute something positive then you will not want to learn that language.And then thirdly if ...if you are exposed in a positive manner and given the tools to see that this language is worth knowing and..... Facilitated to know it then you will want to learn the language

Interviewer: Yeah.

Tisia:That is what I think

Interviewer: So what can discourage you from learning a language or keep you from learning a language?

Tisia: Again, first if the attitudes of....if I see that the attitude of those that even speak the language if their attitude is not welcoming at all then I don't even see the reason why I should learn the language. I will learn it to speak to who? and then if am not gonna achieve anything with the language it will not take me to anywhere in the global society in which we are it cannot market me it cannot sell then I don't see a reason to learn the language

Interviewer: Okay. Which memories or stories come to mind when you think about the different languages you can use? For example when you think about all these languages that you can speak Xhosa, Afrikaans, Zulu, Pidgin English, English your mother tongue what stories come into your mind what memories?

Tisia: Silence...

Interviewer: Maybe a memory that language has played a part in your life? Maybe positively, or negatively? any story, any memory? That language has been a center of attention?

Tisia: Errm... I think I (hesitate)...don't know the only thing to me is I always. I just always ponder the issue of language is a very complex issue in???because every time when I am exposed to another language I always try to to ...to understand like the standard or the concept or what that language, the meaning how meaning is conveyed in that language. That is the first thing that really puzzles me so the memories the issue of language is that if you don't really have a master of language meaning is very problematic

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: Meaning is being conveyed through language whether it is my mother tongue or it is pidgin or it is the new language that am exposed to it helps me to...to understand meaning and sometimes I have to take that language maybe even go back go right through my mother tongue to come out with the meaning so the ...the whole issue of thinking and trying to is like compartments in my head that I take this memory out here put it in the other one then try to make sense of it

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: Yeah so sometimes the way I see it language is not just about what you speak it is also about what you know and what you think and how you appreciate meaning because I can appreciate meaning differently because of what I speak. Another person also can appreciate meaning differently from what I ?they speak but at the end of the day it is the language that is going to express how we all think.

Interviewer: For example you studied at University of Yaoundé 1 and you had to move to a predominately English context like North West to Yaoundé which is French context do you have any experience or memories that maybe you experience at that time with regards to language because you changed context? For example any challenges any that you faced?

Tisia: I really didn't faced that there because I went to high school in Yaoundé Ok I went to high school in lycee Bilingue Yaoundé so I had already been exposed to that French context and fortunately for me again I was ?disempowered because my main subjects were still going to be in English

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: I majored in history, English literature and English language which there was no other way to teach these subjects to a student like me except in English. So again in high school it was a bilingual high school so the only other difference was that I had to do French like a subject so the same thing when I got to the university. I majored again in English, modern letters and linguistics and then African literature which all were still instructed I English. So again I had a subject that was French that I had to do so I really didn't when it comes to communication for study purposes English for academic purposes I didn't have a problem there// but what I had a problem was the culture was the French culture because Emmr...the French students didn't have the same culture

like us English students, it didn't only go in the way of speaking, it went in a way of dressing, in the life style, in the cultural... In the socialization so that is where I had

Interviewer: A problem?

Tisia: Yeah where I had an issue- I didn't ...I didn't really appreciate the French culture of the way of doing things so it was a problem to me but gradually I adjusted.

Interviewer: Yeah and maybe you even adapted to some of those French cultures you copied some

Tisia: Yeah >>>>unconsciously

Interviewer: (Laughs) okay

Tisia: Unconsciously they just ...you have to you take I cannot use the word copied I use the word unconsciously I take on some of those cultures without, unknowingly

Interviewer: Yeah. Okay now let's talk about your coming to South Africa or Cape Town (memory)

Tisia: Yes I had a problem when I came to South Africa i stayed in Johannesburg for about two years. In Johannesburg they have, they speak what is called Zulu which is still one of the national languages of South Africa so I started trying to get into the system because I know when you get anywhere language is the first way to get into a system so I started struggling to listen to the Zulu and to understand the Zulu and to be able to tolerate and accommodate the Zulu Yeah. Then later I moved to Cape Town. When I moved to Cape Town I discover that Cape Town is not having Zulu Cape Town is having isiXhosa and then again Cape Town have Afrikaans. I also experienced a level of of emrrh... trauma in Cape Town because in Cape Town everywhere you spoke English you had a problem because in Cape Town it was either Afrikaans or isiXhosa. So if you don't errh... if you are black you should be IsiXhosa if you are coloured you should be Afrikaans or white??? If you are black and not isiXhosa already you are in a problem

Interviewer: Laughs

Tisia: So that is when I came into contact with a challenge on language which i had to battle with in order to understand.

Interviewer: Yeah may be story that came into mind that will link you to that particular challenge. Maybe you were discussing with somebody where communication as problematic can you recall??

