

**A Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) Analysis of Yoruba Students' Narratives of  
Identity at Three Western Cape Universities**

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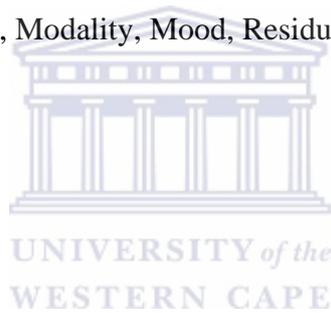
## ABSTRACT

*There has been a great deal of research exploring Halliday's (1978, 1994, 2004) Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) approach. However, there has been little work that specifically targets SFL to explore African discourse. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) views language as "social semiotic", that is, language is functional in terms of what it can do or what can be done with it; and semantic in that it is used to make meanings (Halliday's, 1978). This study explores SFL to analyse narratives of identity as told by Yoruba students at three Western Cape Universities: University of the Western Cape (UWC), University of Cape Town (UCT) and University of Stellenbosch (SUN). This research is both quantitative and qualitative in outlook and results of the study are presented. I used the qualitative method to collect and analyse the data; but a certain amount of quantitative analysis was presented as well in order to determine the predominant identity options favoured by the students. A total of 14 Yoruba students were interviewed for data collection which was analysed with SFL interpersonal metafunction theoretical approach. Specifically, the study examines linguistic choices that the students utilize to maintain and reconstruct their identities in Cape Town. This concentrates on the aspects of Mood component combining Subject and Finite element, Residual component comprising Predicator, Complement and Adjunct as well as Modality in participants' narratives. Besides, an important aspect of the study was the consideration given to ethical issues.*

*Analyses are presented on tables showing the frequencies of the interpersonal elements as configuration for preference use of different Subjects, Finites, Predicators, Complement and Adjuncts to either strengthen or weaken positions. Equally, the metaphorically expressions of objectivity to highlight the continuities and contradictions in the students' narratives of identity in the diaspora was considered. These serve as interpersonal elements used by*

*participants for stylizing and personalizing different identities options. Also, the study presents how the students organize their message for cohesion/coherence in their narratives. Thus, SFL establishes how the linguistic choices of the students reflect identity options in their new environment. The study shows the strengths of systemic-functional approach in its integration of what the students said, with what they might mean within the situation in which they said them. Finally, I conclude that these elements of interpersonal metafunction framework make participants' narratives coherent while revealing the different identities they appropriated in the diaspora.*

**Keywords:** Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), text, clause, Participant, Subject, Finite, Predicator, Complement, Adjunct, Modality, Mood, Residue, identity and narratives.



## DECLARATION

I declare that *A Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) Analysis of Yoruba Students' Narratives of Identity at Three Western Cape Universities* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

**Idowu Jacob Adetomokun**

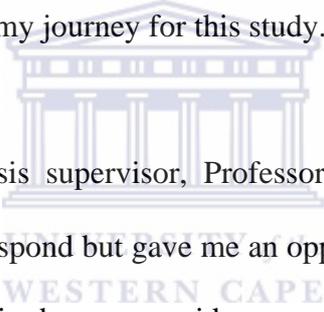
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**Signed:** .....



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## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to

The

**Almighty God**



For sparing my life and seeing me through this great journey

WESTERN CAPE

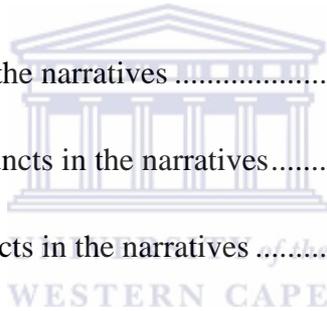
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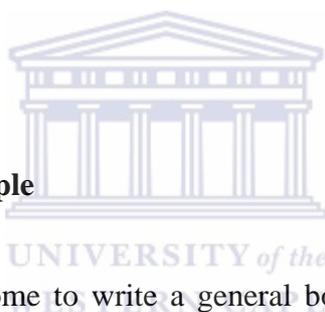


## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1 Introduction

This chapter gives insight into the historical background of the Yoruba people of Nigeria and their geographical location in Nigeria. This leads to the statement of the research problem and its significance to the linguistic field of inquiry. The conceptual framework for the research is introduced followed by the method for collecting and analyzing the data of the research together with the chapter outline.



#### 1.1 Origin of the Yoruba people

Scholars have found it cumbersome to write a general book about the Yoruba origin, and Eades (1980) considers such a task a foolhardy enterprise. However, a pointer to a common origin of the Yoruba kingdoms is the existence of a cycle of myths and legend which purports to describe the creation of the world and its people and the foundation at *Ile-Ife*, the world's centre of the first kingdoms (Smith 1969, 1976, 1988; Trager, 2001). Smith argues that into these myths are woven the names of the heroes whom the Yoruba regard as their founding ancestors. A common version of the myth tells how *Olorun* (owner of the sky) descended *Oduduwa* and sixteen others from heaven by a chain into the uninhabited ocean below. *Oduduwa* is regarded as the father of all Yoruba kings. The myth claims that *Oduduwa* threw into the waters a handful of soil, and placed a cock on the soil together with a palm nut. The cock scratched the soil and it became land, and the nut grew into a tree with sixteen branches, symbolizing the sixteen crowned rulers of *Oduduwa's* house (Eades, 1980).

The legend pointer to the Yoruba origin, according to Smith (1988), relates that *Oduduwa* was a son of *Lamurudu* (king of Mecca) who migrated westwards until he came to *Ile-Ife* and settled there. From *Ile-Ife*, *Oduduwa's* children and grandchildren went forth to become the founders of kingdoms and royal dynasties in the area we call Yorubaland today. As to *Lamurudu*, he undoubtedly represents the *Namrud* of Arabic and Muslim legend and/or *Nimrud* of the Bible Old Testament legend. Smith relates another version of the legend about the Arab conquest of North Africa in the seventh century which likely had repercussions far to the south suggesting there was movement up the Nile and westward across North Africa of the Bedwin, Beni Hillal and Beni Sulleim tribes. This may have brought about the move either of the Yoruba people or of a group of conquerors who later became assimilated with them in the present Yoruba homeland (Smith 1988: 10). However, highlighting the unreliability of these stories, (Smith 1988: 9) writes:

These stories of the creation of man – the myths – and of the foundation of Yoruba polity – the legends – are found in all the kingdoms, and most of the royal houses trace their descent to Ife. They vary considerably in detail and rarely have the coherence, of, for example, the myths of Ancient Greece. Nevertheless, they remain recognizable as the same in their essentials, and their prevalence among almost all the Yoruba and perhaps too their very incoherence, support the claims of a common origin and a shared Yoruba past.

This interpretation may seem to some extent supported by the possibility that certain of the Yoruba techniques, for example, iron-working, a method of casting metal objects, and forms of government, in particular the Sudanic state; and the divine kingship, may have been diffused from the Nile valley. But these possibilities are far from justifying the acceptance of

the Egyptian theory, while other parts of the argument, especially the supposed resemblance in language between ancient Egyptian and Yoruba, can be dismissed (Smith 1988: 10).

Nevertheless, in Eades (1980) opinion, the Yoruba themselves have a profound sense of history and frequently relate current societal and political developments to historical events. Historical traditions, like myths, are a resource which can be exploited to legitimize or attack the status quo, and this is reflected in the extraordinary number of local histories which have been produced in all areas of Yoruba land. One can say therefore that the underlying diversity of Yoruba social forms is an increasing cultural and linguistic unity and a common historical experience. According to a Yoruba newsletter publication, the Yoruba are a nationality, the majority of who live in the south western part of Nigeria in West Africa. But it is not wholly explanatory, and certainly, it is not without its own controversy. The Yoruba are a black people, of Negro stock and they speak a common language, Yoruba, which belongs to the Kwa group of the Niger-Congo language family. Yoruba is a dialect continuum, that is, it has many dialects and the dialect at one end of the continuum is not intelligible to speakers at the other end of the continuum. The Yoruba people are also found in neighbouring Togo, Benin Republic. Because of the slave trade, the Yoruba can also be found in other parts of the world, including Brazil, Cuba, Trinidad, and the United States<sup>1</sup>.

Also, (Falola, 1999: 6) agrees with Smith (1988: 6) that the Yoruba constitute a numerous people with many kings and rulers over distinct and independent sub-ethnic groups. Their differences are recognized in dialects, food habits, and use of drums and also in their songs. What is known as the Yoruba nation today is actually a political bloc of sub-ethnic nations with a common origin and history, united under a common lingua franca – the *Yoruba*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.yorubaalliance.org/Newsletter/newsletter74.htm>

*language*. A host of other reasons are based on cultural similarities, such as common words in the Yoruba language irrespective of the dialect which, as Trager (2001) remarks, is mutually understandable among distinct city states and kingdoms.

## **1.2 Geographical location of the Yoruba people**

There is a common understanding among writers about the Yoruba people which highlights the geographical area they inhabited. According to Eades (1980: 1), the Yoruba homeland is in the south-western part of Nigeria, and it extends across the Benin Republic into central Togo. This is the area socially, economically and culturally shaped by settlements of the Yoruba people. Smith (1988: 7) believes the Yoruba people are the third largest ethnic group in Africa's most populous country, living in the rich forest and farmland of South-Western Nigeria. In this regard, Badejo (2007:10) notes that there are about forty (40) million Yoruba speakers in Western Nigeria and the Republic of Benin, and several million Yoruba descendants in the Western Atlantic Diaspora. The Yoruba are spread over several states out of the thirty-six states in Nigeria such as, *Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo* and *Ekiti*. Also, they are spread in considerable number across *Kwara, Kogi* and *Edo*. Below is the Nigerian political map indicating all the 36 states and her borders with neighbouring countries. From the map, the different states highlighted above are visibly located at the south western part of Nigeria.

## Nigeria Political Map<sup>2</sup>



In addition to the explanation above, there is a Yoruba irredenta in the republics of Benin and Togo, cut off from their brethren by the European frontier makers in the scramble for Africa at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; Elegbeleye (2005: 85) agrees that a diaspora is found over a wide area stretching from Brazil and North America. By reflecting on the Yoruba people of West Africa, Hetfield (1996: 6) observes that Yoruba are one of the best-known peoples of

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.mapsofworld.com/nigeria/nigeria-political-map.html>

Africa living in Nigeria and Benin. They are the type of people that are urbane, living mostly in cities, towns and villages with busy markets in the centres. Most of the Yoruba people are Christians with a sizeable number of Muslims among them, especially in the more northern parts of Yoruba land (Gordon, 2003). Corroborating this type of discussion of the Yoruba requires an understanding of some of the common features easily associated with the Yoruba people. This will now follow.

### 1.3 Typicality of the Yoruba people

There is a genuine struggle to define a name for the Yoruba identity and many authors have showed interest in the idea of *Yorubanness* linking their beliefs to the historical and cultural beliefs discussed above. From this perspective, (Falola, 1999; Bewaji, 2007; Fayemi and Adeyelu, 2009) agree that the Yoruba constitute an ethnic group but with sub-ethnic identities such as *Oyo*, *Ekiti*, *Ijebu*, *Egba*, *Ijesha*, *Ondo*, and *Akoko* among others that are clearly recognized in the Yoruba land. A host of other reasons are based on cultural similarities, such as common words in the Yoruba language irrespective of the dialect, the common occupation of farming, the existence of kings with power as well as his subordinate chiefs, the habit of living together as extended families, the worship of deities such as *Ogun* (god of iron), *Ifa* (god of divination), *Sango* (god of thunder), common dressing styles, and the love of festivities. What constitutes the identity of the Yoruba people is likely linked to the range of distinguishing features mentioned above among many others. For instance, they have their traditional mode of dressing which is easily distinguishable from other groups in Nigeria. Traditionally, the men dress in *Agbada* (a wide-arm piece of clothing), *Dansiki* (half of Agbada), *Buba* (a short or long sleeve top that goes halfway down the thighs), *Sokoto* (trousers) and *Fila* (cap) to match. While the *Dansiki* and *Buba* are worn as the top of the

trousers, either of them must be worn before the *Agbada* can be placed on top. On the part of women, they are known for wearing *Iro* (wrapper around the waist), *Buba* (short or long sleeve loose neck blouse), *Gele* (head gear/scarf) and *Iborun* (an extra scarf piece, which can either be tied around the neck, or put diagonally across the body. This description is best represented in the following picture that reveals Yoruba dressing styles discussed above as downloaded from the internet.

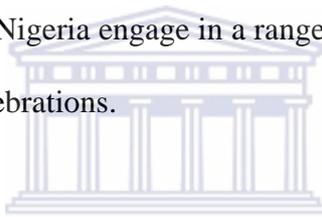


The above picture is just an illustration of one the Yoruba traditional styles of dressing. This particular style is usually for formal occasions like marriage, church services, political meetings and other formal ceremonies. In our ever more complex and rapidly globalizing world, Yoruba people are not insulated from contemporary dressing especially the western styles of wearing jeans, shirt, and jacket, among others.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.motherlandnigeria.com/attire.html>.

By practice, traditional Yoruba popular foods include: *iyán* (pounded yam), *amala* (yam/cassava flour), *garri/ eba* (cassava staple meal), *moinmoin* and *akara* (made from beans), to mention just a few. Some of the foods such as, *iyán*, *amala* and *eba* are in mashed form and eaten in morsels with their nutritious soups such as *ewedu* (vegetable), *egusi* (melon), *gbegiri* (made from beans), among others. Prominent among Yoruba drums are the *bata* (usually for masquerade dance) and *dundun* (regarded as a talking drum). A common knowledge in Nigeria is the Yoruba wholesome culture of celebrating festivities using the aforementioned attires and food. Other Nigerians have given Yoruba people the nickname “*s’owan’be*” meaning “*is it happening there?*” referring to a predisposition or strong inclination to search for locations of merriment. In this regard, Trager (2001: 2) states that the Yoruba people of South Western Nigeria engage in a range of activities, from fund-raising, to problem-solving, to ritual and celebrations.

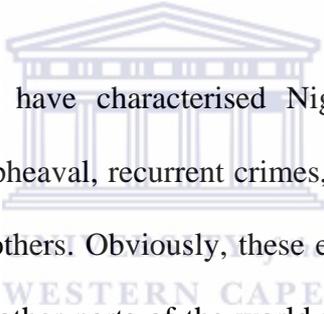


Another way that Yoruba people show off their distinctiveness is in physical appearance by traditional tribal marks in their variety. The distinctive dialects among Yoruba communities uniquely appropriate tribal marks distinguishing them from each other and other groups in Nigeria. However, the modern Yoruba society can no longer be said to be keen about tribal marks for identification the way it was used during the pre-colonial era and in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The events that are likely to shape the self-distinctiveness among Nigerians in the diaspora now follow.

#### **1.4 Events that characterise modern Nigeria**

Nigeria is one of the largest countries in Africa with physical regions classified by ethnicity, language and religion. According to Gordon (2003), Nigeria is home to at least 250 distinct ethnic groups. In contrast Salawu (2010: 345) states ‘Nigeria is known to have over four

hundred (400) ethnic groups belonging to several religious sects'. In Nigeria, four major ethnic groups make up about 65 to 70 percent of the population. The largest group is the Hausa/Fulani, a mixture of two ethnic groups living primarily in the northern half of the country; the Yoruba in western Nigeria and the Igbo in eastern Nigeria. The Islam religion is spread among the Fulanis and the Hausas. The Igbos of the Southeast and the Yorubas of the Southwest are predominantly Christians. As Gordon (2003) stresses further, the country is also divided into rival groups based on region, the most basic division being the north versus the south. Roughly half of the population is Muslim with a large Christian minority numbering about 40 percent, while about 10 percent of Nigerians continue to embrace other indigenous religions.



There are dramatic events that have characterised Nigeria's modern history, such as tremendous social and political upheaval, recurrent crimes, economic and educational crises, religious mayhem and a host of others. Obviously, these events have had a large impact on Nigerian citizens' movements to other parts of the world where they seek a better life. The stigma of crime attached to Nigerian citizens has caused them to be derided outside their borders. Jaishankar (2009: 345) states, 'crime is a major social problem in Nigeria like any other countries of the world'. Nigeria, like many other countries of the world, has reeled under the impact of crimes such as murder, child abuse, robbery, extortion, forgery, corruption, graft, embezzlement, fake currency, impersonation, and so on.

More worrisome is the crime of 'advanced free fraud popularly known as "419" recognized under Section 419 of the Nigerian Penal Code. In clarification, this felony usually involves a perpetrator impersonating a government official or a representative of an international business mogul, offering a greedy victim the opportunity to make millions of dollars from the

illegal transfer or deposit of Nigerian funds abroad. The scheme relies on the willingness of the victim's predisposition to violate the laws by responding to such an illegal offer and providing business and personal information and bank account numbers for the completion of the contract. In reality, the victims will lose his/her money (Crumpton and Agozino, 2004: 100). Other disturbing illegal acts that undermine Nigeria's credibility and which are acknowledged internationally include: terrorism, drug trafficking, money laundering, mortgage fraud, child trafficking, religious mayhem and more.

By logical consequence, there is no doubt that the constellation of these crimes will provoke the reconstruction of identities by Yoruba students in Cape Town. It has gotten to the point that Nigerians are seen as character liabilities, social menaces and people with vaults of integrity deficit. It is not putting things too strongly following Conway's (2006: 370) claim that "boundary crossing individuals meet discontinuities more often and discontinuities bear some resemblance to personal crises and transformations". Thus, the above issues must have a bearing on the interpersonal relationship of this generation of Nigerian students in Cape Town who are undeniably very active in socialisation with their environment, spending most of their times at school with other nationalities. However, the relationship will not be as easy as it sounds because it might lead to different kinds of identity crises in this context. This conception now leads to the statement of the research problem.

### **1.5 Statement of the problem**

Certainly, there is a common sensitivity that if attitudes shift migrants could readily participate as full members of their host societies and pay attention to the institutional forces and influences that get in the way of this integration process (Conway, 2006: 86). As this

study has demonstrated, people do not just possess one identity related to the social categories to which they belong, but rather they present and represent themselves by choosing from an inventory of more or less compatible identities that intersect and/or contrast with each other in different ways, and in accordance with changing social circumstances and interlocutors (Bailey in Auer, 2007: 59). Therefore, the problem investigated in this research relates to the extent to which these Nigerian migrants of Yoruba extraction maintain and reconstruct their different Yoruba identities as boundary crossing individuals; the continuities and discontinuities that characterise their personal crises and transformations.

I specifically explored how the above background issues affect the interpersonal relationships of the students in Cape Town, South Africa. Do the students still remain Yoruba-Nigerians or they have shifted from what they are known for back home? Is their Yoruba-Nigerian identity unique through language, food, dress and other manners or not? What are the identity options they depict in Diaspora in comparison to their home in Nigeria? I adopted Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory for analysis in this study. Specifically, I explored the concept of "Interpersonal metafunction" to illuminate how the students maintain and reconstruct their Yoruba identity in the Diaspora.

## **1.6 Research aim**

This research analysed narratives from Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory focusing on interpersonal elements of the clause. The idea is to demonstrate the linguistic choices that Yoruba people bring into play to maintain and reconstruct their identity in the Diaspora.

## 1.7 Specific objectives

The research specific objectives are:

1. To identify the Mood component comprising the Subject and Finite, also the Residual part of the clause consisting of Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct.
2. To explore how these elements are usually packed into the Interpersonal metafunction of the clause realising interpersonal relationship between speaker and hearer, writer and reader.
3. To interpret these elements functionally in the narratives highlighting different identities of the students in Cape Town in comparison to the dominant ones at home.
4. To show the maintenance and reconstruction of identity in their narratives in terms of continuities and discontinuities as they shape their self distinctiveness.
5. To establish that SFL Interpersonal elements are functional for achieving self distinctiveness purposes because these elements contribute to the cohesion in terms of continuities and contradictions in personal narratives.
6. To establish that identity construction is not just about language use, necessarily the dress, food, greeting, music, etc are integral means of identity stylization.

## 1.8 Research questions

In order to validate the aim of this study's focus, the study addresses the following questions:

1. How do Yoruba people use linguistic choices to ascertain and reconstruct identity in the Diaspora?

2. How does Modality assess the relation or difference of the students' identities from the dominant ones in Cape Town?
3. How has the choice of lexical items, Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct embedded in each clause indicated continuity and discontinuity in their narratives?
4. How do interpersonal elements contribute to the cohesion/coherence of the narratives so produced in terms of continuities and contradictions in the narratives of identities?
5. How do Yoruba cultural practices contribute to stylization of their identity in the diaspora?

### **1.9 Rationale and scope**

This research work shows that among other forms of identity interaction, Interpersonal elements play a very important role in the construction of identity among people. Scholarly works on the interpersonal elements perspective aimed at determining identity are very limited. This research was done because it has not been addressed in the literature. Therefore, this study builds up on the literature on identity. The scope of this research is limited to Yoruba students in Cape Town only.

### **1.10 Research Methodology**

The research is descriptive and interpretive in nature and is qualitative rather than quantitative. But in order to determine the predominant identity option favoured by the students, a small amount of quantitative analysis was presented. Qualitative research seeks out the 'why', not the 'how' of its topic through the analysis of unstructured information – things like interview transcripts, emails, notes, feedback forms, photos and videos. It is used

to gain insight into people's attitudes, behaviours, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles. Quantitative research is the empirical research in which the researcher explores relationships using numeric data. Survey is generally considered a form of quantitative research. Results can often be generalized, though this is not always the case.

This research investigated identity through language, by adopting Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) approach to the analysis of identity construction. It expands the scope of analysis where the importance lies in how the Interpersonal metafunction lays out the interactive nature of identity construction in social spaces. The data was collected from fourteen (14) Yoruba students from the University of The Western Cape (UWC), the University of Cape Town (UCT), and the University of Stellenbosch (SUN). Specifically, I examined the Interpersonal elements used by the students in their narratives to bring their identities to prominence. I followed the Systemic Functional Linguistics model advocated by Halliday (1994) to study how language is used in the social context. I explored how Halliday's concept of Interpersonal metafunction unwraps the notion of identity construction. This was investigated from the perspective of the Yoruba people. Following other similar studies on interpersonal metafunction analysis such as Konijn et al., (2008), Wang (2006), Xu (2009) and Banda (2005), the study used a field-based research approach to text/narrative analysis. This entails analysing spoken texts. Field based research refers to the use of data obtained in the field of research. It falls within the scope of primary research which involves field research as opposed to secondary research (Burns, 2000).

Based on Halliday's (1978, 1994, and 2004) SFL interpersonal approach to determining clauses create meaning in relation to context, this study chunked the narratives into clauses in the light of how language is structured as a resource for doing social life (Eggins, & Slade,

1997). They are: Identify Modality in terms of Subject and Finite choices; investigate the distinctive Residual patterns of Predicator, Complement and Adjunct occurrences and Interpret the clauses in the light of interpersonal relationships for judgment and evaluation to understand why the students are speaking as they do, and even identify less immediate social causes (Fairclough 2003:11).

In conclusion, this study shows how interpersonal elements create speakers' identities as established in narratives. Using SFL tools for analysis, the fundamental meaning of the structure conveyed in narratives of the students was revealed. Undoubtedly, within the Interpersonal metafunction, the social character and relationship of functional constituents within texts can be discerned.



### **1.11 Ethical issues**

The nature of the participants (and in this study, young adults) and sensitivity of the topic poses important ethical issues (see appendix).

- During the interviews, the participants were protected from any kind of physical and psychological strain and had the right to withdraw from the sessions for any reason whatsoever.
- The participants were invited to interact in a way that was funny, informal, creative and totally stress-free, with minimal prompting from the researcher.
- Copies of the draft of the narratives and the transcripts were available to any participant at request for during the duration of the research
- The participants' real names were concealed and any situation that might disclose personal details was omitted.

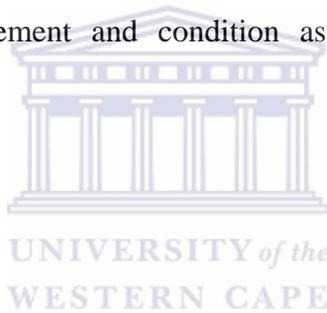
- Participants were told of their right to accept or reject the consent form which indicated willingness to participate in the research (see appendix).

