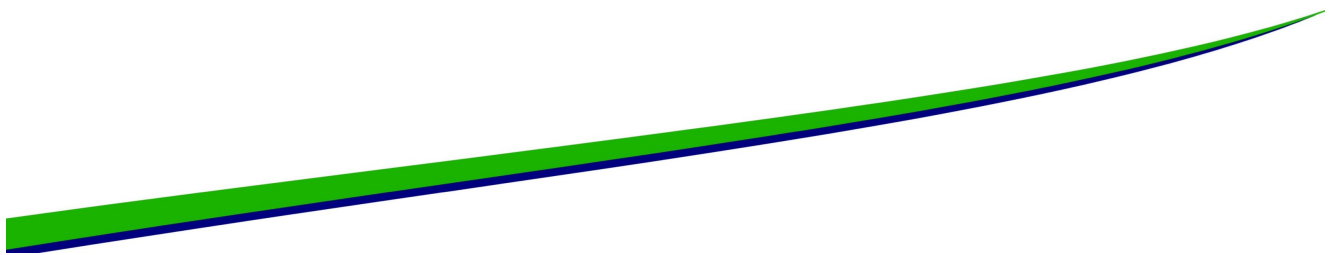# Branding and Material Culture of Multilingualism and Identities in Linguistic Landscapes in Langa

Sifundo Lennox Metula 2105657

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Magister Atrium in the Department of Linguistics, University of the Western Cape.

Supervisor: Professor Felix Banda

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Abstract

Very few studies of linguistic landscape (LL) have been conducted in townships, rural areas, and Africa in general. The focus is and has been on major city centres and their surroundings. Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to the study of linguistic landscape and in turn to increase understanding of multilingualism. Most importantly recent studies that are using social semiotic approach to multimodality are looking beyond language to include other semiotic resources constituting space. Thus, this study follows this new breed of studies that have focused on the social semiotics of landscapes or multimodality and space rather than language alone. The thesis explored selected local and non-South African owned shops in Langa township. The researcher was interested in investigating the interaction of local and, international material culture of multilingualism in the construction of unique branding and identities in Langa township.

The specific objectives include: 1) To identify the social semiotic material used in the construction of brand identities in LL of Langa township. 2) To explore the construction of local and transnational/transAfrica brand identities in the LL of Langa township. 3) To identify similarities and differences in choices by local and foreign business owners in linguistic and other semiotic materials in the construction of signage. 4) To identify the meanings behind the choices in the material culture (linguistic and other cultural semiotic resources) employed in the construction of identities in LL.

The theoretical and analytical framework utilised for analysis was multimodal/multisemiotic discourse analysis. This was complemented by an ethnographic methodology which recognizes the importance of ethnographic materials such as interviews, cultural materials, sustained and involved observations, etc. The database mainly comprised selected photographs and interview narratives with selected business owners and customers. The study found that both local and

foreign shop owners consciously draw on various cultural and linguistic practices to create and maintain their identities. The translocated signs reflect and construct both translocal and transnational cultural values as they carry traces of the originator or history, sometimes in a resemiotised form, and the culture in which they are (re)produced. However, these cultural materialities are also used as commodities for branding purposes to attract customers and to sell goods. The study makes a contribution not just to the studies in material culture, but also to the intersection of local and transnational multiculturalism and multilingualism in relation to semiotic landscapes. That way, it also contributes to extending the scope of the study of semiotic landscapes.

Keywords

Linguistic landscape

Branding

Identities

Langa

Shops/spaza shops

Commodification

Semiotic remediation

Intertextuality

Material culture

Local and Non-South African/Foreign

Declaration

I declare that *"Branding and Material Culture of Multilingualism and Identities in Linguistic Landscapes in Langa"* is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Full Name: Sifundo Lennox Metula   Date:

Signed:

Aknowledgements

Thank you to my mother for the unwavering support, love, patience and encouragement.

I would like to thank everyone in the Linguistics department who supported me in whichever way. Thank you for your support and kindness. Thank you Prof Bock, Berneshia, Nathalie, Candice just to mention but a few.

A special thanks to my supervisor, Prof Felix Banda for your invaluable guidance, wisdom and most importantly your support. Prof thank you for your patience, encouragement and belief in my potential. I will always be indebted to your support and wisdom in all the years I have known you.
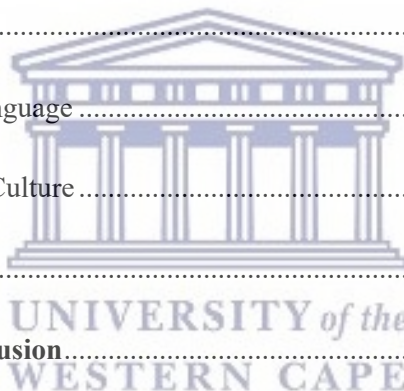
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CHAPTER ONE

Background Information and Situating the Study

1.0 Introduction

This study looked at the processes and strategies employed by certain shop owners to create and promote their businesses. This study investigated selected local and non-South African owned shops in Langa township. The researcher was interested in investigating the interaction of local and, international material culture of multilingualism in the construction of unique branding and identities in the new and changing semiotic landscape of Langa. This chapter begins by discussing the background to the study followed by a brief historical background, community and the linguistic profile of Langa township, rationale, purpose and aim of the study, objectives of the study, research questions and the structure of the thesis.
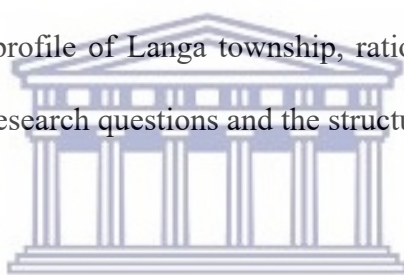
1.1 Background to the Study

The study of linguistic landscape (LL) is a relatively new development in the field of sociolinguistics, which focuses on written language in the public space. Very few studies have been conducted in townships, rural areas and Africa in general. The focus is and has been on major city centres and their surroundings. The study draws its conceptual framework from a few preceding studies about linguistic landscape in Africa (Banda and Jimaima 2015, Peck and Banda 2014, Akindele 2011, Lanza and Woldemariam 2013, Stroud and Mpendukana 2009).

It is in the township of Langa and its surroundings that this study is designed to explore as a contribution to the study of linguistic landscape in non-upmarket regions. For the past two decades there has been an influx of foreign nationals who have taken over most of businesses

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in the townships and Langa is no exception. It is on the impact of immigrants especially from other African countries (such as Somalia, Nigeria, DR Congo and Cameroon), including some locals who have relocated from other regions in South Africa, on the linguistic landscape of Langa that the study focuses. Hence, this study investigates the interaction of local and, international material culture of multilingualism in the construction of unique brand and identities in the new and changing semiotic landscape of Langa.

Early studies were more of quantitative, meaning they were just counting how many languages are there and which languages are used more often than others. However, recent studies have moved beyond language to include other semiotic resources. As noted in Banda and Jimaima (2017:602) "Language, whether written or oral, is just one of many social semiotic resources people use in sign making". Gorter (2006) and Shohamy and Wakman (2009) called for the inclusion of other semiotic resources in the construction of the LL. These inclusions and attempts to expand the 'scenery' entailed innovations in methodological applications and what constituted data in the LL. There was also a shift from predominantly quantitative to a focus on multimodality and qualitative ethnographic methods of data collection (Stroud and Mpendukana 2009; Blommaert and Huang 2010; Banda and Jimaima 2015). Thus, based on studies already done on linguistic landscape, this study follows the new waves of methodology by Stroud and Mpendukana (2009), Banda and Jimaima (2015, 2017), Peck and Banda (2014), Lanza and Woldemariam (2013) and Akindele (2011).

1.2 A Brief Historical Background, Community and Linguistic Profile of Langa Township

It is important to give an overview of the history of Langa. A lot has changed since the establishment of the township. Langa is said to be the oldest township in Cape Town and is

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located about 11km from the city Centre of Cape Town in the Western Cape Province. The name Langa is Xhosa and literally means 'sun'. The name is also partly derived from the name of Langalibalele, a Hlubi rebel who was detained in Cape Town in 1875 after rising against the Natal government. Langa was established in 1927 in terms of the 1923 Urban Areas Act. Langa is one of the many areas in South Africa that were designated for Black Africans before the apartheid era. Following the removal of black people from Ndabeni location, near Maitland, the authorities established Langa location outside Cape Town.

Langa has a long history of being involved in anti-apartheid campaigns and there are various monuments in remembrances of those who sacrificed their lives. Street names have also been changed to names of some of the prominent political figures. Some old buildings such as old post office have been converted to museums.

Since the early 1990s the demographics have changed from predominantly Xhosa speakers to some other African language speaker such as Somali, Congolese, Nigerians and others. With the increase of immigrant population, the number of local businesses in Langa has declined in recent years, while non-South African owned shops have increased. This is due to the fact that many local Business owners opted to renting out their businesses or properties to Non-South Africans. The motive behind this is that they get a steady income every month regardless of whether the business makes money or not.

1.3 Rationale and the Purpose of the Study

The end of the apartheid era opened a whole lot of opportunities for marginalized communities including township residents. This enabled people to establish and enhance socio-economic relations with other areas in the country. In turn, people could open businesses of their choice.

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For this reason, there have been a growing number of various businesses from family-owned shops to informal traders including spaza shops.

This has also allowed communities to redefine, rebrand and realign themselves to the local, regional and international communities. This, in turn allows businesses to incorporate new branding strategies in the post-apartheid South Africa to accentuate and sell their brands and in the process creating new and attractive landscapes.

It is in the township of Langa and its surroundings that this study is designed to explore as a contribution to the study of linguistic landscape in non-upmarket regions. For the past two decades there has been an influx of foreign nationals who have taken over most of businesses in the townships and Langa is no exception. It is on the impact of foreign nationals including some locals who have relocated from other regions in South Africa, on the linguistic landscape of Langa that the study focuses.

1.4 Purpose and Aim of the Study

The purpose of the study is to identify the processes and strategies used by certain shop owners to create and promote their businesses through appropriating local and foreign linguistic and cultural material. The idea is to look at intersect of brand identities and the material culture of multilingualism engendered by local and fellow Africans' interactions in the township environment.

The study's main aim is to investigate the interaction of local and international material culture of multilingualism in the construction of unique brand and identities in the new and changing semiotic landscape of Langa.

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1.5 Objectives of the Study

The following are the specific objectives of the study

1. To identify the social semiotic material used in the construction of brand identities in LL of Langa Township.

2. To explore the construction of local and transnational/transAfrica brand identities in the LL of Langa Township.

3. To identify similarities and differences in choices by local and foreign business owners in linguistic and other semiotic materials in the construction of signage.

4. To identify the meanings behind the choices in the material culture (linguistic and other cultural semiotic resources) employed in the construction of identities in LL.

1.6 Research Questions

This study is motivated by the following questions:

1. What specific branding strategies have business owners employ to compete amongst each other?

2. To examine, what are the perceptions, understandings and opinions of business owners and patrons regarding the name choices?

3. What evidence is there of changes in the linguistic landscape to acknowledge and value the diversity of community languages?

4. In particular, what processes and strategies can be identified that have been used in creating and maintaining identities?

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1.7 Rationale

As noted earlier, very few studies of Linguistic landscape have been conducted in townships, rural areas and Africa in general. Therefore, this study seeks to contribute to the study of linguistic landscape and in turn to increase understanding of multilingualism. Most importantly recent studies that are using social semiotics approach to multimodality are looking beyond language to include other semiotic resources constituting space. Thus, this study follows this new breed of studies that have focused on the social semiotics of landscapes or multimodality and space rather than language alone.

1.8 Chapter Outline

Chapter one: of this study provided the background, rationale, purpose and objectives of this study, including a brief historical background, community and linguistic profile of Langa township. Then it closes with a section on the structure of the theses.

Chapter two: gives a thorough review of literature reflecting relevant discussions, concepts, and definitions from the notion of Linguistic Landscape to Semiotic or Multimodal turn.