Tisia: Is not actually one story. Is always the same is the same challenge? Everywhere i don't know where to start, everywhere even if it is a description that you want to ask if you meet a black person immediately you start they expect you to greet them in Xhosa and to ask in ?/ if you start asking in English then they will tell you where are you from? The focus of the direction is lost. What you wanted to ask is no more there you have (laughs) disorientated and they start asking you oh! you come from that side ???And will end in are you this foreigner who come to take our job? It can end up in a way very bad. So everywhere it was always the same so sometimes you want to try to speak the language because you want to ...you want to avoid being emrr... picked out or you want to avoid a stigma and then you find yourself communication failing along the line then it leads to altercation or something you don't like . Yeah.

The same thing you want to ask something from a white man or it ends up funny. He starts to ask where are you from? You this black person who thing that you are better than????Unfortunately it ends up you then say things that you didn't want to say and >>>but sometimes you had those people who will just understand and then they give you what you want. But most of the time it was a challenge when? everywhere, in the shopping center, going to open accounts, asking for directions everytime, everywhere. Asking to...to maybe looking for accommodation you phone an agent when they hear that your English have an accent they just tell you the room is taken or the house is taken or the flat is taken . Now when you now go look the same South African that phoned they say the place is available ( yes)... so those challenges there were there.

Interviewer: Does not being able to understand or communicate in the local languages here in Cape Town affect you in anyway?

Tisia: For now it doesn't affect me but it use to affect me because it affected me in that point that accommodation it was difficult sometimes err...m, getting things done sometime looking even for source... of livelihood wasn't easy you have to ask and if you don't communicate ///is a barrier already so it use to but for now is no longer because I ...I look for mechanism to...

Interviewer: Okay the next question will follow up to that. What communicative strategy do you normally use to solve problems communicating with South Africans?

Tisia: I just ...now I know I just approach when I approach I first understand whether this is isiXhosa speaking or Afrikaans. Then also the context matters, also the environment matter so I have now understood the different environments how to place myself. If it is an informal I know how to act there, if it is a formal I already errh... from the beginning set???the rules that I am not Afrikaans speaker, I am not isiXhosa speaker, I am English speaking. If it is an informal place where I know I can like maybe struggle to accommodate the isiXhosa or that level of communication, I will do it. So from the beginning now I try to understand the context then I set ....set then I just follow the communication from there

Interviewer: Ok ay for example, if you meet a South African maybe a coloured person who doesn't understand English or Xhosa who doesn't English what communicative strategies are you going to employ to communicate with that particular person in this case?

Tisia: Yeah I start with the greeting like now i can greet in Afrikaans, I can ask in Afrikaans what is your name? I can ask a little bit of direction in Afrikaans so if I meet a colored person that is the strategy I will take then now at a certain point where I cannot? Now bringing in some gestures to indicate with the aid of gestures ???Exactly what am trying to say.

Interviewer: Okay

The same thing with the isiXhosa I will greet in isiXhosa then start the conversation in isiXhosa then in.....along the line come in expressing that I am not very fluent then using gestures to finish the conversation.

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: Yeah

Interviewer: Last section when did you come to Cape Town? What year?

Tisia:2002

Interviewer: How and why did you come to Cape Town? (Means of transportation, transit, any languages learned or picked up while in transit? Cities visited or lived in along the way?). Why did you come to Cape Town?

Tisia: I was ...I said I came to Johannesburg but when my husband came he couldn't stay in Johannesburg because that time there was the paper thing. There were not giving papers again in

Johannesburg so he had to come to Cape Town. When he came to Cape Town they issued him his permits in Cape Town. So he settled in Cape Town so I couldn't settle in Johannesburg and he settle here so I had to join him.

Interviewer: So you came because you had to join your husband?

Tisia: Yes

Interviewer: What means of transportation did you use from Cameroon to Johannesburg?

Tisia: I came with a flight. I actually had a visa

Interviewer: Okay what type of visa?

Tisia: I had an entry visa. Multiple entry visa that was given to me at the airport

Interviewer: Hmm...

Tisia: Yeah it was issue on to my passport???? it was just like a business multiple entry visa that was issue to me at the airport.

Interviewer: What airline?

Tisia: Errh...I used Kenya airways

Interviewer: Direct flight?

Tisia: No I used errh...Cameroon airline then

Interviewer: So it was direct flight from Cameroon to Johannesburg?

Tisia: Yes

Interviewer: No transit?

Tisia: No it was a direct flight from Cameroon to OR Tambo

Interviewer: What are your experiences/circumstances, perceptions with regards to your( life back home) ARRIVAL and life here in Cape Town?Positive and negative experiences at work, school, home, community etc?



Interviewer: First your arrival you said it was an easy... it was direct flight?

Tisia: Yeah it was a direct flight.

Interviewer: Now what circumstances? you made me understand you were coming purposely to join your husband

Tisia: Yeah it was emmr.... It was not easy at the beginning because erm...false hope knowing err... you are coming to somewhere where the grass is always green then you come and things are not the way you taught there were

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: So I start to struggle?...now to get into school. I first went and enrolled in teaching of English as a foreign language my intention was to see if I could have a teaching opportunity in China

Interviewer: Okay

Then I did a Toeff for six months

Interviewer: That was in Johannesburg?

Tisia: Yes in Johannesburg. So I got a TOEFF certificate, after the Toffel certificate I tried to enroll with Wits University but the school fee was more than me so when I relocated to Cape Town then I tried into UWC then that was 2005. I tried to enroll into UWC then I went to the English department and they had to give me a poem to appreciate .Imagine 2005 now will be almost like ten years after I came out from the university.