## 1.12 Chapter Outline

- Chapter one outlines the general introduction of the research. This includes the keywords, statement of research problem, aim and specific objectives, the historical background of the Yoruba people and significance of the study, including the hypothesis.
- Chapter two contains the literature about the sociolinguistic background of the Yoruba identity, theoretical and methodological issues, literature on identity, Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (SFL), discourse and text analysis.
- Chapter three concentrates on the research methodology, which includes an elaboration text-based methodology and working with the interpersonal metafunction. This looked at aspects of Modality, Mood component combining Subject and Finite elements, and Residual component comprising Predicator, Complement and Adjunct.
- Chapter four focuses on the linguistic analysis of the data looking at how the interpersonal elements in narratives are used to convey identity by the participants. This covers the expression of Mood, that is, the purpose the speaker seeks to achieve with his/her speech; the use of Modality expressing the speaker's judgment or evaluation; and the metaphor of modality which creates special interpersonal and discourse effects, hence helping the speakers to persuade and dominate hearers (Gerot and Wignell (1994:118).
- Chapter five discusses the interpersonal meanings spread across the narratives as colours, flavours, and perspectives to foreground emotion, judgment and attitude

(Butt et al., 2001: 131). This concentrates on the stylization of Yoruba identity options in the Diaspora as reflected in the semantic connotations of authenticity of propositions, subjectivity and objectivity. It handles issues of relationship between the speaker and hearer, how events or assertions are framed for their typicality or necessity to establish appropriate interpersonal relationships and achieve self distinctiveness purposes.

- Chapter six draws out the conclusion and suggestions for future research. For instance, the conclusion that participants used modalities such as, '*I think*', '*really*' and '*hardly*' to qualify identities according to likelihood, typicality and necessity. Also, it involves the use of Adjuncts for logical links of time, cause/consequence, addition, contrast, restatement and condition as they signal coherence in their narratives.



## CHAPTER TWO

### Literature Review

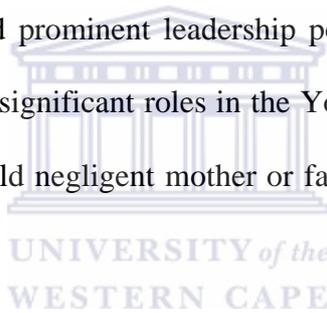
#### 2 Introduction

This chapter explores the sociolinguistic background to the Yoruba identity; expounds the theoretical and methodological issues, the literature on identity, Systemic Functional Linguistics theory (SFL), discourse and text analyses.

##### 2.1 Sociolinguistic Credence of Traditional Yoruba Society

As expected in every society, the Yoruba people have an organised civil life which addresses questions of values, norms, development and solidarity. These are principles which sustain traditions and always engender a strong societal union premised on the society's traditional exigencies. From the foregoing, it seems reasonable to state that various aspects of Yoruba cultural politics are important for enriching the social and moral life of the people and ensuring the continuity of their culture. Since society develops from families, it is necessary to look at how Yoruba families meant so much to their society. According to Elegbeleye (2005: 85), "Yoruba believe in a water-tight regime of rules and regulations hinged on traditions to guide behaviour. Hence, any deviation from the norm is not only frowned upon but could earn the erring member being ostracized from the community". In addition, Yoruba societal disposition more often rejects decadent imported culture by jealously preserving wholesome Yoruba traditions and values.

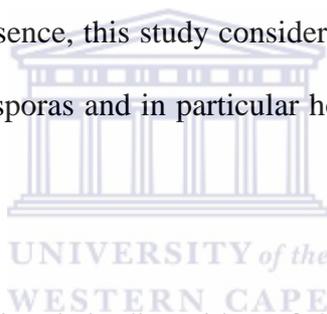
Also, Elegbeleye (2005) continues that in the traditional Yoruba family setting, a paternalistic social arrangement was the paradigm that dictated what role was allotted to who and what role expectation was demanded from all members of the household. He further explains that the father is the statutory head of the family and his words are laws. Along with this privilege is his responsibility as the breadwinner for the family. He is generally assumed to have started the family; therefore it is beholden on him to give direction, both psychologically and physically. The argument here is that Yoruba indigenous culture is both patriarchal and hierarchical (Bewaji, 2007: 85), having a strong bond evident in their traditional norms and values. This sovereignty of tradition that pushes women to the background among the Yoruba people is contested in this modern age. A typical example is Olajubu (2003: 40) who states that, “the fact that men occupied prominent leadership positions in larger numbers should therefore not obliterate women’s significant roles in the Yoruba society”. For instance in the Yoruba setting, older women scold negligent mother or father notwithstanding if the errant person holds a PhD degree.



Furthermore, the Yoruba people believe that character is beauty (Oluwole and Adesina, 2008) and this makes it crucial for all to protect integrity with high moral standards. In this sense, an individual is an ambassador of the family and as such must represent the family creditably. Stressing further, the family sociology is such that it employs democratic tenets in the day-to-day running of the affairs of members. The child is the responsibility of all mothers within the household to nurture. Everybody watches out for one another and reports unwholesome behaviour by any erring member to the appropriate quarters for punishment (Oluwole and Adesina, 2008). With this in mind, Yoruba people teach their children the etiquettes of respect for elders, eating in public, greetings, mannerisms and dress code and other moral values. Fathers teach their male children to prostrate and female ones to kneel when greeting

elders; also they must not call them by name or talk rudely to them. When young people leave home to study or work abroad, they are warned that the family's name is sacrosanct. A Yoruba person is expected to possess and demonstrate these practices in time and space.

From the Yoruba perspective, there is a demarcation and perhaps a distinction between the human being in the generic sense, and the human person in a specific sense; every Yoruba person is expected to have the attribute of *omoluwabi*, which means a paragon of excellence in character (Fayemi, 2009: 167). In the light of this research work, identity goes beyond the human figure created by divine providence, rather it depicts a distinct personality radiating with excellent character. However, this study considered issues of food, dressing, greeting, and language as they all relates to every sphere of the life of the Yoruba students in three Western Cape universities. In essence, this study considers issues of how Yoruba identity is central to Yoruba students in diasporas and in particular how they construct and deconstruct identities in Cape Town.



In line with the above, the sociolinguistic disposition of the Yoruba people is influenced by social and cultural factors (Falola 1999; Bewaji 2007; Badejo 2007; Elegbeleye 2005; Oluwole and Adesina 2008; Fayemi and Adeyelure 2009). The literature suggests that Yoruba people, like other Africans, tend to maintain a strong family bond hinged on their societal norms and values. As the literature also reveals, Yoruba people love to form ethnic solidarity groups, age grade alliances and hometown associations for a shared identity. Also important to the Yoruba traditional setting is the issue of paganism which is characterized by a variety of theological elements, such as a supreme being, subordinate deities, ancestors, sacred kings, all sorts of local spirits, and an elaborate system of divination (Falola, 1999). In reality, this disposition is not peculiar to Yoruba or Nigeria. For example, in Africa, urban-rural linkages have been shown to have a strength and importance that continues over more

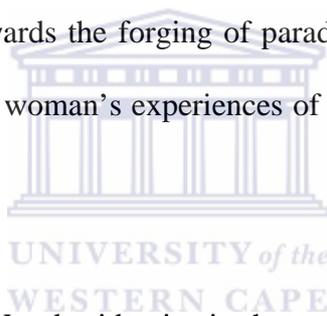
than one generation (Gugler 1991 cited in Trager, 2001). However, the Yoruba people can also be adapted to the needs of deep socio-cultural change, generally experienced as a crisis of identity or as spiritual conversion as reviewed below.

### **2.1.1 The Yoruba contemporary disposition**

As Trager (2001) observes, the Yorubas settling outside their home country have had to deal with a sense of cultural dislocation, as a result of being immersed in a varied and very different cultural environment. Though, Yoruba identity is real, with substantial historical roots, it corresponds neither to a modern nation-state nor to some simple version of a traditional "tribe." It coexists with loyalty to the nation (Nigeria) and with "home-town"; Yoruba identity is owed to the combined force of its past history and contemporary realities. The subject of education is important for the understanding of contemporary Yoruba society and culture. Falola (1999) considers Yoruba people as the most urbane group in Nigeria with the longest history of westernization, Christianity, and education. That means they are a society that places high value on proper education of their members in order to be well exposed to their rights, duties, obligations and responsibilities. This is a disposition that qualifies them as astute eclectic knowledge seekers, and being adept in western education, they are better able to approach issues from an intellectual standpoint. Even what Lloyd (1955) argued many years ago that Yoruba people have the highest number of professors in Nigeria and probably have the highest number of degree holders subsists today.

Furthermore, the English language has been perceived as the language of modernity and elitedom, parents derive joy in hearing their children speaking English fluently, even if they cannot pronounce a word correctly in Yoruba language. Consequent upon this, to keep Yoruba language alive and prevent it from extinction, there is a growing interest to accept

that with language comes culture by making Yoruba compulsory in all schools in Yoruba land. Perhaps, this stems from the fact that the importation of technology means the importation of culture too and could erode Yoruba language together with its subtle nuances completely. Additionally, the contemporary Yoruba woman and traditional Yoruba culture could be described as strange bedfellows. This results from a conflicting and often confusing influence of western civilization and education on the woman while she remains an integral part of the society for which the norms of daily living continue to be located in the traditional Yoruba philosophy of life (Olajubu, 2003: 41). Her argument is that the contemporary Yoruba woman has available to her numerous resources for actualising her potential in every sector of the society and that culture occupies a prime place in it. Therefore, efforts for self-fulfilment should be directed towards the forging of paradigms that will take cognizance of the Yoruba culture as well as the woman's experiences of western education and civilisation (Olajubu, 2003: 42)



Of immense importance to the Yoruba identity is the use of proverbs. In Yoruba culture, proverbs are appreciated as the vehicle for words. As one proverb puts it: "*Owe lesin soro, oro lesin owe, bi oro ba sonu, owe la fi nwa*" ("Proverbs are the horses for words, for when words are lost, we use proverbs to seek them out") (Trager, 2001). This means that proverbs serve as the horses which can carry one swiftly to the discovery of ideas. In this modern age, Yoruba language has retained the use of proverbs in education, media, politics, medicine and the like. Proverbs are normally the special preserve of elders, but because they are used ever so often in the presence of children, proverbs often set them thinking. The value of proverbs to the child, however, is that some of them are sources of amazing summaries of empirical observation, the veracity of which the inquisitive child may want to investigate. Yoruba evident use of language is embellished with proverbs often as a symbol of the importance of

linkage to one's origins. Most importantly, a proverb is considered as a necessary condiment in making up any written or spoken speech. This mentality usually characterises any particular conversation in which they are never in dearth of linguistic nuances to approach issues of different perspectives.

From the foregoing, Adeyemi (2009: 56) states that Yoruba proverbs serve as social charters that condemn some practices, while recommending others. It is believed that proverbs express absolute truths reflecting cultural identity, norms and values (Anand, 1996: 8), and that there is a direct correlation between proverb truths and actual behaviour of their people. A Proverb is one of the most important tools or indices for assessing personality among Yoruba people. This is because a proverb may be a very effective mode of communication especially its persuasive use in speech to signal maturity, cultural sophistication and wisdom. As is the focus of this study, for the Yoruba people, the home place or home-town is a significant and continuing source of a person's identity throughout life. Therefore, individuals are expected to act with that sense of identity in mind, and are likewise reminded by others that there are expectations and obligations based on that identity (Trager, 2001). Having discussed the sociolinguistic importance of Yoruba people, I am going to discuss the construction of identity.

## **2.2 The construction of identity**

In order to understand the fundamental meaning of identity, the inclination is to turn to a favourite dictionary for a definition of the term. The Oxford English Dictionary, for example, provides not just a single definition, but different meanings. The Oxford Dictionary (2nd ed., 1989: 620), defines identity as “the sameness of a person or thing at all times or in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else;

individuality, personality”. This means the condition or fact of remaining the same person throughout the various phases of existence; continuity of the personality. In this sense, personal identity is those attributes or qualities (predicates) of a person such that if they are changed, it is no longer the same person, the properties that are essential to him or her being that person rather than being merely contingent. But, identity is an abstract, complex and dynamic concept. As the result of these characteristics, identity is not easily defined and therefore many scholars have provided a variety of descriptions.

Should one search further in different books on the subject, one would find that there is little agreement among scholars about a definition. Nearly, every book on identity offers its own definition. Worchel (1998: 47) for instance, defines identity as self-descriptive traits, traits which are not only characteristic of the self (and can also be characteristic of other), but also specific – distinguishing the self from the other. Samovar et al. (2009: 154) consider identity as the reflective views of selves and other perceptions of our self images. Norton (1997: 410) describes identity as how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future.

In recent years, scholars working in a remarkable array of social science and humanities disciplines have taken an intense interest in questions concerning identity. Within political science, for example, we find the concept of “identity” at the centre of lively debates in every major subfield. Students have devoted much new research to the “identity politics” of race, gender and sexuality (Fearon, 1999: 1). Fearon stresses that identity is presently used in two linked senses: social and personal. In the former sense, an identity refers simply to a social category, a set of persons marked by a label and distinguished by rules deciding membership

and (alleged) characteristic features or attributes. In the second sense of personal identity, an identity is some distinguishing characteristic (or characteristics) that a person takes a special pride in or views as socially consequential but more-or-less unchangeable. As can be understood from his argument, identity refers to social categories and to the sources of an individual's dignity (Fearon, 1999: 2). This research interest is motivated by studies which show that the relationship between language and ethnic identity is not fixed and bounded. Rather, there are about four different paradigms that have been used to account for construction of identity, namely: Poststructuralist, Socialpsychological, Interactional sociolinguistics and Social interactionist approaches (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). Discussions on these approaches now follow.

## **2.2.1 Theoretical issues of identity construction**

### **2.2.1.1 Social psychological approach**

The social psychological approach has been used to study negotiation of identities in multilingual settings. The approach assumes a one-to-one correlation between language and ethnic identity. Negotiation of identity in this approach becomes a “transactional interaction process in which individuals attempt to evoke, assess, define, modify, challenge, and/or support their own and other’s desired self-images, in particular, ethnic identity” (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). However, this approach has been criticized for conceiving individuals as members of homogenous, uniform and bounded ethnographic communities which obscure hybrid identities and complex linguistic repertoires of bilingual and multilingual living in a contemporary global world (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004: 5). Corroborating Pavlenko and Blackledge’s position, Fearon (1999: 2) asserts that there is no necessary linkage between identity and language. For instance, in ordinary language, one can use identity to refer to

personal characteristics or attributes that cannot naturally be expressed in terms of a social category, and in some contexts certain categories can be described as identities even though no one sees them as central to their personal identity. Nonetheless, identity in its present incarnation reflects and evokes the idea that social categories are bound up with the bases of an individual's self-respect.

In a study that focuses on the use of language in the construction of identity in Russian as expressions of national and ethnic self-definition at different periods, Clarke (2005) observes that language and identity are closely connected. Thus, language is a critical component in the construction of identity. If identity is seen as a set of characteristics that define an individual or a group, then language is an important means by which these characteristics are communicated. Stressing further, he believes that at the level of the individual, identity can be expressed through personal and family names which distinguish that individual from others in society. At the level of the ethnic group, identity can be communicated through terms of ethnic affiliation which not only bestow membership on those within the group, but also exclude those deemed to be outside the group. At the level of the nation or state membership can be defined as referring to those who are considered to be citizens, usually persons entitled to a passport. What cannot be ruled out is the hypothesis that identity represents a universal semantic field in the sense that a notion of identity is expressed by every language (Clarke, 2005: 7).

### **2.2.1.2 Interactional sociolinguistic approach**

Interactional sociolinguistic approach, contained in Gumperz's (1972) seminal work on the ethnography of communication, focuses on the negotiation of identities through code-switching and language choice. This approach moves away from the social psychological

approach as it viewed language as fluid and constructed in linguistic and social interaction. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) citing Myers-Scotton's (1993, 2006) framework view talk as a negotiation of rights and obligations between speaker and addressee and assume that speakers have a tacit knowledge of indexicality, that is, of marked and unmarked language choices in a particular interaction. In this sense, if a particular speaker makes an unmarked choice, he/she is recognising equality in social distance as the basis for the speech event. But, if it is a marked choice, then the speaker is negotiating an uncommon balance in rights and obligations (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004: 9).

By examining identity construction and Hip-hop in the US and Australia, Dominello (2008) observes that Hip-hop is a trend of expressing one's identity as part of a community through phonological techniques. Using a pronunciation unique in style expresses the users' association with, connectedness with, and at the same time distanced from the community. This use of language choice embellished with code-switching makes it easy to simultaneously shift from one particular identity to another. Dominello claims the hip hop community are using a particular speech style to associate themselves with the hip hop community, and to express their hip hop identity. He arrives at this claim by the hypothesis that Australian Hip-hop artists use an exaggerated Australian accent (Broad Australian English) when performing, and a less exaggerated (Standard Australian English) accent when not in performance mode (Dominello, 2008: 43).

These findings are very interesting and lend support to the hypothesis by interactional sociolinguistic approaches focused on the negotiation of identities through code-switching and language choice. Furthermore, Dominello (2008) confirms Alim's (2002) argument that language is used by hip hop artists to construct an identity of 'street consciousness', and that

in fact there is a greater presence of non-standard grammatical and phonological features in the rapping of hip hop artists than there is in their natural speech. This present study shall be informed by social constructionist and poststructuralist approaches which consider language choices in multilingual settings as being a function of larger sociocultural, political and economic factors (Auer, 2007; Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). I shall review these approaches that explore the relationship between language and identity as a sociological phenomenon.

### **2.2.1.3 Social constructionist approach**

The social constructionist approach focuses on how languages are used to legitimize, challenge and negotiate particular identities; and to open new identity options for oppressed and subjugated groups and individuals (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). This approach regards identities as phenomena (especially language), which people constantly negotiate through their interaction with others. By this, it emphasizes the role played by language in the ways in which individuals and groups choose to express, display and accomplish their identities. It also stresses the dialogical nature of identity formation as discriminatory practices on the part of socially marginalized groups (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). The aim is to provide general models and principles for interrelationships that take place between individuals and social forms or delineate the symbolic or linguistic constitution of cultural and individual identity. As such, the selves are constructed through the multiple discourses or narratives within which they are momentarily positioned (Antaki and Widdicombe, 1998: 202). Thus, this approach shows the link that identities are likened to discourses and power relations by conceptualising how individuals are socially produced by means of available resources.

This constructionist view is very instrumental as it has contributed to poststructuralists approaches to concepts of identity and individual social relations. This is the case in Schneider's (2003) work on how people with schizophrenia construct positive identities. He argues that the internal self, in the intuitive sense, might have disappeared owing to some threats that bombard different contexts of our lives. Hence, the self is saturated, filled to overflowing, losing any sense of a distinct identity. The self is an ongoing project of social construction. It is not simply something we are, and neither is it imposed automatically by social institutions; rather, identity is actively constructed, moment by moment, through social interaction (Schneider, 2003: 187).

Indeed, when we engage in identity work, we craft out 'self' from the messy details of actual lives (Holstein and Gubrium, 2000: 17) within the conditions of possibilities provided by particular discursive environments. We draw on our biographical particulars and on culturally available knowledge to present versions of ourselves in specific social circumstances in order to tell ourselves and each other who and what we are (Schneider, 2003: 187). Schneider takes this further suggesting that self-categorizations are dynamic and fluid; therefore identity is something that must be accomplished over and over again, in every social interaction, constantly negotiated and maintained through communicative practice (Schneider, 2003: 188). Thus, as relevant to this study, it has been argued that acculturation of migrants generally assumed that, to deal with bicultural pressures, immigrants will either have to reject the dominant culture and adhere to the ethnic culture, or else assimilate into mainstream society and reject their ethnic culture. This means two cultures are occupying positions at opposite ends of a single continuum whereby the more mainstream or acculturated group members are, the less they could retain their ethnic culture, and vice versa (Chiro, 2008: 18). Having mentioned this, it is assumed that participants in this research will either stick to their

cultural values in Cape Town or blend with the prevalent cultures in this different environment.

The social constructionist approach influences the work of Auer (2007) who uses the notion of identity in a metaphorical sense, which represents how the individual defines his/her self-reflexive sameness. He points out the issue of collective identity as unique quasi-beings expressing their identities through certain features equally unique to them. Among these features, the national (standard) language has a privileged role. As such, a nation expresses its own individual character through and in its language. Here, it is assumed that there is a natural link between a nation and its language. Auer acknowledges the dominant paradigm in the social sciences today which is more or less radically constructivist. Therefore, in this regard, nations, ethnic or social groups are no longer assumed to naturally exist, for instance on the basis of genetics, ancestry or birth, but are seen as social and ideological constructs (Auer 2007 citing Niethammer 2000). However, nations may also use language in order to establish their identity. Instead of the national standard varieties, it is now the specific ways in which the majority and/or the minority language are spoken, as well as the various mixing and switching styles, which are considered to be the straightforward, natural expression of identity (Auer, 2007: 2).

The above argument accords with the issue of collective identity which develops when group members are aware that they share similar attitudes towards certain group cultural values. Such values make up the group's ideological system, which regulates the principles of judgment and the ways of acting that group members are supposed to accept and abide by. Group members are able to construct personal ideological systems from the attitudes by which they evaluate and assign meaning to new and old cultural and social values (Chiro,

2008: 19). In theory, all individuals regardless of background are able to draw upon a variety of cultural stocks in constructing their personal cultural systems. However, the ideological system of each ethnic group almost invariably includes judgments about the value of its culture as a distinctive entity, and hence about the extent and nature of cultural and social interaction that should take place between itself and various other groups. Thus, “Everybody expresses pride in both their heritage and culture, they identified most strongly with their home culture and values. They may express generally positive attitudes towards their cultural systems and values, or express pride in their heritage background, or express generally negative evaluations in relation to their experiences of cultural conflict. Undoubtedly, they may be prejudiced in social categorizations and identify quite decidedly with home culture” (Chiro, 2008: 20).



In the notion of performative identity, Auer (2007) notes as Coupland (2001: 346) emphasizes that single utterances can be stylized when speakers are being studiedly ‘artificial’ or ‘putting on a voice’. Stressing further, stylized utterances have a performed character and index a speaker’s identity switch of some kind, in the sense that he/she makes it clear to other interactants that the identity taken up is not the one that would be expected from him/her in that context. Thus, a speaker can switch from a typical identity to a different one thereby putting on a show. In a sociolinguistic investigation of the bilingual childrearing practices of native English-speaking intermarried fathers living in Japan, Jackson (2009) examines how linguistic practices are tied to questions of power and identity within a political economy of language. In this conception, where identity is viewed as a performance and is fluid and unfixed, language use becomes very much an act of identity. Indeed, language use is intricately related to the ways in which individuals can discursively construct

their identities, as well as position oneself and partner in linguistic intermarriage (Jackson, 2009: 68).

Furthermore, Auer (2007) presents social identity as another perception of individuality. This concerns the construction and management of identities in interaction; that is, how individuals demonstrate or position themselves from the standpoint of societal relevance during the process of interaction. It involves the extent to which individuals can mobilise diverse possibilities within or across the linguistic systems of their repertoire – grammar, phonology, and lexicon – in order to symbolically express their social identities. His view follows the constructivist approach to social identities which dissolved the unity of the individual as a social actor into an array of acts of identification. But the approach transformed identity into identities, and thus reanalysed sociolinguistic variables from symptoms into symbols (Auer, 2007 citing Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985: 182). Considering this present study, the assumption is that linguistic choices of the students will reveal their natural reflexes of identities. Participants in this sense are treated as unique quasi-beings which express their identities through certain features equally unique to them. Among these features, the national (standard) language has a privileged role (Auer, 2007: 3).

Schneider (2003: 186) remarks that life circumstances and available cultural knowledge provide resources for the active process of the construction of distinctive selves. The person who describes him or herself as somehow detached from the self calls on the idea of a “real” autonomous and authentic self that resides deep within each of us. We internalized various views of ourselves because of our membership of a social group by virtue of where we are naturally placed. Looking at how front-line managers establish managerial identities, Down and Reveley argue that displaying oneself in spoken interaction with others is central to

identity formation, by providing face-to-face confirmations of identity. The reason is that face-to-face encounters are an important resource that actors can use to confirm narrative identities (Down and Reveley, 2009 citing Goffman, 1990). A pivotal point of contention has been the extent to which human agency shapes self-identity in the context of wider discourses and other social structures like race and class that impinge on organizational members. Therefore, identities are constructed within discursive contexts, but individuals are able to influence and shape these contexts (Down and Reveley, 2009: 382). The fact is that individuals are engaged in identity construction by combining the internal self-reflection and external engagement with various discursively available social identities.