Chapter three: provides theoretical and analytical framework of the study, which contains literature pertinent to research methodology. It provides a review of the concepts employed in the study.

Chapter four: This chapter describes in detail the approach and research methodology used in the study. It describes the type of data collected for the project, instruments used for data collection and procedures followed in the process including sources and selection of data. Then the approaches followed in analysing the data. The study employs multimodality and

qualitative ethnographic methods of data collection (Stroud and Mpendukana 2009; Blommaert and Huang 2010; Banda and Jimaima 2015).

Chapter five: This chapter provides an interpretation and analysis of photographs taken throughout Langa Township and the language use thereof. It also includes the analyses of the interviews to identify the perceptions, understandings and opinions of business owners and patrons regarding the name choices.

Chapter six: This chapter is an extension of and builds on chapter five as it also includes data analysis and discussion and findings of this study derived from interviews, photographs, cultural material observed. Among other themes it identifies similarities and differences in choices by local and foreign business owners in linguistic and other semiotic materials in the construction of signage. Thus, revealing more similarities than differences. This chapter discusses in detail the meanings behind the choices in the material culture (linguistic and other cultural semiotic resources) employed in the construction of identities in LL. Then it argues that the choices are both symbolic and business or branding strategies.
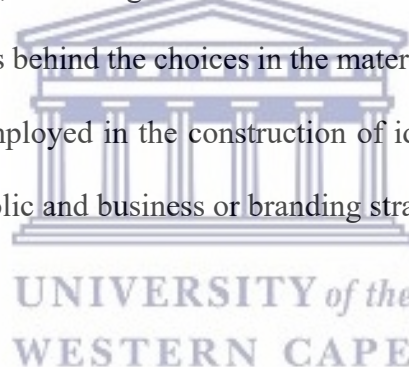
Chapter seven: Summarises key findings and concludes the study.

1.9 Summary

This chapter gives the background to the study and provides a brief historical background, community, and linguistic profile of Langa township. The purpose, aim, objectives of the study are discussed in this chapter. The questions that motivated the study are provided in this chapter. Then, it concludes by outlining the structure of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

From Linguistic to Semiotic/Multimodal Turn

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the literature related to the study. This chapter is in three folds. First it looks at the theory and discussions around the notion of linguistic landscape. Second it reviews the semiotic/multimodal turn including the notion of material culture of multilingualism and thereafter it gives a brief overview on branding and identities.

2.1 Linguistic Landscape

This thesis looks at the linguistic landscape of Langa Township with the focus on the signage of both local and foreign owned shops. The study of linguistic landscape is a relatively new development in the field of sociolinguistics, with the focus on written language in the public space. In trying to explain the notion of linguistic landscape, I draw on Landry and Bourhis' widely used definition. They define linguistic landscape as "the language of public road signs, advertising billboards, street names, place names, commercial shop signs, and public signs on government buildings, which combines to form the linguistic landscape of a given territory, region or urban agglomeration" (Landry and Bourhis, 1997:25).

Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara and Trumper-Hecht (2008:10) argue that "One first step to put some order in the analysis of LL consists in distinguishing top-down and bottom-up flows of LL elements, that is, between LL elements used and exhibited by institutional agencies which in one way or another act under the control of local or central policies, and those utilized by

individual, associative or corporate actors who enjoy autonomy of action within legal limits". The main difference between the two categories resides in the fact that the top-down are expected to reflect a general commitment to the dominant culture while the bottom-up are designed much more freely according to individual strategies. It is clear from the above objectives that for the purpose of the study the focus will be much more on bottom-up flows of LL elements. In other words, this study looks at LL elements utilised by individuals or shop owners.

Early linguistic landscape studies tended to look at LL as having two functions: informative and symbolic (Landry and Bourhis, 1997, Cenoz and Gorter, 2009, Aiestaran, Cenoz and Gorter, 2010). Informative function indicates the borders of the territory of linguistic group. It shows a specific language or languages for communication or to sell products. On the other hand, the symbolic function refers to the value and status of the languages as perceived by the members of a language group in comparison to other languages (Landry and Bourhis, 1997, Cenoz and Gorter, 2009). Furthermore, Aiestaran, Cenoz and Gorter, (2010) state that the processing of visual and linguistic information and the language in which signs are written can influence how people perceive the status of other languages, their attitudes towards them and it can even influence their language use either in a positive or a negative way.

In addition, Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara, Trumper-Hecht (2008:8) states that "It is in the conviction of Landry and Bourhis (1997) as well as of Spolsky and Cooper (1991) that LL functions as an informational marker on the one hand, and as a symbolic marker communicating the relative power and status of linguistic communities in a given territory". Focusing on Canada, Landry and Bourhis stressed the importance of LL in language maintenance using the framework of ethnolinguistic vitality research in bilingual settings. On the other hand, Spolsky and Cooper focusing on Jerusalem stressed the influence of political regimes on LL. However, their argument is that while these approaches are helpful, they also

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have shortcomings. They go on further explaining these shortcomings as follows; The Landry-Bourhis approach sees LL as 'given' context of sociolinguistic processes and therefore not focusing on the very factors which give shape to LL with limited or without considering the dynamics of LL. On the other hand, the Cooper- Spolsky approach turned more clearly toward aspects of change, but it does not pay attention to the complexity of LL with regards to the large number of actors that participate in its formation. Moreover, while both approaches do emphasise the '*sui generis*' interest of LL as a set of facts deserving study and research, they provide only a limited grasp of the genuine and far-reaching importance of LL.

In one of the earlier studies on LL, Backhaus (2005) on one hand argues that despite strong differences regarding place of observation, applied methodology and underlying research perspectives, three basic questions that inform the study of the linguistic landscape can be identified. These are the "writers, the readers, and the diachronic development of language in public space, respectively:" Linguistic landscaping by whom? Linguistic landscaping for whom? Linguistic landscape *quo vadis*?

The first question refers to the originator or source of a sign. The first basic destination here is between official and non - official items. On the other hand, the second question concerns the readers of the sign. The third question concerns the dynamics of languages and scripts in contact. It focuses on what the signs out in the streets reveal about the diachronic development of a city's linguistic condition (Backhaus: 59 -60).

On the other hand, Ben-Rafael (2009) goes further in elaboration by identifying four structural principles that shape the linguistic landscape. The first principle is the presentation of self, which is inspired by Gofman's (1963, 1981 in Ben-Rafael, 2009:36) "analysis of how social agents present a favourable image of themselves to others to reach a desired goal." Ben-Rafael extends this principle to LL items, which competes for the attention of passers-by. It follows

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that the opaque the LL, makes the competition difficult, "and more unusual items have a greater chance of being noticed" (Ben-Rafael, 2009: 37).

The good- reasons principle derives from the fact that LL items must cater 'rationally' to the (perceived) needs and desires of the readership, and that the readership has to be able to perceive such LL items as being rational (Ben-Rafael, 2009).

The third structuration principle relates to collective identity. Whilst the principle of presentation of self indicates the agent's uniqueness to gain the attention of passerby, the collective-identity principle indicates to which group(s) the agent belongs and draws clients on a basis of a shared identity. Ben-Rafael (2009:46-47) argues that "an awareness of this can indicate the measure of societal divisions- of tolerance to sociocultural differences and the use of linguistic items to include or exclude groups and expressing identity."

Ben-Rafael (2009: 47) concludes that the 'power-relations, the fourth principle, centre on the degree to which certain groups can impose linguistic regulations on others. It can be revealed in the extent to which a dominant culture is tolerant to differences; to the degree in which a dominant group's power is restricted by legislation; or also how other powerful agents may oppose language regulations.'

As noted above, early researchers focused more on language display in public spaces. That means if language is not there, they would assume that it is 'dead'. As indicated in Landry and Bourhis's (1997:30) study of ethnolinguistic vitality "the weaker the position of an ethnolinguistic group relative to more dominant ethnolinguistic out-groups on these socio-structural factors, the stronger the likelihood that this group will tend to assimilate linguistically and cease to exist as a distinct ethnolinguistic collectivity". On the other hand, recent studies that look beyond language display such as Banda and Jimaima (2017:596) looking on language vitality in multilingual context of Zambia argue that this is not always the case, "even as people

migrate to other areas it is not always the case that they 'lose' their language(s); on the contrary they carry with them their linguistic repertoires, which they blend with those found in the new place". In the light of the information above, this study looks beyond language display. Hence the inclusion of material cultures (Linguistic and other cultural semiotic resources in the study of semiotic landscapes).

2.2 Semiotic/Multimodal Turn

This gave rise to what is called the multimodal or semiotic turn in LL studies (Jaworsky and Thurlow 2010; Peck and Banda 2014; Banda and Jimaima 2015, 2017). Even though the new waves of LL studies have turned multimodal/multisemiotic, the field is still called LL study as this name has already been established (Banda and Jimaima 2015). This section gives a brief overview of the new breed of studies that have focused on the social semiotics of landscapes or multimodality and space rather than on language alone.

Early studies were more of quantitative, meaning they were just counting how many languages are there and which languages are used more often than others. However, recent studies have moved beyond language to include other semiotic resources. As noted in Banda and Jimaima (2017:602) "Language, whether written or oral, is just one of many social semiotic resources people use in sign making". Gorter (2006) and Shohamy and Wakman (2009) called for the inclusion of other semiotic resources in the construction of the LL. These inclusions and attempts to expand the 'scenery' entailed innovations in methodological applications and what constituted data in the LL. There was also a shift from predominantly quantitative to a focus on multimodality and qualitative ethnographic methods of data collection (Stroud and Mpendukana 2009; Blommaert and Huang 2010; Banda and Jimaima 2015).

Kelleher (2014:23) also argues that although structural principle provides a theorisation of LL that goes beyond the quantitative, they do not sufficiently consider the interplay between artifacts of LL and their context and the expansions in meaning that result. Nor do they provide a means of accessing the thoughts, feelings, perceptions and beliefs of producers and receivers of LL since analysis is not grounded. Hence, the call for quality ethnographic methods of data collection.

In addition, Jaworski (2013:2) argues that just like in the natural world where landscape can be shaped by visible or invisible forces and human or non-human activities, such as soil erosion. "Linguistic landscapes are, too, shaped by typically invisible but traceable constitutive activities that are profoundly ideological, encapsulating different social actors' priorities, goals and competing value systems". In his commentary on the special issue, he further argues that though these papers all agree with the idea of social construction of space and place and that they see the role of linguistic and other semiotic resources as central in giving space its 'meaning' or creating 'a sense of place', there are also shortcomings involved. However, he argues that these shortcomings may be alleviated to some extent by the ethnographic detail obtained in the field to supplement (triangulate) the more or less informed guesses or interpretations of our data. It is clear from the above descriptions and arguments on linguistic landscape that there's more to investigate the field than just the linguistic appearance. Stroud and Mpendukana (2009:363) also argue that "more refined notions of space coupled to a material ethnography of multilingualism could provide a theoretically more relevant and methodologically refocused notion of (multilingual) linguistic landscape". It is based on these arguments that this study seeks to identify social semiotic material used in the construction of brand identities in LL of Langa township.

2.3 Material Culture of Multilingualism

As mentioned above that those that are using semiotics are looking beyond language. This section gives a brief description of material culture as part of linguistic landscape studies in reference to the works of Aronin (2015), and Aronin and Ó Laoire (2012). They describe material culture as "the realm of physical items, produced by humans as well as events and spaces interconnected by and with local and global mentality, culture, tradition and social life. The objects (or artifacts) include everyday life objects such as food and utensils, furniture and pieces of art, weapons and medical devices, medications, books and clay tablets of the past, pens and carpenter tools, monuments and buildings" (Aronin and Ó Laoire 2012:3). They call for a deliberate focus on the study of materialities (artifacts, objects and spaces) which can contribute significantly to the investigation of multilingualism.