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: That was almost like not... I appreciated the poem it didn't go well I was asked to come and do a third year again.

Interviewer: Oho!...

Tisia: At that moment I was not really keen to go back and do third year so I decided to go and rather do something online and try to educate myself while preparing to see whether I can...And eventually I enrolled in an honours program.

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: And that is what I did I was doing that and then raising, having children, having a family doing the informal training and doing something else to add to my Toffel

Interviewer: Okay yeah let me just go before coming to meet your husband was that really your main concern of coming here or you had other things in mind besides coming to join your husband?

Tisia: I was just coming to further my education

Interviewer: Okay you also had that intention of furthering your education?

Tisia: My intention was to further my education. I tried to get into errh...the ecole normale in Cameroon to be a teacher, the teachers training and you know Cameroon with the corrupt system.

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: I couldn't get into the teachers training and I very much wanted to go into education so it didn't work so my intention coming here I wanted to further my studies

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: Yes

Interviewer: How do your life experiences here compare with that in Cameroon? What can you say about your experience(s) in Cape Town? (Forming friendships, work or employment life, schooling for your children, South African way of life?)

Interviewer: Let's start with forming friendships your experiences here compared to Cameroon? In terms of forming friendships

Tisia: Errh... Is incomparable because when you are in your own comfort zone that is your own land the mindset is not the same and then you shift and you meet people in another land and you still stay with that mindset you come in with from your own land not knowing that people are no more having the same mindset so it wasn't easy. I came from Cameroon with a very naïve mindset thinking that people were just the way I thought they were coming...I just graduated from the university, got married, had life easy, everything was easy then I came into a land where people struggle and toiled, they toiled to survive, toil for ...for... for papers they toil for everything. I didn't know people the way I thought I knew so before I knew it I was hurt by a lot of people. So I will not really call anything friendship I actually didn't have friends because every relationship that I encountered it broke along the line.

Interviewer: Work or employment life? Can you compare your work experiences here or employment life with that of Cameroon?

Tisia: Errh... in Cameroon I really never worked like really officially. I use to just have like holiday jobs from the university, assist people may be supermarket or in private shops or in other family activities so in that context also I really didn't also have a problem because it was in my comfort zone even if I go to work in any supermarket is still somebody that I know. It didn't give me a lot of pressure so unlike here when I came work here was to work and sustain. In Cameroon I didn't

work to sustain my life because I really didn't errh...have rents to pay the only thing was food. So I didn't work to pay rent, I didn't work to sustain, here I had to work to sustain my life, I had to work to.....to try to accommodate back home which they were expecting thinking that I have gone somewhere where there is a lot of money

Interviewer: (Laughs) Yeah

Tisia: So it wasn't easy

Interviewer: And was it that easy finding a job here?

It wasn't easy finding a job because first the right papers, you need to have the right papers in order to get a job and again the.....the standard of education that I had I only have the first degree which it was not really errh... qualified enough for me to get the type of job that I wanted. And I needed an education in order to be able to have that job so financially I didn't have the money to be able to put myself at that level. So it wasn't easy finding any job. That is why I finally erm ???reframe to private business ?? to go informal trading.

Interviewer: What about schooling for your children?

Tisia: Ok schooling for the children was also a challenge. It was a challenge in that each time you go to find mostly errh... the provincial schools, communities' schools they will tell you there are mostly first for South Africans so you are only put last as a foreigner if the places are available.

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: So we ended up mostly going to private education which was most of the time very expensive and we didn't have any other option other than paying.

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: Yeah

Interviewer: Any South African way of life?

Tisia: Yes you have to follow the South African in order to survive because that is how you find it., you need to be errh,.. you need to be prepare to go to the shops all the time everything you have to buy, everything you have to purchase, you have to be very vigilant errh... of your own life because sometimes you can find yourself in a violent situation, sometimes you can ??to crime situation and the life also is very fast. You need to >>>>>>to put a mind set to be able to meet up if you don't meet up you need to give up so it was like it wasn't easy

Interviewer: Yeah

Interviewer: Who do you usually interact with on a daily, weekly or monthly basis? Do you have any friends, neighbours, etc?

Tisia: For now I have really have like a settled type of routine, am a student so on a weekly basis I am on campus and interacting with my colleagues, interacting with the students that I am tutoring and I am also busy sometimes having meetings with my supervisor or attending workshops. Then during weekends, I have social groups that I have

Interviewer: Like Cameroon association?

Tisia: I have my social women the Cameroon women which I am part ?????. I also belong to my tribal association Bafut, I am also part, then I also actively emmr... involve with Cameroon association community building issues when it comes to community building I am part. When they are joyful events I come in to share also when we have sorrowful events I come in actively to assist and to build the community

Interviewer: OKay

Tisia: Yeah

Interviewer: Do you miss home?