Also, Auer (Auer, 2007: 3) considers the notion of ethnic identity citing (Edwards, 1985; Ting-Toomey, 1999) and argues that ethnic identity expresses allegiance to a group through common ancestry where language can form part of it. In a similar manner, Gordon (2003) agrees that ethnic identity recognizes the existence of identities and loyalty rooted in common language, culture, or territory that people of all societies have. Another important option that Auer considers is cultural identity, even though at times this can include ethnic identity. Cultural identity is a social construction (Fong, 2003; Yep, 2003) and based on learned behaviour and identification of communications of a shared system (Fong, 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1999 cited in Auer 2007). This means that cultural identity is linked to socialisation in a given cultural context rather than just attachment and affiliation based on origins and ancestry. According to this view, Chiro affirms, “minority group members can have either strong or weak identifications with their own or mainstream cultures. In such cases, a strong ethnic identity does not necessarily imply a weak relationship or low involvement with the dominant culture. Indeed, strong identifications with both groups are indicative of integration or biculturalism, whereas identification with neither group suggests marginality. While an

exclusive identification with the majority culture indicates assimilation, identification with only the ethnic group indicates separation” (Chiro, 2008: 18). This occurs when people move away from their parental home.

#### **2.2.1.4 Poststructuralist approach**

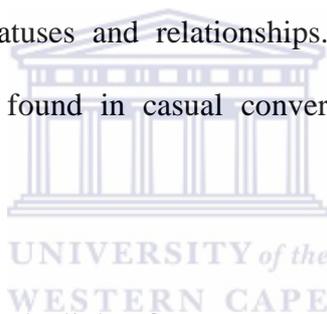
This approach explains how languages are appropriated in the construction and negotiation of particular identities. They consider language choices in multilingual contexts as embedded in larger social political economic and cultural systems (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004: 10). This means that they recognise the sociohistorically shaped, contestable, unstable and mutability of ways in which language ideologies and identities are linked to relations of power and political arrangements in communities and societies. Poststructuralist approaches bring into light the hybrid, transgendered, and multiracial identities that have been ignored by pointing to the splits and fissures in categories which were previously seen as bounded or dichotomous systems (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004: 13). They combine the sociopsychological approach (Davies and Harre, 1990; Edwards, 1997; Gergen, 1994; Harre and van Langenhove, 1999) and the poststructuralists approach (Bourdieu, 1991; Cerulo, 1997; Weedon, 1987) to highlight five identity options available to people while negotiating identity. The first identity option stems from the social constructionist view that identity is located within particular discourses and ideologies of language because ideologies of language and identity guide ways in which individuals use linguistic resources to index their identities and to evaluate the use of linguistic resources by others (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004: 14). Gibson (2004) asserts that language is a central feature of human identity. When we hear someone speak, we immediately make guesses about gender, education level, age, profession, and place of origin. Beyond this individual matter, a language is a powerful symbol of national and ethnic identity (Gibson, 2004: 1). Stressing further, he believes that

speakers who embrace the identity of a particular community will engage in positive identity practices, while those who reject the identity will use negative identity practices to distance themselves from it (citing Bucholtz, 1999). However, he agrees that neither identity nor language use is a fixed notion; both are dynamic, depending upon time and place (Norton, 1995). How we perceive ourselves changes with our community of practice, allowing us multiple identities over the years or even within a day. In discussions of identity, an ethnic group or individual ascribing to that group may have a symbolic attachment to an associated language, but may use another more utilitarian language instead. More commonly, an ethnic group identifies with a specific language (Gibson, 2004: 3).

The approach taken here is that although the social address of a speaker (i.e., ethnicity, sex, age, etc.) influences the experiences which shape identity, social identity is not something which is determined by these factors, but rather something which is constructed through discourse (LePage and Tabouret- Keller 1985; Blackledge and Pavlenko 2001). Further, the construction of identity varies situationally as the salient aspects of the interlocutors' identities change across interactions. Also, Fuller (2007) addresses the question of how language choice is used to express and negotiate identity. He examines the language use in a combined fourth/fifth/sixth grade bilingual classroom containing 13 Mexican-American children and discovers that identity emerges within their interaction. According to him, identities, including ethnic identity are negotiable and variable, and there is no one-to-one correspondence between language and ethnic or national identity (Fuller, 2007: 106).

Integral to the study of identities within this framework is the idea that individuals may adopt multiple positions, and that these different aspects of identity may be salient in different interactions, or even concurrently. Studies of bilingual communities have shown that

language choice is often a key aspect in such identity construction. Following the first option is the poststructuralist thinking, in particular Bourdieu's model of symbolic domination that identities are embedded within power relations. This belief often contributes to the indexical linking of linguistic varieties with character types and cultural traits, whereby linguistic behaviours of others are seen to be derived from their social, political, intellectual or moral character, rather than from national origin. In the analysis of sentence-level grammatical patterns and speakers mood choices, Banda (2005) shows how interactants construct identities and social roles, as well as role relationships. He aptly sums up the relationship between social roles of male and female which require distinctive grammatical behaviours, with implications for power relationships between interactants. He discovers that code choices signal specific roles, statuses and relationships. He is of the view that similar grammatical patterns would be found in casual conversations among men and women anywhere.



The third identity option is seen in the light of poststructuralist inquiry in which Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) discuss multiplicity, fragmentation and hybridity identities. They highlight 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. This option is in contrast to studies on identity which privileged a single aspect of identity, most commonly ethnicity or gender at the expense of others. Here, it is believed that individuals often shift and adjust ways in which they identify and position themselves in distinct contexts. In this conception, Kazmierska (2006) examines the narrative of a Turkish woman living in Germany for the process of identity changes influenced by the narrator's migration experiences. According to him, immigrants must face problems of adaptation in

new social and cultural environments (Kazmierska, 2006: 73). Also, changes can be marked by turning points constituted by critical incidents. The biographical situation of an immigrant generates many critical incidents which reflect the impact of this experience on one's identity (Kazmierska, 2006: 76). The fourth identity option expresses identity on the platform of imagination which plays a crucial role in the process of creation of new identity or in Hall's (1990) terms, in the process of imaginative production of identity. A process they consider is often aided by the use of new linguistic terms, visual art, and literary narratives. This imagined option possibly will create new practices of self-representation. According to this view, the individual identity is not fixed once and for all after achieving a certain degree of maturity; rather, it is continually socially constructed and subject to contradictions, revisions and change through reflexions throughout the life-span of the individual concerned (Hall, 1992; Nkomo and Cox, 1996; cited by Lindgren and Wahlin, 2001: 359).

In the description of boundary-crossing individuals and the way they construct identities through interaction and reflection, Lindgren and Wahlin (2001:357) argue that life is an ongoing process of identity construction, whereby reflection upon life episodes and the pattern of such episodes shape identities. This view could help us understand how modern individuals construct their identity in the absence of traditional stable life contexts. The individual is not only someone who exists as a definition generated by others, but also as a self-defined person with a free will and the possibility of choosing direction. Since narrative-texts serve as data for this study, I will briefly review scholars' contributions to identity and narratives.

### **2.3 Narratives identity**

After everything else, narratives identity plays a particular important role in our account of the negotiation of identities. In this opinion, the phenomena of unprecedented transnational

migration, displacement and creation of new diasporas often lead to tension and shifting identities experienced by groups and individuals. Identity narratives offer a unique means of resolving this tension, reconstructing the links between past, present and future, and imposing coherence where there was none (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004 citing Czarniawska, 2000; Hall, 1990; Pavlenko, 1998; 2001). In this vein, identities are the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within the narratives of the past, present and future.

One of the ways in which we construct identity is through narrative. The self is delineated and embodied in narrative constructions or stories. A person's identity is not to be found in behaviour nor in the reaction of others (though important) but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative ongoing. The main challenge for individuals in this post modern society is to maintain a coherent narrative of self in the face of the overwhelming barrage of identity possibilities provided by modern life (Schneider, 2003: 188). Schneider argues further that the stories we tell about ourselves are not simply recitations of the facts of our lives. Rather they are artful constructions that draw on both our life experiences and on culturally available discourses to cast our lives and ourselves in particular ways (Schneider, 2003 citing Holstein and Gubrium, 2000). In the words of van der Veen and Cook-Gumperz (2007: 1), "narratives are written or spoken texts, or symbolic performances, in which a transformation from an initial to a final state is recounted."

The types of narratives that people tell may reveal a great deal about their perspectives, their expectations for the future, beliefs, and personal philosophy. Narratives may reflect cultural archetypes which shape community character, and when told during ritual gatherings, they serve as a means of co-constructing the identities of both the speaker and listeners as members of that community". In the opinion of Pléh (2003: 188), "narration is a very special

feature of human nature, and therefore, it is somehow a key to understanding humans. It is a basic non-associative organizing principle of the human mind, the mirror of thought". Stressing further, human mind is characterized by spatial and temporal disintegration or distribution. The disorganized events in our mind get organized through the mediation of stories we tell to ourselves. The unity of consciousness and self disappears as a first step and comes back through the back door as narrative integration (Pléh, 2003:194).

A discourse unit that provides an excellent locus for investigating issues of identity is the narrative. Brockmeier and Carbaugh (2001:1) point out the importance of narrative as an expressive embodiment of our experience, as a mode of communication, and as a form for understanding the world and ultimately ourselves. Additionally, Turner (1996: 4) notes: that narrative is the fundamental instrument of thought. It is our chief means of looking into the future, of planning, and of explaining. It is a literary capacity indispensable to human cognition generally. Hence, narratives structure our experience, our knowledge and our thoughts. There is interplay between language, narrative and identity (Weldeyesus, 2007: 2). Riessman (2000:12) believes that personal narratives serve many purposes - to remember, argue, convince, engage, or entertain their audience. To emphasize the performative element is not to suggest that identities are inauthentic, only that they are situated and accomplished in social interaction. Informants do not reveal an essential self as much as they perform a preferred self, selected from the multiplicity of selves or persona that individuals switch between as they go about their lives.

Tetrault (2003) focuses on characteristics natural to human identity attributes worldwide and argues that identity is presently used in two linked senses: (a) social identity which refers simply to a social category marked by characteristic features or attributes; and (b) personal

identity which predicates a person such that if they are changed, it is no longer the same person. By examining whether questions of identity are central to theories of language, Norton (1997: 410) asserts that every time language is used, people are not only exchanging information with their interlocutors; they are also constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of what they are and how they relate to the social world. Norton's view corroborates Gibson's (2004) position that language is a central feature of human identity because it serves as the vehicle by which messages are meaningfully conveyed from speakers to listeners or writers to readers.

In a similar vein, Clarke (2005) argues, language and identity are closely connected having obtained a clearer picture on the use of language to express identity in Russia; and also the way in which people represent what is foreign and unfamiliar when describing a group or nation to which they do not belong. He strongly emphasizes that if identity is seen as a set of characteristics that define an individual or a group; then, language is an important means by which these characteristics are communicated. Furthermore, by investigating the ways in which individuals introduce and frame identity, Ricento and Wiley (2005: 23) emphasize that identity is constructed, maintained and negotiated through language and discourse. Banda (2005: 226) concurs with this point using Conversational Analysis in SFL theory to investigate role structure as well as analyse encoded statuses and dimensions of social identity in Zambian/English casual conversation. His data from an authentic multilingual conversation in an urban setting demonstrate how multilingual conversationalists utilize the grammatical resources of the different languages at their disposal to make interpersonal meanings in casual talk. Through an analysis of sentence-level grammatical patterns, and of speakers' mood choices in particular, he argues that grammatical choices in speech play a role in constructing social identities.

Identity has been constructed against the background of demographic change drawing upon certain cultural resources such as myths, symbols and narratives, to construct collective identity. These cultural resources are also expected to be used extensively by participants in this research because according to Conway (2006: 77), they denote a commonness which people share as common territorial attributes. They also imply difference, or a sense of otherness, which operates to distinguish one people from another. From the Yoruba cultural heritage standpoint, Badejo (2007) explores the role of matrices of identity as the agency in a social and cosmic order. Looking at the strong affiliation to core family attributes which according to him maintain balance and harmony with social identity; he believes that African people mark their cultures by a shared vision of social survival and regeneration within their classical traditions (Badejo, 2007: 7). This thrives within the oral and written traditions of the Yoruba people. Therefore, this study will consider language, lexicon, and meaning with the assumption that if people lose their language and overlook their cultural heritage, they have forgotten their living purpose. Basically, the sustenance of cultural legacy for survival of identity, thrive in Yoruba oral narratives, proverbs, songs, dress, etcetera.

Relevant to this research that linguistic choices shape identity is the work of Coulmas (1997) which explores the Biblical account in Judges 12: 6. According to the account, the Ephraim soldiers were asked to pronounce the word 'Shibboleth' with the first consonant as [sh]. If the fugitive would say shibboleth with the first consonant as [s], because he couldn't pronounce the word correctly, they would grab him and kill him. He further argues that individuals create their linguistic system so as to resemble those of the group or groups they wish to be identified with, or such individuals use language to distance themselves from these groups (Coulmas, 1997: 29). When considering the ways boundary-crossing individuals construct

identities through interaction and self, Lindgren and Wahlin (2001) believe that it is done by narrative directed towards language as it is used to convey self-distinctiveness by individuals. In all of these, language puts more or less articulated experiences together into a coherent narrative to clarify how individuals relate to their environment over time.

Tulloch (1999) presents the voices of the Inuit revealing their perspective of the importance of the Inuit language for Inuit identity and declares that language is a root and matter of identity, an enactment of identity and a tool of identity construction. Similar work of Hyden and Orulv (2009) focuses on how persons with AD (Alzheimer's disease) use their remaining linguistic and cognitive resources, together with non-verbal aspects of the storytelling event, as resources in communicating and negotiating their identities in everyday encounters. Their result indicates that other aspects apart from the temporal and referential organization of narratives are important resources for the teller in establishing and negotiating identity. In a related manner, Hammack (2006) examines the life stories of Israeli and Palestinian adolescent participants in a coexistence program. He notes that identity “crisis” occurs in adolescence because it is the life-course moment in which an individual begins to incorporate childhood identifications into an understanding of self that is compatible with the norms of a particular society.

As the literature suggests, language encapsulates our thinking, character and emotions; in the end, it reflects our uniqueness. Despite the widespread opinion about the question of identity and language, we must acknowledge certain weaknesses and gaps in the overall conception of the ideas particularly the skills of Interpersonal elements and marked thematic traits in construction of identities. The literature on identity will be supplemented and complemented

by the analytical/theoretical framework drawn from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL), with a particular focus on the Interpersonal Metafunction.

## **2.4 Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)**

Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday is the influential leader of Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL). Burns and Coffin (2001) write about Halliday:

He believed that language problems were often inadequately dealt with in existing grammars and linguistic theories which focused on language structure rather than language function; and sentence rather than text analysis. His theory SFL framework is designed to explain the inter-relationship between culture, society and language use. One of its central tenets is that behaviours, beliefs and values within a particular cultural and social environment influence and shape both the overall language system (such as English) and language instances, the way people use language in everyday interactions. Equally it asserts that everyday language use plays an active role in shaping the social and cultural contexts in which it operates.

This semantic and functional orientation leads to the conceptualization of language as a resource, or a cultural tool, rather than a set of rules. This is a rather different orientation to other linguistically and grammatically based approaches to analysing language. For instance, Chomsky positioned that linguistics should go beyond merely describing syntactic structures, and aim to explain why language is structured in the way it is – which includes explaining why other kinds of structures are not found. This tends to make language description absolutely explicit.

The Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theory is an approach which proves to be a powerful concept for the study of texts. This framework looks at language from the outside as well as the inside, because it analyses language as used naturally in any social settings. To better understand the descriptions of grammatical resources and the general functionality of language within discourse, texts can be analyzed through SFL. Halliday (1978) argues that the crucial characteristic of SFL is its orientation outside linguistics towards sociology. This orientation brings with it a view of language as social semiotic. Hence, it can equip us to discover tendencies and patterns in texts which would otherwise remain hidden through description, interpretation and making meaning of texts.

Also, Eggins (1994) agrees that SFL approach has helped linguists in the analysis and explanation of how meanings are made in everyday linguistic interactions, which Teick (2004) believes is a theory of language rooted in anthropology. This approach helps us to know about how language works in both cultural and situational contexts. Furthermore, as Burns and Coffin (2001: 96) state, 'SFL focus is on *semantics*, which deals with how people use language to make meaning; and *functionality*, which is concerned with the way we arrange text coherence'. Thus, SFL approach views language as doing because it provides a linguistic behaviour potential that is ultimately defined by the context of culture. All in all, SFL is increasingly recognized as a very useful descriptive and interpretive framework for viewing language as a strategic, meaning making resource.

The systemic model claims that English lexicogrammatical system falls into three major subsystems which are called Metafunctions. Halliday names the metafunctions as: *Textual metafunction*, *Interpersonal metafunction* and *Experiential metafunction* (Halliday, 1994; Teick, 2003: 36). In the metafunction hypothesis, language is said to fulfil the three major

functions above. The Textual metafunction enables language to be packaged and presented as an integrated whole. It is a way we use language to construct logical and coherent texts by looking into the choices of Theme and Rheme in the text. Interpersonal metafunction refers to the use of language to enact social relationships and is associated with the grammatical system of Mood by looking at choices of modality, predicator, complement and adjunct in a text. The Experiential metafunction deals with language users telling their experiences of the world (Halliday 1994: 53). Discussion on the Interpersonal metafunction, which is the focus of this study, now follows.

#### **2.4.1 Interpersonal metafunction in texts**

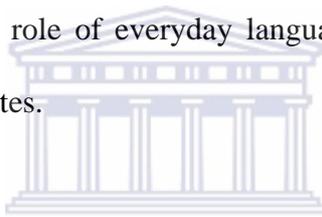
Since Halliday argues that language enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of what goes on around them and inside them (Halliday, 1994: 106); and also that language provides a theory of human experience (Halliday and Matthiesen 2004: 29); many scholars have followed Halliday's concept of Interpersonal metafunction to influence their own work. Gerot and Wigell (1994: 13) agree with Halliday (1994: 71) on interpersonal meanings expressing a speaker's attitudes and judgments. These are meanings to act upon because through such meanings social relations are created and maintained. These interpersonal meanings are realized in the lexicogrammar through selections from the system of *Mood* which are: the Subject represented by a nominal group; and the Finite operator represented by a verbal group.

Following Halliday's SFL (1985, 1994) Interpersonal metafunction hypothesis, Xu (2009) describes modality system, which is a sub-heading in the interpersonal system. He interprets metaphor of modality and its functions in advertising English and points out that metaphor of modality plays pragmatic roles of foregrounding subjectivity and objectivity as well as

expressing politeness and text cohesion. Hence it helps advertisers to establish interpersonal relationship with readers and to achieve their commercial goals by manipulating them. Meanwhile, in the coordination of interpersonal relationships with language, modality enables us to offer or ask for information straightforwardly as well as giving a vague impression of our attitudes and opinions in an indirect and polite way.

As individuals, we have opinions and attitudes towards propositions expressed with language or circumstances described by propositions. This helps us to give judgments on the authenticity of propositions, based on our subjective attitudes and opinions which Halliday (1994) argues enables the speaker to express his/her attitudes with his/her language and exerts influences on the listener's attitudes and behaviours. Based on this conception, Butt et al (2001) analyse an argument in a child's play. The analysis shows that argument in the text is maintained by simple repetition of the Subject, and the Finite which are necessary to maintain the argument (pg. 111). Besides, they analyse a text written by a primary school child who had been taught how to write an exposition. This is done by looking at modality in context. Moreover, two other texts were analyzed: the conclusion of an investigative report meant to make recommendations at the end of the report; and a courtroom cross-examination in which the second speaker is trying to avoid giving definite answers. In all these cases, speakers and writers are including their own opinion. This is very helpful because it sometimes allows a speaker to stand apart from the action as if to say, 'well, it's only my opinion, it could be otherwise'. In other situations, speakers may appear openly persuasive, or even downright dominant about how humanity could, or should, or ought to be viewed. These are the interpersonal elements to be examined in the students' narratives to allow for findings, conclusion and recommendation.

In the line of Interpersonal metafunction analysis, Gerot and Wigell (1994) consider Mood element in a mother-child chewing gum text, to answer the question: What do the speaker roles suggest about the power relations inherent in the interaction? By analyzing texts from the Mood element and Residue, they discover that the Finite element has the function of anchoring or locating an exchange with reference to the speaker and making a proposition something that can be argued about (Gerot and Wigell, 1994: 27). It does this in three ways; through primary tense, modality and polarity. The mood element carries the burden of the clause as an interactive event and it remains constant as the nub of the exchange. In the scenario, like most involving parent-child discipline, it is the adult who has the right to question, to interrogate and accuse. Thus, Interpersonal metafunction's concept of Halliday's SFL, certainly reveals the active role of everyday language use in shaping the social and cultural contexts in which it operates.



With the assumption that diagrams serve a semiotic function, Joubert (2009) explores a descriptive framework that can be used as a tool to analyse the role of diagrams in mathematical discourse. His trifunctional framework offers three interrelated different ways to look at diagrams as a semiotic resource in accordance with Halliday's (1994) argument that any text fulfils three functions: ideational, interpersonal and textual. But he considers only the interpersonal function of diagrams. By examining diagrams as representation and communication, he argues that the author produces an image to create a type of imaginary social relation with the viewer, a relation realised by contact and modality. Considering mathematics as a social and cultural practice, he argues further that the use of diagrams is just as much an essential part of mathematical discourse as other modes, such as the linguistic and the symbolic.

In the same stratum, Wang (2006) attempts the modal choices as a genre by reference to the three contextual parameters. He takes examples from *Language* (Vol. 77, 2001), and employs modal adjunct to modalise the degree of probability of the judgment on the book as being unique among studies of North American Indian languages. His analysis shows that in one particular genre, modal choices are influenced by and help to construe all the three parameters of the context of situation (ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday, 1994: 35) rather than just one of them.

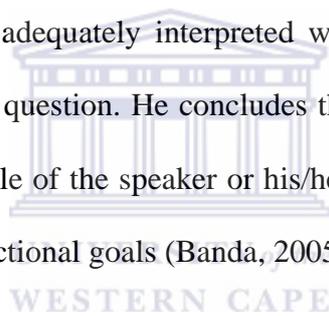
The interpersonal metafunction is concerned with the aspects of grammar which enable interactions between interlocutors. While polarity is the choice of either positive or negative, modality refers to various kinds of indeterminacy that fall between the two ends of the polarity (Halliday, 1994). In particular, the modal choices serve to make the reviews more objective and polite and also help to organize a stretch of wordings, which respectively correlate to the three metafunctions. He concludes that the wave-like nature of modality contributes to the scaffold of the text. At the same time, this way of organizing text helps to create a polite and objective book reviewer.

Using the Interpersonal tool to explore communicative dynamism, Konijn et al (2008: 13) believe that emotions are at the heart of interpersonal communication. This means that much of what is communicated in an interpersonal context is interpreted as or guided by emotion. One well-known type of speaker-involvement in the utterance is deixis, where the speaker and interlocutor serve as the reference point with respect to which categories, like tense or demonstratives can be interpreted. All the same, Verstraete (2007) is consistent with Konijn et al., (2008), Wang (2006), Xu (2009) and Banda (2005), by focusing on those grammatical resources that specifically serve to encode aspects of the speaker and his/her interaction with

the interlocutor. Banda chooses interpersonal meaning as a general label for the speaker/interlocutor-related domain because it is the only one that explicitly includes both speaker-attitude and speaker-interlocutor. He argues that the reference of present and past tense marking on the verb, personal pronouns, and demonstratives can only be interpretive relative to the speaker's and or interlocutor's temporal and spatial location. He argues for instance, in an utterance like:

“I came here and won Wimbledon seven years ago, but we weren't scrapping and fighting at the bottom so this is very sweet on this occasion”.

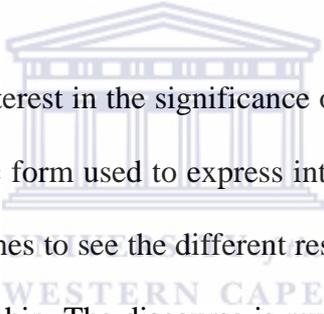
The above statement cannot be adequately interpreted without knowing the temporal and spatial location of the speaker in question. He concludes that the interpersonal nature serves to construe some aspect of the role of the speaker or his/her interaction with the interlocutor in specific ways to achieve interactional goals (Banda, 2005: 12).



#### **2.4.2 Systemic Functional Analysis of Narrative Texts**

Systemics describe a text in terms of the different choices of language we find in a given text and in the way a text's function realises what is happening (ideational metafunction); how it interacts with the reader or hearer (interpersonal metafunction), and how a text coheres (textual metafunction). As Martin (1992: 493) opines, "texts are social processes and need to be analysed as manifestations of the culture they in large measure construct". Systemic linguists place considerable emphasis on the idea of choice, that is, we view language as a network of interrelated options from which speakers and writers can select according to their communicative needs.