Hence, a "need to expand the present epistemological paradigms of multilingual landscape research to include a focus on materialities that are linked with the ways of life in multilingual homes, places of work and socialization and time – spaces of wider society" (Aronin and Ó Laoire, 2012:1). Their argument is that material culture manifests social reality and social change with tangible clarity that is often not accessible in studies of all other aspects of multilingualism. As mentioned elsewhere, material culture embodies our mental and perceptual world, action and the way of life. Aronin (2015) argues that the flow of everyday life of being and doing, is unthinkable without buildings, objects, tools and spaces. Materialities accompany virtually every step of our lives and influence our existence. In real life communication, cognition, cultural practices and language learning never occur in a vacuum, but rather amidst materialities and with their assistance. This is echoed by Aronin, Hornsby and Kiliańska-Przybyło (2018) as they argue that the scope of material culture overlaps to a certain extent with the linguistic landscape, but the material culture of linguistic landscape is even broader because it is not only limited to the public space. In this volume they try to show how objects

such as postcards, souvenirs, sugar bags etc. can be related to identity, minority languages, globalisation, immigration, language teaching or cultural differences. It is under these arguments that this study tried to incorporate and explain the role of cultural material observed in the linguistic landscape of Langa. Therefore, this study tried to incorporate material culture by looking at what do people bring with, when they come or move into these spaces, things like cultural or traditional artifacts or souvenirs including names or languages used in the signage that can also be related to identities.

2.4 Branding and Identities

This section gives a brief overview on the concepts related to branding and identities. In trying to discuss the concept of branding I draw on the work of Becker and Palmer (2009), who in turn draw on the works of others like Laurance (2001) and Aaker (2002). Santos and Buzinde (2007:323) in their conceptual framework define identities as follows, "Identities are produced and confirmed through interactions with others. That is to say, social agents construct and project certain meanings onto the individuals with whom they interact, and they, in turn, interpret the meanings produced by their interlocutors". Therefore, it is possible that in different situations people may alter their identities accordingly to the environment and the people. As noted by Peck and Banda (2014:18) in their findings on Observatory's linguistic landscape that "while it is clear that some transnational owners (as seen with EBL) celebrated ownership openly and use it as a marketing strategy, other groups appear to shy away from the overt use of signs that might identify and link them to a particular space". In South Africa there is a tendency of looting foreign owned shops whenever there is a protest especially, against poor service delivery in the townships. This could explain why some shop owners tend to shy away from using signs that might reveal their identities.

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In general, "Branding is the process of giving a meaning to specific company, products or services by creating and shaping a brand in consumers' minds. It is a strategy designed by companies to help people to quickly identify their products and organisation and give them a reason to choose their products over the competition's, by clarifying what this particular brand is and is not" (www. the branding journal.com). Laurance et al (2001) state that today's brands are however not only about the logo, but it is also still there to evoke familiarity, there is much more that can be read into the brand than simply a name. According to Aaker (2002) cited in Becker and Palmer (2009:9) "a brand is more than just a product and there are four brand identity perspectives. When building a brand identity, the brand should be considered as: a product, an organization, a person and a symbol". They further argue that "brand identity is 'aspirational', thus how the brand wants to be perceived, whilst brand image is how the brand is perceived by the customer. " (p 9).

A brand like a person can be characterised in terms of personality traits which give the brand more characteristics than describing a product in terms of what it can do. It can a the brand strong many ways; it can affect the relationship with customers, in the same way that human personalities can affect relationships. Becker and Palmer (2009:11) cite Laurance et al (2001) and state that "the strongest brands are those that elicit emotional attachment from customers." Therefore, it is easier to create a relationship with a brand if there is a person to relate to. In other words, branding aims to establish a significant and differentiated presence in the market that attracts and retains loyal customers. However, for the purpose of this thesis the focus is on the social structuring of languages that leads to commodification of linguistic forms to sale goods in shops/spaza shops not so much on the products in themselves. The idea was to find out how businesses appropriated local and international material culture not only in selling the products but in selling their identities.

2.5 Summary

This chapter began by looking at the definition and theory of LL studies. The next section focused on multimodal turn and discussed the importance of moving beyond the signs from early LL studies that were more quantitative oriented in that they counted languages appearing on the signage, to a focus on multimodality and qualitative ethnographic methods of data collection, which recognises the importance of ethnographic materials including a focus on materialities. The last section gives an overview on branding and identities that ultimately are also socially constructed.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical and Analytical Framework

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides theoretical and analytical framework of this study which contains literature pertinent to research methodology. Firstly, this section is informed by theories of multimodal/multisemiotic discourse analysis. This is also referred to as the study of multimodality. Moreover, it also looks at studies that use ethnographic methodology which recognises the importance of ethnographic materials such as interviews, cultural materials etc. These studies provide the means of accessing the thoughts, feelings, perceptions and beliefs of producers and receivers of LL. Thus, focus on the social semiotics of landscapes or multimodality and space rather than on language alone.
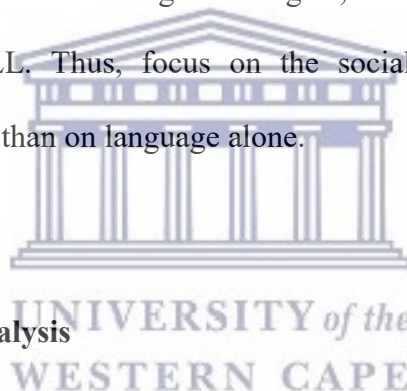
3.1 Multimodal Discourse Analysis

The term multimodality was introduced to highlight the importance of considering semiotics other than language in use, such as image, music, gesture, and so on. It is the work of Kress and Van Leeuwen (1990, 1996; Van Leeuwen, 1999) which is becoming increasingly definitive of approaches to text analysis and meaning making, and where the discourse analytical term 'multimodality' originates. The term multimodality is a technical one aiming to highlight that the meaning work we do always exploit various semiotics. In other words, multimodality provides the means to describe a practice or representation in all its semiotic complexity and richness. Often oriented to finished and finite texts, multimodal analysis considers the complexity of texts or representations as they are, and less frequently how it is that such

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constructs come about, or how it is that they 'transmogrify' as (part of larger) dynamic processes. Even though, Iedema underscores the importance of multimodal approach to the analysis of interaction etc. It is for the reasons mentioned above that Iedema (2003:30) advocates for an additional and alternative approach to analysis by introducing the term resemiotisation. The argument is that "the inevitably transformative dynamics of socially situated meaning-making process require an additional and alternative analytical point of view". This alternative view favours the social-processual logic which governs how material meanings mutually transforms one another (Douglas, 1994), and is referred to here as resemiotisation.

This brings us to the two concepts which are useful when looking at socially/culturally situated meaning making process: resemiotisation and intertextuality. The term resemiotisation refers to "how meaning making shifts from context to context, from practice to practice, or from one stage of a practice to the next" (Iedema, 2003:41). In other words, resemiotisation is meant to provide the analytical means for tracing how semiotics are translated from one into the other as social processes unfold. There is a need to also ask why these semiotics rather than others are mobilised to do certain things at certain times (Iedema, 2003) On the other hand intertextuality in its most obvious sense, is the presence of actual elements of other texts within a text (Fairclough, 2003:39-40). Intertextuality covers a range of possibilities; it is about certain parts being borrowed while resemiotisation carries out and highlights how these borrowed texts are revised to suit the context or practice at hand.

Iedema (2003) in discussing the concept of resemiotisation, talks about 'historicising' meaning by contextualising complex, multi-semiotic representation within the practices, social rules, resource availabilities and 'moral habits' that bear on how we are able to mean, and on how

our meaning makings unfold. The argument is that multimodal analysis should be complemented with a dynamic view on semiosis. Since our semiotic landscape is becoming more and more populated with complex social and cultural discourse practices.

In addition to Iedema's semiotic approach to analysis, Scollon and Scollon (2003) argue that we can only interpret the meaning of public texts like road signs, notices and brand logos by considering the social and physical world that surrounds them. Iedema (2003) also argues that these new realities of the semiotic landscape are primarily brought about by social and cultural factors. Enfield (2000) elaborates by arguing that the social world is an ecological complex in which cultural meanings and knowledges (linguistic and nonlinguistic) personally embodied by individuals are 'intercalibrated' via common attention to commonly accessible semiotic structures. He further argues that people carry "private representations", thoughts, concepts, and sense/sensorimotor images (in many possible forms) that are structured and can be recalled and privately manipulated. Hence this study follows ethnographic methodology which recognises ethnographic materials such as interviews, cultural materials to elicit these 'private representations'/cultural meanings.
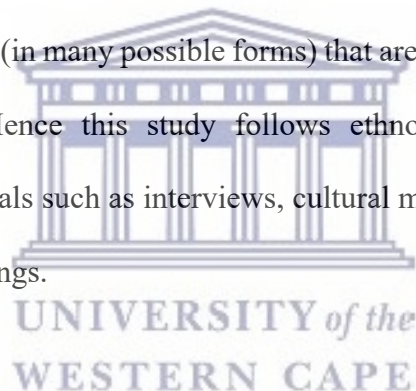
Recent studies have moved beyond just counting how many languages on display to a more ethnographic approach. And this is due to the fact that there has been a call for the inclusion of other semiotic resources in the construction of the LL. These inclusions and attempts to expand the 'scenery' entailed innovations in methodological applications and what constituted data in the LL. There was also a shift from predominantly quantitative to a focus on multimodality and qualitative ethnographic methods of data collection (Stroud and Mpendukana 2009; Blommaert and Huang 2010; Banda and Jimaima 2015). Pennycook (2017: 272) cites Blommaert in emphasizing this shift as follows: "linguistic landscape research has thus shifted its understanding of language from a focus on enumerable languages on signs in the public domain

to include greater contextual (ethnographic) and historical understanding of texts in the landscape-who put them there, how they are interpreted, and what role they play in relation to space, migration and mobility".

Banda and Jimaima (2018) suggest the need to go beyond the written text so that the oral narration rather the written language becomes as significant as an object of study. They suggest this in relation to the study done in London China town by Blommaert and Haung (2010). They argue that this study makes a significant contribution to the overall framing of a material ethnography as it foregrounds the subjective narration of space. Also, the study helps to bring into the spotlight the consumer for whom certain signs are emplaced and the specific story they are deployed in these specific spaces to narrate. They also note that Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) remind us that sites rely on their materiality to co-construct their LL and that the narratives borne by some of the signs have long-established trajectories as they are merely revoiced through the processes of resemiotisation and intertextuality, just as these two concepts discussed above. This move to a more ethnographic approach to data collection has resulted into increased development of concepts related to analysis such as the two discussed below.
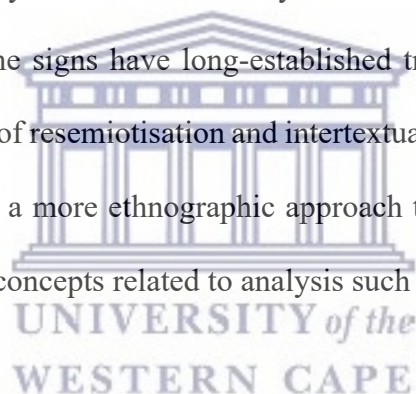
3.2 Spatial Repertoire

Pennycook and Otsuji (2014, 2015) argue that a spatial repertoire comprises resources available for making meaning which are entwined to particular spaces. This approach builds an appreciation of the spatial setting as material, representational, chronological and socially co-constructed, it is a non-individualistic perspective, and it explores the dynamics between distinct elements in the meaning-making process and the accomplishment of tasks; thus, the multiplicity of meaningful "staff" is made relevant. The point is that spatially available materialities and non-material, language, objects, smells, and activity modes can be drawn

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upon. It is a pragmatic question, what sense and use develops through social interaction. In this manner the idea of meaning potential accentuates the consideration that a spatial repertoire is open to elucidation and manipulation. Space is vital to production of cultural identity because the affirmation, creation and negotiation of social identities occur within and through special relations of places (Pratt and Hanson 1994) cited in (Santos and Buzinde 2007). This is echoed by Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) in citing Blommaert, Collins and Slembrouck (2005) who note that situations, defined by how space and place are configured and represented, and the different interactions and identities that are possible in those spaces, strongly determine how people use a language.