Tisia: Terribly

Interviewer: (Laughs)

I miss home terribly sometimes I cry because I was brought up by my grand mum she is still alive she is almost and she misses me every day she cries, she says she wants to see me am the first grandchild so I miss home more than everything and I wish and pray every day that err... the South African constitution look into the issue of >>>>>>of documentation for graduates because I will like to visit my country now and again but my concern is if am not allowed to come back to finish my education then I will not be ?????so am really not wishing to get papers and stay in south Africa am wishing to get the papers in the way that I can be visiting my home and coming back but if I have the opportunity of finishing my studies and go contribute in my own nation

Interviewer: Okay because you are not on study permit?

Tisia: Am not on study permit

Interviewer: Do you feel at home in Cape Town?

Tisia: Yes errh... You know I have err...I had to build up a mechanism around my life that if I keep happiness is like am storing it in the box by the time I think I have to open it ???no more so

from other emmr... Situation that happen Cameroonians have died in Capes Town without having an opportunity to go back home so I saw that for you to keep on being miserable it will not help you, is not ??? so I try to make home around myself as much as possible???

Interviewer: Okay Do you have any particular names for different groups of migrants from other countries or South Africans?

Interviewer: For example you have this amaKwerikweri

Tisia: No I never didn't have names like that, I only come to understand those names here. I came to understand all those names here because like when I came to Johannesburg the Congolese where talking of how Congolese call people like migrants they say you are an adventures

Interviewer: Okay

Tisia: They call you adventurer

Interviewer: (Laughs adventurer)

Tisia: So when I also came to Cape Town then I always use to hear this err... resentment attitude of South Africans they either call you makwerikweri or ama foreigner or all those things. But myself I really not have anything but I use to have a concern when I go to do papers or the type of influx of Somalians on the South African soil but anywhere that is not my problem because I am also an immigrant.

Interviewer: Okay Apart from languages that differentiate you from a South African what other thing(s) makes you different from a South African?

We are now with the issue of culture and identity

Tisia: I think apart from language there are a lot of things that makes me different from a South African. I am not a South African or am...I have another culture that I was brought in I was brought up to eat differently, I was brought up to dress differently, and I was brought up to socialize differently. So apart from my language my customs and values are not the same > The...the way that errm ... value and beliefs my respect my custom is not the same like South Africa so we are not the same people. Yeah. The only thing is that we may have... like the black once may have the same colour like me but the cultures are not the same

Interviewer: There are different?

Tisia: Emmrrr...

Interviewer: Okay what does identity mean to you?

Interviewer: (There are many different ways of maintaining one's identity such as joining a club or organization with other with other migrants or buying products from their country or continuing

traditions from that culture or by making frequent trips back to their country of origin). In what ways do you maintain this /these identities?

Tisia: To me my identity is I think is unbreakable am here but my heart is in Cameroon. I contact my family on a weekly basis, or daily basis or as much as I can. I am not really that type of person who loves Cameroon food so I don't die for the food.

Interviewer: (Laughs)

Tisia: Serious if I have the opportunity I eat it, if I don't have the opportunity is fine. But when it comes to my culture I love my culture. I grew up in a culture of respect, from a culture of love, humility, sharing, hospitability, socialization which I miss ??and when I have the opportunity with the Cape Town context I try to still exploit that, I still keep contact with my family home I miss home because presently the status of my paper cannot allow me to go home and come back so the best I can do is to communicate through

Interviewer: Often

Tisia: Yes, so my identity to me is everything that still links me back to my home so that is it

Interviewer: How do you feel about being a Cameroon migrant in South Africa?

Tisia: I feel; I feel very unfortunate as a young Cameroonian of my generation. At first I use to like really be very sensitive and really be erm... very I can say I use to really not want to speak about it. About me leaving my home that I would have wished to leave there and work after my studies and forward my own studies and be happy because the challenges I go through here they actually almost break me down rather than make me. They almost break me but to a greater extent again I just come to put God and say God has a plan for everybody. I still feel bless like a young Cameroonian of my age to be here because the challenges have pushed me where I am and eventually I know I will make a contribution in my own economy. The education that I am having is not only my education but is education to change my people.

Interviewer: Yeah

Tisia: Because for now I know what I a gaining I will eventually give back to my people if I have the opportunity. So as a Cameroonian in Cape Town, is very challenging I don't love it to here I really don't like it but I have made that for now I will just love and appreciate what I have.



Interviewer: Do you feel that you belong in South Africa Why? Why not?

Tisia: No

Interviewer: Why?

I don't belong. First I don't have papers am a refugee, secondly I don't have rights like South Africans, I don't have any right like what so ever I can never walk anywhere and just comfortably do things, I cannot just go to the bank and open, I have a bank account but I will not open another additional investment account an then start to borrow money like a South African, I cannot just get up and then go to the bank and they will look at me that I am a student I qualify for a student loan and they give it to me so I don't feel belong at all. I know I am an outsider in an inside place where I am just like having an education? /having a life there for now.

Interviewer: What do you perceive other Cameroonians feel about you as a Cameroonian living in South Africa?

Tisia: Silence...

Interviewer: How do other Cameroonians see you as a migrant here?