Texts have to be understood in their context since they represent the reality that surrounds them; Kambeleris and de la Luna (2004: 241) point out that, “As readers, we have to be able to interpret critically the texts we interact with on a daily basis and become more analytical in our literacy practices around texts. In this way we will develop a critical literacy”. Texts are always produced in the socio-cultural context of their time, and we gain a better understanding of them by taking context into account. Taking into consideration the contextual issues surrounding texts involves a kind of social relationship between writer and reader. Readers need to see social interactions (writer and reader) through the process of reading multimodal texts, keeping in mind that texts are always interpreted according to the cultural frame of the individual (Lirola, 2006: 257).



A study by Lirola (2006) takes interest in the significance of interpersonal meanings for total communication, and the linguistic form used to express interpersonal meanings. He analyses two covers of free British magazines to see the different resources they use to attract people's attention and to encourage readership. The discourse is multimodal in nature and presents an increased emphasis on modes of representation which are not written texts, especially an increased dominance of the visual mode to catch people's attention. This leads us to consider how the visual elements and contexts of a text contribute to our overall experience of the text because there is a clear combination of verbal and visual meanings. The study shows that the designer creates the page according to what he wants the reader to see first on a page and the mood that the text should create. He/she creates a relationship between the different parts of the text that contribute to the internal coherence and cohesion. This internal coherence is related to the logic of the text. In Halliday's words (1994: 339): “For a text to be coherent, it must be cohesive; but it must be more besides. It must deploy the resources of cohesion in ways that are motivated by the register of which it is an instance; it must be semantically

appropriate, with lexicogrammatical realizations to match (i.e. it must make sense); and it must have structure”. This present study takes advantage of what the participants told the researcher about themselves to gain full understanding of the participants’ identities.

Kawashima (2004) examines texts selected from a magazine in the light of SFL methodology. The lexico-grammatical analysis of the texts focused on investigation of the ways these texts construct the relationship between the writer and the reader. There are two main variables of context that influence every text. Firstly, language use occurs within a context of culture, which determines which genres are permissible within a given society. Secondly, it is dependent on the context of situation, also known as register, comprising three critical contextual variables which both determine and are influenced by the meanings realized in texts (Kawashima, 2004: 1). The study also addresses comparison of the ways in which writer-reader relations construct identity in texts. The construction is concerned with the social relations between interactants, and is reflected by the use of interpersonal metafunction in a text. The linguistic analysis using SFL tools reveal features of a more unequal power relationship, lower contact and low or no affective involvement. Also it shows a close-to-equal power relationship, higher contact and high affective involvement between writer and reader. The writer’s role is to teach the reader what the rules are, how s/he should behave, and what s/he needs to do to pass as a successful student.

A similar line of investigation by Ferguson (1992) explores the analysis of interpersonal aspects of Subject and Finite elements in the Mood for identity construction of aphasic conversation. Data collected in subjects’ homes was from both conversation and elicited role-play. It also involves the test for Communicative Abilities in Daily Living (CADL). Following transcription and clause division, the researcher analysed each clause for its

function as exchange. The two contexts of the samples elicited from the CADL, and the conversation samples were seen to have differing effects on the nature of the exchange taking place. The conversation samples showed mainly the exchange of information, while the CADL samples showed a greater proportion of exchanges involving goods and services, that is, offers and commands.

According to Ferguson, “even if only one of the resources of the interpersonal metafunction were accessible to the individual, for instance, rising intonation, this was sufficient for the successful exchange of interpersonal meanings. This means it did not matter whether the Subject element was omitted from the Mood, nor whether it was possible to reverse the order of Subject and Finite elements to indicate a polar interrogative (Ferguson, 1992: 289). Given the sensitivity of the analysis to contextual variation, it is suggested that it would defeat one of the strengths of the analysis to expect stability of these measures across different contexts. In his opinion, language has abundant resources for the expression of interpersonal meaning which individuals are able to exploit whenever other options may be less accessible, either due to situational constraints or to difficulties with language formulation (Ferguson, 1992: 290).

## **2.5 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the Yoruba people have a sense of identity which they tend to portray by some common features that are associated with them. Also, the construction of identity can be influenced by several factors as individuals tend to establish and maintain social relations; and express social roles created by language. This gets clearer through the use of interpersonal metafunction which accomplishes things by means of interaction. As interpersonal meanings are realised in the lexico-grammar through Mood, Modality and

Person (Halliday 1985), its realisation delimits social groups, and shapes individuals' social identifications and social personality (Halliday 1970). The next chapter deals with the research methodology for this study and now follows.



## CHAPTER THREE

### Research Design and Methodology

#### 3 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on the research methodology, which includes an elaboration text-based methodology on interpersonal metafunction. This looked at aspects of Modality, Mood component combining Subject and Finite element, Residual component comprising Predicator, Complement and Adjunct. It also explains the method used in collecting and analyzing the data for this study. It also explains the researcher's encounter with the participants in this study and the general difficulties that cropped up during data collection.

#### 3.1 Overview

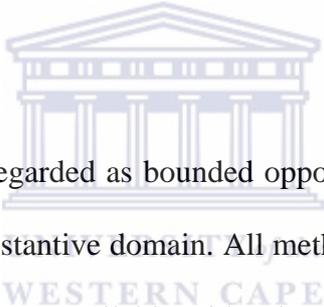
Doing research simply means the systematic use of some set of theoretical and empirical tools to try to increase our understanding of some set of phenomena or events (McGrath, 1994). The element that goes into a research approach is the specific methods of data collection and analysis. This may involve researchers collecting data on an instrument or test or gather information on a behavioral checklist. Also, it might involve visiting a research site and observing the behavior of individuals without predetermined questions or conducting an interview in which the individual is allowed to talk openly about a topic largely without the use of specific question (Creswell, 2003).

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001: 261), the methodological approach means the process, precepts, techniques, laid down rules, techniques, and procedures used in collecting and analyzing data. Supporting this assertion, McGrath (1994: 154) states, "methods are the

tools – the instruments, techniques and procedures by which a researcher gathers and analyzes information”.

There are different types of methods that can be used in data collection. The two that are common among researchers are: Quantitative and Qualitative. However, Creswell (2003) explains three approaches to research method that tends to be more quantitative, qualitative or mixed. In this research I used the qualitative method to collect and analyse the data; but a certain amount of quantitative analysis was presented as well in order to determine the predominant identity option favoured by the participants. Besides, an important aspect of the study was the consideration given to ethical issues.

### **3.2 Methodology**



All research methods should be regarded as bounded opportunities to gain knowledge about some set of phenomena, some substantive domain. All methods used to gather and to analyze evidence offer both opportunities not available with other methods, and limitations inherent in the use of those particular methods (McGrath, 1994: 154). McGrath believes that one good example of the dual nature of methods (opportunities for gaining knowledge and limitations to that knowledge), is the widespread use of questionnaires and other forms of self-report in many areas of the social and behavioural sciences. On the one hand, self-report measures (questionnaires, interviews, rating scales, and the like) are a direct way, and sometimes the only apparent way, to obtain evidence about certain kinds of variables that are worthy of study: attitudes, feelings, memories, perceptions, anticipations, goals, values, and the like.

On the other hand, such self-report measures have some serious flaws. In his example: Respondents may try to appear competent, to be consistent, to answer in socially desirable

ways, to please (or frustrate) the researcher. Sometimes respondents are reactive on such self-report measures without even being aware of it. Arguing further, he posits that these flaws limit and potentially distort the information that can be gained from such self-report measures. As McGrath (1994) wants us to believe, other approaches to data collection, such as observation of visible behaviour, may be difficult or impossible to use when studying particular kinds of variables. For example: How do you go about observing anxiety, or sadness, or some other emotion? In any case, while such methods may avoid some of the particular weaknesses of self-reports, those methods will have other different weaknesses.

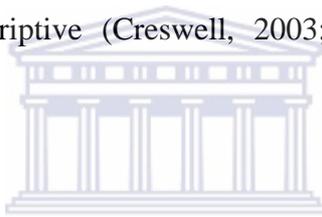
### **3.2.1 Qualitative method**

The qualitative approach was chosen to be the best for this study because it takes care of the experiences of the students through interpretation of their narratives. Qualitative methods involve trying to understand a particular phenomenon of interest without formulating hypotheses (Devlin, 2006: 53). A qualitative approach is one in which the inquirer often makes knowledge claims based primarily on constructivist perspectives (i.e., the multiple meanings of individual experiences meanings socially and historically constructed, with an intent of developing a theory or pattern) or advocacy/participatory perspectives (i.e., political, issue-oriented, collaborative, or change oriented) or both.

It also uses strategies of inquiry such as narratives, phenomenologies, ethnographies, grounded theory studies, or case studies (Creswell, 2003: 21). This approach usually involves open-ended or semi-structured interviews, which are typically tape-recorded and then transcribed. The transcriptions are then subjected to a series of analyses, beginning with the raw data and, step by step, moving to relevant text, repeating ideas themes, theoretical

construct, theoretical narratives, and research concerns (Devlin, 2006 citing Averbach and Silverstein, 2003).

Qualitative research seeks out the ‘why’, not the ‘how’ of the topic through the analysis of unstructured information – things like interview, transcripts, emails, notes, feedback forms, photos and videos. It is used to gain insight into people's attitudes, behaviours, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyles. Qualitative approaches are hypothesis generating, unlike quantitative approaches, which involve evaluating existing hypotheses. The researcher is the primary instrument for the data collection and analysis; it usually involves fieldwork, and it primarily employs an inductive research strategy. The product of qualitative study is richly descriptive (Creswell, 2003; Devlin, 2006; Newman, 2003; Huberman et al., 1994).



Despite the fact that qualitative research methodology was actually used in conducting this study, the shortcomings of this research method have not gone unnoticed. Qualitative research cannot be statistically tested because the information is collected in words only and not in numbers. In case the researcher is interested in giving some numerical interpretations, the approach is forced to be intermarried with the quantitative research approach (Neuman, 2003). Another shortcoming of qualitative research methodology is that it is time-consuming. This is because, to pursue more valid and reliable studies, multiple research approaches should be applied in one study. Coding and analysis are also energy-absorbing (Huberman, et al., 1994). The researcher can be overwhelmed with the flood of different ideas and perceptions from interviewees, especially when a researcher has to transcribe and sometimes to translate the interviews. In all, words may be more unmanageable than numbers.

### **3.2.2 Quantitative method**

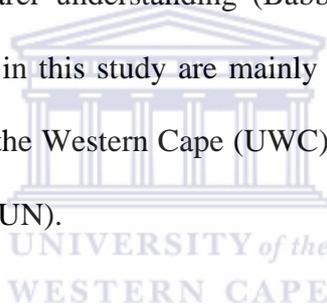
The quantitative approach is one in which the investigatory primarily uses postpositive claims for developing knowledge (i.e., cause and effect thinking, reduction to specific variables and hypotheses and questions, use of measurement and observation, and the test of theories), employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collect data on predetermined instruments that yield statistics data (Creswell, 2003: 21). In this scenario, the researcher tests a theory by specifying narrow hypotheses and the collection of data to support or refute the hypotheses. An experimental design is used in which attitudes are assessed both before and after an experimental treatment. The data are collected on an instrument that measures attitudes, and the information collected is analyzed using statistical procedures and hypothesis testing. Quantitative research is the empirical research in which the researcher explores relationships using numeric data. Survey is generally considered a form of quantitative research. Results can often be generalized, though this is not always the case ([writing.colostate.edu/guides/research/glossary/](http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/research/glossary/)).

### **3.2.3 The mixed method**

In the mixed methods approach, the researcher tends to base knowledge claims on pragmatic grounds (e.g., consequence-oriented, problem-centered, and pluralistic). In this wise, strategies of inquiry involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problem. The data collection also involves gathering both numeric information (e.g., on instruments) as well as text information (e.g., on interviews) so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information (Creswell, 2003s: 21).

### **3.2.4 Research Design**

In every empirical study, observations must be gathered, those observations must be aggregated and partitioned, and some comparisons must be made within that set of data. The comparisons to be made are the heart of the research. They reflect the relations that are the central focus of the study (McGrath, 1994). Research design can be thought of as the structure of research (Cook and Campbell, 1979; the root that glues and holds all other branches of the thesis together (Maxwell, 2005). Going by this argument, the analysis part of the study is actually the area whereby you compare and contrast the facts taken through data collection in order to structure together the similarities of the facts collected and sieve the differences among them for clearer understanding (Babbie and Mouton, 2001: 261). The selected participants interviewed in this study are mainly Yoruba students in three Western Cape Universities: University of the Western Cape (UWC), University of Cape Town (UCT) and University of Stellenbosch (SUN).



### **3.2.5 Semi-structured interview**

Standardized or semi- structured interview was used throughout this research. The design of the researcher is a descriptive one in the form of open-ended interviews with the students. They are generally organized around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between the researcher and the participants. The questions were designed such that they encourage the participants to share descriptions of the phenomena for easy interpretation or analysis by the researcher. With reference to (Mackey and Gass, 2005: 173), structured interviews resemble verbal questionnaires in which the researcher usually asks an identical set of questions of all respondents. This allowed the researcher to compare answers from different participants. For the purpose of clarity, the

semi-structured interview was also used in which the researcher uses a written list of questions as a guide while still having the freedom to digress and probe for more information. The researcher contacted the participants face to face on the stipulated campuses. This type of encounter is important to confirm their narratives since ‘qualitative researchers perhaps by nature, tend to focus on the experiences of actors as they negotiate their worlds’ (Norris and Ortega 2006).

The interviews were conducted by asking the students to narrate the Yoruba distinguishing features, their feelings about them now, the difficulties they encountered identifying with those features and how they have changed as they engage in everyday interaction in Cape Town, South Africa. The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed and analyzed by the researcher in the subsequent chapters. The interviews were scheduled in advance at a designed time and location with an individual or in groups. The researcher bore in mind that it is necessary to rapidly develop a positive relationship during the interviews so as to establish rapport as an essential component of the interview.

### **3.2.6 Case study**

According to McGrath (1994), the basis you use for choosing the cases that are to be included in your study, out of a larger population of potential cases, also has a substantial effect on the credibility of the evidence resulting from your study. Case study is one of the main methods in gathering qualitative data (Flyvbjerg, 2006). On the other hand (Yin 2002), sees case study as one of the unique techniques of qualitative analysis that is used to collect data directly from the source and he was of the opinion that case study should be used for studies that are based on explanations, stories, experiences and events.

McGrath (1994), however, argues further that most of the ways that researchers have to assess correlations and differences rely on statistical reasoning that requires that the cases in the study be a "random sample" of the population to which the results apply. So, the results will really apply to that population of which your cases constitute a random sample; you do not actually select a random sample. You select a sample by using a random procedure. According to this argument, there is no guarantee that the resulting sample will be a mirror of the population. That is, you have no guarantee that your random sample (the sample you select with a random procedure) will yield a representative sample (that is, a distribution of cases that mirrors the population from which you sampled). Thus, using a random procedure to sample from a population or to allocate cases gives you the best chance that the resulting population will be representative, and that the resulting allocation of cases to conditions will be unbiased (McGrath, 1994:162).



### **3.3 Collection of the data**

The participants in this research were initially contacted by email and/or telephone. The researcher outlined the nature of the research and the contribution that the participants could make to this. The researcher explained that all interviews would be tape-recorded but that the material gathered would be considered confidential. All the participants approached were happy to contribute to the research, many suggesting that they will be thrilled with the outcome of the research and giving the researcher their blessings in the investigation. The majority of interviews were conducted at the designated campuses namely: UWC, UCT and SUN. The technique of using a voice recorder was employed for the collection of data in this study. This instrument enables the researcher to record the narratives of the participants which was later transferred to a disc and was played on the computer for transcription. Though 15 participants were intended to be interviewed (5 in each university), a total number

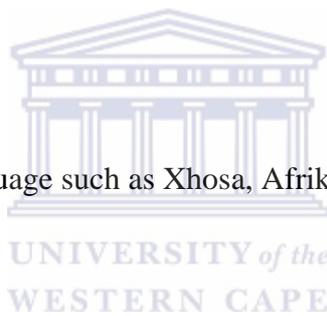
of 14 participants were interviewed. This is due to a technical problem with the voice recorder which failed to retain one of the interviews. The data was collected between September and October, 2010 and English language was the base language used for interaction during the interview.

However, practicalities of the situation as indicated in the research proposal necessitated visiting a participant at his residence. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed for analysis. To build an initial theory for this study, and to have an understanding of it, a series of literature review of previous studies was done to build a solid study. Before interviews were conducted, a set of open- ended interviews questions were made. The structure of the interviews was broken into different segments of the study in order to cover all aspects of the study including research questions. Data were collected in the interviews and copies were made available for the researcher's supervisor.

During the interviews, I skipped some questions with some participants when I discovered that they had already answered such questions while I had asked the preceding ones. I did interviews only with the students, no questionnaire was used. The interview questions are as follows:

1. Are there distinguishing features for the Yoruba ethnic group?
2. Can you describe some of the ways you have employed to maintain the Yoruba language and identity in Cape Town environment?
3. How easy or difficult is it for you to maintain Yoruba identity in Cape Town?

4. Can you explain the contexts in which you practice your Yoruba culture in Cape Town?
5. How are Nigerians and Yoruba perceived in Cape Town? Do you agree with that perception? Explain.
6. What sort of interactions are there between Yoruba and other ethnic groups in Cape Town?
7. Do these interactions have any impact on Yoruba culture generally? What do you think?
8. Do you speak another language such as Xhosa, Afrikaans, etc, in Cape Town?



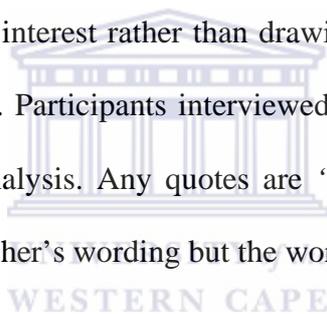
### **3.4 Analysis of the data**

Data analysis involves working with the data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what to tell others (Bogdean and Biklen, 1982 as cited in Merriam, 1998). In regard to this study, the unit of analysis is the clause. Analysis of data is an arrangement, ranking and ordering of data according to their categories and similarities for a common goal to be achieved (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). The analysis was based on the interviews recorded on audio tapes from the participants.

The overall analytical approach adopted largely followed the conventions of template analysis, where the researcher produces a list of templates representing themes identified in

the textual data. The qualitative data analysis package was used for the initial stages of coding. This is a useful organizational tool which allows the researcher to: index segments of the text to particular themes, carry out complex search and retrieval operations quickly, and link research notes to coding. This allowed the researcher to analyse texts at different levels of specificity, that is, aspects of Mood combining Subject and Finite element, Modality combining modalization and modulation, Residual component comprising Predicator, Complement and Adjunct.

These analyses overlap to some extent but taken together provide a comprehensive overview of the interpretations of the participants' perceptions. The analysis was concerned with identifying issues in the areas of interest rather than drawing conclusions about the strength or generalizability of such views. Participants interviewed in the research are referred to as "*Participants*" throughout the analysis. Any quotes are "*written in italics surrounded*" to indicate that this is not the researcher's wording but the words of the participants.



### **3.4.1 Generation of themes and categories**

Based on template analysis, the transcripts were coded into broad themes based on the research objectives and interview questions to create an initial template. Following Halliday's (1978, 1994, and 2004) SFL interpersonal approach to determining clauses creation of meaning in relation to context, the study applied the following procedures:

1. The breaking apart of the narratives into clauses in the light of how language is structured as a resource for doing social life (Egins and Slade 1997).
2. Identification of MOOD comprising Subject and Finite choices; Modality in terms of modalization and modulation, the distinctive patterns of Predicator, Complement and Adjunct occurrences.

3. Using Halliday (SFL) metafunctions, or what Fairclough (2003: 26) calls ‘multifunctionality’ of texts to analyse the clauses in terms of systemic selections in the Interpersonal metafunction network.
4. Interpretation of clauses in the light of interpersonal relationship for judgment and evaluation to understand why the students are speaking as they do, and even identify less immediate social causes (Fairclough 2003: 11).
5. Discussion of findings using the inductive logic assumed in most qualitative studies to illuminate effectively the understanding of the students’ construction of identity (Auer 2007, Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004).

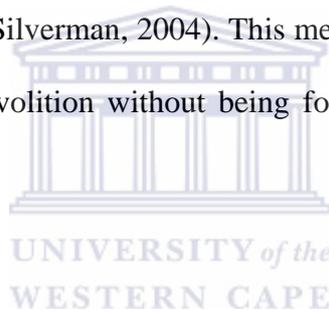
### **3.5 Ethical Issues**

Appropriate ethical consideration was taken into consideration because of the sensitivity of the issue on the ground. The anonymity of the participants in relation to the information shared was maintained. During interviewing, the participants shared information that could “jeopardize their position in a system” (Di-Cicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006: 319). This information remained anonymous and protected from those whose interest conflicts with those of the participants. Interviews may result in opportunities for individuals to vent their frustrations and share their experiences. In view of this participants were given the informed consent form to give their consent to participate in the interview (Silverman 2000).

Before the research was undertaken, a consensus was reached by the researcher and the participants, and the researcher saw to it that there must be no breach of contract. An ethical consideration form asking for permission to conduct the research was given to the students wherein both parties agreed upon the statement and promised not to breach the agreement

(the researcher and the participants). The researcher explained to the participants what the research entails and why the data is being collected in that particular setting.

The participants were informed of their right to withdraw the information he/she had provided if need be. The protection of the participants from harm, the assurance of the confidentiality of the research data, and the question of deception of subjects were also highlighted as very important ethical principles (Frankel and Wallen, 1993). Finally, the participants will be granted access to the transcripts and to the research findings if need be. The researcher made it clear to all the participants that their participation is voluntary and they can opt out and withdraw their services anytime they feel so without being pestered or humiliated for their withdrawal (Silverman, 2004). This means that the participants joined the research team out of their own volition without being forced or compelled (Bennett et al, 1994).



### **3.6 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have discussed the meaning of research method, elaborated on research design, the method of data collection for the research, the method of data analysis and ethical issues. The following chapter is concerned with template analysis of the data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Analysis of the construction and deconstruction of Yoruba identity

#### 4 Introduction

In this chapter, I analysed the data of this study according to how participants deploy linguistic elements across their narratives to make interpersonal meanings. Following Eggins and Slade (1997), I analysed the use of mood choices, that is, how mood choices are effectively used to construct and deconstruct Yoruba identities. Also, I analysed the use of incomplete clauses, Subject/Finite, Predicator, Complement and Adjunct which are the components of interpersonal metafunction framework. This analysis determines meanings created in clauses in relation to context (Halliday, 1994), that is, exploration of clauses in the light of how language is structured as a resource for doing social life (Eggins and Slade, 1997).

#### 4.1 Mood choices in the narratives

In this section, I examined how participants in this study use Mood choices to express semantic and grammatical differences in the forms of declarative, interrogative and imperative. According to scholars, the crucial relationship in interpersonal meanings is between grammatical functions. Two grammatical features carry the main burden of interpersonal meanings: Subject and Finite. This combination makes the MOOD BLOCK of a clause where the Subject represents the participant in the clause and the Finite corresponds to the auxiliary verb in the clause (Butt et al., 2001: 88). Thus, both the Subject and Finite make it possible for participants to move their propositions forward impressing the different

identity options at their disposal. In this regard, it is argued that whether the participant chooses to use declarative, interrogative or imperative Mood choices has implications for the kinds of interpersonal meanings and identities portrayed. The table below represents the arrangement of clauses into mood choices in this study:

**Table 4.1: Frequency of clause categories in participants' narratives**

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Declarative mood</b>	<b>Interrogative mood</b>	<b>Imperative mood</b>	<b>Incomplete Clauses</b>	<b>Individual total</b>
Participant 1	28		-	5	33
Participant 2	50	-	-	4	54
Participant 3	93	6	-	5	104
Participant 4	94	3		1	98
Participant 5	81	1		9	91
Participant 6	79	2		2	83
Participant 7	61	1		4	66
Participant 8	44	1		6	51
Participant 9	87	3		3	93
Participant 10	120	4		4	128
Participant 11	73	5	1	2	81
Participant 12	86	3		2	91
Participant 13	78	1		-	79
Participant 14	47			1	48
<b>Gross Total</b>	<b>1021</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>1100</b>
<b>Percentages</b>	<b>(92.8%)</b>	<b>(2.8%)</b>	<b>(0.09%)</b>	<b>(4.31%)</b>	<b>(100%)</b>

From the above table, out of the 1100 clauses analysed, the majority 1021 (92.8%) clauses are declaratives. The dominance of declarative Mood indicates that participants in this study are giving information, most normally making statements (Eggins and Slade, 1997; Banda, 2005). For this reason, the Subject always precedes the Finite and the Finite is always in present tense. Examples are contained in the excerpts below:

**Table 4.2: Analysis of declarative Mood**

No	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement
1	<i>The popular traditional attire in Yoruba land</i>	<i>is</i>		the <i>agbada, buba</i> that's for men (Participant 12)
2	<i>We</i>	<i>have</i>		<i>eh... ekojije that eh... they call it pap</i> (Participant 11)
3	<i>We</i>	<i>have</i>		<i>amala, we have eba, we have eh ... in the Ijebu land we have eh ... this eh ... ebiripo</i> (Participant 12)
Mood			Residual	

From the above table, two columns represent the Subject plus Finite components of each clause. The declarative mood enables the participants to construct identities in an as-a-matter-of-fact way. For this reason the attire associated with the Yoruba is described as if it were common-sense knowledge. In the literature, it is argued that declarative clauses are used to initiate conversational exchanges by putting forward information for negotiation. Thus, participants in this study take on an active initiatory role by giving factual information. Furthermore, declaratives can present either factual information or attitudinal opinion, or

useit to query prior talk, to challenge and to counter-challenge (Eggins and Slade 1997: 85). I shall analyse the use of interrogative Mood next.