3.3 Commodification of Language

Banda and Mokwena (2019:178-179) cite Appadurai (1986:13) who proposes that commodities be perceived as "things in a certain situation, a situation that can characterize many different kinds of things, at different points in their lives". Therefore, adopting this situation-dependent approach to commodities enables the exploration of "the commodity potential of all things rather than searching fruitlessly for the magic distinction between commodities and other sort of things". In this conceptualisation, any language or meaningful linguistic features can be a commodity, depending on the situation. They state that the early political economists view commodities as special kinds of manufactured goods (or services) which are associated only with capitalists' modes of production and are thus to be found only where capitalism has penetrated (Appadurai 1986:7). However, they argue that "such narrowly defined view of what constitutes a commodity needs to be revisited following the impact particularly of the local on the global" (Banda and Mokwena (2019: 177-178).

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Jaworski (2019) argues that commodification of language has emerged as one of the key topics in contemporary sociolinguistics. Fairclough (1992:207) cited in Jaworski (2019) defines commodification as a shift in the organization of social domains whereby institutions that have not traditionally been concerned with the production of commodities in the narrow sense come to be associated with commodity production, distribution and consumption. Banda and Mokwena (2019) cite Heller in defining commodification of language, according to Heller (2003:474) the commodification of language refers to the process of "language being rendered amenable to redefinition as a measurable skill and consequently, the understanding of language being a marketable commodity on its own". Banda and Mokwena (2019:179) in their study in rural areas of Northern Cape note that "business owners increasingly recognise local languages as 'things' that can be transformed into commodities that in turn help to sell/advertise other commodities". They further argue that languages, or their linguistic features as modes in signage, should be valued as mobile socio-culturally given and multimodally shaped semiotic resources deployed for communicative impact on consumers in local contexts of use. One of the conditions that have led to the increasing role of language in economic processes, both as communicative labour (the work process) and as a cultural artifact (the work product), is the use of symbolic, often linguistic resources to add value to standardized products (Heller 2010 cited in Jaworsky (2019).

Leeman and Modan (2009:332) looked at the commodification of language in Washington DC's Chinatown and argue for "a contextualised, historicised and spatialised perspective on linguistic landscape which highlights that landscapes are not simply physical space but are instead ideologically charged constructions". They argue this after looking at the newly gentrified Chinatown in Washington DC. They established that recent establishments, particularly non-Chinese owned chains, use Chinese-language signs as a design features targeted towards people who neither read nor have ethnic ties to Chinese. They further argue

that "like other aspects of the built environment, material realisations of language are strategic tools that are wielded in local politics, power struggles, and competing claims to space". Furthermore, they argue that instances of written language in the landscape are not only artifacts of negotiation over space, but they are also productive signs in that they have important economic and social consequences, and can affect those who would visit, work, or live in a given neighbourhood.

3.4 Summary

This chapter outlined the theoretical and analytical framework for the analysis of the data presented in chapter five. The theoretical framework is grounded in multimodality, aiming to highlight that the meaning work we do at all times exploits various semiotics and studies that use ethnographic methodology which recognises the importance of ethnographic materials such as interviews, cultural materials etc. It is under these theoretical underpinnings that the analysis is based, the call to go beyond the written text by looking at social and cultural factors that shape the meaning making process. Thus, this study's theoretical premise is that of meaning making process as socially constructed.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Methodology

4.0 Introduction

This chapter describes research methodology, including the type of data collected for the project, instruments used and procedures, data analysis methods and ethical considerations. As mentioned above, very few studies have been conducted in townships, rural areas and Africa in general. It is in the township of Langa and its surroundings that this study is designed to explore as a contribution to the study of linguistic landscape in non-upmarket regions. Based on studies already done on linguistic landscape this study follows the new waves of methodology by Stroud and Mpendukana (2009), Banda and Jimaima (2015, 2017), Peck and Banda (2014), Lanza and Woldemariam (2013) and Akindele (2011).
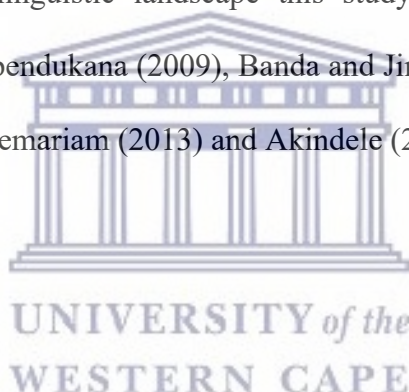
4.1 Research Design

This study is informed by an ethnographic methodology which recognizes the importance of ethnographic materials such as interviews, cultural materials etc. The nature of the study is both descriptive and interpretive and is qualitative rather than quantitative. It is qualitative in the sense that it is not only interpreting the signs but rather trying to establish the meaning behind the signs. Jaworsky (2013) argues that ethnographic details obtained in the field may supplement '(triangulate)' the more or less informed guesses or interpretations of our data. This is supported by Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) who argue that a more refined notion of space with 'material ethnography' of multilingualism provide a more relevant and refocused notion of (multilingual) linguistic landscape.

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4.2 Data Collection

Data was collected in four different ways: First, Photographs were taken throughout Langa Township. In addition to photographs, interviews with selected business owners and customers were conducted. Third, a walking methodology was employed which enables the researcher to get an idea of how people consume these signs. Fourth, observation of materialities such as food, clothing etc. was also employed.

4.2.1 Photographs

The main source of data is photographs, mainly of the spaza shops taken throughout Langa Township. More than 50 photographs were collected and narrowed down to 25 for the purpose of the study which focuses mainly on the shop signs including spaza shops. Some of the photographs were taken around Langa business centre and the taxi rank. Langa is one of the smallest townships if not the smallest around Cape Town. Therefore, other photographs were taken throughout various streets of Langa while walking. Banda and Jimaima (2015:602) note that LL studies have privileged digital images as quantifiable and analysable data because "photographs capture a fleeting and irretrievable moment in time, extracting it from the flux of change that characterizes human life". In cases where the participants had given permission for interviews, the discussions around the photographs and the meaning behind the names were complemented by the narratives from the interviews.

4.2.2 Interviews

However, as mentioned above LL studies have moved beyond just analyzing photographs or counting how many languages are there. Photographs can be said to be the point of departure

of data collection in LL studies. Moving beyond photographs, interviews were conducted with randomly selected eight (8) shop owners and on various aspects of the signage. This was to investigate reasons concerning the choices of names, languages and linguistic choices in the signs including the products they are selling. Individual interviews were structured into four (4) foreign shop owners and four (4) local shop owners. After seeking their permission, interviews were also carried out with four (4) randomly selected customers to get their views as consumers of these signs. Do they know the meanings of the languages/messages on the signage? Do the names, languages or the products on sale including the prices attract them? Participants were interviewed in the streets as I walked to and from the shops.

4.2.3 Walking Methodology

A walking approach, which in recent years has found its way into social sciences, has been found to be useful technique for data collection (Stroud and Jegels 2014; Banda and Jimaima 2015). As observed by Evans and Jones (2011: 850) "the literature suggests that a major advantage of walking interviews is their capacity to access people's attitudes and knowledge about the surrounding environment". This methodology allows people to remember details and ideas that could have been omitted from an office-based interview. Being mobile in the place and interacting with the environment allows for more detailed and on-site answers from participants.

However, it should be noted that in most of these shops it proved to be a challenge to get inside and walk around to observe and take pictures of any cultural material such as artifacts, clothing food etc. Therefore, it is important to note that the findings are partially reliant on the researcher's noted observations particularly regarding products on sale and observation of cultural artifacts. As can be seen in the analysis, the shops are characterized by burglar bars to

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prevent any easy access to the shops. This maked it even harder for the researcher to observe goods on sale as well as conducting interviews. In fact, interviews where and when they were granted, were conducted through a small window used for buying and selling which also has burglar bars. This could be attributed to the fact that whenever there is a protest in the townships the Somali shops become the target of looting and vandalism. On 9 July 2014, for example, Langa was the site of violent protest against government service delivery specifically of housing but soon turned into a more general protest about broader issues such as Marikana Massacre and general living conditions. Several shops and businesses were torched and looted and transport links to the rest of the city were closed off by protesters.

4.3 Multimodal Data Analysis

Recordings were transcribed and translated into English where necessary. Thereafter, following recent trends in LL approaches to data analysis, a multimodal text analysis of the themes from the narratives from interviews, images, languages and other cultural objects in place was done. The analysis addresses the themes related to the objectives of study and hence arising the following questions:

- What specific branding strategies have business owners employ to compete amongst each other?

- To examine, what are the perceptions, understandings and opinions of business owners and patrons regarding the name choices?

- What evidence is there of changes in the linguistic landscape to acknowledge and value the diversity of community languages?

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- In particular, what processes and strategies can be identified that have been used in creating and maintaining identities?

As noted above this move to a more ethnographic approach to data collection has resulted into increased development of concepts related to analysis. This study incorporated concepts such as resemiotisation, intertextuality, commodification and spatial repertoires in the analysis. Thus, these concepts guide us in understanding how the meaning making process unfolds.

4.4 Ethical Procedures

As mentioned above, that interviews form part of the study to triangulate data collected by means of photographs and observations. I requested permission from the selected individuals for interviews at their convenient time. Before conducting the interviews, enough time was granted to interviewees to read information in the form of information sheet that details my intentions and the purpose of the project. The information sheet includes the following: the purpose of the study, that the conversation with them will be recorded and transcribed, their participation will always be voluntary and anonymised. Once they agree I asked them to sign the consent form which 'spells out' the UWC 'code of conduct' for research.

4.5 Summary

This chapter outlined the research design and methodology of this study. As the study is of qualitative design therefore, the methods that were explained aimed at establishing and demonstrating the meaning behind the names on the signage. This was done through interviews

with some shop owners and some customers to get their perspectives regarding the names. The data collection method was the use of camera to take photographs, walking methodology to observe goods on sale including materialities of material culture as well as interviews to supplement the interpretation of photographs.

CHAPTER FIVE

Personal Names, Nicknames, Clan Names and Identities in Semiotic Landscapes

5.0. Introduction

The new and changing linguistic landscape of Langa provides a great deal of data regarding the name choices on the signage. These include personal names from both local and non-South African owned shops, nicknames and clan names. As these not only show personal preferences, but also indicate an expression of identities. This chapter looks at connotations associated with some of the names including cultural/religious meaning. Hence, signs are seen to reflect their particular social and cultural contexts. In the analysis that follows, I first present local personal names and non-South African personal names, followed by nicknames and clan names. I looked at name choices in both local and foreign owned shops to identify the branding strategies used to create and maintain identities. As Fairclough (2003) argues, what is 'said' in a text is 'said' against a background of what is 'unsaid' but taken as given. Thus, to research meaning making one needs to look at interpretations of texts as well as texts themselves, and more generally at how texts practically figure in particular areas of social life, which suggest that textual analysis is best framed within ethnography. Here the researcher agrees, hence the detailed analysis of the names and phrases on the signage complemented by the interviews in some cases.

5.1 Local Personal Names and Identities

There has been a growing trend from using surnames in the old shops to using personal names including nicknames and clan names. Many of these names are in reference to the clan, God,

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the home, or family to which a person is born, and these can also carry aspirations. Personal names can also have as much significance as clan names. Scollon and Scollon (2003) argue that we can only interpret the meaning of public texts like road signs, notices and brand logos by considering the social and physical world that surrounds them. Here I am looking at the names given to the shops and their social or culturally associated meanings. The understanding and interpretation of these signs depends on the reader's cultural background as they both reflect and construct social/cultural values and in turn express identities. First, I begin by explaining the name on the sign below 'Nomzamo'.