Tisia: You now unfortunately we come from a land where people are really, people are really, people have been pushed to >>>to a certain extent so sometimes Cameroonians really don't they don't border what goes on. People just think of what they have. Is very sad but is the truth. People think of their own selves, people push their own agendas, people have struggles??? that t has almost given them that sense of selfishness so that is how our society is and unfortunately to me I really think nobody really cares what happens to me the only thing is that we have that culture that if maybe you die or if you are sick to that point they will not allow your corpse to stay here. So they are just doing it I order to maybe have another name or to be seen but not really that it really matters to anybody. Going back home maybe that could be something??Really here in this community if it is not your family I don't think anybody matters to another one

Interviewer: Do you believe others in South Africa feel you belong here? Why? Why not?

Tisia: No, no South Africans have never felt that errh... foreigners belong here. Their attitude shows, they don't like foreigners. We are not being treated like South Africans. Am in the university studying I pay my own fees; I tutor which I give back service but every time am being

treated as if am not errh... am not required but when am required am really like wanted again. Everything is like most of the time ??it is clearly written there only for South Africans even though we are studying in a university that those resources are there that they can give us in order for us to give it back to the other people they will rather keep it and then give only for South Africans so it is but clear I don't belong am not s South Africans Yeah.

Interviewer: What have you learned gained from your migration experience?

Tisia:A lot, my mindset changed, I have seen that when you are I your comfort zone you don't appreciate what you have, you appreciate more when you have shifted from your comfort zone. I have also seen that it is only you who can let yourself down. You need to give your best until there is no more best to give so that is what I have learnt. Migration has taught me a tolerant lesson, it has taught me a lesson of survival, it has taught me a lesson that you have to do your best until you can't do it any more before you say????

Interviewer: Okay.Can you describe how you feel about your future as a migrant in South Africa? (Worries, fears, hopes, outlook)?

Tisia: I got more hopes than fears. I got more hopes than worries. In the hope I had challenges, challenges like survival err.. sustainability, living, paying rent, feeding myself, my fees but I really don't emrr... fear because I know I belief in God with God if God can bring me through from where I as till here I know every other thing is possible so my lively, my sustainability depends on God and I have a lot of hope. I know that err...being treated the way I am being treated in South Africa is just short-lived eventually there are more doors for me with the end of my education that is what is very important to me.

Interviewer: What would you say to other Cameroonian who may consider migrating to South Africa (world of wisdom, advice, helpful to know?)

Tisia: Yes I will say errh... when you want...if you wish to study rather just go through the embassy and get you school get everything right and get your study permit even though when you come in like a student still home affairs still frustrate students and refuse to renew but in that case you will still have a story to back you up and you have the law behind you. Just getting and going like you going for greener pastures is very dangerous because it can break you , it can make you into something else, it can also you can also lose your life because I you are not very strong morally, physically everything you can degenerate into something else so I won't say parents young

Cameroonians old ???everybody when you want to send your relation outside, the expectancy should not be too high When we are in our comfort zone we don't know what we have but when you step out there is a lot at stake. And also what I will also advice people when you move try to move with the attitude change don't get stuck in your old attitude. Only you can save yourself, you don't move thinking that somebody there will assist you. Or you don't move thinking that when you get frustrated ???yourself into a situation and don't struggle to get out it will help you. Move with the attitude of positivity, move with an intention to learn , move with an intention to accommodate and if you have that attitude and maye with God by your side then the rest will happen.

Interviewer: Okay thank you very much for your time unless you have some other thing to add about your experience s of migrating from Cameroon to South Africa. Any other thing just to conclude.

Tisia:Errm...I will just say I really thank God for giving me the opportunity to migrate to South Africa because as a language student talking about the language err... issue, linguistically Cameroon from Cameroon with 260... ethic groups I came here and discover that language is not just what we see the issue of language is really deeper than just the world and African countries are looking at it. I have learned and as an educator, as a student what I have learned and understood is that language is a peoples identity a language is a way that we think that who we are so if err... the word can tolerate each other's way of understanding meaning which is through language I think the world will be a better place because linguistically we can see that knowledge is not only created through one language. Indigenous languages have created knowledges that have changed many parts of the world which they didn't use only English so to me I will say we should take the migration like a positive thing to change the world other than a problem. Migration shouldn't be seen like a problem. Migration should be seen in a positive manner because it exposes people to each other and then brings cultures together and try to enlighten the issue of knowledge more that knowledge is not only about one thing it is about developing, knowledge is not stagnant, knowledge is a developmental process that is what am going to say.

Interviewer: Okay thank you very much and I wish you success in your studies.

## Appendix C: Segment of the Nuka meeting (birth celebration -born -house)

Chairperson : Uncle (name) like we call him, we know him as Mr (Name) uncle Ju on behalf of nuka make hi offer a word for the house [*We call on uncle (Name) to offer a word on behalf of Nuka*]

Mr (Name): Thank you chairlady, thank you Nuka and thank you for any visitor. We dey for rejoice sometime we don dey for this house wey we no bi di feel fine but this one na rejoice. As ma (Name) don talk we go get more pikindem next year. Thank God the pikin dem di increase daily. I di want for talk say we get a very joyful day and i bi even check say madam chair will bring pikindem make dem come play but ma no bring pikindem yi bi all fine. Some other people no bi come but they send excuse. I want just take this opportunity for tell chairperson say (Name) i bi di communicate with yi. Yi talk say whey! yi don really miss this house because yi phone get problem ....but yi say yi happy say we do the celebration. Say make i sent yi greetings for this house on behalf of hi and >>>so hi say make i greet everybody say things dem no di always waka as planned butsay God go di always show we way.