Interrogatives are typically used to initiate an exchange by requesting information from others. They thus construct the speaker as dependent on the response of other interactants (Eggins and Slade 1997: 85). It is not surprising that there is less use of interrogatives in this study. Participants used interrogatives in a total of 30 (2.8%) times as represented in the above table (Table 4.1). Usually in the interrogative clause, the Finite comes before the Subject (opposite of declarative) and is realised in an interrogative Mood. This is a feature of the polar interrogative which expects a yes/no response. In information-seeking questions, the question word is Wh – functioning as Subject, then the Finite follows it (Butt et al., 2001: 95). The questions which participants used in this study are more rhetorical and meant for continuity rather than asking for answers or they can be the type of questions that people asked the participants. In any case, most of the questions do not require answers. Consider the excerpts below:

**Table 4.3: Analysis of interrogative Mood**

No	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement
4	<i>What</i>	<i>is</i>		<i>this?</i> (Participant 4)
5	<i>What kind of soup</i>	<i>is</i>		<i>this?</i> (Participant 11)
6		<i>Are</i> <i>(Oh)</i> <i>are</i>	<b>Subject</b> <i>you</i> <i>you</i>	<i>Yoruba?</i> <i>Ibo?</i> (Participant 3)
Mood			Residual	

As can be seen from the example, both participants asked these questions reiterating what others asked them during interactions. These are questions asked in the context of describing a particular food and soup of Yoruba people. However, still on interrogative Mood, the following examples are questions which participants asked during the interview not requiring any response from the researcher but which are projected clauses with rhetorical meanings. Examples are represented below:

**Table 4.4: Analysis of interrogative Mood**

	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>	
7	<i>What</i>	<i>do</i>		<i>you call it?</i> (Participant 8)	
8		<i>Is</i>	<b>Subject</b>	<i>called</i>	<i>dansiki or so?</i> (Participant 9)
			<i>it</i>		
Mood	UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE			Residual	

Excerpts 7 and 8 above are not interrogatives demanding information either from the researcher or anyone else in particular. I would argue therefore that in the process to make definite statements, the participants repeated the questions so as not to lose their train of thought. These types of questions are gap fillers or techniques which participants used to hold on to the narratives plot while thinking of what next to say. Eggins and Slade (1997) have argued that because interrogatives encode information imbalance, they are not common in casual conversations. Hence, it is not surprising that there are few interrogatives in this study because the context of the research is that in which only the researcher was asking questions from the participants. In return, the participants only expatiate on classification of selves as

distinctive personalities thereby negotiating their identities. I will consider the use of imperative Mood below.

All imperatives are implicitly addressed to the addressee. The imperative typically does not contain the element of Subject or Finite but consists of only a Predicator plus any of the non-core participants of Complement and Adjuncts (Eggins and Slade 1997: 88). There is one instance of use of imperative Mood in this study, 1(0.09%) clause as indicated in the table above. Consider the example below:

**Table 4.5: Analysis of imperative Mood**

	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
9	<i>Tell</i>	<i>your kids</i>	<i>to stop</i>	<i>doing drugs</i> (Participant 11)
Mood			Residual	

The above excerpt represents the participant’s instruction to South Africans during an interaction. With this utterance, the participant was compelled by the pain of negative identity to give an order while at the same time trying to defend the Nigerian image. In the context of the conversation, it could imply that the participant was negotiating action indirectly, that is, functioning to encode advice (Eggins and Slade (1997). It is possible also that this participant is frustrated to openly flaunt his identity in Cape Town because of the negative sentiments associated with Nigerians in the Diaspora. Note that he uses the pronoun ‘Your’ as if to dissociate himself from the criminal elements among the Yoruba. The literature has highlighted crimes such as advanced free fraud (419) (Crumpton and Agozino, 2004: 100); drug trafficking, money laundering, human trafficking, religious menace, forgery (Jaishankar, 2009: 345) among others. I would declare without a doubt that denunciation of national

character will ignite the construction of spontaneous identities by individuals. Having analyzed the different Moods, I will now examine the occurrences of incomplete clauses in participants' narratives.

In this study, a total of 48 (4.31%) incomplete clauses are identified. As presented in table 1 above, with only one exception, all other participants used incomplete clauses. Some of the clauses have no clear Subjects but the idea in a preceding clause was carried to another clause implying that the researcher must recover the Subject of such clauses from the context of the narratives. Examples are presented below:

**Table 4.6: Analysis of incomplete clauses**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
10	<i>So,</i>	<i>my maintaining.... interacting with people here .... (Participant 1)</i>			
11	<i>and</i>	<i>eh the way we ... (Participant 3)</i>			
12	<i>Like eh ...</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>have...(participant 5)</i>		

Here, participants are trying to express how they flaunt identities either as individuals (excerpts 11) or as a group that shared a common background (excerpts 10, 12). Unfortunately, they consciously made incomplete sentences thereby continuing to break the flow of their expressions. The incomplete clause in excerpt 10 above has a Subject

component while other components are missing. Excerpt 11 is not showing a clear grammatical Subject while excerpt 12 has a Subject plus a Finite/Predicator but none of these clauses has Complement. I would argue therefore that the method of one-on-one interview, being a spontaneous communication accounted for the participants' difficulty in uttering meaningful expressions. Though participants indicate an initial commitment to expressing an idea in a clause, they suspend it and maybe later restart it in another clause. It could also be that participants cannot formulate an entire utterance at once, which brings about the suspension of their speech, introducing a pause and starting of a new clause. Also, it may be that participants changed their minds about what they wanted to say or preferred to reformulate the idea in another way. Thus, the clauses lost the exact meanings they are meant to convey because they are incomplete expressions. According to Bloor and Bloor (1995: 6-7), the clause has a special place in expressing meaning because it is at this rank that we begin to talk about how things exist, how things happen and how people feel in the world around us. It is also at this rank of clause that we usually use language to interact with others. The next section deals with analysis of Subject person.

#### **4.2 The use of Subjects for personalizing identities**

The purpose of this section is to consider how participants in this study explore linguistic elements representing Subjects in clauses as referents that are the carriers, identified, doers, behavers and sensors of different phenomena that signal identities. Expectedly, in declarative clauses, the Subject is the element that occupies the initial position of the clause. In that sense, it stands for what Halliday (1994) terms 'Theme' of the clause which is "what the clause is about" (Halliday, 1985: 39); "the starting point for the message; the ground from which the clause is taking off" (Halliday, 1994: 38). In the interpersonal metafunction

arrangement, as the literature states, the Subject is the pivotal participant in the clause, the person or thing that the proposition is concerned with and without whose presence there could be no argument or negotiation (Halliday 1994: 75).

In this study, participants used the personal pronouns “*I*” and “*we*” extensively to personalize different identities. Similarly, there are less uses of second person singular/plural ‘*you*’ and third person plural ‘*they*’ Subjects by participants. I elaborate on this later. The frequencies of occurrence of these Subjects are represented in the table below:

**Table 4.7: Frequency of Subjects in participants’ narratives**

Participants	First person singular ‘I’	First person plural ‘we’	Second person singular/plural ‘you’	Third person singular & plural ‘they’, ‘he’ ‘she’ ‘it’	Other nominal elements as Subjects
Pp1	14	-	6	2	2
Pp2	14	5	7	5	3
Pp3	31	10	2	14	12
Pp4	27	6	10	19	9
Pp5	7	40	5	8	7
Pp6	18	8	18	12	12
Pp7	21	4	-	2	8
Pp8	30	4	3	-	3
Pp9	33	1	3	5	12
Pp10	43	3	9	33	16
Pp11	24	13	9	6	12

Pp12	32	22	15	1	14
Pp13	12	11	8	3	12
Pp14	5	22	1	14	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>

The above table shows the frequencies of words in the narratives of participants that occupy the Subject position which are semantically relevant to the negotiation of identities. Out of the 703 regular Subjects that constitute the participants' narratives, "I" by far leads in the number of uses 311 (39%), followed by "we" 140 (17.4%) times. These numbers clearly demonstrate the dominance of "I" and "we" over words that function as grammatical Subjects in the narratives. Participants preference for the use of "I" and "we" enabled them to weave propositions around themselves as individuals or as a group of ethnic nationality. In doing this, they consecutively use these linguistic elements more than the others as Subjects in their narratives. It was easy for them to use the 'I' and 'we' when taking an individualistic stand and being typical in assertions.

As mentioned earlier, the "I" and "we" elements occupy the initial position of clauses; hence, they are what the clauses are about (Halliday, 1985: 39). Hence, personalising propositions pervade the narratives of the participants because they are certain of the kind of identities they aspire to. I will first consider the use of "I" for personalising identities. The highest percentage use of "I" indicates that participants in this study tended towards appropriating individual rather than group identities. Consider the following excerpts:

**Table 4.8: Analysis of personal Subject “I”**

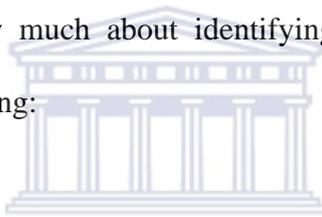
	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
13		<i>I</i>	<i>'m</i>	<i>(very) proud</i>	<i>to be a Yoruba man than to be a Nigerian (Participant 4)</i>
14		<i>I</i>	<i>'m</i>		<i>a scientist (Participant 5)</i>
15	<i>Then to ...</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>'m</i>		<i>a Christian and as far as I am concerned (Participant 10)</i>
16		<i>I</i>	<i>Speak</i>		<i>Arabic and why I speak Arabic is because I'm a Muslim (Participant 12)</i>

The examples above show that considering the use of “I”, participants ascribed to themselves individual identities rather than a homogenous ethnic identity. In excerpt 13, Participant 4 construes himself as socially embedded in the Yoruba social role and history by expressing personal pride to be a Yoruba rather than a Nigerian. This participant prefers ethnic loyalty compared to national patriotism and this is a manifestation of his recognition of the core values of the Yoruba society. Individualistic conjecture of Participant 5’s (excerpt 14) identity as a scientist, Participant 10 (excerpt 15) as a Christian and Participant 12 (excerpt 16) as a Muslim shows that they are engaging in their commitment to educational and religious obligations and the opportunity to depict personal identities.

Therefore, these identity options are reflections of how participants in this study represent themselves in Cape Town. They position themselves as individuals that assume control over events and actions by purposefully initiating and identifying phenomena that drew attention to them. Scholars have argued that participants engaged in personalization of utterances

whether they are revealed in the text and drawn attention to, by the use of the personal pronoun “I”, or whether they are obscured and underplayed (Eggins and Slade, 1997). Hence, these participants are constructing individual identities on an ethnic, social, educational and religious axis (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004).

However, I should like to point out that although the use of “I” is common, the study shows that participants switched from “I” to “we” and vice versa. By using “I”, participants distanced themselves from the group and became individualistic while “we” implies that participants include themselves in the group. In this sense, some participants prefer “we” more than “I” and some participants did not use “we” at all. This is so because some participants actually did not say much about identifying with the Yoruba ethnic group. Participants expressed the following:



**Table 4.9: Analysis of personal Subject “we”**

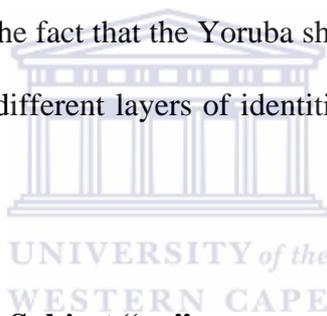
	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
17	<i>But during summer,</i>	<i>we I</i>	<i>can't wear</i>	<i>wear</i>	<i>our native attire here during winter  my native language at least to functions that is Nigerian by attending party or get together for the Nigerian community (Participant 2)</i>
18	<i>So,  Like Yoruba</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>have</i>		<i>special food that we eat that people from the other part of the country are not used to</i>

	<i>people,</i>	<i>they</i>	<i>relate</i>		<i>with you with respect</i>
	<i>and</i>	<i>I ... (amala) we</i>	<i>buy</i>		<i>Yoruba food like 'amala' like eh ... pouno yam, like eh ... 'ila' which is okra (the soup) and some other food items like that.</i>
		<i>I</i>	<i>eat</i>		<i>amala from time to time</i>
		<i>we</i>	<i>eat</i>		<i>egusi also we buy egusi(Participant 4)</i>
19	<i>The Yoruba people,</i>	<i>they</i>	<i>are</i>		<i>well blessed with various types of costumes distinguishing them from other parts of ... other tribes of the country</i>
	<i>Like eh ...</i>	<i>we</i> <i>we</i>	<i>have</i> <i>have</i>		<i>... the women, the local ones called eh ... iro and buba whereby we tie (Participant 5)</i>

In excerpts 17, 18 and 19 above, we can see Participants 2 and 4 started with the inclusive “we” and later shifted to using the individualistic “I”. On the part of participant 5 (excerpt 19), she started with Yoruba people and then further distanced herself from the Yoruba group by using “they” but later brought in the inclusive “we” which makes her part of the Yoruba people. By doing this, the participants make inference from the specific to the general and vice versa. This pattern illuminates individual and collective contestations around the notion

of Yoruba identity. It is also about how actions, re-actions and meanings as well as social processes followed by Yoruba identity options are constructed, maintained and changed. I would argue that the contestation is epitomised through participants’ linguistic behaviour as seen in the interplay between the personalised “*I*” continually tempered by the generalized social attitudes of the “*we*”. Next is the analysis of “*we*”.

Put differently, the representation of “*we*” as Subject in this study is also a sense in which some participants see themselves not as a homogenous collective ethnic group, but as a loosely fitted heterogeneous group with little or no ties with the ‘home’. In such instances, the fact that the participants demonstrated preference for the generic “*we*” rather than the personalised “*I*” is indicative of the fact that the Yoruba should not be seen as a homogenous group, but rather as made up of different layers of identities. Let us consider the examples below:



**Table 4.10: Analysis of personal Subject “*we*”**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite /Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
20	<i>And then</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>different styles of cooking soup which are slightly unique to Nigerians; in some cases Yoruba, in some cases just the Nigerian style (Participant 7)</i>
21		<i>We</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>amala, <u>we have eba</u>, <u>we have eh</u>, in the Ijebu land <u>we have eh</u>, <u>this eh</u>, <u>ebiripo</u> (Participant 12)</i>
22	<i>In dressing,</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>dress</i>	<i>in “asoofi” which is majorly use as a very big attire in Nigeria (Participant 14)</i>

In the above table, the “we” is linked to different styles of cooking, dressing, dialects, etc, which distinguishes different Yoruba identity options as well as different Nigerian identities. I would argue that the participants use the “we” of proximity to build identities around them and consequently to negotiate a distance between Yoruba and Nigeria at national level. The use of “we” is supplemented by “they” even when the participants are part of the Yoruba group they are trying to identify with, Analysis of “they” now follows.

As expected from this data, participants did not frequently use the third person pronouns: “they, he, she and it” (15.4%). Nevertheless, we still found those who used the third person plural pronoun, ‘they’, because the participants linguistically distanced themselves from their own Yoruba group by projecting them the third person. Consider the following excerpts:

**Table 4.11: Analysis of third person Subject “they”**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
23		<i>Yoruba people</i>	<i>are</i>		<i>respectful you know and they like greetings (Participant 6)</i>
24	<i>But majorly 70% of them</i>	<i>(Yoruba people), they</i>	<i>eat</i>		<i>pounded yam (Participant 10)</i>
25	<i>And, eh ...</i>	<i>the Yoruba people too</i>	<i>have</i>		<i>a way we greet each other,</i>
		<i>they</i>	<i>don't</i>	<i>greet</i>	<i>by shaking of hands,</i>
		<i>they</i>	<i>greet</i>		<i>by ... the male eh... prostrating to an elderly person and the lady kneeling down (Participant 13)</i>

By using “*they*”, participants make the tone of their narratives sound rather neutral and objective but at the same time create a distance between them and their ethnic origin. In excerpts 24 and 25, participants represented the ethnic group to which they belong with the third person pronoun. Participants 6 and 23 started by saying “*the Yoruba people*” and later switched to *they* while Participant 10 prefers to use *them* before switching to *they*. By standing apart from Yoruba, participants are negotiating different identities within the parameters of existing social relations in Cape Town. I would argue that being in a different setting, given pressing personal circumstances; the participants displayed a lack of commitment to the Yoruba identity in the diaspora. The next Subject-person I will consider is “*you*”.

In the English language, the ‘*you*’ is as the used for second person referent in discourse. It marks both the singular and plural person. Also, Biber et al (2002, 2006) argue that since “*you*” can be singular or plural, it is not always clear whether it refers to one person or more than one. Similarly, the data shows the use of “*you*” [96(12%) as Subject], in some cases, as reflexive of themselves as individuals, and in other cases as binding on the Yoruba people. In most cases it implies no referents in particular; rather such cases clearly exclude the participants but it is left to the researcher to determine the referents. The examples below are from the data of this study:

**Table 4.12: Analysis of impersonal Subject “*you*”**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
26		<i>You</i>  <i>you</i>	<i>have</i>  <i>drop</i>		<i>something bad in your own culture,</i>  <i>it and take something good</i>  (Participant 3)

27	<i>so that the third party doesn't feel somehow</i>	<i>You</i> <i>you</i>	<i>greet</i> <i>have</i>	<i>to speak</i>	<i>them you speak Yoruba but the only problem is that when you are among people you know, English atimes (Participant 7).</i>
28	<i>And if</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>speak</i>		<i>in Yoruba only few have actually identified that you're speaking the very local Yoruba (Participant 9)</i>

As shown in the excerpts, the participants exhibit a lack of commitment to the Yoruba group because the use of “you” in this context has no clear referent and perfectly excludes the participants. It could also be argued that the participants explore “you” in this manner tending to interact with the researcher rather than personalizing identities. Actually, the participants are keen to express issues relating to their identities but they end up using the pronoun that is not reflexive on self. What this means is that they use “you” to describe general tendencies and this clearly indicates the deconstruction of personal description. In excerpt 26, Participant 3 used ‘*you*’ which was meant to refer to himself, while excerpt 27 is referring to the Yoruba people as a collective disposition to their system of greeting as being the practice in Cape Town. Excerpt 28 is a bit awkward because the participant started with “*I*” but later in the Complement component switched to “*you*”. This participant tries to push away the attitude in his utterance to no one in particular by swaying toward generalization instead of specificity.

Though participants used these Subjects in this manner, they are meant to describe individuals’ behavioural tendencies as demonstrated in different contexts. Ironically, in analysing the choice of Subject person, the participants tended to extend “*you*” to a general

person, an implicit switching of speech function through lexicogrammatical choices (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004). The last type of Subject I want to consider is where the Subject is more than one word and not a pronoun compared to the ones analysed above.

Halliday (1994: 76) argues that the Subject is generally a nominal element, that is, a noun or a pronoun element. Not all nominal groups consist of only a single word, in such a case, the entire nominal group is Subject. In the patterning of Subjects represented by the above table, other nominal elements function as Subjects about 132(16.2%) times in the narratives. In such instances, participants used more than one word as Subjects of clauses. These are clear cases of specificity by making the referent of the clause obvious and less ambiguous. Consider the following excerpts:

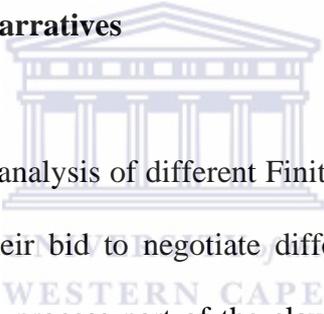


**Table 4.13: Analysis of nominal group Subject**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite/ Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
29		<i>The traditional, our traditional dress</i> <i>Our accent</i>	<i>is</i> <i>is</i>	<i>one of our distinguishing features</i> <i>a little bit strong compared to the another tribe (Participant 3)</i>
30	<i>So, if you see a Yoruba person,</i>	<i>the way that person dresses</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>different from the way Ibo people or Ibo man will dress (Participant 4)</i>
31	<i>Of course when you look at the food um ... um</i>	<i>the diet of Yoruba people also um...</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>different to other tribes which I think is a function of the unique geographical location (Participant 7)</i>

The above excerpts represent Subjects that are more than one word together with the Finite used by participants. We can see from the above that participants actually hinged their propositions upon traditional dressing (excerpts 29 and 30), their accent (excerpt 29) and also their food (excerpt 31) in the process of stylizing identities. As we can also see, the Finite “*is*” works with all the clauses as an identifying process because the participants are identifying the common things that constitute their ethnic identity. According to literature, there is a significant association between Subject/Finite and meaning of a clause (Eggins and Slade, 1997). Thus, the participants are able to embellish relevant clear cut issues that signal identity options. The next section deals with the analysis of Finites in the narratives.

#### 4.3 Analysis of Finites in the narratives



In this section, I shall present the analysis of different Finites commonly used by participants denoting tense and process in their bid to negotiate different identities. According to the literature, the Finite expresses the process part of the clause that makes it possible to argue about the Subject participant. It is always and only the first element in the verbal group and corresponds to what is traditionally called the ‘auxiliary verb’. Where the verbal group consists of only one word, the Finite is realized in that single word (Eggins and Slade 1997: 77) as fused Finite and Predicator. The data for this study shows that the most common Finites include: *am, is, are, have, can* and *do* and they majorly construe relational processes and modal Finites. The table below presents the dominant recurring Finites in the participants’ narratives:

**Table 4.14: Frequency of Finites in the narratives**

Finites	P 1	P 2	P 3	P 4	P 5	P 6	P 7	P 8	P 9	P 10	P 11	P 12	P 13	P 14	Total	%
are	1	5	7	15	16	20	1	1	8	16	11	4	3	1	109	20%
aren't					1							1	1		3	0.6%
is	1	11	11	11		9	20	4	23	10	12	7	9	3	80	15%
isn't	2					1			1					2	6	1.1%
ave /has	2	6	13	8	22	6	6	1	7	8	10	20	7	7	115	21.1%
haven' t/ hasn't	5	1		2		1			1						10	2%
am	1		6	7	5	3	1	4	3	14	1				38	7%
am not				1					3						4	0.7%
will		2		5	2	4	1	4	2	10	2	5	2	1	40	7.4%
do/does		5	5	1	2	2	2	3	1	3		1	4	1	30	5.5%
don't/ doesn' t		5		9	1	1	4	8	9	3	7	3	10	3	53	10%
can				4	4	3	1	4	3	9	3	9	1	2	43	8%
can't						1	3	3	1	1		4			13	2.3%
<b>Total</b>															<b>544</b>	

From the above table, in terms of the regular use of Finites, the auxiliary verb “*be*” (in present forms), that is, “*are* (20% positive, 0.6% negative); *is* (15% positive, 1.1% negative) and *am* (7% positive, 0.7% negative)” are frequently used by the participants. Examples are presented below:

**Table 4.15: Analysis of Finite**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
32		<i>I</i>	<i>'m not</i>		<i>too comfortable with the language itself</i> (Participant 1)
33	<i>Like in Yoruba land,</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>are</i>		<i>fond of prostrating of which it is lacking in the Ibo land or in the Hausa land</i> (Participant 11)

The above excerpts show the negative use “*am not*” and the positive use “*are*” as participants are constructing identities. Excerpt 32 shows that the participant is not fond of the Yoruba language; while excerpt 33 indicates that the participant is stylizing an identity option different from other ethnic groups in Nigeria.