Figure 5.1

Nomzamo is a name given to a female in Xhosa culture, meaning the one who tries harder (hard worker). This name can be given to a child from birth and it can also be given to a young woman when she gets married to another family. The name is aspirational in the sense that parents wish and hope that the child will live up to the name. Thus, most Xhosa names are aspirational and, if you are not familiar with the Xhosa culture you will not know whether the

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name refers to a woman or a man. However, for someone who knows and understands the difference it's easy to conclude that this name belongs to a woman. This is indicated by the prefix 'NO', which is a gender marker for most women and can also indicate marital status for married women. This is what Enfield (2009) calls 'cultural logic', his argument is that the mutual assumptions of particular cultural ideas provide human groups with common premises for predictably 'convergent inferential processes'.

Repeated attempts to secure an interview with the owners were unsuccessful. However, I managed to score interviews with some of the patrons. When asked about the name one of the interviewees replied that:

'Thina sikhule kusithiwa ku kwaNomzamo but umama walapha wayebizwa ngelinye igama, so we don't know.'

'We grew up this place known as Nomzamo, even though we knew the woman by another name, so we don't know.'

When further asked about whether the name or the slogan attracts her into buying the products, she replied as follows:

'Siyela into ethengiswayo because ibutchery zinqabile apha elokishini, so yibutchery efikelelekayo le esikwazo ukuthenga kuyo yonke into enenyama.'

'We are only here for meat, because there are few butcheries here and this is the only one nearest to us, where we can buy meat products.'

It is quite clear from the interviewee's perspective that the name on the signage including the slogan has no significant role in her coming to the shop. Especially, since she grew up knowing this as the only butchery in the area as she notes that there are not many butcheries in Langa as

a whole. However, when asked about what attracts her most regarding the products on sale the interviewee was happy to say:

'Umbengo, nobuneat bayo, nobufresh benyama, nobufriendly bayo.'

'Barbecue/roasted meat, neatness, fresh meat and friendly customer care.'

Below is another picture of a personal local name 'Mncedi' meaning to assist or the one who helps and is followed by an interview with the young shopkeeper.

Figure 5.2

The Shopkeeper was asked about the name Mncedi and his response was that:

'uMncedi ligama le shop kuthwa kukwamncedi kodwa I owner zalapha kuthwa kukwa Bam ifani yazo. Andilazi igama eli lithi Mncedi.'

'Mncedi is the name of the shop but the owners' surname is Bam, I'm not sure about the name Mncedi.'

So, do you think the name or products attracts customers?

'Enye into kuthengiswa izinto zesiXhosa apha. Zazithengiswa kwakudala izinto zesintu apha. Umzekelo izinto zamagqirha namakhwenkwe ayokweluka zazithengiswa apha kwakudala. Yonke into yesintu ifumaneka apha.'

'The fact that we sell traditional Xhosa products here, this shop has been selling traditional related products for a long time. For instance, things used by traditional healers and things needed during the initiation of boys to manhood. Everything related to tradition is available here.'

This prompted the question about the clientele and the products on sale.

'Ngabantu balapha, nabantu abasuka emaxhoseni nakwezinye indawo. Apha nalapha kwaNabe kwakuthengiswa izonto zakudala ezifana namakhuba, iibhekile, nempalha zamakrwala iminqwazi, iibhatyi nengubo kwakungekho need ba uye kwenye indawo.'

'It's local people, people from the Eastern Cape and from other areas around Cape Town. This shop and the Nabe shop (referring to another) were the only shops that sell things related to tradition, things like ploughs, billycans, and traditional wear for newly initiates such as hats, jackets and blankets.'
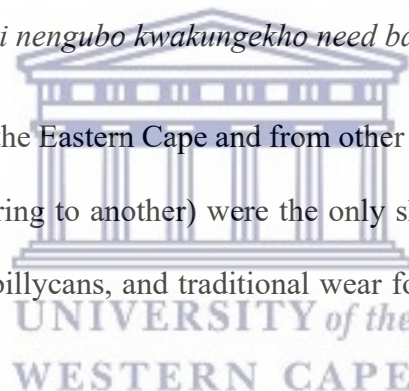
A follow up question was asked, do you still sell those things now?

'Not zonke, amaxesha ayatshintsha kaloku nathi sesihamba namaxesha akusekho mntu ofuna amakhuba ngoku, kodwa usazifumana izinto zama gqirha nezinye izinto zesintu apha.'

'Not everything, times have changed now, and we are not left behind. There is no need for the plough now, but you can still get things like traditional wear for the initiates and other things.'

From the shopkeeper's narrative it is quite clear that the product on sale has a lot to do with attracting customers and the name is there as a reference for customers as revealed that he also

does not know who or what the name refers to. Generally, the name Mncedi refers to a male person and it simply means the one who helps. However, the name could be referring to the founder of the shop since the shop is one of the oldest in Langa and hence the young shopkeeper has no idea to whom the name refers.

5.2 Non-South African Personal Names and Identities

Figure 5.3 below is a personal name from Ethiopia, the name according to the owner means the end or the last born. Even though I did not get the interview I manage to ask the meaning of the name on the signage. He explained to me that he is from Ethiopia and is the last born of eight children, so his parents named him accordingly. However, the name is said to be the short version of Zedekiah, meaning god is righteousness. On the other hand, in the Old Testament it is the name of the last king of Judah, who died in captivity at Babylon. This is where I assume that the shop owner's name and meaning is derived from (the last king/last born). A personal name can be regarded as part of one's identity as shown here, I only asked the meaning of the name and he began by telling me he is from Ethiopia. Then he explained the meaning behind the name.

Figure 5.3

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In figure 5.4 below the name Baraka is a boy's name of Arabic, Swahili origins, which means it has more than one root, and is used in more than one country and different languages of the world, especially Arabic speaking countries, Swahili speaking countries among others. However, the most common meaning for both Arabic and Swahili is "Blessing". I had a brief interview with the shopkeeper of Baraka Shop even though the shopkeeper seems to have no idea about the meaning of the name as indicated below.
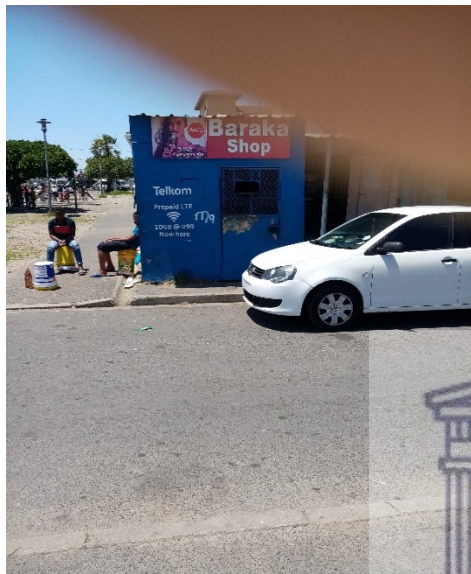
Figure 5.4

The response to the question about the name was:

'Yaah, I'm say Baraka, I think they just use name for fun, I don't know the owner, me I'm working here you know, so…'

The next question was where does the owner come from? And the answer was:

'Ethiopia'

and you?

'From Ethiopia'

Do you think the name attracts customers?

'I don't know, but they come buy things here every day.'

Below is a sign indicating what the owner calls family name/surname from Uganda. The use of family names is another form of collective identities as they tend to be indicators of a particular linguistic or ethnic background. Unfortunately, I was not able to secure an interview with the owner as he is always busy. However, I was able to sneak in some questions while buying some fruit and that is how I got to know that he is from Uganda. At first glance I thought the name had something to do with Kenya which is one of the southern African countries not far from Uganda. This view was also shared by two of the customers, who agreed to be interviewed. They both assumed that the owner is from Kenya as indicated below from the interview.

Figure 5.5

The question was asked whether she knows what the name Bukhenya means, and her reply was that:

'Umkhenya ngumntu usuka pha kwelalizwe lakhe qha wazithiya ba ngumkheya.'

'Umkhenya (as affectionately known by customers) is a person coming from his country and chose to name his shop by the name of his country.'

This answer prompted a further question. Which country? And the answer was:

'Kenya.'

Another question was that, how long has the shop been operating? And she replied by stating that:

'Yhoo, yiminyanka qha andiyazi yiminyaka emingaphi.'

'It's been years but I'm not sure exactly how many years.'

A further question was asked on whether the name or the product on sale attracts her into buying in this shop and the reply was that:

'Into enditsala ngamandla pha, ivege yakhe, nefruit yakhe zisoko zifresh kunye nezinye iproduct zakhe zisoko zifresh.'

'What attracts me most is that his vegetables, fruit and other products are always fresh.'

This is supported by the second interviewee from the same shop, the question was asked; what attracts you most about this place? And the answer was that:

'Into enditsalayo kwaMkenya izinto zakhe zonke ziright zifresh neAirtime yakhe ayenyukanga bayiR5 uyifumana ngala mali akho mali ziextra.'

'What attracts me is that his products are in good condition, fresh. Even the Airtime does not have an extra charge, if you buy R5 Airtime you only pay R5 with no additional costs.'

The next question was an extension of the above; do the name or products on sale including the price attracts you? The answer was that:

'Kuba ndimazi uMkenya kwa esafika apha wayenestand pha ngasendlini, ndingabizwa ligama ndingabizwa nazizinto azithengisayo. Uqale kancinci eqhuba itrolley ukuya emarikeni njengokuba nje semkhulu kangaka. Ngoba naxa ndifuna into ndingena mali uyandinika akanangxaki yiyolento ndithanda ukuthenga apha.'

'I know Mkenya since he arrived here, he used to have a stall next to my house. It could be both the name and the products on sale. He started very small, he used to push a trolley to the market and now the business has grown to be this big. Even when I want something without money, he gives me what I want, he does not have a problem with that. That is why I come here more often.'

Another question was asked based on the shop sign; do you know the meaning of the name Bukenya? The answer was as follows:

'Andilazi ncam kodwa Umkenya ngowase Kenya.'

'Not really but I think he is from Kenya.'

Both interviewees assume that the owner is from Kenya, even after so many years she has been coming to buy here almost every week. However, what is worth noting is that the quality/freshness of the products including the prices is what matters to these customers. In addition to that the second interviewee also noted that he is able get some goods on credit when he does not have cash to buy since he knows the owner and has a good relationship with him.

5.3 Branding and Nicknames

Nicknames have also become a common factor in the linguistic landscape of the townships. The following signs are found close to each other in the taxi rank competing in selling the same food to the same customers. These nicknames are sometimes shortened and localized version of their full names; some people grew up with their nicknames while others are given by their beloved customers. Ben Rafael et al. (2006:26) cited in Leeman and Modan 2009 also characterizes LL as a social construction: they argue that "LL should be understood in terms of the symbolic functions of language that allow people to use language to index identity and present a certain image of self that support actors' rational self-interests in attracting clients." Thus, it makes sense for them to appropriate these nicknames as shop signs as they are already established and known by customers. In the following figure 5.6 below the nickname Mazoe which is usually given to fames named Zoleka. However, it worth noting that Mazoe is a name of a popular juice drink of Zimbabwean origin. The brand was founded in the 1930s and the product has become popular in the Southern African regions including South Africa. Therefore, the nickname could have been repurposed from this product when the product gained its popularity in South Africa. In figure 5.7 below the nickname is Ntosh and is usually given to females named Ntombomzi and Ntomboxolo.

Figure5.6

Figure 5.7

It is observed from the interview with the shopkeeper of Mazoe restaurant that it was in the best interest of both the owner and customers to use the nickname as it was already established name between the two parties. The business was there long before the new taxi rank was built, and they used makeshift tents for shelter. However, during the construction new stalls were also built for hawkers. That necessitated new repositioning strategies and branding to maintain these already established identities in these new spaces.

During the interview, the question was asked about the name choice and the shopkeeper replied that:

'Umazoe yiowner yalapha ethingisa inyama yenkukhu ephekiweyo nekrwada. Igamalakhe elipheleleyo ngu Zoleka.'