*[Thank you chairlady, thank you Nuka, and thank you for any visitor. There are certain times in this house that we have experience sadness but this is a joyful occasion for us. As the chairlady has said, there will be more children next year. Thank God the birth of children in this house is increasing daily. I just want to say that we should have a joyful day today and I was thinking the chairlady was going to come with her kids so that they can come and play. She did not bring them but is fine all the same. Some members are not able to attend but they have sent their apologies. I want to use this opportunity to tell the chairlady that I was communicating with (Name) who is in Cameroon and she said she misses this house but that she is very happy that the celebrations are going on. She sent her greetings to the house and regrets the fact that some things do not always go as planned but with God all things are possible].*

I also want for talk say i bi dey for this house since 5 o' clock and i happen say one of we brother (name) come and because place way hi di stay hi no go fit get transport for go back so hi bi come hi chop some small born house chop and then hi drink then hi go. But we other brother them one for Kahyilitsha no get no excuse i no know why they no really come for here. So na why that hi

chop get to go early in order for catch this thing for go...so na the excuse that for we brother NyohPhilip. So hi no fit for stay because hi bi dey for here with Nibut hi bi get to leave. But we actually be grateful say hi bi bi a timid start but we don dey in shape>>>>we have full house and we be grateful. Thank you Ma.

*[I also want to say that I arrived here this evening at 5 o'clock. It happened that one of our brother (Name) who came and because where he lives he will not be able to get transportation to go back had to leave early. He however ate some food and had some drinks before leaving. But some of our brothers from Kahyilitsha are not here and we have not heard from them why they are not here. We are actually happy because the meeting started timidly but the house is getting fuller. We are grateful. Thank you chairlady]*

Chairlady: Thank you uncle (name). Born fine i don just receive message now say some my pikin don born again so i fit call born house. Soi di thank Uncle (name) for that wonderful and very brief a speech. We happy say even though some of we members no dey here they di member we. You know meeting no bi only make we dey physically, you see Joy dey back home hi di think of we, (name) no bi fit make am because of transport but hi fight for come here a little earlier then hi find hi way for go back chairman and the rest. So we di really bi happy for be part of this association.

*[Thank you uncle (name)....Giving birth is a nice thing. I just received a message now that one of my children has just given birth so i too can organize a birth celebration. I thank uncle (name) for that wonderful and brief speech. We are happy that even though some of our members are not here they are still thinking about us. You know it is not only about physical attendance and that is why members like (name) can still be in Cameroon and think about us. Even ( name ) could not stay for long due to transport but he made an effort to come early but had to leave early. So we are really happy to be part of this association].*

Chairlady: So wusai pa pikin dey? We go find am. Chairmen send excuse say hi dey work. Wusai pa pikin?

*Chairlady: [where is the father of the child? We are going to fine him. At least the chairman sent words that that he is at work. Where is the father of the child]?*

Somebody from crowd: Hi don just comot outside hi di come [*He just stepped out, he is coming*]

Chairlady:How we fit di chop born house pa don go noh?Sometime you don give pa another woman. But the woman dey for here... i check say while we di wait make pa pikin come this pinkindem be na say make we di born am. If we get opportunity for born more no bi we go born am make meeting begin grow?

[*How can we be celebrating the birth of a child and the father of the child is gone? Maybe someone has given the father of the child another wife. But since the women are here, I think while waiting for the father of the child to come we can continue....Children need to be born and if we have the opportunity to do so we should so that the meeting can grow*].

Crowd:Na so

[*That is it*]

Chairlady:Yeah we brother don talk say i no bring (name) and (name) them make them come. If i bring them we go feel say meeting get plenty pinkindem them so people them go slag. When we see few pinkindem the young one dem go push make pinkindem come. See am that one shidon for they so hi dey like say hi di sleep but if pikin bi dey hi for di cheak am eh? . Pa( name)

[*Yeah our brother said I did not bring (name) and (name) to the meeting. If I had brought them people will feel there are many children here and thus will not border about child bearing. But when we see fewer children the young ladys will make an effort togive birth to children. Look at that one sitting down as if she is sleeping. If there was a child she will be checking on the child and not sleeping. Isn't it papa (name)?*]

Papa (name):You di always collect their trouser noh?

[*But you always collect their trousers*]?

Chairlady:I collect trouser them but wusai the woman dem for collect trouser. i don collect trouse you see the one them weyi collect tham hi happen. The one them weyi no collect tham. Now no one no want collect my own so i don decide for collect my own me sefsef. Na yiweyi say i go born four next year.