Similarly the possessive auxiliary “*have* (21.1% positive, 2% negative)” dominates Finites in the narratives simply indicating attributive possessions of individuals or groups to stylize identities. Consider the following excerpts:

**Table 4.16: Analysis of Finite**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
34		<i>I</i>	<i>haven't</i>	<i>(really) been</i>	<i>that much of a Yoruba in the real sense of the word</i> (Participant 1)
35	<i>Because</i>  <i>For example,</i>  <i>an Ijebu</i>  <i>people,</i>	<i>we</i>  <i>they</i>	<i>have</i>  <i>have</i>		<i>different languages (dialects)</i>  <i>even in Yoruba</i>  <i>their own type of language</i> (Participant 5)

Excerpt 34 shows a negative attitude of the participant in constructing a Yoruba identity.

Excerpt 35 indicates part of the identity options which the participant highlighted as a distinguishing feature of the Yoruba people. The abundant usage of these linguistic elements “*be* and *have*” could be interpreted according to their functions as identifying and attributive processes (Butt et al., 2001). Since participants are trying to construct who they are, they conveniently identified identity traits and attributes associated with them either as individuals or as a collective group.

The other Finites include “*do* (5.5% positive, 10% negative)” and modal auxiliary “*can* (8% positive, 2.3% negative)”. The examples below are instances where participants demonstrated the use of modal Finites for interpersonal meaning making:

**Table 4.17: Analysis of Finite**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite (modal)</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
36		<i>I</i>	<i>can't</i>	<i>prostrate</i>	<i>to ... if I do that he will be thinking I'm</i>

					<i>not that thing you know (laughing)</i> (Participant 6)
37	<i>Because</i>  <i>Secondly,</i>	<i>I</i>  <i>I</i>  <i>I</i>	<i>don't,</i>  <i>cannot</i>  <i>can</i>	<i>greet</i>	<i>( I don't, I cannot, I don't) understand most of them first of all eh speak English (Yoruba) proverbs and things like that in many languages; in Xhosa, Afrikaans, Ovambo language which is a Namibian language (Participant 8)</i>
38	<i>If I know you are older than me and</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>don't</i>		<i>stretch forth ... even if you are not older than me I don't stretch forth my hand first to you until you do it then I respond (Participant 11)</i>



As represented above, I would argue that the higher number of the negative use of ‘do’ is because the participants are expressing the inability to effectively perform aspects of identity options or markers in Cape Town. This is reflected in the excerpts, that is, Participant 6 (excerpt 36) is unable to prostrate when greeting elders in Cape Town. Also, Participant 8 (excerpt 37) is expressing the fact that his understanding and use of the Yoruba language is grossly limited to the extent that he cannot use proverbs in his language. On the part of participant 11 (excerpt 38), his use of the Finite “*don't*” depicts not disregarding Yoruba manner of respect when greeting an elderly person bearing in mind that he wants to sustain a positive attitude to Yoruba values.

The net effect of these situations is that the present disposition of the participants in respect of Yoruba identity, in my opinion, is capable of weakening their passion for sustaining their cultural heritage in the diaspora. This in turn may set a precedent for other Yoruba in the diaspora who may be similarly inclined. On the use of modal auxiliary ‘*can*’, it is an expression of certainty or definiteness by participants in the performance of identities in Cape Town. As the literature puts it, these interpersonal elements encode attitudinal meanings, they function to enable the speaker to express a position or assessment on what is being talked about. These are meanings made more fundamental to the clause through the use of Finite modal verbs such as *may, could, might* (Eggins and Slade 1997: 84).

Ironically, the modal auxiliary “*may*” is conspicuously absent in the data for this study. Another striking point is that, the data shows the Finites specify the primary tense in which they identify and attribute specifically to the present time. In accordance with Halliday, “a proposition may become arguable by having its relevance to the speech event specified in temporal terms” (Halliday, 1994: 75). Thus I would argue that by the use of modal verbs participants are factual about personalising different identity options applicable to them in Cape Town. In the next chapter, I will discuss the different personalised identity options used by participants expressed in their narratives. Analysis of the Predicator is presented in the following section.

#### **4.4 Pattern of Predicator elements in the narratives**

This section on the pattern of Predicator elements will look at other verbs in addition to the Finites above in order to determine the expressions of action and phenomenon in the participants’ narratives. According to Eggins and Slade, the Predicator encodes the action or

process involved in the clause. It is usually the other element apart from the auxiliary verb in the group but where the verbal group consists of one word only; both the Finite and Predicator are fused in that one word (Eggins and Slade 1997: 81). In table 4.3, some of the verbs that occurred in the table function as both Finite and Predicator. In such cases, both the Finite and Predicator are fused in the verbs.

By copious use of Predicators such as: *have, do, am, is, are, speak, put on* and *wear* participants actually indicate possession of certain features and the ability or inability to demonstrate those characteristics that signal individual or group identities. The pattern of recurring Predicators noticed in the data of this study is presented below:

**Table 4.18: Analysis of Predicator**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite/Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
39	<i>and interaction,</i>	<i>we (still)</i>	<i>speak</i>	<i>the language even with the Yorubas around (Participant 2)</i>
40	<i>Occasionally,</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>put on</i>	<i>my traditional attire (Participant 3)</i>
41		<i>I</i>	<i>wear</i>	<i>my traditional cloth (Participant 7)</i>

In the definite sense, Predicators are used by participants to specify different aspects and phases like seeming, trying, hoping thereby expressing desires. They occurred in the active voice as participants confidently asserted their identities. Thus, Predicators such as *wear, eat, speak, dress, , prostrate* and *greet* are used to declare the actions of wearing Yoruba dress, the eating of Yoruba local foods, the speaking of Yoruba language and greeting. Consider the following excerpts:

**Table 4.19: Analysis of Predicator**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
42	<i>So</i>	<i>that I</i>	<i>will</i>	<i>be able to blend</i>	<i>with those people I'm interacting with yah; like the issue of having to call somebody that's older than me by name (you know)</i> (Participant 10)
43	<i>I mean</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>to prostrate</i>	<i>at least for our women you kneel down for your elderly ones</i> (Participant 11)
44	<i>For now,</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>don't</i>	<i>speak</i>	<i>any of the South African languages even the Afrikaans, Xhosa</i> (Participant 12)

From excerpt 42, after the Finite “will”, the remaining part “be able to blend” is the Predicator. Excerpt 43 has “to prostrate” as the Predicator while excerpt 44 has “speak” as the Predicator of the clauses respectively. The use of these Predicators determine the processes of blending with the South African community, the Yoruba system of prostrating to greet an elder and the inability to speak any of the South African languages by the participants respectively. In agreement with the literature, these Predicators encode the action or process involved in the clauses. They give content to the verbal element of the proposition, telling what is or was happening (Eggin and Slade 1997: 79). Thus, the Predicator elements

are actively used by participants in the process of constructing and deconstructing Yoruba identities. The analysis of Complement follows in the section below.

#### 4.5 The Complement component in the narratives

Another component of the interpersonal metafunction framework that houses the expansion of meanings is the Complement. The Complement is the component that has the potential of becoming the Subject but which is not because it occurs in the Residual position of the clause in the interpersonal metafunction framework (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). In the narratives, participants expand their negotiation of identities by the sequence of words dependent on a head noun in the Residual part of clauses. Examples are as follows:

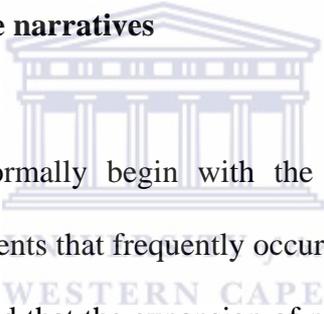
**Table 4.20: Analysis of the Complement**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
45	<i>And then our language also</i>	<i>our language</i>	<i>is</i>		<i>quite distinct from eh.... other languages that makes us to ...</i> (Participant 11)
46	<i>because</i>	<i>We here</i>	<i>don't is</i>	<i>practice</i>	<i>that;</i> <i>like western more of western life style</i> (Participant 14)
47		<i>We</i>	<i>use</i>		<i>our local food; on which we are enjoying here</i> (Participant 5)

With the exception of excerpts 10 to 12 which are incomplete clauses, there is a presence of Complement in all the excerpts analysed so far in this study. As we can see from the excerpts 45 to 47 above, the component of Complements are not as pivotal as the Subject, but they

present material which is open to negotiation is often challenged (Eggin and Slade 1997: 81). For instance, in excerpt 45 we can challenge the speaker's intention about what makes their language quite "*distinct*" from other languages. Equally in excerpt 46, we can start to argue about what the participant means with "*that*" and "*western culture*". In excerpt 47, we can ask the participant to elaborate on what "*our local food*" and "*here*" mean. As observed in this study, the component of Complement enables participants to convey different issues comprising language, tribal marks, dressing, food, greeting, music, dancing steps, drums and hair fashion in stylizing identities. In the next chapter, I look at how participants stylize identities. The section which now follows presents an analysis of Adjuncts in the narratives.

#### 4.6 Analysis of Adjuncts in the narratives



Although declarative clauses normally begin with the Subjects at the initial position, Adjuncts are other linguistic elements that frequently occur at the beginning of clauses before the Subject. Scholars have argued that the expansion of negotiation is made possible by the use of Adjuncts – the parts that do not express Subjects, Finites, Predicators and Complements (Eggin and Slade, 1997: 81). According to the literature, Adjuncts are expressed by prepositional phrases, adverbs and adverbial groups, or conjunctions. There are three main types of Adjuncts: circumstantial, interpersonal and textual which function to add extra information about the events expressed in the core of the proposition.

As noted in this study, the textual Adjuncts are the most frequent in the narratives because participants used this to achieve logical continuity in the plot of their narratives thereby contributing to the narratives' coherence. Next to textual Adjuncts are the circumstantial Adjuncts that participants used to express the manner, times, places, conditions and reasons

that are influential in identifying identity options that participants appropriate in the diaspora. The interpersonal Adjuncts carry the lowest figure being sparingly used by the participants because they probably chose not to express personal opinions as much as they express factual knowledge. The frequency of occurrences of Adjuncts in the narratives is presented in the table below:

**Table 4.21: Frequency of Adjuncts in the narratives**

Participant	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P 10	P 11	P 12	P 13	P 14	Total
Circumstantial Adjuncts															
	11	12	13	43	41	26	28	17	30	46	27	38	23	20	335 41.5%
Interpersonal Adjuncts															
actually						1	2	1	1	1			5		11
I think			2				4	1	4	5	1	8	9		30
really	6				1	2		3	2					2	16
basically	1														1
															58 7%
Textual Adjuncts															
and	2	5	9	7	6	3	7	3	7	15	14	9	1	5	101

													4		
but	2	6	8	9	2	7	9	12	7	12	1	6	3	2	86
if		2		8	3	9	4	3	3	4	7	6	1		41
so/ because	7	13	18	25	19	15	4	1	22	20	10	15	1 7	4	188
															416
															51.5%
<b>Total</b>															<b>809</b>



#### 4.6.1 Circumstantial Adjuncts in the narratives

Circumstance Adjuncts answer the questions *with what, where, when* and *how* (Eggins and Slade 1997). From the table above, circumstantial Adjuncts occurred 335 (41.5%) times in the narratives. A vital point is that, this type of Adjuncts is either at the beginning of clauses before the Subject and in a few cases at the end of clauses. They used the circumstantial Adjunct as an opening move for a new segment of information or to overcome information difficulty. Consider the excerpts below:

**Table 4.22: Analysis of circumstantial Adjunct**

	<b>Circumstantial Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
48	<i>So, based on their languages,</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>are</i>	<i>able to distinguish</i>	<i>them</i> (Participant 5)

49	<i>When my friend's dad came to Cape Town,</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>greeted</i>		<i>him in a Yoruba way and he appreciated that (Participant 6)</i>
50	<i>So, when I see my people,</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>want</i>	<i>to speak</i>	<i>Yoruba to them yah (Participant 12)</i>
51	<i>Maintaining Yoruba identity here...</i>	<i>I ... I</i>	<i>don't</i>	<i>think</i>	<i>is that very, very quite easy and is quite easy and is not ... (Participant 13)</i>

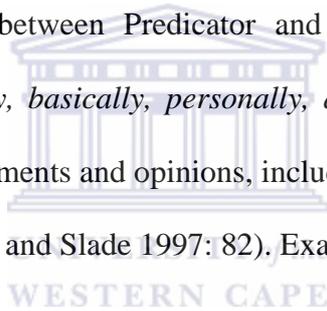
Excerpts 48 and 51 above add extra information through “*with what*” putting the Yoruba language as to what distinguishes them and also maintaining the Yoruba identity is what participant 13 finds either easy or not easy. Here, participants meant to convey a logical relation of meaning within clauses as they negotiate different identity options. By fronting circumstantial Adjuncts at the beginning of clauses, they achieve the thematic importance of introducing background information to clauses as well as establishing a topic. That is why in excerpts 49 and 50, participants begin clauses with information signalling time, that is, “*when*” the participants are able to greet in the Yoruba way and also speak the Yoruba language in Cape Town. This pattern pervades all the narratives whereby participants initiate a proposition with circumstantial Adjuncts functioning to add extra information about the events expressed in the core of the proposition (Eggin and Slade 1997: 81). I would argue therefore that participants used circumstantial Adjuncts portraying those circumstances that are crucial to understanding the surreptitious meaning of their declaratives. The analysis of interpersonal Adjuncts now follows.

#### 4.6.2 Interpersonal Adjuncts in the narratives

Interpersonal Adjuncts are adverbs or prepositional phrases which express meanings to do with judgments and opinions, including meanings about how likely or how intense something is. Some interpersonal Adjuncts adjust probability, certainty and usuality values (Eggins and Slade 1997: 82).

##### 4.6.2.1 Analysis of Modality

A noticeable patterning of interpersonal Adjuncts in this study is the use of modal Adjuncts appearing at the beginning of clauses, between Subject and Finite, between Finite and Predicator and in some cases between Predicator and Complement in clauses. Modal Adjuncts such as *actually, really, basically, personally, definitely* are deliberately used to express meanings to do with judgments and opinions, including meanings about how likely or how intense something is (Eggins and Slade 1997: 82). Examples are below:

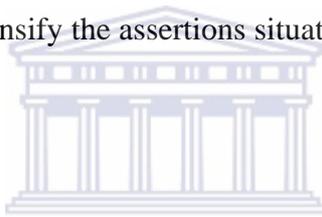


**Table 4.23: Analysis of modal Adjuncts**

	<b>Modal Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Modal Adjunct</b>	<b>Complement</b>
52	<i>Basically,</i>	<i>my Yoruba identity</i>	<i>has</i>	<i>been</i>		<i>all along on the recessive side, even back home in Nigeria (Participant 1)</i>
53	<i>(I think),</i>	<i>Yoruba</i>	<i>are</i>	<i>known</i>	<i>basically</i>	<i>for that (agbada) (Participant 10)</i>
54	<i>Personally,</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>'m</i>			<i>proud to be a Nigerian (Participant 4)</i>

From excerpts 52 and 54 above, the use of the modal Adjunct “*basically*” implies that what participants 1 and 4 are saying is fundamental to the issue of their identities. Participant 1 gives the impression that his Yoruba identity essentially has receded. Participant 10 wants us to believe that the *agbada* is a dress mainly for the Yoruba people of Nigeria. On the part of participant 4, he expressed his personal opinion about his pride for Nigeria and this could be interpreted that he breathes a certain degree of patriotism about his country in the diaspora.

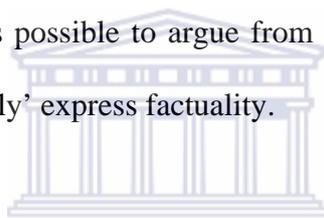
Another pattern is the use of modal Adjuncts between Finite and Predicator in clauses. This choice is made purposely to intensify the real action that participants gave prominence to their narratives. In such instances, participants express factual opinions about issues that are central to constructing their identities. By deliberately placing these modal Adjuncts in different parts, they tended to intensify the assertions situated in certain exigencies. Examples are represented below:



**Table 4.24: Analysis of modal Adjuncts**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Modal Adjunct</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
55		<i>Eh... the environment</i>	<i>didn't</i>	<i>really</i>	<i>permit</i>	<i>us (Participant 6)</i>
56		<i>I</i>	<i>put</i>	<i>... to actually</i>	<i>... celebrate</i>	<i>it on just ... not because my culture and not to neglect it (Participant 10)</i>
57	<i>Because</i>	<i>the minority of Nigerians</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>really, really</i>	<i>gave</i>	<i>us a very bad name em ... outside Nigeria (Participant 14)</i>

In excerpt 55, participant 6 expressed the fact that the social environment in Cape Town did not encourage the practice of the Yoruba style of prostrating or kneeling when greeting an elderly person. Notwithstanding in excerpt 56, participant 10 expressed the fact that he wears traditional Yoruba dresses as a celebration of his indigenous culture in the diaspora. Also, excerpt 57 indicates that participants put up with the fact that many Nigerians unwholesome attitudes in the diaspora are as preconditions to discard the Yoruba or Nigerian identity. Consequent upon this, I would argue that participants could not but prefer exhibiting a hybrid identity in Cape Town. The participants expressed different Modal or comment Adjuncts to display attitudes or evaluate situations (Gerot and Wignell, 1994; Bloor and Bloor, 2004) thereby expressing the continuities and discontinuities that have characterized their present status in Cape Town. Thus, it is possible to argue from the perspective of the participants that the use of ‘really’ and ‘actually’ express factuality.



Other interpersonal Adjuncts are adverbs or phrases used to either play up or tone down the intensity of clauses. They are amplifiers: *totally, absolutely*; mitigators such as: *just, only, merely*; as well as vague expressions: *or something, or whatever* (Eggin and Slade 1997).

We can see participants using mitigators such as *still* and *Justas* in the examples below:

**Table 4.25: Analysis of mitigators**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
54	<i>Even my hair style,</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>can</i>	<i>still see</i>	<i>this person is from eh ... (Yoruba part of Nigeria) (Participant 5)</i>
55		<i>I just</i>	<i>worn</i>		<i>it here just once (Participant 13)</i>

By using the mitigators “*still*”, participant 5 tended to moderate wearing the Yoruba traditional hairstyle in Cape Town. Whereas participant 13 using “*just*” lessened his passion for wearing Yoruba dresses in Cape Town. What is obvious from these expressions is that the participants engaged in an ongoing process of constructing life experiences with the purpose of persuading the researcher into accepting their description of different identities.

Furthermore, another interpersonal set of Adjuncts includes the metaphorical expressions of probability, such as *I think, I reckon, I guess*, where these are not functioning as autonomous clauses. According to Butt et al (2001), sometimes we use a whole clause in a text to express our opinion of the proposition in a neighbouring clause. We use the grammar metaphorically when we say, for example, *I think* when we mean probably, or *I believe* when we mean almost certainly (Butt et al 2001:116). The data for this study reveals the usage of metaphorical expressions of probability “*I think* and *I guess*” liberally by participants. These expressions mainly indicate that participants were being cautious about their assertions. Hence, they just expressed thoughts and cannot be hundred per cent liable to the assertions. Examples are represented as follows:

**Table 4.26: Analysis of metaphorical Adjuncts**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
56	<i><u>I think</u></i>	<i>one of the ways that I normally eh... employed to maintain the identity</i>	<i>is</i>	<i>to speak</i>	<i>Yoruba to people that are from the same cultural descent (Participant 3)</i>
57	<i>Well, <u>I guess</u>,</i>	<i>it</i>	<i>has</i>		<i>a lot to do with keeping the culture alive especially</i>

					<i>some of us that have been here for a very long time”</i> (Participant 8)
58	<i>In terms of food, <u>I think</u></i>	<i>amala</i>	<i>is</i>		<i>more of the western Nigeria food if I’m correct ... ah ...”</i> (Participant 9

In excerpt 56 and 57, we can see that participants implied that the speaking Yoruba is likely/probably an expression of identity in Cape Town. Similarly, excerpt 58 presents an expression of probability in which the participant was not identifying the *amala* food as peculiar to people in the western part of Nigeria, that is, the Yoruba people. In line with scholars’ argument, since modality refers to the various kinds of indeterminacy that fall between the positive and negative poles of polarity, it makes what is said less absolute. In this way, the speaker is not giving a yes-or-no dichotomous judgment on a particular point. Rather, he is playing along the line between the two poles and thus making his argument more objective and not easy to be challenged (Eggins and Slade 1997). As seen from the excerpts, participants explored this metaphorical projecting clause *I think, I guess* as an expression of probability rather than as an expression of objective truth in an explicit way (Kawashima, 2004:6). It is clear then that they are linguistically objectifying their thinking, in other words they are expressing factual possibility.

In addition, a pattern of interpersonal Adjuncts noticed in the data is the use of the metaphorical hedge *you know* and it occurs 65 times mainly as a gap filler and maintaining contact with the researcher (Eggins and Slade, 1997). In this regard, two other Adjuncts worthy of mention are continuity and holding Adjuncts which signal a clause are coherent

with prior clause without specifying a particular logical relation. Some of the continuity Adjuncts are: *oh, well, yah* and others are continuity markers *umm, eh, um* and *ah* used as holding Adjuncts used to retain the floor while the participants organize their message (Eggins and Slade 1997: 83). In the narratives, participants freely used these interpersonal elements of continuity about 278 times to interact with their narratives' plots during the research interviews. These communicative practices are construed as recurrent patterns of functional units that are shaped by interactional considerations. Analysis of the textual Adjunct now follows.

#### **4.6.3 Textual Adjuncts for Construction of coherence and logical continuity**

Textual Adjuncts are adverbs, prepositional phrases or conjunctions which express meanings about the logical links and continuities between one clause and earlier clauses. The three main subclasses are: Conjunctive Adjuncts – links a current clause with prior talk by expressing logical relations of time (*then, next*); cause/consequence (*so, because*); condition (*if*); addition (*and*) contrast (*but*) and restatement (*I mean, like*). Continuity Adjuncts – signals that a speaker's clause is coherent with prior talk, without specifying a particular logical relation. The most frequent continuity markers are *oh, well, yah*. Holding Adjunct words like *umm..., eh..., em ...* and *ah...* which speakers use to retain the floor while they organize their message (Eggins and Slade 1997: 83).

As shown in table 4.6 above, participants in this study make their narratives logical and coherent by using appropriate textual Themes. They copiously used textual Adjuncts such as “*so/because*” 188 times as linking clauses to express logical relations of cause/consequence; “*and*” 101 times to express logical relations of addition; “*but*” 86 times to express logical relations of contrast and “*if*” 41 times to express logical relations of condition (Eggins and

Slade, 1997: 83). The textual Adjuncts occur 51.5% (the highest percentage) of recurring Adjuncts in the participants’ narratives. All these mean that participants include such grammatical features as sequencing conjunctions (Butt et al., 2000) to make their narratives coherent.

In fact, the explicit and systematic usage of these elements is undoubtedly beneficial to analysing the data. What is significant in the occurrences of textual Adjuncts linking or binding clauses is their relevance to the interpretation of the data. The adverb, “so” expresses meaning in a clause where it functions as carrying the consequence of the preceding clause. Consider the following excerpts:

**Table 4.27: Analysis of textual Adjuncts**

	<b>Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
59	<i>So, while there are instances when I do away with it,</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>think</i>		<i>that’s an example</i> (Participant 9)
60	<i>So, well,</i>	<i>they</i>	<i>say</i>		<i>if you are in Rome, you behave like Romans</i> (Participant 11)

In excerpt 59, the participants mentioned that he called his supervisor who is older than him by his first name which is not encouraged in traditional Yoruba culture. As a consequence of this, the participant believed he had abandoned his culture. Participant 11 (excerpt 60) would rather move with the trend in Cape Town than struggle to sustain the Yoruba culture of

showing respect during greeting. This participant is among those that express a keen interest in learning South African languages in order to blend in with the people of South Africa.