'Mazoe is the owner of the business which sells chicken both cooked and uncooked. And her full name is Zoleka.'

This prompted a further question on why Mazoe not Zoleka or another name and the response was that:

'Umazoe waziwa kakhulu kulebusiness not apha kwaLanga qha nekwezinye iindawo, Abantu bamazi ngeligama lika Mazoe. Noba untu usuka eTown ukuba ubuza kwaMazoe wonke umtu apha uzoyazi ba kufunwa bani'

'Mazoe is very well known in this business not only in this area but in other areas as well, people identify her by this nickname. Whether a person comes from Town if she/ he asked the name Mazoe everyone will know who the person is looking for.'

It is evident from the interview that the reason behind the name choice was in the owner's best interest to maintain not only identity but also to retain customers. As the name was already a brand on its own in this business long before the new stalls were built. Therefore, it was not a

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difficult choice for her to brand the business as Mazoe was already a household name in her business circle. Hence, the name plays a big role in attracting customers as the shopkeeper reveals that Mazoe has been in this business for more than 15 years and she has customers from other townships such as Gugulethu and Delft. This is due to RDP housing project so many people received houses from different areas. However, according to the shopkeeper they still come for Mazoe's chicken. The use of nicknames on the signage also acknowledges the linguistic diversity in local use of languages.

5.4 Branding and Slogans

Figure5.1 above is a locally owned butchery, Nomzamo butchery, with the inscription of the slogan at the bottom of the sign. This is one of the strategies usually employed by well established businesses, by having a personal slogan that is aligned with their brand to emphasize the uniqueness of the brand in comparison to other businesses. Osman, (2008) notes that the purpose of having a slogan is to attract the reader's attention and to let it linger on the reader's mind' The phrase *'Kwanyama ayipheli kuphela izinyo lendoda'* can be loosely translated as '**A place where they never run out of meat, so much that men lose their teeth'**. This is an example of intertextuality, as mentioned above intertextuality is the presence of actual elements of other texts within a text. In other words, as in this case a phrase is borrowed and repurposed to suit the purpose of the advertiser/ advertisement. This phrase is borrowed from a narrative by the miners during the gold rush in Johannesburg. As can be seen below this is more like a poem and that is how people used to describe Johannesburg in those days and is poetically narrated as follows:

'Egoli kwandonga ziyaduma kwelendudumo'

'the place of gold, place of thunder'

'Kwanyama ayipheli kuphela izinyo lendoda'

'where they never run out of meat, until you lose your teeth'

'Kwandod' if'ihluthi ngenxa yenyula'

'Where a man dies with full stomach because of Nyula (one of the dishes)'

'Kwamfaz'ushayintsizwa ngenxa yentlutha'

'Where women defeat men due to food abundance'

Nomzamo is a butchery that not only sells raw meat but also sells barbecue (Braai / Umbengo) In this case the phrase is repurposed as a slogan not only to convey its literal meaning, in that they never run out of meat but also to add value to their product. This in turn, is associated with the name/brand Nomzamo butchery in consumers' minds. The bottom line is that a slogan is an advertising concept and a marketing tool (Osman, 2008).
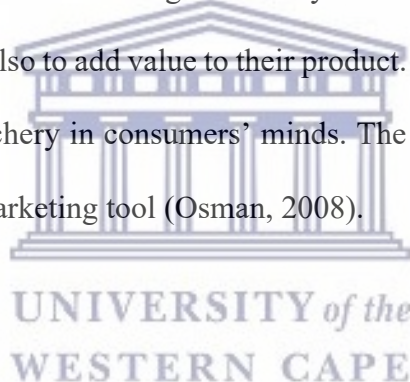
5.5 Branding and Clan Names

Recently we have seen a growing use of clan names and this can be attributed to several things such as freedom of expression, cultural background, identity expression etc. As noted by earlier researchers who distinguished between the top-down and the bottom-up elements of LL, that the bottom-up are designed much more freely according to individual strategies. Iedema (2003) argues that the new realities of the semiotic landscape are primarily brought about by social and cultural factors. In other words, Iedema (2003) in discussing the concept of resemiotisaion, talks about 'historicising' meaning by contextualizing complex, multi-semiotic representation within the practices, social rules, and 'moral habits' that bear on how we are able to mean, and

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on how our meaning makings unfold. This is what the analysis seeks to do here, by looking at social rules and moral habits that guides us on meaning making processes in creating and maintaining identities through shop signs.

The following figure 5.8 shows one of the spaza shop with a clan name "Zondwa" Cash Store. This name belongs to one of the well-known clans, the Madiba clan which was most popularised by the former state president Nelson Mandela, affectionately known as Madiba.

Figure 5.8

One of the conditions outlined by Heller (2010) is the use of symbols, often linguistic resources to add value to standardized products. Here, the shop owners draw on their cultural linguistic features such as clan names as a creative resource for selling their products. In this case, clan names are used both for their exchange value (selling products) and heritage/symbolic value. The latter can be attributed to the fact that most Africans especially Xhosas in this instance, take pride in their clan names. This can be seen when Xhosa people especially men introduce each other; usually the point of entry is to enquire about clan names. The identities are more associated with clan names more than personal names or surnames. Thus, clan names take precedence in identities and give someone a sense of belonging.

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The exchange value part is that the use of clan names can be of beneficiary to both local consumers and business owners. On one hand consumers can get some goods on credit by virtue of affiliation. In turn, consumers will be loyal to the shop and buy here whenever they have money. One thing to note here is that these spaza shops with clan names as signs are mostly found in areas known as zones that were previously hostels housing immigrant workers from rural areas. The use of clan names is a complex system that is regulated by specific social and cultural mechanisms. That is why sometimes you find that there are connotations associated with the use of clan names such as backwardness, rural, uneducated, not street smart etc. Most people born in the townships/suburbs do not really prioritise the use of clan names in their everyday talk. The use of clan names for them is mostly reserved for special occasions such as traditional ceremonies.

Thus, the use of clan names can also be associated with spatial repertoires that both these group of people use to make meaning in different places or spaces. Pennycook and Otsuji (2014, 2015) argue that spatial repertoire comprises resources available for making meaning which are tied to specific spaces. Figure 5. 9 below is another sign with a clan name Bhadela. I had an interesting conversation with the owner just after the interview adding to his views and reasons for using clan name in the shop sign hence, I took some notes. His argument was that you need to look at the place and its surroundings including the people, and then this should give you an idea of what kind of customers will buy your product. According to him the place allows him to use clan name because people here are proud and familiar with the clan system and most of them are from the Eastern Cape. They are living in close proximity as hostel dwellers and usually refer to each other by clan names and many share the same clan names. Interestingly, here there is a strategic and deliberate use of clan name not only to express his identity but to sell his business to local people.

Figure 5.9

When asked if there is any reason for using clan name as a shop sign the owner's reply was that:

Bhadela is my clan name and Xhosa culture respects clan names, also when someone sharing the same clan sees this name he or she will say, let me support my brother. Unlike the first name such as Vuyani, there are many people out there sharing the same name as Vuyani but are not related. When you say you are Bhadela the other person from the same clan knows that we are related.

Thus, the shop owners use this particularly important feature of Xhosa language and its culture as a commodity to sell their products and in the process expressing and maintaining their identities as proud Africans. These clan names appeal to intended consumers who possess this kind of cultural linguistic knowledge. As noted by Banda and Mokwena (2019:177) that "languages, or their linguistic features as modes in signage, should be valued as mobile socio-culturally given and multimodally shaped semiotic resources deployed for communicative impact on consumers in local contexts of use".

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Below is another example of spaza shops with clan names, it should also be noted that the researcher could not be allowed to record interviews with some shop owners for various reasons but took notes instead. However, from the conversations that I had with them I picked up some few things. The lady in figure 5.10 told me that this is their clan name and that her husband suggested that they use their clan name as a sign and that's how the sign came about. This emphasizes the point I raised above about men assuming a leading role in the clan structure.

Figure 5.10

The three signs above could also be explained in terms of what Ben-Rafael described as 'collective' identities. 'Whilst the principle of presentation of self indicates the agent's uniqueness to gain the attention of passerby, the collective-identity principle indicates to which group(s) the agent belongs and draws clients on a basis of a shared identity'; Ben-Rafael (2009:46-47) points out that 'an awareness of this can indicate the measure of societal divisions- of tolerance to sociocultural differences and the use of linguistic items to include or exclude groups and expressing identity'. Clan names, therefore, are linked with the ways of life and socialization in these communities and ultimately express identities.

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Regarding clan names, the choice is determined by first the love and respect for culture and the belief that someone sharing the same clan as the owner will definitely support the business. This is due to the fact that in the clan system if you share the same clan name with the other person even if you do not know the person or you just met; you are not only related to each other but are considered brothers or sisters. To the extent that you cannot even marry each other. In addition, one of the owners is of the opinion that if two shops with different clan names selling the same thing, are close to each other and a passerby sharing the same clan name with one on the shop signs he/she will choose the one related to him/her. Jaworski 2013 notes that Linguistic landscapes are also shaped by typically invisible but traceable constitutive activities that are profoundly ideological, encapsulating different social actors' priorities, goals and competing value systems. It is under these ideologies that the shop owner believes using his clan name as a shop sign might attract and keep customers especially those that share the same clan name.

5.6 Summary

This chapter looked at different kinds of branding strategy employed by business owners to create and maintain identities. Thus, the use of personal names and nicknames serve to indicate individualise identities with significant meaning for others. While the use of clan names indicates collective identities. In light of the interviews business owners believe that the names have a significant role in attracting customers. On the other hand, customers cite the products, convenience, prices and/services as the major draw cards for them to come into the shops.

CHAPTER SIX

Brand Associations, Street Names and Commodification.

6.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the signs on non-South African and local owned shops that use names reflecting their associations/ brand association, religious association, street names and the use of language as a commodity. Lastly, we look at some few items on sale in one of the spaza shops as part of material culture. Enfield (2009) argues that people carry "private representations", thoughts, concepts, and sense/sensorimotor images (in many possible forms) that are structured and can be recalled and privately manipulated. Stroud and Mpendukana (2009) remind us that sites rely on their materiality to co-construct their LL and that the narratives borne by some of the signs have long-established trajectories as they are merely revoiced through the processes of resemiotisation and intertextuality. Therefore, this chapter aims to demonstrate common trends, similarities and/ differences in choices by local and non-South African business owners in linguistic and other semiotic materials in the construction of signage.

6.1. International Brand Association

Almost all these spaza shops are selling the same goods and can be described as small convenient stores supplying necessities for low-income residents. The stock ranges from small packets of groceries such as small rice, maize meal, cooking oil, cool drinks, loose cigarettes, airtime etc. They are also known as 'Somali shops' by the locals regardless of where the owner comes from. It is also argued elsewhere that rituals and events are part of material culture, as observed during one of the visits on a Friday when I arrived in some spaza shops, the shops

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were closed. Then I was told that as part of their religion the shopkeepers went for prayers and will be back after an hour, hence this is associated with Somali Shops.

This has also prompted some non-South African shop owners to conceal their identities using local and international brands. Some shop owners use these well-known international and local brands not only to boost their sales but also to remain anonymous as not to reveal their personal or (inter)national identities. This could be explained by what Banda and Peck (2014) call 'brand anonymity'. They describe this as "a neologism which combines the association with a brand so as to conceal a supererogatory facet of one's personal make-up" (Banda and Peck, 2014:19). However, it should be noted that in townships anonymity might help a little bit, but not that much as people usually know that shop is owned by a Somali or non-South African.

Figure 6.1 below is an example of a Spaza shop owned by a Somali-Land immigrant with the name New York in the shop sign.