[*I collect trousers but where are other women to collect from me? The one who collect the trousers have produced results. Those who do not collect do not produce any result (no child bearing). Now*]



*nobody wants to collect the trousers from me so I will keep it to myself. That is why I said I will give birth to four children next year.*

Chairlady: Yeah so make we just di enjoy as we di make speeches. Actually i bi want make na Dr (name) bi get for talk for we hi dey outside so make we just di get fun enough to eat and drink in the kitchen so please have fun enjoy. Even if your belly already big that big wey hi big no bi the one for this born house. You fit add more there make hi big even bigger Ma (name) get plenty Kaba them.

*[Yeah while we are waiting for the host Mr (name) let us just be enjoying ourselves as we make speeches. Actually, I wanted Dr (name) to make a speech but since he is still outside we can just go on and have fun. There is enough to eat and drink in the kitchen so please have fun. Even if your stomach is big already you can still make it bigger from this celebration. Ma (name) has got many kaba (Free wear from Cameroon).*

Chairlady: No bi so Ma (name)?

[Isn't it Mama (name)

Members: (Laughs...)

Chairlady: If yi bi how hi go enter house comotkaba. So please feel free enjoy, table dey. I go just sit down make we get a little bit of merry while Dr Joe come and then we go give hithe opportunity like Pa for pikin for talk for we and then we fit move on with the program. Because we no fit move on with the program further wey Dr (name) no deyweyna hi bi we host. I bi sorry about that.

*[No matter what she will bring out some Kaba from her room. So please feel free that is the table (food). I will have my sit while we enjoy and wait on Dr (name) who will be given an opportunity to make a speech as the father of the child when he comes back. It is only then that the program will continue. We cannot move on with the program when Dr (name) who is the host is not around. I am sorry about that].*

Chairlady: But as we di wait on Dr Joe if any announcement dey we fit make the announcement even if na person wey hi di find woman. Or man wey hi di findpikin, or man wey hi di find man. (side communication)

*[As we wait on Dr (name) if there is any announcement it can be made. Even if it is a man looking for a wife or someone looking for a child or even a man looking for a man ...]( side communication)*

Dr (name) comes in

Chairlady: Dr (name) we di wait na you so and as you don keep we waiting. we di feel like say we go fine you. You know when i bi concern fines dem di always come. Nuka in a serious note I feel sayi don di suspect house. House di ever make me chair na because when i bi chair fine dem di enter. Dr (name) we go fine you we no fit come for your house you comot leave we for more than one hour. You no take excuse we di waka find you sotey hi left small make we call police say Kidnapping don happen for this house. Nuka don address bornhousewey the host no bi dey so i no know how the host go pay for that. So Dr (name) we don come see pikin as Nuka we don address pikinwey pa for pikin no day for hear talk wey Nuka gi am for pikin so we di call pa for pikin make hi talk for we. We no even know pikin hi name. Make pa for pikin talk for we.

*[Dr (name) you are the one we are waiting for and you have kept us waiting. We feel like you need to be fined. You know when I am concerned fines will always come. Nuka (association) in a serious note I feel something is suspicious here. This meeting always make me chair because they know when I am chair there are always fines contributions. Dr (name) we are going to fine you because we cannot come to your house and you leave and abandon us for more than one hour. You did not even ask for permission and we were looking for you all over the place. It was only left for us to call the police and report that you have been kidnapped. Nuka has gone on with the celebration even without the host. So I do not know how you as the host will make up for this. We have come to see the child as Nuka and you are not there to hear us address or talk to the child. We will call on you to address us. We do not even know the name of the child. Let the father of the child talk to us].*

Chairlady: Nuka oyee Nuka oyee

Members: Oyee [symbol of happiness]

Chairlady: Wuna no di talk. Na who dem di talk?

*[Whyare you not respondent? Who are those making noise?]*

Members: Oyee [ members respond]

Dr ( Name):That we pikin hi name naTyembi...hi never bi Christian and hi never bimuslim. When hi go grow hi go chose hi own side wey hi go go. That nukapikin hi name naTyembi. Tyembi mean say this world dey so hi under deep plenty. The reason bi say they bi di cry my first woman hi die on the 5<sup>th</sup> on the 4<sup>th</sup> my uncle them come create wonderful problem for deyweyi no believe. The one them weyi move them for prison. So hi want be on the 5<sup>th</sup> they born this pikin. I gather that my uncle them talk for them say this pikinwunadey so wuna bi devil all. I no di fear different peoplei di fear nawuna.

*[That our child's name is Tyembi and she is not yet a Christian nor a Muslim. When she will grow up she will chose where she wants to belong. That Nuka's child's is named Tyembi. Tyembi means that this world is very deep. Why I say so is because when they were celebrating the dead of my first wife on the 5<sup>th</sup> and on the 4<sup>th</sup> my uncles came and caused a lot of problems there in such a way that I could not believe. Some of them I even took out from the prison. By the 5<sup>th</sup> this child was born. I gathered my uncles and told them that with the birth of this child I see all of you as devils and I do not fear other people but you people].*

Member:All laughs

Dr (name)That we pikin hi name naTyembi.This one/////They talk say they no go cry that die. I tell them say for this country na we and Mbe them di talk. And that pikin di grow how way that hi name dey.Hi waka wey hi dey seven months so i di beg hi say make hi no talk quick quick because if hi talk quick hi go talk talk wey hi fit worry place. So i thank wuna plenty as wuna don come make we share this one word of joy. Mami don first talk for here say one man di come gi am then hi go shidon hi. No na only say man pikintheir heart to strong plenty. Man pikin no fit talk that day wey hi bi happen.