In this category of textual Adjunct, participants used “*because*” as a conjunctive element binding clauses in a logical relation of reason. This is a signal that participants tended to continue their assertions by giving reasons that necessitated their attitude and or inability to portray certain identities. Some examples are given below:

**Table 4.28: Analysis of conjunctive Adjuncts**

	<b>Conjunctive Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
61	<i>Because most of us are students</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>don't</i>	<i>have</i>	<i>much of ... to really associate compared to when we are at home (Participant 5)</i>
62	<i>Because of my dressing,</i>	<i>he</i>	<i>was</i>	<i>able to identify</i>	<i>okay this is my brother ; because here we are in a different environment (Participant 12)</i>
63	<i>Because the clothes are quite light</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>need</i>	<i>to really put on</i>	<i>a full jacket with your sweater and other (Participant 13)</i>

In excerpt 61, the participant implies that their busy schedule with regard to academic engagements could not afford them the leisure of gathering for merry making as Yoruba people usually do in Nigeria (Trager, 2001). The message in excerpt 62 is that wearing the

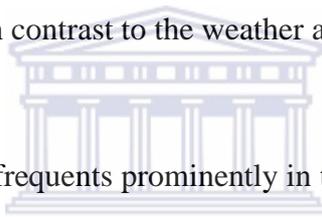
Yoruba traditional dress in Cape Town made it easy for another Yoruba person to recognize him. In excerpt 63, the participant recognises that the texture of traditional Yoruba dresses cannot stand the cold weather hence they need to wear thick clothing during winter. For this particular reason, performing the Yoruba identity through their cultural dress code is difficult during winter in Cape Town.

Moreover, other conjunctive elements used in abundance by participants include “*and*” and “*but*” which mainly linked clauses by expressing logical relations of addition and contrast respectively. Examples:

**Table 4.29: Analysis of additive Adjuncts**

	<b>Additive Adjunct</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
64	<i>And like eh in second one which I say the putting on the attire</i>	<i>the traditional attire</i>	<i>is not</i>		<i>always like eh I use to be in English dress in most cases (Participant 3)</i>
65	<i>And, even if you want to give somebody something like water you know someone that's older than ...</i>	<i>you <u>just</u></i>	<i>bend</i>		<i>down (Participant 5)</i>
66	<i>But, through church activities or maybe birthday</i>	<i>we</i>	<i>found</i>		<i>ourselves in functions: graduation or someone put to bed (Participant 5)</i>

Excerpts 64 to 66 above represent the patterning of conjunctive Adjuncts which form a connection or bridge to a previous clause (Butt et al., 2001: 123). From the cohesion perspective above, the participants explored usage linking conjunctions “*and, but*” as cohesive devices to keep track of assertions from one clause to another. The information that excerpts 64 and 65 offer adds specific examples to the propositional content of the preceding clauses. On the other hand, the information in the excerpts helps to show the contrast between the clause and its preceding clause. The ‘*and*’ signals a conjunction relating to addition in which participants are adding more to the description of wearing traditional dress and being polite as traits of identity respectively. The ‘*but*’ (excerpt 66) signals a conjunction relating to contrast in which the participant highlighted the ceremonies that urge them to wear their traditional attires in Cape Town in contrast to the weather and other official engagements.



Finally, the Adjunct of condition frequents prominently in the narratives of the participants. It represents those conditions in which the Yoruba people exhibit different cultural practices.

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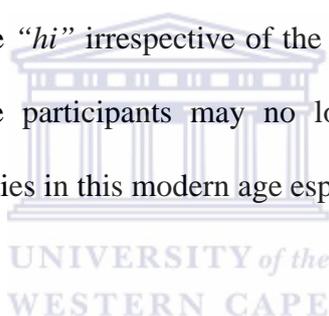
The following excerpts are examples from participants’ narratives:

**Table 4.30: Analysis of Adjunct of condition**

	<b>Adjunct of condition</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Finite</b>	<b>Predicator</b>	<b>Complement</b>
67	<i>If you want to greet him (an elder)</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>kneel</i>		<i>down I mean, that’s for a lady;</i>
	<i>if you’re a man or a boy</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>Prostrate</i>		
	<i>even if you want to give something to an elder</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>Bend</i>		<i>down (Participant 5)</i>

68	<i>If you're eating, if you're working; if you see them at work maybe in their research</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>Greet</i>		<i>them E kuise</i> (Participant 6)
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As we can see from excerpts 67 and 68 above, the conditional “*if*” shows that observance of postures, which are important options for performing greetings among the Yoruba people. However, as I have argued earlier, kneeling and prostrating are becoming less common ways of greeting because people are mobile and in a hurry for business and other chores. They find it convenient to greet by a simple “*hi*” irrespective of the time of the day. Therefore, those conditions as articulated by the participants may no longer be necessary or sufficient stipulations for performing identities in this modern age especially in the diaspora.



The textual Adjuncts such as “*so, because, if, and, but, I mean, like*” are used as logical cohesions linking larger units of meaning into a single coherent text. It is argued in the literature that logical cohesions are usually achieved by linking adverbials. These are similar in function to conjunctions, but the main difference is that conjunctions link the meanings of clauses together while linking adverbials link meanings together across larger units of text, such as from one sentence to another or from one paragraph to another (Egins and Slade, 1997). Thus, participants extensively used different Adjuncts to connect different ideas together that make their narratives compact comprising the different identities they appropriated in Cape Town.

#### 4.7 Summary of analysis

This analysis shows the strengths of the systemic-functional approach in its integration of what the participants said, with what they might mean within the situation in which they said them. As Halliday (1985) discusses, it is normal language use to exploit different options within the networks to realize meaning choices. As a result, participants in this study spread interpersonal meanings across their narratives to give them particular colours, flavours or perspectives. In this chapter, I arranged clauses into mood categories. I used these to analyse how participants used particular marked expressions in the initial position of clauses signalling time, place, reason and condition on which performing identities are contingent. The use of Subject as the pivotal person or thing that their proposition is concerned with was also analysed. I showed that interpersonal elements encode attitudinal meanings by functioning to enable the speaker to express a position or assessment on what is being talked about (Halliday, 1994). These meanings are made more fundamental to the clause through the use of Finite modal verbs and modal Adjuncts deliberately to strengthen propositions.

Furthermore, I showed how the participants have explored circumstantial Adjuncts to introduce extra background information at the beginning of clauses giving vivid understanding of the message contained in their narratives. The use of mitigators meant to moderate meanings and metaphorical expressions for probability or objectivity is analysed. Ultimately, I examined the use of textual Adjuncts for the logical flow of ideas and coherency by participants. All these are linguistic elements of the interpersonal metafunction network explored by participants to make their narratives coherent while revealing the different identities which they appropriated in Cape Town.

As seen from the analysis, in line with contemporary theorists, identity is located in interstices of multiple axes such as language, geopolitical locale, institutional affiliation, and social status among others whereby each aspect of identity redefines and modifies all others (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004: 13). The next chapter will corroborate this SFL analysis by focusing on the stylization of identities by participants in the light of different approaches to the construction of identity.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### Stylization of Yoruba identities in the diaspora

#### 5 Introduction

In this chapter, I demonstrate how the participants have stylized identities. I in turn illustrate how the participants have portrayed identities semiotically through language, dressing, food, greetings, fashion, dancing steps and music. The rationale is to determine how linguistic and other interpersonal elements are used in stylizing identities in the diaspora.

#### 5.1 Stylization of identity through language

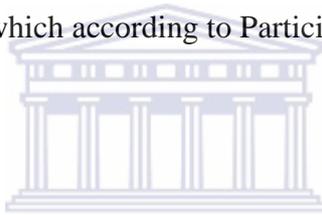
To begin with, Clarke (2005: 7) argues that language is a critical component in the construction of identity. According to him, if identity is seen as a set of characteristics that define an individual or a group, then language is an important means by which these characteristics are communicated. Considering this argument, and indeed in this research on the construction of identities by Yoruba students in Cape Town, language is taken to be an integral part of negotiating identity. In this research, it was found that participants' narratives point to identity options related to standard Yoruba language which includes the standard aspect of the language, its different dialects and accent or intonation. In this regard, in this section, I discuss how participants draw on language as a social semiotic (Halliday 1994) to distinguish various identities.

Participants 11 and 13 argue that Yoruba people are identified by the Yoruba language which is different from the Ibo and Hausa languages in Nigeria. Specifically, Participant 13 stresses that the Yoruba group in Nigeria have sub-ethnic groups that share a common standard Yoruba language. In the view of Trager (2001), the standard Yoruba is mutually understandable among distinct Yoruba kingdoms. Consequently, the participants' contributions can be established within the psycho-social approach to identity study which assumes a one-to-one correlation between language and identity (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004). By drawing attention to language in this context, participants view their language as one of the very important features of negotiating and indexing identities (Blommaert, 2007).

Slightly different from the above, the psycho-social approach has been criticized for conceiving individuals as members of homogenous, uniform and bounded ethnographic communities. This obscures hybrid identities and complex linguistic repertoires of diasporic bilingual and multilingual people in a contemporary global world (Pavlenko and Blackledge, 2004: 5). In the data for instance, Participant 5 declares that the Yoruba language is spoken in different dialects. Participant 13 believes there is a standard Yoruba language understood by all Yoruba people; irrespective of different dialects. It is not surprising then that participant 5 gives examples of the *Ijebus* and *Remos* as different and linguistically unrelated dialects. This in turn concurs with the scholars' view that the Yoruba constitute numerous people over distinct and independent sub-ethnic groups whose differences are recognized in dialects, food habits, use of drums and songs (Smith, 1988 and Falola, 1999). Food, drum and music will be discussed later in this chapter. I would argue therefore that these participants imply that the idea of a Yoruba identity is not a uniform or a homogenous thing. To strengthen this position, in the interview preamble, some participants state that they came from *Ekiti*, *Osun*, *Oyo*, *Ilesa*, *Ijebu*, *Ogun*, *Kwara*. These are places which corroborate the different dialects of

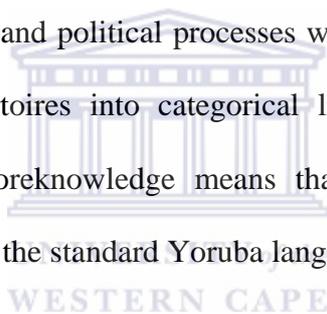
Yoruba people and they serve as interesting pointers that individual identities are also linked to different regions.

The other issue about language involves how Participants 3, 7, 8, 9 and 10 categorise the Yoruba people as a collection of distinctive ethnic units with interrelated accents or intonations. The significance of this is that, the accents or intonations identify them as distinctive units but combined as a larger group of the Yoruba people in Nigeria. In the literature for instance, Coulmas (1998) explores the biblical account (Judges 12: 6) and illustrates that the accent of the Ephramites determined their identity. By stressing that the accent or intonation of the Yoruba people determines their identities, Participant 3 highlights that the Yoruba accent is unique which according to Participant 8 differentiates them from the Ibos or the Hausas of Nigeria.



Also, Participant 7 stresses that the different accents of the Yoruba people are reflections of the individual's Yoruba background. In a practical manner, Participant 12 declares that when he speaks English, it will be discerned from his accent that he is a Yoruba person. Here, the participants' expressions suggest that they are really quite interested in the subject matter of language and identity by continuing to weave accent or intonation into the distinguishing features of Yoruba identity. As mentioned earlier, what this implies is that the Yorubas are not just one large homogenous group but a heterogeneous group who share a language with varying degrees of mutual intelligibility. From this perspective, I would argue that the Yoruba language is a dialect continuum, that is, it has many dialects and the dialect at one end of the continuum may be unintelligible to speakers at another end of the continuum. Hence, there is linguistic diversity within Yoruba identities.

The discussion above demystifies any myth that qualifies the Yoruba as one big homogenous group. Rather, the language they speak is not the same across communities and regions. As we can clearly discern from above, the different dialects are used to perform different layers of Yoruba identity. From the foregoing, we can argue that the standard Yoruba language is an invention of colonial ingenuity mostly taught at school, used by the print and electronic media in public places and in published literature. Scholars have described standard Yoruba language as a mixture of historical dialects and foreign structures (plausibly from English and Hausa/Arabic) using the Oyo-Ibadan and Lagos accents, which does not consist of a single homogeneous dialect, but rather a number of dialects (Ogunbiyi, 2003: 79; Falola, 1999). Similarly, scholars have argued that, “So-called languages are epiphenomena of ‘invention’, a term that describes the historical and political processes which represent mutable, local, and contingent communicative repertoires into categorical linguistic varieties” (Makoni and Pennycook, 2007). Now this foreknowledge means that many Yoruba people are not necessarily proficient in speaking the standard Yoruba language.



It is not surprising that participants in this study demonstrate individualistic attitudes toward the Yoruba language in Cape Town. In this regard, some participants exhibit a positive attitude toward the Yoruba language in the diaspora. For instance, Participants 3 and 7 state that they speak the Yoruba language to Yoruba people as one of the ways they maintain their Yoruba identity in Cape Town. Also, Participant 11 declares that communicating in the Yoruba language on a daily basis is an important aspect in upholding Yoruba values and the concept of traditional practices in Cape Town. At this point, these participants activate their ethnic identities and cultural heritage in the diaspora (to be discussed later), through expressing positive ideological attitudes towards Yoruba (Chirco, 2008).

Furthermore, Participant 5 claims the fact that many Yoruba people are living in Cape Town gives them the opportunity to communicate in the Yoruba language among themselves. She further stresses that in such instances if there are non-Yoruba people around, such people will be excluded from the crux of the interaction. Hence, these participants behave in this way to distinguish themselves as Yorubas and at the same time to distance themselves from other people (Coulmas, 1997: 29). However, the participants are aware that trying to distance themselves in such a manner could create a resentful suspicion. That is why Participant 6 states that in order not to offend the non-Yorubas who are around, they speak English in most situations among themselves.

However, some participants display an indifferent attitude to Yoruba in Cape Town. For example, Participant 1 states that he is not comfortable with speaking the Yoruba language in Cape Town and even back home in Nigeria. This participant claims that English was his mother tongue; hence, he struggles with the Yoruba language but communicates effectively in English. Also, Participant 8 claims he rarely speaks the Yoruba language in Cape Town because he is not good at speaking the language. As a result, he communicates in English but code-switches with Yoruba during conversation with fellow Yoruba people, especially at places like church and on campus.

Studies have shown that speaking a particular language does not necessarily make you ethnically identified with it (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004; Heller 2007). Thus, the idea of linking identity to language is unreliable. For instance, Participant 2 indicates that there are some people that are not Yoruba by ancestry origin but they can speak the Yoruba language proficiently. These people can be said to linguistically perform and negotiate Yoruba identity

options (Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004) through language, but are not necessarily Yoruba by ethnicity.

Indeed, as found out in this study, the notion of negotiation of identity by participants relates most explicitly to hybrid identities. Some participants claim that they are learning to speak South African languages thereby linguistically appropriating South African and other identities. Of course in their narratives, Participants 1, 2 and 8 claim they are able to pick the greetings and affectation words in languages like Afrikaans and Xhosa. In fact, dwelling on this a little longer, Participant 8 asserts that he understood and can greet in the Ovambo language of Namibia. On the part of Participants 3, 6, 10 and 11, they have tried as much as possible to pick up words in Xhosa, Zulu and Afrikaans. By appropriating these languages, it tends to give them more power to negotiate different identities. This makes it easy for them to blend into different countries, including South African society.

In addition to the above, Participant 10 and Participant 13 tried to learn French alongside picking up words in South African languages, not only to enhance their communication in the languages but also the ability to negotiate transnational or intercontinental identities. At this point, it is vital to point out the effect of globalisation on the participants. In the view of Hammack (2006), “globalisation fundamentally alters the culture specific life course and reframes the social and ideological contexts within which identities are formed ... Youth in the context of globalization thus develop bicultural identities, given the presence of (at least) two distinct social systems to which they must acculturate (Hammack, 2006 citing Arnett, 2002). This gives credence to Pavlenko and Blackledge’s (2004) argument that identities are not fixed, but are in a state of flux and are negotiable.

There are some participants that said they are just happy with Yoruba and English only as their languages of interaction. In the literature for instance, Gibson (2004 citing Bucholtz, 1999) believes that speakers who embrace the identity of a particular community will engage in positive identity practices, while those who reject the identity will use negative identity practices to distance themselves from it. This is evident in the contributions of participants 4, 5, 9, 12, 13 and 14 unfolding over their narratives. In the narratives, Participant 4 declares that he has no interest in learning eleven national languages and end up knowing little about them. Some participants reject integration into the South African languages but rather tried to legitimize their Yoruba identity. By this, they are prejudiced in social categorizations by identifying quite decidedly with their home culture in respect of speaking the Yoruba language in Cape Town. Evident in the narratives are the claims of Participants 5, 9 and 14 who only use English and Yoruba for interaction. Besides, Participant 12 adds that he speaks Arabic to the Sudanese and Egyptians in Cape Town because of his Muslim religion. The point here is that, these participants are trying to preserve an identity which is important to them in both identifying themselves as Yoruba and at the same time appropriating religious identity. In consonance with the literature, participants express generally positive attitudes towards their cultural systems and values that constitute their heritage but are indifferent and hold no negative evaluations in relation to their experiences of other cultures (Chirco, 2008: 21). In this regard, they do not despise South African languages and their various cultures but they are happy to hold on to their “own”.

The discussion of stylization of identity through language discussed so far reveals both positive and negative attitudes from participants to their ‘home’ language in Cape Town. Constructively, Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) argue that identity should not be linked to language use only; rather identity is performative in discourse and action. Thus, although

stylization is a highly creative individual process, in order to succeed at an interactional level it needs to resort to common knowledge which, in turn, is based on language and other kinds of ideologies that are socially constructed and shared (Bailey in Auer, 2007). The discussion of stylization of identities through dressing is discussed in the following section.

## 5.2 Stylization of identity through dressing

This section discusses participants' stylization of identity through Yoruba traditional dressing. All the participants agree in their narratives that some dressing attributed to Yoruba people are different from the Hausa and Ibo people of Nigeria. It is in this light that Participant 3 asserts that Yoruba traditional dresses are one of the distinguishing features of the Yoruba people. The styles of dressing that participants mentioned include: the *iro*, *buba* and *gele*' (head gear of different styles of wrappings) for the female and the *buba*, *sokoto* (trouser) and cap for males. Continuing from the above, Participant 4 declares that Yoruba dress includes another style called '*dansiki*' and locally knitted clothing called "*aso oke*" being sown as '*buba*' and '*sooro*' (trouser). Participant 9 adds a "local" cap called *abetiaja* for males. Participant 12 specifically asserts that seeing a Yoruba person dressed is enough to identify a Yoruba person. Participant 14 adds "*aso ofi*" and "*aso adire*" (tie and dye with embroidered Baltic) as part of Yoruba dressing together with the manner by which women wrap big head scarves that really stand out.

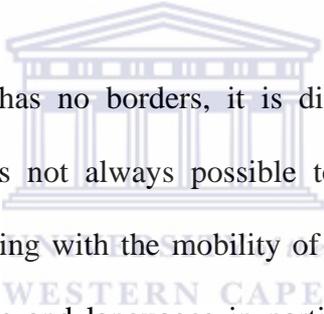
These dressing styles represent the traditional dressing among Yoruba people but which in these modern days may no longer be the case. As specified by Participant 5, the dressing is defined by certain occasions. In fact, Participant 10 asserts that basically in the Yoruba line, the dressing is meant for special occasions like social functions, traditional weddings and

church ceremonies, among others. Following this development, these traditional styles are gradually being overridden by the simple wearing of English dresses. Evidently, Yoruba people are also wearing shirts, trousers and even the corporate wearing of a suit to offices and other places of businesses.

In a different development, it is very difficult to demarcate the boundary of the dresses ascribed to the Yoruba people by the participants. That is, people from other parts of the world have access to the dresses since they are able to buy them on the open market. Thus, they also own and wear the Yoruba dresses. In the literature, a study that describes the identity of boundary-crossing individuals, Lindgren and Wahlin (2001: 360) show that an individual is not only someone who exists as a definition generated by others, but also as a self-defined person with a free will and the possibility of choosing direction. In fact, there are South Africans who are not Yoruba by birth but are either married to Yoruba people or have Yoruba friends that wear the Yoruba dresses out of choice. In the data, Participant 10 tells of his experience that he wears Yoruba dresses to celebrate Yoruba culture and not to neglect it in Cape Town. In such instances, the dress attracts attention from people some of whom approach him to express their love for the dress. They sometimes make a request that he should buy Yoruba dresses for them. Thus, what the participants call Yoruba traditional dressing is being globalised through the “local” interest.

In certain instances, participants make attempts to wear their traditional dresses in Cape Town. Though their expressions seem to be more involved in stylization of identity through dressing, in such instances, they are making a “fashion” statement. As the data reveals, Participant 1 asserts that he wears Yoruba dress in Cape Town during summer. Also, Participant 2 points out that he wears Yoruba dress to a party or when Nigerians get together

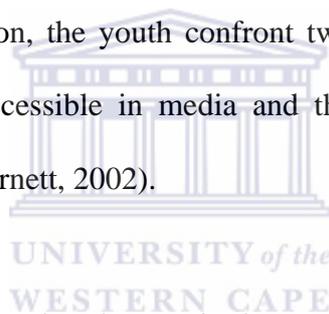
in Cape Town. Participant 3 declares that he wears the dressing occasionally at weekends when going to shop while Participant 4 declares when he wears the dress people look at him in admiration. Furthermore, Participant 5 and Participant 10 claim they wear the traditional dresses to church most times. The experience of Participant 12 has to do with the fact that the dresses catch the attention of people in Cape Town. According to him, on his first or second day at the University of Stellenbosch, a Yoruba woman noticed that he was a Yoruba person from Nigeria. In all these situations whereby participants wear Yoruba dresses, the idea is to express allegiance to the “home place” (Trager 2001) through dressing in the diaspora. In other words, they wear the dresses to actually celebrate Yoruba culture and not to neglect it in Cape Town.



In this globalised world which has no borders, it is difficult to sustain the wearing of traditional dressing. In fact, it is not always possible to define where “home” is. Like identities, “home” is always shifting with the mobility of people making it difficult to link identities with particular localities and languages in particular. Ironically, it is not always possible to maintain the so-called “home” identities. In this regard, participants express various reasons why they could not sustain the wearing of Yoruba dresses in Cape Town. For instance, Participant 5 considers it odd to wear it to a chemistry lab because the dressing may not look smart on her thereby making it uncomfortable to perform experiments. More generally, wearing Yoruba dresses in Cape Town is not an easy thing because of the cold weather. Among other frustrations, participants lament their inability to wear Yoruba dresses because of the western lifestyle and way of dressing in Cape Town. Equally, Participant 7 declares he rarely wears Yoruba dresses in Cape Town because it makes him look like he is at a masquerade or an alien. This is a clear sign that they do not want to look different from

the other people around them and also may be feeling insecure in the midst of the South African people or may also be conscious of the possibility of a xenophobic attack.

Dwelling on the above a little further, Participant 9 states he hardly wears Yoruba dresses so as not to be easily associated with Nigerians. Participant 13 claims that once he wore Yoruba dress in Cape Town but could not continue because he does not see people wearing it. Ultimately, Participant 14 declares he does not wear Yoruba dress because of the Western life style in Cape Town as mentioned earlier. Participants' attitudes in effect corroborate Hammack's (2006) argument that globalization fundamentally alters the culture specific life course and reframes the social and ideological contexts within which identities are formed. As a consequence of globalization, the youth confront two sets of normative systems: the global culture (i.e. Western), accessible in media and through technology, and the local culture (Hammack, 2006 citing Arnett, 2002).



From the foregoing, I would argue that these attitudes are also consistent with the view that people are not cut off from the crosscurrents of pervading globalisation. As this diffusion was taking place so also was the hybridisation process going on, thus making the classification of particularities difficult to do successfully (Ogundele, 2007: 50). This discussion reveals an unbalanced aspect of the wearing of the Yoruba dresses and it is one version where participants present themselves in specific social circumstances in order to tell others who and what they are. Food is also commented upon by the participants as it constitutes an arena for identity displays which I discuss in the next section.

### 5.3 Stylization of identity through food

According to Chirco (2008: 20), “in theory, all individuals regardless of background are able to draw upon a variety of cultural stocks in constructing their personal cultural systems”. In line with this argument, participants delve on local Yoruba food as another option for performing identity. In this research, Participant 4 and Participant 5 identify some food of the Yoruba which is different from the other parts of Nigeria like “*iyán*”. He was specific about ‘*ikokore*’, a typical food of the *Ijebu* people in Yoruba land. This participant expressed that when the Ibo or Hausa people see this type of food, it usually activates their curiosity. Interestingly, Participant 7 attributes the different food of the Yoruba people to a function of their geographical location. This participant mentioned that Nigerians grow yam across the country but Yoruba eat yam more when compared to other groups in Nigeria. The participant also referred to a research done either in the UK, US or Nigeria about the Yoruba people of Nigeria having the highest rate of twins in Africa. In his words, “the research was actually to see how to link that level of fertility to vitamins in yam”.