Figure 6.1

This also indicates some intertextual allusion to common or popular names such as 'New York'. As revealed from the interview that the shop owner has never been and has no ties to

New York, their association with the city stems from watching television. New York is well known not only as a global city but also as a brand which was popularized by the slogan in 'I love New York' campaign which includes among other things a clothing range associated with music and pop culture. Therefore, the intertextual use of the well-known brand 'New York' suggests brand association which appeals to those familiar with it and reinforces the connotations of being a global city which can also imply that we all know New York. When asked about the name the owner said:

'New York – eh- the friend before me, he chooses the name I accept it, I have no idea, but I think he likes New York City.'

When further asked whether the previous owner has ever been to New York the owner replied as follows:

'No, only just watching the TV'

The use of international brands as signs serves not only to conceal identities but also as business strategy. They use this well-known brand to appeal to knowing consumers especially those familiar with the name. The owner suggest that people are attracted by this name and would often come and enquire about the name. This is revealed from the interview when asked whether the name plays a role in attracting customers. The owner replied by stating that:

'Yee, because this place is close to taxis, many people are driving, so when they see this name, they come ask me, this is New York shop? So, I like New York, I want to go there. So many people like this name and they come for this name.'

By this the owner can stand out from other businesses and attract customers by virtue of association with an international brand. As noted earlier that New York is known as a Global City, one can deduce from the interview that the branding is informed by the owner's aspiration

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to be associated with the city or the admiration of the city. His perception is that this name serves to gain attention of passersby and attract interest of customers, as they often come to enquire about the name while buying some goods on sale.

Figure 6.2 below is another example of brand association to common names and is also owned by non-South African. The name Aljazeera is associated with a news television channel which literally means 'the island' in Arabic and is referring to the Arabian Peninsula in context. It is named that way because it claims to be the only independent news network in the Middle East. It was initially launched as an Arabic news and current affairs satellite TV channel and has since expanded into a network with several outlets, including the internet and specialty television channels in multiple languages.

Figure 6.2

6.2 Local Brand Association

Others seize a moment in time and space to associate themselves with a particular brand, as is the case in the following two examples in figure 5. and 5. These two shops displayed their association with certain football teams by strategically putting their nicknames on the sign as

a marketing and identity tool. One with the South African national team and the other with Orlando Pirates football club.

Figure 6.3 Bafana can be associated with the South African soccer national team nicknamed Bafana Bafana (which means the boys/young men). The shop keeper is from Ethiopia and he shared with me that the shop was opened in 2010 when South Africa hosted the soccer world cup. The shop was opened just before the world cup, there was this huge hype about world cup coming to South Africa and they use that to attract customers.

Figure 6.3

The owner took this opportunity to establish and identify himself in the area to customers as the name Bafana Bafana was a buzz and even people young and old were donning Bafana Bafana branded clothing. However, it is quite clear from the interview I had with one of the customers that the name Bafana can be interpreted in different ways. When asked about the meaning of the name Bafana the interviewee responded by saying that:

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'Ingangafani kumntu nomye umntu, mna ndizoyi interpreta ngolunye uhlobo. Ok ndizokuxelela ba phayana mhlawumbi ababantu bathengisayo phayana are young boys okanye iclientele yabo ngabantu abatsha kulevicinity ibekwe kuyo.'

'The interpretation might differ from person to person, I might have a different interpretation from the other person. Ok, let me tell you maybe the owners are young men, or their target clientele is the youth in this vicinity.'

However, the interviewee further revealed that he did not even know the name of the shop until now when I pointed to the sign.

'Ndiyalothuka kwa eligama mna andilijongi nelogama ndiza nje ba isisipaza shop ndithenge lonto ndiyifunayo.'

'It is the first time I even look at the name, I did not even know the shop's name until now, I just come to the spaza shop to buy what I want without looking at the name.'

This led to the next question, do you think the name has anything to do with attracting the customers?

'Ngokunokwam mna awusiwa ligama uyangukuthi lento uyifunayo uyayifumana na pha ba ayikho ndiyagqitha kude kuthiwe iyafumaneka pha endaweni ethile.'

'In my opinion, it is the availability of the products, if they do not have it you proceed to next shop until you get what you are looking for.'

From this interview it is evident that some customers think very little if at all about the name of the shop. In some cases, they refer to the shop in reference to what they know close to the shop e.g the shop next to Kwalicks (local Tavern) or next to the Taxi rank.

Furthermore, I asked specifically what attracts him most about this shop. And the answer was:

'Balapha kufutshane, endaweni yoba ndikhwele ndiye kwaShoprite ngelinye ixesha kuyanetha kufuneka ndihambe ngenyawo. Enye into yiconviniece awukhweli uye ngapha kude, awubhatali into zefare ilapha kufutshane around the corner uthatha ngokujikela nje uyifumane lonto uyifunayo.'

'The shop is nearby, instead of taking a taxi to Shoprite, sometimes it is raining I had to walk far. So, it is convenient, you don't spend money on taxis to travel to faraway places it is right here around the corner. You just turn around the corner and you get what you want.'

The main objective of the sign maker is to attract consumers, even though the sign maker might have realized the intended meaning that does not necessarily mean the consumers share the same sentiments. Contrary to what shopkeepers and owners say, it is quite clear from some of the patrons' perspectives that the names have no real significance in them coming to the shops. The main attraction for them is the products on sale including the affordability and convenience. As noted by this participant that the shop is very close to him, it is just around the corner and he does not have to travel far to get the necessities. Even though he shops here almost every day he did not even know the shop's name until I pointed it out.

Figure 6.4 below is a South African owned spaza shop with Mabaccania as the name of the shop. Mabaccania/Mabakabaka as affectionately known by Orlando Pirates fans is one of the oldest and top teams in the South African Premier Soccer league (PSL). This is a nick name associated with Orlando Pirates soccer team (The Buccaneers). Football is one of the most popular sports in South Africa especially among black people and is a social activity that offers communities or social groups a chance to express an identity. The use of the well-known football club by the owner is a creative business strategy to express a collective identity and to draw customers on a shared identity.

Figure 6.4

The owners are big fans of Orlando Pirates and are proud to associate/identify themselves with the team as revealed from the interview. The interviewee is the shopkeeper not the shop owner, the interview was very brief and conducted in isiXhosa. When asked the reason behind the name the shopkeeper said:

'Umama notata balapha bafavour iPirates (Amabakania)'

'Both owners (husband and wife) are fans of Orlando Pirates (The Buccaneers).'

Here the participant reveals that it was an easy decision to decide the name of the shop. The owners both husband and wife are big fans of Orlando Pirates foot club. Their understanding was that they should use something they both love as they also co-own the shop. Their perceptions regarding the name in attracting customers is that Orlando Pirates has many followers all over the country including Langa and the fact that it is close to a Taxi Rank, people can easily recognize it.

Also, the Buccaneers spaza shop was established in 2011 when Orlando Pirates won three major trophies (a treble) in that season. The owners took the opportunity to reveal their association with the team and thereby expressing a collective identity.

6.3 Branding and Place Names

While others hide their identities through both local and international brands others openly reveal their identities by using names that depict their associations or backgrounds. It can be noted that the use of Personal place names can be an indication of an expression of identities. These names indicate a person's association with a particular place, country of origin and/ religious background.

Figure 6.5 below displays the owner's association with Uganda with the inscription of its Capital City Kampala on the shop sign but also an identity tool. Kampala is the largest and capital city of Uganda a Southern African country. As revealed from the interview the owner is from Uganda and is proud to be associated with the country she loves. When asked the reason behind the name, the shopkeeper who is the daughter of the owner said:

'Because we love our country'

Despite all the challenges faced by immigrant shop owners, others are happy to reveal their identities. Also noted from the interviews is that the sign does not only serve as an identity marker but a marketing tool. It serves to gain attention of customers as they constantly enquire about the name and the owners are happy to oblige and explain. This is shown below when asked whether the name has anything to do with attracting customers.

'Of course, yes, because they want to know what Kampala is. So, when they come here, we must explain to them'

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In this instance, the shop owners are not only explaining the products on sale they also get a chance to sell their country as well as educating those who do not know much about their neighbouring countries. During these interactions the shop owners can reveal their identities and share their culture with the locals. Thus, cultural identity is in this case affirmed not only through the creation of signs but also in the interaction with locals. The owner does not only reveal her place of origin but also expresses and maintains identity as proud African. The perceptions are that the name serve to gain attention of passersby and attract interest of customers, as they often come to enquire about the name while buying some goods on sale.

Figure 6.5

6.4 Branding and Religion

The following sign in figure 6.6 is an indication of a religious/cultural background associations. Bismillahi is an Arabic word taken from a phrase 'Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim', literally means 'in the name of God/Allah, the merciful and compassionate'. The words are said to

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preface all except one of the chapters of the Koran. The phrase is commonly used by Muslims as a blessing before eating or some other action. The phrase is repurposed from its ordinary use which is normally at the beginning or as a blessing of any significant undertaking, into a stop sign and creating a new context. Banda, Jimaima and Mokwena (2019:77) state that in addition to emphasizing sociocultural factors in sign making, Kress (2010:10) says that signs are an expression of the interest of the sign-maker to realize meaning 'using culturally available semiotic resources, which have been shaped by practices of members of social groups and their cultures'. Thus, the shop owner used the phrase as a sign to indicate his association with Islam thereby expressing his religious/cultural identity. In other words, the phrase is used for collective identity representation to show solidarity among the Muslim society or to the Islamic Faith.

Figure 6.6

Even though communication was a bit of a problem I was able to get a very short interview, for instance, when asked about the meaning of the name, one of the shopkeepers just said,

'It's culture.'

Then I asked, which culture? The shopkeeper replied that:

'I'm come from Somalia.'

Another question was who named the shop? And the reply was:

'The owner come long time to South Africa and name the shop.'

So do you think the name attracts customers? was a follow up question. The response was:

'Yes, people come see this beautiful name, ask me what this name and tell them it's my culture.'

However, from the little information I got and that they are referring to the name as culture. Thus, this indicates the fact that most Muslims societies not only view Islam as religion but also as part of their culture. There were about four people in the shop, and they were reluctant to talk to me. One of them mentioned that some of them do not have papers/legal documents to be in South Africa. That is one of the reasons they did not want to be recorded. Even after trying so hard to persuade them language barrier proved to be another obstacle.

Here, the shop owner employs what is known as semiotic remediation by drawing on a well-known religious book especially among Muslims, the Koran and repurposes this phrase as a shop sign. By borrowing and repurposing this phrase the author is employing what Banda and Jimaima (2015:645) citing (Bolter and Grusin 2000) call remediation as repurposing. They describe this as "putting a familiar content into another media form: a comic book series is repurposed as a live action movie, a televised cartoon, a video game". Furthermore, they argue that repurposing is, in this case, understood as recycling of material or content from one medium in another medium for a different purpose. Thus, the idea is not to replicate the earlier forms but to exploit new meanings that claim, 'to offer an experience that the other forms

cannot'. However, they also state that repurposing is not confined to media relationships: it is also about the 'refashioning of materials and practices' as well as the creative 'borrowing and adapting [of] materials and techniques whenever possible', for new meanings and purposes. By this the shop owner can maintain his heritage by appropriating this phrase as both linguistic and material culture. In other words, the phrase is not only repurposed as a shop sign but also for symbolic reasons. Thus, the sign serves as a symbol of Islamic religion/culture for the shop owners.

Even though there is a large number of populations associated with Islamic religion in South Africa especially in Cape Town, it was unusual to find names associated with Islamic religion on the signage in the townships. Now the linguistic landscape of Langa embodies a well-known phrase among the Islamic community such as Bismillahi which index cultural or religious identity.