*[They said they will not celebrate the dead of my wife. I told them that I and the chief's control this country (village).That child is growing just as the name reflected. She started walking when she was seven months old so now am begging that she should not talk quick because if she does she will say things that can cause problems. So I thank you very much as you have come so that we share this moment of joy. Mami has earlier said that a man's job is only to get the wife pregnant and when that is done then the man's job ends there. But I want to say here that it is not true. The problem is just that men have a stronger heart. As you wanted to know how it happen men cannot explain how it happened.]*

Members: Talk make we hear

*[Say it. We want to hear]*

A member: If hi talk weti wey hi bi happen for hi Jesus go small.

*[If he says what happened that day even Jesus is small to hear]*

Another member: We want hear na who bi cry plenty?

*[We want to hear who cried first?]*

Dr (name): We bi man pikin we no fit talk how hi bi happen.

*[We are men we cannot explain how it happened].*

Another member: Na how you bi cry

*[How did you cry?]* Hihohibo

Discussion continues.....

Time to give the baby's gift

Chairlady: Woman eey

Members: eey

Chairady: Wuna stand up nohNa which kana woman this? Even if your belly big how jump up Woman eey?

*[What type of women are these? At least stand up. No matter how big your stomach is make an effort to stand up you can even jump].*

Members: Eey

Chairlady: Good. We di call pa and mamipikin make them stand then the newest mamipikin we go send nayi make hi gipikin hi parcel. There after no body no go put hi bumbs for down as we di call am for South Africa. We go sing pikinyi song, we go dance pikinyi dance. If we never dance well well chop no go comot. After the dance we go call item 11 we start di chop di dance. I di ask



people wey they come make wuna di look eye for here. Some of we dey so me no 1 i never married i di find man i di find pikin. Wuna shine wuna eyes look man pikindem.

*[Good. We call on all mothers and fathers to stand up so that the newest mother will hand over the gift parcel to the father of the child. (The child is in Cameroon). There after nobody is allowed to sit or put the bumbs (as we call it in South Africa) on the chair. We will sing and dance the birth celebration songs. If we do not dance well there will be no food. It is only after the dance that item 11 (food) will be served. While the celebration is going on I will call on those who are not yet married to be watchful and pay attention to men]*

Chairlady: No bi so?

*[Isn't that so?]*

Members: Na so

*[It is]*

Chairlady: So newest mamipikin come give pikinyi parcel

*[Let the newest mother come and hand over the parcel to the child]*

The newest mother in the house came forward and handed the child's parcel to the father of the child.

Chairlady: Na small thing this way Nuka don put am together. Na small thing dem no bi small thing but as we di giam na for pikinyi own no bi for papa. We di hand am now for mami and papa but no bi for them make them make sure say hi reach the pikin. So that make pikin know say they di member yi to for South Africa.

*[This is the little parcel Nuka has put together. It is not really small per say because it is for the child and not for the father. Although we are handing the parcel to the father and mother they should make sure it reaches the child. This is so that the child will know that we do remember her in South Africa.]*

Members: Wule-le-le-le claps

*[Reactions from crowd to show joy]*

Chairlady: Dance shaking everybody up shaking shaking if you no dance you go born pikin today.

*[Dance!... up everyone and dance if not there will be no conception]*

All members sing and dance...

Song 2 sample

Planti di sweet for mouth hi di hot for nyasheey

Plantieey...plantieey...planti di sweet for mouth hi di hot for nyash

For day time ha-ha-ha-ha-ha

For night time

Ehm-ehm-ehm-ehm-ehm- ehm

*[Plantain is a symbolic dish in Cameroon when it comes to birth and death celebration. As such the main message in the song is about plantain. According to the song message plantain is related to the phallic or male penis. Although plantain is tasty in the mouth, it is painful in the vagina].*

Chairlady: We thank everybody make we sit down catch our breath get some entertainment then continue dance.

*[we thank everyone let 's sit down catch our breath, get some intertainment then dance can continue....]*



## Appendix D LETTER OF CONSENT

### CONSENT FORM

I am conducting research for my Master's Thesis, pertaining to the study of Language acquisition by Cameroonian and Nigerian migrants in Cape Town. I am a student at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa and would like to request your permission to conduct and record an interview with you and or use your information as part of my data. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. Should you grant me this permission; you still have the right to withdraw from this exercise at any time and to ask that any information already recorded be deleted. Your identity will not be revealed in the course of the research to anyone else apart from my supervisor and me. A copy of the transcription of the interview will be available to you on request. I pledge that your privacy will be respected. Should you agree to assist in this research, please kindly sign below the following statement of consent.

#### Statement of Consent

The researcher Ms NCHANG DOREEN has explained what she needs from me clearly. I understand that my name will not be used in this thesis and that I can withdraw from the interview and have the recording deleted at any time. I hereby give my permission to be interviewed and recorded.

(Signed).....

Date.....Place.....