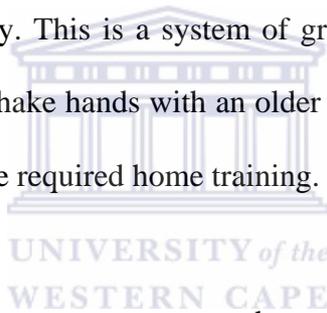
More elaborations on Yoruba food are highlighted by the participants. For instance, Participant 9 mentions *moinmoin* as types of Yoruba food. Participant 10 believes that about 70% of Yoruba people eat pounded yam (*iyán*). Participant 11 expresses *eko jije (pap)* as strictly Yoruba food and his description of *ewedu* soup is that other ethnic groups in Nigeria show a frown on their faces that Yoruba people eat something blackish. Participant 12 identifies more peculiar foods of the Yoruba which include *ekuru* made of beans and *ebiripo* of the *Ijebu* people. The participant reiterates some of the food types mentioned above in his narrative. In fact, when we look at what these participants have mentioned about Yoruba food, we realize that food is very essential for every society. Undoubtedly, food makes and/or

strengthens similar cultural groups together. The peculiarity of these types of food as expressed by the participants defines aspects of Yoruba culture. However, in Cape Town and many other parts of the world, there are Nigerian restaurants where these types of food are available. Thus, participants expressed the fact that although they are not living in Nigeria, most of the times they still eat Yoruba or Nigerian food in Cape Town. Participant 4 enthusiastically asserts his love for ‘*amala*’, *poundo yam*, ‘*ila*’ (okra soup) and *egusi* (melon soup) in Cape Town. Interestingly, in this age of technology, the ingredients and method of cooking of the food and stews are available on the internet for curious minds.

For all the participants in this study, food is an important aspect of negotiating and sustaining their Yoruba identity in Cape Town. Whenever someone goes back home, they try to bring their local foodstuffs from Nigeria. This is despite the fact that there are Nigerian shops in Cape Town and Bellville where Nigerian foodstuff is found. They believe nothing is like their local food on the grounds that they are not used to types of food such as: bread, tea and the like. This is why Participant 13 lamented that in Stellenbosch, they hardly find a Nigerian ‘*buka*’ (*restaurant* as normally called back home) where they can find ready prepared Yoruba or Nigerian food. Critically important in this discussion about food is the orientation toward the group cultural systems of participants identifying themselves with their cultural food in Cape Town. What participants presented in their narratives supports Fuller (2007) who believes that identity is operationalized as the product of symbolic associations with preferences for food, music, sports, holiday foods, and location. Hence these participants strive to sustain the link with their “home” in the diaspora. That is, participants’ familiarity with Yoruba food in Cape Town points to a commitment to traditional Yoruba food in the diaspora as obtained in Nigeria. In the section that follows, I discuss stylization of identity through traditional greeting.

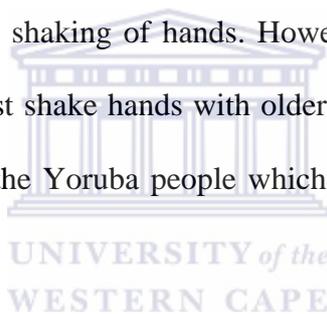
#### 5.4 Stylization of identity through greeting

Next to other options of stylization of identity is “greeting” as it is common to all the narratives. Scholars have argued that we tell stories about ourselves not simply as recitations of “the facts” of our lives, rather they are artful constructions drawing on our life experiences and our cultural resources to cast our lives and ourselves in particular ways (Schneider, 2003 citing Holstein and Gubrium, 2000). Following this argument, participants in this study draw on the Yoruba philosophy of politeness in greeting to stylize identity. For instance, Participant 4 declared that the Yoruba greeting is different from the Ibo or Hausa people of Nigeria. The absence of an appropriate greeting, whenever it is required, can be the beginning of an age long hostility. This is a system of greeting in which a younger person does not make the first move to shake hands with an older person because it will be regarded as being untutored and without the required home training.



In the data, participants agree that a younger person does not call an elder by their first name when addressing or greeting them. Rather, the younger person uses an honorific expression by saying, for instance, ‘*E kaaro*’ (*greeting in the morning*) for greeting an elder. The use of ‘*E*’ (*[e]as in elephant*) is equivalent to the second person plural pronoun ‘*you*’ invariably used for addressing a single person. Even Participant 4 claims that he maintains Yoruba greeting systems for elderly persons and also extends it to his peers in Cape Town. Furthermore, Participant 5 expresses that she maintains the use of “*E*” for greeting at any time of the day. Almost all the participants recognize this typical dimension of the Yoruba greeting because showing respect to someone older requires a female to kneel down and a male to prostrate.

Greetings in Yoruba are countless because there is no occasion that does not have its distinct and peculiar greeting. There are special greetings for early morning, afternoon, evening and night. There are also special greetings for different occupations, seasons, festivals, etc. For example, Participant 6 states that everything in Yoruba is greeting, such as greeting when eating, they will say “*E ku ije*”, while working or doing research “*E ku ise*” and when making merry “*E ku igbadun*”. This participant gives the impression that greeting is very vital to communication and community life among the Yoruba because it acts as a motivator of some sort. This kind of attitude is associated with Yoruba people and is different from the English greeting style for instance; rather, the English simple greeting is saying “*hi*”. In addition, Participants 5, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 accentuate the prostrating and kneeling posture for greeting elders as against the shaking of hands. However, Participant 11 adds that it is wrong for a Yoruba person to just shake hands with older people. Those are peculiar things that are quite synonymous with the Yoruba people which differentiate them from the other ethnic groups in Nigeria.



However, participants expressed difficulty in maintaining the greeting practice in Cape Town unlike at home where they prostrate to greet an elder. As the data reveals, participants are not able to prostrate physically, rather they position themselves in a way that shows respect as well as not stretching a hand to an older person when greeting. The feeling is that if they do that, people will think that something is wrong with them. In other words, people will consider them as mentally ill. Participants expressed adherence to these behavioural scripts associated with respect for age as Elegbeleye (2008) argues that Yoruba people train their children to maintain a slight bow of the head and deliberate avoidance of eye contact when being spoken to by the elderly. Nevertheless, Participant 6 expressed an experience about how he prostrated to greet his friend’s father in a Yoruba way in Cape Town and the man was

impressed with his attitude. This participant compared this disposition to his relationship with his research supervisor whom he only greets by saying “*hi*” and that is all. In reality, participants attributed their frustration in performing the Yoruba identity through greeting to the Cape Town environment. Thus, some of the participants recognize the limitations and prefer to follow the trend in Cape Town.

What the above contributions from the participants emphasize is that, Yoruba people have different lexemes for greeting in the morning, afternoon and night like the English greetings. Considering the globalized environment we live in, this selection of linguistic feature revealing the system behind cultural practices is still applicable to participants in the diaspora. Participants emphasize that greeting among Yoruba people are not casual because there are meanings attached to greetings. For instance, they stress that the younger people do not offer handshake first to the elderly people neither do they call elderly people by name during greetings or interactions. Therefore, the action of a male prostrating or a female kneeling down (Elegbeleye, 2008) is encouraged and adjudged the right posture by which to greet elderly people. However, these greeting traits may not be unique to Yoruba people, but may be shared with other ethnic groups that are perceived to be related. However, they represent necessary, but not sufficient conditions for membership of the Yoruba group in Nigeria. A contrast can be made with that of English society, where a greeting typically performs the function of phatic communication by just saying “*hi*”, for establishing social relationships; but this cannot be taken for granted within Yoruba culture where greeting appears to serve as the passing on of information (Akindele 1990).

The discussion on stylization of identity through greeting represents how participants position themselves in the context of the wider social network in which they are involved in a way

that conforms to the present environment which is different from home. With the effect of globalisation in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, casual interaction among the Yoruba can be noticed to imbibe the English greeting as demonstrated by the participants. Though participants activate their native culture systems and express positive ideological attitudes towards them (Chirco, 2008: 19), they may feel comfortable to use the usual English greeting of just saying 'hi' as well. Recognizing this necessity, I argue that the participants redefine themselves as social actors within the mores imposed by powerful global pressure. The section of stylizing identity through hair fashion and tribal mark now follows.

### **5.5 Stylization of identity through hair fashion and tribal marks**

This study reveals the fact that migration is not only about the movement of individuals but also the movement of their cultural resources. In this regard, participants recognized that their cultural distinctiveness is also defined partly by hair fashion. A strong attachment to cultural practices of hairstyles determines how participants portray themselves as Yoruba in Cape Town. In the data, Participant 5 declared that Yoruba women plait in local styles. There are other styles transferred from Yoruba grandmothers such as, *banana style*, *ipako elede*; *suku*, *kojusoko*, *panumo* and *patewo* styles. During the research, the participant claimed that her hairstyle was patterned exactly after her grandmother. Notwithstanding, what this participant highlighted may not be a usual practice of the Yoruba people in Cape Town, if we consider the advent of modern science and technology that has brought considerable change to the trend of hair fashion. If we view the materials women use nowadays and the styles in vogue compared to what operated in the past, there has been a tremendous shift from the traditional to the modern.

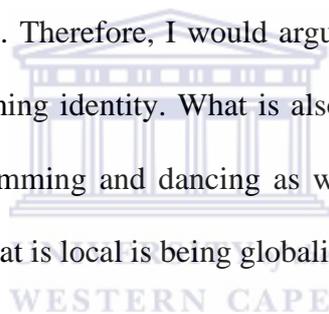
As revealed in this study, another traditional fashion mentioned for stylization of identity is the tribal mark. This is an old traditional practice among the Yoruba which is no more in vogue in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the data, Participants 2 and 5 mentioned that with tribal marks one is likely to recognise a Yoruba person. Participant 5 is specific that there are some tribal marks from *Ondo*, *Ijebu* and from different parts of Yoruba land. This still supports my initial argument that the Yoruba is not one homogenous group. However, participant 2 stated that in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, Yoruba people no longer use tribal marks for identity. By mentioning tribal marks, the participants presented a kind of identity purely based on the grounds of ancestry rather than through the means of cultural socialization. It could also be that the tribal marks are meant to set out occupational engagements by which people in particular occupations or families have unique marks for identification. The issue here is that the tribal mark as a marker of identity has been eroded by the influence of globalization as argued earlier on because participants set the traditional Yoruba apart from the modern Yoruba. Within this context, I would argue that the issues of identity change over time and should not be conceived as static, but as dynamic. I will consider participants' stylization of identity through dancing, drumming and music in the section that follows below.

## **5.6 Stylization of identity through dancing, drumming and music**

By drawing on culturally available knowledge to present versions of selves in specific social circumstances in order to tell who they are, participants stylize identity through dance, drum and music. Participant 11 expressed that the Yoruba people's typical dancing steps and drumming are important part of the Yoruba identity. According to this participant, anything that the Yoruba do is accompanied by drums and dancing. The participant was even specific about a type of dance called the "bata dance" and a type of drum called "iya-ilu" (mother

drum). This participant implies that typical dancing steps and drumming may have some traditional significance with the aim to perform the Yoruba identity. Universally, drumming as percussion enables people to rhythmically dance to any music. In the present globalized village, different percussions accompany different music and signal different identities such as hip hop identity (Dominello, 2008) and many more.

Dancing to different music is likely to have integrated some of the so-called traditional dancing steps like the *bata* dance mentioned above. Furthermore, it is assumed that there is cultural significance attached to the *iya ilu* mentioned above as it goes beyond mere entertainment value. The participant suggests that the drumming and dancing are symbols of events among the Yoruba people. Therefore, I would argue that the dancing and drumming are significant aspects of performing identity. What is also significant is that other types of music have adopted Yoruba drumming and dancing as we see them on the television and other media nowadays, in that what is local is being globalized.



Finally, an integral option by which participants stylize identity is through music. Generally, the rhythmic pattern of any music makes it easy for anyone to dance even if what the music is saying is unintelligible to the dancer. However, it is of value when one can understand what the music is saying, like portraying the philosophy of life through music. In the data, participant 7 claimed that he listened to Yoruba music to refresh his sense of Yoruba identity in Cape Town. This indicates that music becomes dramatic through performance and is an agent of performing identity. It is assumed that the participant feels comfortable to sustain the habit of listening to their local music which they like or find necessary to be part of the Yoruba society and function within it. This is an indication that the participants still want to maintain contact with their ethnic origin in the diaspora. The discussion so far focuses on

asymmetry adherence to specifics rather than the hybrid identity options as portrayed by participants in Cape Town. All in all, identity itself is not linked to these specifics because they are not one hundred percent reliable. So far, the discussion of stylization of identity through language has covered standard Yoruba, dialects in Yoruba and accent or intonation associated with the Yoruba people of Nigeria.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the different themes through which participants in this study personalize identities in Cape Town. In actual reality, they find it difficult to freely flaunt their ethnic identity in the Cape Town environment. It does not mean that they are detached from the membership of the Yoruba social group, but the main challenge for individuals in this postmodern society is to maintain a coherent narrative of self in the face of the overwhelming barrage of identity possibilities provided by modern life (Schneider, 2003: 188). The fact is that the participants are trying to preserve the identities which are important to them in both identifying themselves as Yoruba and at the same time as participants in the global culture. From a general point of view, the present participants' identities seem to be the hybrid outcome of efforts towards identity construction in line with globalization.

All the excerpts discussed above are integral to the study of identities within this framework, embracing the idea that individuals may adopt multiple positions, and that these different aspects of identity may be salient in different interactions, or even concurrently (Fuller (2007: 106). As Schneider (2003) argues, the internal self in the intuitive sense, might have disappeared owing to some threats that bombard different contexts of our lives. Hence, the self is saturated, filled to overflowing, losing any sense of a distinct identity.

The discussion so far substantiates Auer's (2007) conception about the construction and management of identities in interaction; that is, how individuals demonstrate or position themselves from the standpoint of societal relevance during the process of interaction. It involves the extent to which individuals can mobilise diverse possibilities within or across different spaces in order to symbolically express their identities. The linguistic choices of the participants revealed their natural reflexes of identities through certain features equally unique to them (Auer, 2007: 3). As a result, identity cannot be fundamental, rather it is multiple, fluid and inherently linked to social practices. The next chapter deals with the conclusion and recommendation for future studies.



## CHAPTER SIX

### Conclusion and suggestion for further research

#### 6 Introduction

This last chapter provides conclusions of the current study. The details of the main findings of the study are highlighted, and suggestions for further research based on the findings of the current study are made. Finally, limitations of the study are outlined.

##### 6.1 Linguistic choices for construing identities

In line with the specific objectives of this research, I explored Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) theoretical framework of Interpersonal metafunction to analyse narratives of identity by Yoruba students in Cape Town. Though SFL works on the assumption that three ways of making meaning are operating simultaneously, i.e. the experiential, interpersonal and textual metafunctions, this thesis focuses on all elements of making meaning in the interpersonal metafunction. This choice of theoretical framework has been productive in enabling me to explore the main research aim for this thesis, namely how interpersonal elements construe identities. Here researchers like Halliday (1994, 2004); Halliday and Matthiessen (2004); Eggins and Slade (1997); Butt et al (2001); Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004, 2006) and Auer (2007) have been the most influential.

As such, I analysed the *Mood* component of the clause comprising the Subject and Finite, and also the *Residual* component consisting of the Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct. I started

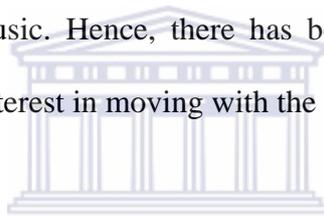
with analysis of grammatical 'Mood' choices involving the declarative, interrogative and imperative moods. Out of 1100 clauses analysed, the declarative mood appears in 1021 clauses, the interrogative mood in 30 clauses, and the imperative mood in only one clause while the remaining 48 clauses account for incomplete clauses. Though incoherent utterances pervade the narratives, being spontaneous communication, the domination of the declarative mood is an indication that the participants are keen to assert their propositions either positively or negatively as they negotiate identities. The interrogative Mood as used in some instances functions as projected clauses meant to hold on to the narrative plot while thinking of what next to say. The majority of the interrogatives are rhetorical in nature as explored by the participants to add colour or flavour to their narratives. But there are some of the interrogatives which are basically questions asked by South Africans concerning participants' identities at one point or the other. The Imperative Mood appears only once in the narratives used by one participant as part of his experience when he gave an instruction to some South Africans to stop castigating Nigerians. The interpersonal metafunction shows how participants use language to position themselves (and the researcher), to encode their ideas about obligation and inclination and to express their attitudes (Butt et al, 2001).

I examined the *Subject* and *Finite* to determine how participants stylize different identities in Cape Town (table 4.7). First person singular Subject 'I' was heavily used by five participants, moderately used by six participants while three participants used them thinly. Also, the first person plural Subject 'we' was heavily used by three participants, moderately used by two participants and scantily used by eight participants. These personal Subjects were woven around stylization of identity by the options of Yoruba language, food, music, dressing, greeting, accent and traditional tribal mark. The common Finites that frequently accompanied these Subjects include the different forms of the verb *be* such as, *am*, *is* and *are* and they

function to identify features that define the different identity options of participants. Also, the attributive process *'have'* functions to attribute certain identity traits to participants while the modal auxiliary *'can'* and the auxiliary *'do'* are designed to strengthen assertions either positively or negatively. I analysed the remaining part of the clause which is the *'Residual'* consisting of Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct. The Predicator enabled me to discover the different contents or what was happening in the proposition of the participants. I found out that through the Complement component, participants developed arguments that enabled them to negotiate different identities. Although a few clauses do not have Complement in the narratives, the material which is open to negotiation and often challenged (Eggins and Slade 1997) is embedded in the Complement.

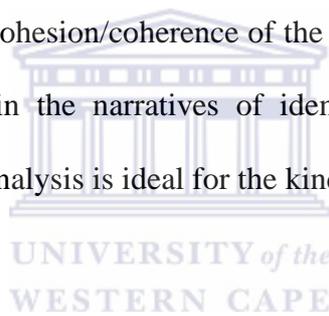
Furthermore, I examined the use of different Adjuncts which add extra information about the events expressed in the core of the propositions (Eggins and Slade 1997). This involves Adjuncts answering questions such as when, where, how, why or with what. These Circumstantial Adjuncts were frequently used by ten participants while four participants used them sparingly reflecting those circumstances that favourably or unfavourably determine stylizing their identities through language, greeting, dressing, food, tribal mark, hair fashion and music (table 4.21). I also took into consideration meanings that do with judgments and opinions, including meanings about how likely or how intense the proposition is. The issues of probability, stressing or moderating the intensity of proposition together with vague expressions used to maintain contact with the researcher, are examined. Also, I consider the modalities which participants used to qualify identities according to likelihood, typicality and necessity. Equally, examining the Adjuncts involves the logical links of time, cause/consequence, addition, contrast, restatement and condition as they signal coherence in their narratives. All these elements are woven into clauses realizing interpersonal meanings in

the narratives of the participants. I explored how these elements indexed different identities portrayed by the participants. The linguistic elements were interpreted functionally to highlight the different identity options that participants appropriated in the diaspora. The analysis shows that all the participants had difficulty in sustaining elements of Yoruba culture in Cape Town. For instance, they expressed that communicating in the Yoruba language among themselves, wearing Yoruba traditional attire and prostrating to greet elderly people, were hard to practise in Cape Town. As a result, they appropriated a hybrid identity as a matter of convenience for them, combining Yoruba and local identity options in the diaspora. Also, through the use of the personal Subjects *I* and *We*, participants revealed their confidence and in some respect their pride in exhibiting Yoruba cultural practices through language, dressing, food and music. Hence, there has been modification to their cultural identity as they expressed their interest in moving with the trend in Cape Town.



By delving into the internal constituent structure of words, particularly the clause, the SFL interpretation has explained the grammatical structure of the narratives by reference to meaning. Most importantly, participants' expressions of different modal or comment Adjuncts to display attitudes or evaluate situations (Gerot and Wignell, 1994; Bloor and Bloor, 2004), emphasized the continuities and discontinuities that have characterized their identities in Cape Town when compared to Nigeria. It is clear that the participants maintain mixed, negotiated, performative, and hybrid identities in language, dressing, food, greeting as well as music. This inkling accords with Trager (2001) view that Nigerians settling outside their home country have had to deal with a sense of cultural dislocation, as a result of being immersed in a varied and very different cultural environment. Hence, participants in this study constantly negotiate through their interaction with others, their hybrid, transgendered, and multiracial identities as against a bounded or dichotomous system (Pavlenko and

Blackledge, 2004). Also, it could be said that the empirical study conducted in this thesis indeed, shows that the different identities portrayed by the participants conform to the contemporary view on identity as performative (Auer, 2007) because the different identity options stylized by the participants indicate that they wobble within the identity options available to them in Cape Town. Scholars have argued that our gender, race, class, ethnicity, sexual orientation, among other characteristics, are all implicated in this negotiation of identity (Hornberger and McKay, 2010). The theoretical and conceptual framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) Interpersonal metafunction therefore is useful for unravelling self-distinctiveness purposes. As this study found out, it is established that SFL Interpersonal elements are functional for achieving self-distinctiveness purposes because these elements contribute to the cohesion/coherence of the narratives so produced in terms of continuities and contradictions in the narratives of identities. Therefore, my concluding remark is that this interpersonal analysis is ideal for the kind of analysis done in this research.



## **6.2 Future research**

In analysing these linguistic choices, I have drawn on the SFL theory of metafunction with interpersonal analysis of participants' narratives in the construal of their identities. This study only investigated how the theory on SFL Interpersonal metafunction elements was explored to maintain and reconstruct identities by Yoruba students in Cape Town. It is suggested that further research be done to investigate how local people perceive Nigerians in the diaspora. It would also be interesting to examine the trajectory of migrants from their place of origin to a foreign land. Also, further research is needed on how migrants impact on the local identities in the diaspora.

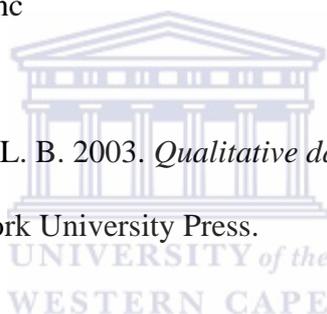
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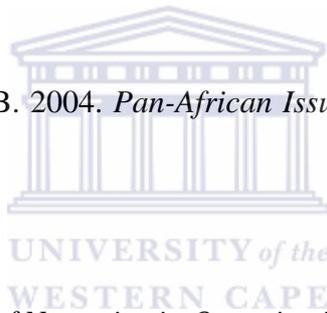
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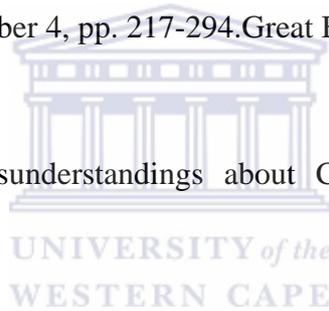
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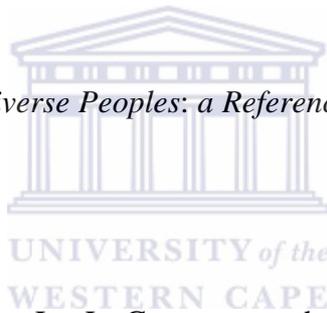
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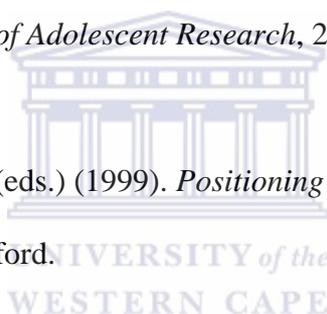
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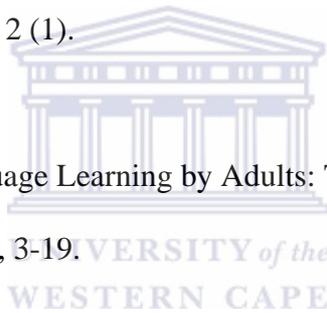
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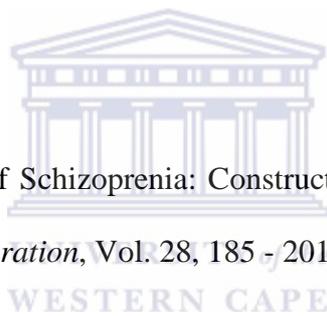
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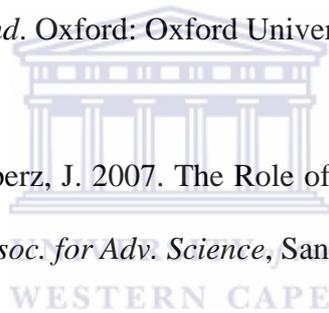
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