 6.5 Branding and Location

Below are shop signs that indicate street names, place of business or location where the business is situated. Pennycook and Otsuji (2014, 2015) argue that spatial repertoire comprises resources available for making meaning which are tied to specific spaces. Here, the shop owners used these socially given or shaped linguistic resources as collective identities to attract consumers. Langa is also divided into zones even though there has been an introduction of street names by local authorities, people are still referring to these areas as zones. In figure 6.7 below the shop owner decided to use the area name zone 1 as a shop sign with which most people in this area are familiar. This will definitely have a communicative impact on customers. By this the shop owner is claiming to be part of this community and that the shop is for everyone in this community. The owner is aware of the local social networking system.
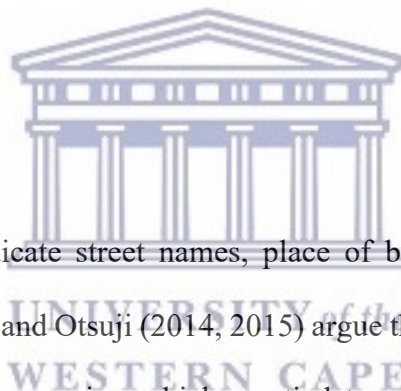
Figure 6.7

Figure 6.8 below is on the main road that was known as Washington Street but now referred to as King Langalibalele drive. Just as noted above in zones people are still referring to the street as Washington. There is a sharp contrast between what is happening in Langa and Washington DC's Chinatown. In Washington DC's China town, the use of Chinese signs is for symbolic reasons designed by local authority to preserve the space for tourist attraction. Despite government's efforts in changing zones and street names associated with apartheid legacy into names of well-known local and national political figures. In Langa the use of old names by shop owners is a business strategy determined by sociocultural factors such as the intended consumer. What we see here is the commodification of local signs by non-south African shop owners to attract local customers into buying their products. Unlike in Washington DC there is no mandate or spatial restrictions that force the shop owners to use the new names. This is purely business strategy; the shop owners understand and recognize the value of local knowledge/languages by using these old names as marketing tools.

Figure 6.8

6.6 Commodification of Local Language

The two pictures below figure 6.9 and 6.10 are some of the examples where people rent out the shops without changing the signs. People conducting business in these shops are immigrants from Somalia, but the shop names are in Xhosa. What is interesting about these names is that both names are action words not personal names as is usually the case in many shop signs. In the first sign the word Siyazama literally means (we are trying) and in the second sign the word Woza means (come). However, more interestingly is that the new tenants decided not to change the signs at all even though they do not speak the language. These words do not necessarily have a symbolic meaning but have a communicative meaning in that customers can read and understand them. This is a clear example of what Leeman and Modan (2009) call a "communicative force of the words and languages on individual signs". These words can be said to have a 'force' in that they talk directly to knowing consumers of the signs. For instance, the word Woza is calling on passersby to come and buy. Thus, the decision not to change the sign may be communicating a purely business strategy and a deliberate attempt to retain and

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attract customers. This is the use of language as commodity at best; here the commodification of local language by non-South business owners is, a business strategy aimed at attracting local customers. As noted by Banda and Mokwena (2019:179) in their study in rural areas of Northern Cape that "business owners increasingly recognize local languages as 'things' that can be transformed into commodities that in turn help to sell/advertise other commodities". As indicated in the analysis above that even non-South African shop owners acknowledge the value of local languages and/its linguistic features. In other words, just because you see signs written in Xhosa does not necessarily mean people running the business speak the language.

Figure6.9   **Figure 6.10**

This could also be argued based on hidden identities/brand anonymity, where people deliberately hide their identities. In addition to Peck and Banda's (2014) observation that Somali traders' deliberate concealment of identities with global brands such as Coca-Cola has become a commonplace in Cape Town. In this case the Somali traders use local language to achieve two things; they use local language/its linguistic features strategically as marketing

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tools while at the same time concealing their identities. However, as noted earlier anonymity does not play a major role in the townships as people already know the shop is owned by Somali or non-South African.

6.7 Food and fabrics as material culture

Below is one of the few shops that sell imported food products from other African countries. Not only do the sign carry the name of the shop Tresor African Food which on its own is descriptive, it consists of additional information such as the location of the shop. As seen from the above signs it is not common to find an address and telephone numbers on the spaza shop signs in the township. The name Tresor is a personal name from the Democratic Republic of Congo, meaning *treasure* in English and is pronounced as 'Trezor'. In addition to the name of the shop the description of the type of product on sale, African Food indicates a strong attachment to Africa. Both the name and address including telephone numbers play a major role as marketing tools for the shop. On one hand, by describing the shop as selling African food the shop attracts interest of customers. On the other hand, the shop also provides telephones numbers including the address to induce action for consumers and allow passersby to spread the word or to call in themselves.

Due to language barrier, I was unable to conduct an interview; however, the shopkeeper was kind enough to allow me to take photographs of the products on sale. However, from the little talk we had, he claims that the material is imported and that he gets customers from the DR Congo, Angola, Nigeria, and other African counties.

The material found in the shop include food products such as sugar bags, maize meal bags, different kinds of rice, different kinds of fish, especially from the lake, fabrics for making

African clothing designs etc. which can be related to identity or immigration. Food is part of material culture, as discussed above in the literature review that material culture also includes physical objects. The objects (or artifacts) include everyday life objects such as food and utensils, furniture and pieces of art, weapons and medical devices, medications, books and clay tablets of the past, pens and carpenter tools, monuments, and buildings (Aronin and Ó Laoire 2012:3). Some bags have names while others are in small packages with no names. But those familiar with the products know exactly what it is in them.

Figure 6.11

Below are some of the products on sale.

Figure 6.12

The bags in figure 6.12 above are different kinds of maize flour or maize meal used to make stiff porridge among other things. There are different names from different countries for this stiff porridge. This is known as Ugali or Nsima, Vuswa, Fufu, Nshima, Pap among other names and is a staple food for most African cultures. Different cultures use different methods of cooking, it is cooked in boiling water or milk until it reaches a stiff or firm dough -like consistency.

There are also some fabrics on sale here. These fabrics have unique patterns and are used to make modern Afrocentric clothing. The fabrics worn by women are sometimes used as a way of non-verbal communication due to their well-known hidden meanings. The colours and symbols used in each print design can symbolise ethnicity, marriage, and social status of the wearer. For example, there is popular Ghanaian print known as 'Speed Bird' with multiple birds flying in the same direction. This patten means you can be 'rich today', 'poor tomorrow' as money can easily fly away.

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Figure 6.13

In figure 6.13 above contains some more maize meal and flour on top including rice. There are also some kind of beans, dried peas, powdered chilli peppers, some seeds, among other things. Some of these form part of the most popular dishes especially in West Africa.


Figure 6.14   **Figure 6.15**

In both pictures above there is fish, figure 6.14 contains whole big dried fish on the other hand figure 6.15 contains small frozen fish. Fish is a key dietary ingredient in many costal and landlocked African countries. Therefore, it is a significant source of animal protein especially in those cultures that depend on fishing.

6.8 Summary

This chapter demonstrated how business owners appropriated local and non-south Africa linguistic and cultural material as branding material on the shop signs. This chapter also reveals that business owners are convinced that the names have a significant role in attracting customers. While customers affirm the products, convenience, prices and/service are the major reason for them to come into that particular shop. However, the names on the signage reflect both local and non-south African social and cultural contexts from which they are produced, as shown in the interpretations above.

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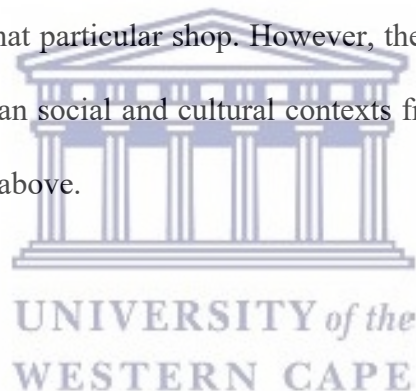
CHAPTER SEVEN

Summary and Conclusion

7.0 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the processes and strategies used by certain shop owners to create and promote their businesses through appropriating local and foreign linguistic and cultural material. In addition to branding, it is apparent that through these processes, identities are consequently constructed and maintained. The next sections summarise and make conclusions on the study.

7.1 Summary of Findings

It is important to look back at the objectives identified at the beginning of the study and summarise the findings and draw conclusions on each.

To identify the social semiotic material used in the construction of brand identities in LL of Langa Township.

The social semiotics used in LL of Langa range from personal names including nicknames as forms of personal identification, to those that have a symbolic meaning for religions or traditions. Others are happy to cite location of the shops. The linguistic landscape of the spaza shops in Langa also shows the use of brand association and brand anonymity. Thus, shop owners use both local and international brands strategically as a marketing tool and sometimes to conceal their national and personal identities. At the same time, the use of place names shows

love of the country or the place from where one comes. There is also the use of clan names which have a strong connection to local traditions. Commodification of local languages such as using local words or street names as names of the shops for marketing purposes is also evident. Thus, local language, Xhosa in this case or its linguistic features including clan names, nicknames, personal names are valuable commodities for marketing.

To explore the construction of local and transnational/Trans Africa brand identities in the LL of Langa Township.

Both local and foreign shop owners consciously draw on various cultural and linguistic practices to create and maintain their identities. The signs both reflect and construct cultural values as they carry traces of the culture that produce them. As can be seen on some foreign owned shops, names like Zed (God is righteousness), Baraka (Blessing) and Bismilahi (in the name of God/Allah, the merciful and compassionate) are deeply rooted into Muslim religions shared across Africa. On the other hand, local names including clan names are deeply rooted and reflect local cultural traditions. Both local and foreign owned shops make use of brand associations not only international brands but also local brands. The shop owners have appropriated materialities of local, transnational/trans Africa and commodification of local languages as branding materials. Therefore, the diversity of names on the shop signs illustrates both localized and transnationilised identities and commodities.

To identify, similarities and differences in choices by local and foreign business owners in linguistic and other semiotic materials in the construction signage.

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One notable difference is that the use of international brands such as New York and Aljazeera are more common on non-South African owned shops and rarely found on locally owned shops. Also, non-South African owned shops are most likely to cite location of their shops as a shop sign. For instance, Zone 1 Cash Store uses the area in which the shop is located, and Washington Supermarket uses the street name on the signage. Then there is the use of clan names and nicknames mainly by local business owners. From the analysis and observations there are also some evident similarities in the construction of signage. First, the use of personal names can be observed on both local and foreign owned shops. Second, both local and foreign owned shops take advantage of local brands as indicated above by two shops that uses local soccer teams as shop names. Not surprising though, is that both local and non- South African owners take advantage of the local language 'isiXhosa', and use it as a commodity to attract customers and consequently sell their products.

To identify the meanings behind the choices in the material culture (linguistic and other cultural semiotic resources) employed in the construction of identities in LL.

Personal names such as Nomzamo, Bukhenya etc. used as spaza shop names are forms of personal identification of the owner or family. Some show love of the country in particular the place from where one comes, such as Kampala. Others tend to evoke aspirations as noted earlier from the New York shop that even the owner has never been there but is fascinated by New York culture from watching television. The clan names, nicknames including religious names tend to evoke cultural and ideological traditions to which that person has been socialized. It is also worth noting that some of these foreign names have deeper meanings and share a connection in the sense that they have a religious background, similarly to local personal names they also carry aspirations. Other shops simply use location of the shop as shop names

strategically as a sense of belonging and to create a personal relationship between the consumers and the shop itself. There are also those that use local brands such as local football teams as shop names which evoke national pride and a sense of belonging.

7.2 General Conclusion

This study reveals that both local and non-South African shop owners consciously draw on various cultural and linguistic practices to create and maintain their identities. For instance, the use of clan names which is one of the most important features of Xhosa language and its culture and the use of religious concepts such as 'Bismillahi' which is a very important and well-known phrase among the Islamic community both indicate collective identities. In other words, the names on the signage reflect both local and non-South African social and cultural context from which they are produced. On the other hand, personal names, and nicknames indicate individualised identities. Shop owners are mindful of the value of local languages as marketing tools. The use of both local and foreign names on the signage acknowledges and value the diversity of community languages in the linguistic landscape of Langa. Therefore, the diversity of names on the shop signs illustrates both localized and transnationalised identities. The name choices on the signage are both symbolic and business or branding strategies.

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